

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO SEMI-AUTONOMY?

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Writing in the Yale journal *Perspecta* in the mid-1980s, K. Michael Hays put forward an argument for “a critical architecture that claims for itself a place *between* the efficient representation of preexisting cultural values and the wholly detached autonomy of an abstract formal system.”¹ In setting up such a relationship between autonomy and criticality, Hays was elaborating his mentor Stanford Anderson’s efforts to promote a pragmatic ethical rapprochement—or compromise—between an autonomous practice that aspired to Kantian rigor and purity and the obligations of cultural—if not also social—engagement. “Quasi-autonomy,” as Anderson had it, or “semi-autonomy” in Hays’s variation, offered the possibility of an architecture resistant to instrumentalization in the service of the dominant order.

Both Anderson and Hays were alluding to Louis Althusser’s notion, derived from Karl Marx, that superstructures in capitalist society, taken in this instance to include cultural activities such as architecture, were “relatively autonomous” from its infrastructure, its economic base:

Marx conceived the structure of every society as constituted by ‘levels’ or ‘instances’ articulated by a specific determination: the infrastructure, or economic base (the ‘unity’ of the productive forces and the relations of production) and the superstructure, which itself contains two ‘levels’ or ‘instances’: the politico-legal (law and the State) and ideology (the different ideologies, religious, ethical, legal, political, etc.). [...]

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Their index of effectivity (or determination), as determined by the determination in the last instance of the base, is thought by the Marxist tradition in two ways: (1) there is a 'relative autonomy' of the superstructure with respect to the base; (2) there is a 'reciprocal action' of the superstructure on the base.²

Anderson's formulation was originally put forward in a 1966 paper written in response to the positivist, even scientific, interest of the time in "problem-solving" design methods. Incorporating and elaborating upon that paper in his *Perspecta* 33 essay of 2002, titled "Quasi-Autonomy in Architecture: The Search for an 'In-between,'" Anderson began by noting that:

[r]ecurrently, anxieties arise around such issues as these: can architecture be other than a mere servant to commercial/capitalist/ideological forces? [...] Is not autonomous production the only way to avoid submersion in the material conditions of one's time? How can a formally driven enterprise like architecture address social issues responsibly (or at all)?³

In the 1966 paper, Anderson had cited Le Corbusier's Carpenter Center as exemplary, in that it was not the "frictionless, efficient" result desired in problem-solving design, but rather a building where "all of one's senses and the whole of one's perception are engaged," a building that is "a world, a context, a problem [not yet solved], and we have the happy opportunity to form ourselves against it."⁴ In the later article, de Stijl, exemplified by Gerrit Rietveld's Schröder House, and the early works of Peter Eisenman such as House I (the Toy Museum in Princeton, NJ), take on this role:

The de Stijl and early Eisenman works are of fundamental importance to the discipline of architecture. They project new ways of conceiving material form, space, light, and, at least to my mind, implications for use and meaning. Significantly, these 'new ways' are deployed in such a manner as to give as much or more attention to their generalized potentials as to the specifics they initially served. It is in this that they approach autonomy and establish new references within the discipline.[#]

Anderson notes the importance of the intimacy of scale of these examples, and the fact that "a particular use is not defined." He observes that "[o]ne is acutely aware of one's own body in, and in relation to, these environments – and with this, also the anticipation of one's occupation in various modes."⁵

His concerns were thus humanist in nature, and the ethical issues as he implied them suggested, first, the virtue of generous contributions to the discipline, and second, to the community, in effect a duty of care to the built environment and to human experience within it. He concluded: "To seek to live only a life of the mind at one pole, or of materiality at the other, or of coercive power from either, is to impoverish one's self, one's

discipline, and one's smaller or greater community.”⁶

Michael Hays, in his *Perspecta* 21 article of 1984, sets up the dialectical opposition between, on the one hand, “architecture as instrument of culture,” where it occurs as “essentially an epiphenomenon, dependent on socioeconomic, political, and technological processes for its various states and transformations” and “reconfirms the hegemony of culture and helps to assure its continuity,” and, on the other hand, architecture as autonomous form, where both design and its criticism are involved with:

*the comparative absence of historical concerns in favor of attention to the autonomous architectural object and its formal operations – how its parts have been put together, how it is a wholly integrated and equilibrated system that can be understood without external references, and as important, how it may be reused, how its constituent parts and processes may be recombined.*⁷

On one side, he remarks:

*describes artifacts as instruments of the self-justifying, self-perpetuating hegemony of culture; the other side treats architectural objects in their most disinfected, pristine state, as containers of a privileged principle of internal coherence.*⁸

In seeking a way out of this dichotomy, Hays proposes an architecture and a criticism characterized by “worldliness,” and in this respect acknowledges a debt to the thinking of Edward Said. Hays’s exemplar of such a semi-autonomous architecture is, perhaps surprisingly, Mies van der Rohe. Citing the unbuilt Alexanderplatz project in particular, as well as the Barcelona Pavilion and IIT’s campus, Hays asserts that:

*Mies’s achievement was to open up a clearing of implacable silence in the chaos of the nervous metropolis; this clearing is a radical critique, not only of the established spatial order of the city and the established logic of classical composition, but also of the inhabiting *nervenleben*. It is the extreme depth of*

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*silence in this clearing – silence as an architectural form all its own – that is the architectural meaning of this project.*⁹

Implicitly, then, in semi-autonomy Hays proposes the ethical virtue of architectural and interpretive work that does not acquiesce to the interests of hegemonic culture, but at the same time does not withdraw entirely from engagement. Also implicit in this opening gambit is a duty of faith to the battle cries of modernism's avant-garde.

In his subsequent writings on this theme of critical architecture, most notably in his books *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject*, of 1992, and *Architecture's Desire: Reading the Late Avant-Garde*, of 2010, Hays's exemplars and his arguments undergo shifts. His exemplars move from Mies to Hannes Meyer and subsequently, in the third book, Aldo Rossi, Bernard Tschumi, John Hejduk, and Peter Eisenman. The shifts in Hays's arguments have been charted in depth by Louis Martin in his essay "Frederic Jameson and Critical Architecture" published in 2011. Martin notes that Jameson's thinking becomes increasingly important in Hays's later writings, which alter the construction of the dialectical oppositions and which address, in turn, the negative dialectics of the Frankfurt School, deconstruction, the pessimism of the Italian critic Manfredo Tafuri, and Lacan's psychoanalytic thinking. Throughout this period, Eisenman, in parallel with Hays, continues to publish on the topic of a critical architecture, convinced that his own work exemplifies such practice.

What had remained constant, says Louis Martin, is that "[c]ritical architecture ... seeks change through resistance, negation, and opposition to the forces maintaining the status quo."¹⁰ Mary McLeod, however, had summed up well the haunting skepticism of the Italian critic:

*[The Tafurian position] views architecture as pure ideology, in which ideology is defined as 'false consciousness' – that is, as reflection of dominant class interests. Architecture thus plays a negative social role: it becomes an instrument of the existing power structure. Even purportedly critical architecture (and in this category Tafuri places all utopian impulses in architecture since the Enlightenment) contributes in its uselessness and, more seriously, in its deception to the perpetuation of bourgeois capitalism.*¹¹

Responding to Hays's series of texts seventeen years after their initiation, Sarah Whiting and Robert Somol, also writing in *Perspecta* 33, offered a "projective" alternative to "the now dominant paradigm of criticality." For both Hays and Peter Eisenman, they claimed, "disciplinarity is understood as autonomy (enabling critique, representation, and signification), but not as instrumentality (projection, performativity, and pragmatics). [...] As an alternative to the critical project, – here linked to the indexical, the dialectical and hot representation – this text develops an alternative genealogy of

the projective – linked to the diagrammatic, the atmospheric and cool performance.”¹² Where Hays had cited Mies’s exemplary status, Somol and Whiting invoke Koolhaas, contrasting his response to the skyscraper frame in *Delirious New York* with Eisenman’s experiments with Le Corbusier’s Dom-ino frame: “these New York frames exist as instruments of metropolitan plasticity and are not primarily architecture for paying attention to; they are not for reading but for seducing, becoming, instigating new events and behaviors.”¹³ Perhaps even more so than Koolhaas, for the purposes of the essay the acting style of Robert Mitchum (read through art critic Dave Hickey) is put forward as an exemplar: “‘Mitchum architecture’ is cool, easy, and never looks like work [...]. Here, mood is the open-ended corollary of the cool-producing effect without high definition, providing room for maneuver and promoting complicity with subject(s).” Nevertheless, Whiting and Somol felt it necessary, in their conclusion, to insist that “[s]etting out this projective program does not necessarily entail a capitulation to market forces [...].”¹⁴

Some of Whiting and Somol’s allies in this cause, however, felt less need to be equivocal.¹⁵ In the early 2000s Michael Speaks in particular set out an aggressive polemic against the notion of critical architecture and, indeed, its entire context of critical theory. Speaks’s background included doctoral studies at Duke University with Frederic Jameson, but perhaps of greater ultimate influence on Speaks’s thinking were the debunking diatribes of literary critic Stanley Fish. So motivated, Speaks took on the role of advocate for the “New Economy” movement of that time, particularly as promoted by Kevin Kelly in *Wired* magazine. Technology was changing everything, according to both Kelly and Speaks, and architecture needed to be not critical but innovative. In one of a series of articles published in the Japanese periodical *A+U*, Speaks wrote: “Just as theory confronted

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philosophy with its slowness and morality, so today does pragmatic entrepreneurial thought confront theory with its historical connection to the dreams and utopian aspirations of philosophy.”¹⁶ He cites an essay by Alejandro Zaera-Polo, then of Foreign Office Architects, in which the author constructs what he calls a “niche-seeking map” that can, according to Speaks, “be used to create flexible practices that are better able to respond to the new market reality of globalization.”¹⁷

In an intriguing passage from the same article, Speaks invokes management guru Peter Drucker. Architectural practice under the avant-garde model, informed by critical theory, Speaks claims, “is nothing more than what [...] Drucker calls ‘problem solving.’” For Speaks, practice in this model simply takes direction from theory, and “adds little or no value along the way. Innovation, Drucker tells us, works by a different, more entrepreneurial logic, where, by rigorous analysis, opportunities are discovered that can be exploited and transformed into innovations.”¹⁸ Speaks had, whether knowingly or not, repurposed Stanford Anderson’s original opposition of 1966, substituting critical architecture for Anderson’s target, the scientific design methodology of late modernist “problem-solving.” But Speaks had also *inverted* that opposition: for Anderson, 1960s problem-solving was too much of the world of corporate capitalism. For Speaks, critical architecture’s version of problem-solving was too little of it; the solution was to embrace wholeheartedly the logic of the market.

George Baird, in turn, responded in his essay of 2004, “‘Criticality’ and Its Discontents,” drawing into his analysis of post-criticality the positions of Whiting and Somol’s fellow-travelers Stan Allen, Sylvia Lavin, and Michael Speaks. Noting that for Koolhaas, “if it turns out that ‘criticality’ constrains efficacy, then to that extent ‘criticality’ must give way,”¹⁹ Baird is nonetheless ready to allow him some remaining capacity for resistance, but is wary of post-criticality’s potential consequences. To what extent, he wonders, will it develop models to measure “the ambition and the capacity for significant social transformation”? “Without such models,” he went on, “architecture could all too easily find itself [...] ethically adrift.”²⁰

Were Baird’s apprehensions borne out? What were the ethical attitudes embodied in calls for a projective, post-critical architecture? Whiting and Somol’s concerns, insofar as they can be interpreted in ethical terms, appear predominantly pragmatic. They address architecture’s capacity to be effective. From their perspective, an avant-gardist position of principled critical distance could not be maintained if architecture was to be recognized as a practice with value in the world, and in this respect they might also be taken as suggesting a utilitarian model. But then there is this business of Robert Mitchum, of “cool”: social autonomy of a kind in

one sense, to be sure, though in another requiring a social setting in order to be recognized. But doesn't cool imply a freedom from constraint; an unruffled individualism untroubled by conscience; a natural gift for getting what you want, by whatever means; even rule-breaking as an aesthetic? Is there perhaps a Machiavellian streak in their position?

For Michael Speaks, there is no shame in being an operative critic, to use Tafuri's term; no shame in engaging in promotionalism and career brokerage. In a series of interviews in *A+U*,²¹ Speaks extols the virtues of rapid prototyping and versioning enabled by digital modeling and fabrication, and indeed technological innovation in general. Presented as exemplars in this respect are firms such as SHoP; Greg Lynn FORM; Neil Denari; Asymptote; Maxwan; and AMO, the research arm of OMA.

Speaks's use of the business model is millennialist, his rhetoric neoliberal with its embrace of competition, technocracy and the market as arbiters of all success. Does he present us with innovation as an implied ethical duty of the designer? Yet he decries the "moralism" of traditional philosophical intellectualizations of architecture. Success in the marketplace is, evidently, a virtue in itself. For Speaks, there is no other world to be part of; autonomy, semi- or otherwise has become an effective impossibility. Instead, he presents us with the received ethos of social Darwinism.

What if we undertake a thought experiment here? What if we take at face value Speaks's cheerleading for the new-economy business model, for digital technology as the central concern for forward-looking architectural practices, and examine what innovation would really mean? Clayton Christensen, Clark Professor of Business Administration at Harvard, is a widely admired theorist of what he terms "disruptive innovation," innovation from below that undermines and displaces the established leaders in a field. Speaks is clearly seeking to be disruptive, to gain market share, so to speak, from

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the established authorities and positions within the field of architectural intellectuals. But Christensen, in his book *The Innovator's Dilemma*, notes that in the field of technology, disruptive innovations “result in *worse* product performance, at least in the near term”²²: early Japanese cars, for example, early digital cameras compared with film, or the sound quality of cellphones. Here we might recall a lecture that architectural critic Wilfried Wang gave at MIT in the early 1990s. Wang, a staunch advocate of European builderliness in his formal presentation, remarked in discussion afterwards that, by contrast, Rem Koolhaas’s buildings would fall apart in a few years’ time.

But might we also understand this lower performance as applying to ethics as well? Christensen’s second major point is that disruptive innovation creates new markets where consumption in that field had not been occurring before. His colleagues cite the example of the ChotuKool, a small-battery powered refrigerator produced by a company advised by Christensen’s consulting firm Innosight. David Duncan, a senior partner there, confirms that “[b]y the standards we are used to, it doesn’t perform well. It would never sell [in North America]! But in rural India they have sold 100,000 units in the last year or two.”²³ The analogy is once again rough, but could we understand the connection in this instance as being to the proliferation of iconic architecture in places it had not hitherto appeared: Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, the Emirates, and China, and its ethical performance in those contexts?

If there is some insight to be gained for architecture from this thought experiment, how might we understand the motivation of Somol, Whiting, and Speaks’s allegiances? The Oedipal nature of their assaults has been noted by Baird and others. One aspect, however, has not received so much attention: the fact that the promoters of post-critical architecture—Whiting, Somol, Speaks, Stan Allen, and Sylvia Lavin—were all at that time pursuing or already in administrative positions in architectural academe. Now I do not wish to impute ethically questionable activity to all academic administrators, nor indeed necessarily to all members of this group. But it is nonetheless worth noting that the business model was also widespread in the university by this time, with all the consequences for tenure, academic freedom, and collegial values which we experience today. The antagonists of semi-autonomy and critical architecture, Speaks and company, would need to have become entangled, if not embedded, in fundraising, marketing and the academic equivalent of flexible accumulation. In short, a necessary and perhaps ingratiating closeness to capital would have become part of their daily *modus operandi*. For some, advocating at least a partial autonomy, and a critical distance, from the

hegemonic social order might well have appeared, in these circumstances, to be a liability. Some reflexive institutional critique appears to be necessary here, although this is a subject for another essay.²⁴

What of the ethics of the actual projects of the projective camp? Reinhold Martin tackled this question in an essay of 2005, taking to task some of that movement's exemplars for their involvement in the 2002 exhibition and competition for the rebuilding of Ground Zero. Foreign Office, Martin noted, accompanied their entry with the exhortation: "Let's not even consider remembering.... What for? We have a great site in a great city and the opportunity to have the world's tallest building back in New York."²⁵ Greg Lynn, for his part, asserted that "the transfer of military thinking into daily life is inevitable."²⁶ The projects, says Martin, "monumentalize, in exemplary 'post-critical' fashion, the neoliberal consensus regarding new 'opportunities' opened up by techno-corporate globalization. Accordingly, the responsibility of professionals in the new world order is confined to facilitating the 'new' while washing their hands of the overdetermined historical narratives [...] through which this new is named."²⁷

Things came to a head at the Projective Landscape Conference, held at the Technical University of Delft in 2006 and including Hays, Somol, Whiting, Speaks, Stan Allen, Roemer van Toorn, and Reinhold Martin, among others. As reported by the web site *Archined*, Willem Jan Neutelings asked "what should he do if he were asked to build a new head office for the fascist Vlaams Belang party? While the assembled panellists (twenty in total) fiddled uneasily with their glasses, a high-spirited Robert Somol bellowed 'take the job'. Somol then turned on Michael Hays: 'I don't care what you think. You do your thing and I'll do mine, and let's both have fun.'" Reinhold Martin observed that the "idea [...] that the arrival of capitalism opens an immense field of possibility in which the

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designer can experiment freely is an outstanding example of ideology.” This criticism Michael Speaks “heartily laughed away saying, “The market is something that happens, and what happens is reality, not ideology’.”²⁸

And finally, what of the arch-exemplar of the post-critical, Rem Koolhaas? At least from his earliest days in America, Koolhaas had exhibited a consciously transgressive enthusiasm for the commercial. *Delirious New York*, of course, assigns the power of a subconscious manifesto to the commercial production of Manhattan architecture, and while at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, Koolhaas had produced an exhibition on the work of Wallace Harrison. The exhibition, even then, had the Nietzschean title “Beyond Good and Bad.”

Two decades later, writing on the effects of globalization on the city, Koolhaas remarks that:

[w]e realize . . . that we are now moving into uncharted territory, a territory characterized by fluid conditions – flows of traffic, flows of human beings, flows of money, flows of work. [...] Confronted with this mutation, this new urban condition, we refuse to recognize that we are powerless to forestall it. [...] I would like [...] to help make us [...] a profession able to formulate perfectly rational answers to perfectly insane questions. For it seems clear that we are increasingly confronted with utterly irrational problems, problems that we no longer have the luxury of refusing.²⁹

As Louis Martin observes, “the iron cage of an oppressive status quo becomes through Koolhaas’s sublime descriptions the terrifying splendours of the real, a real in which there is no situation rotten enough for not containing a new positivity. To negativity and resistance, Koolhaas opposes an exhilarating acceleration of the real as the only strategy for achieving change.”³⁰

In a 2004 interview with Mark Leonard, Koolhaas attempted to rationalize his acceptance of the CCTV commission, then estimated to be worth \$740 million, elaborating on the nature of the opportunity:

In the CCTV building there is a utopian nostalgia that is the foundation of architecture and in my work in the past there have been very few triggers for that. [...] What attracts me about China is [that] there is still a state. There is something that can take initiative of a scale and of a nature that almost no other body that we know of today could ever afford or even contemplate.³¹

Apologists for the Koolhaasian position have often invoked the image of the surfer as a redemption or transcendence of that position’s affiliation with globalized capital, and as an attempt to redirect narratives of architecture’s powerlessness. A “new pragmatism,” in the face of the overwhelming complexity of undecidable outcomes, informs the choice of ride.³² The surfer, far from being overwhelmed by the inexorable

force of events, instead is skillful enough to ride the wave, to use its massive energy and power to enable his or her own (spectacular) performance. Of this image, several observations need to be made. First, the surfer presents the (Deleuzian) trope of the intuitive calculator, able to judge speed and position with an uncanny ability. Second, the flow that the wave exemplifies is indeed inexorable, a force of nature, its direction unchangeable (and, ultimately, determining of the surfer's own). Third, in capitalizing upon this force for his performance, the surfer not only valorizes but also *aestheticizes* the wave: through his work, he gives it legitimacy.³³

The image of the surfer, in its positive valence, is another metaphor of innovation in the face of massive change. But how does Koolhaas feel about innovation of the kind that motivated Michael Speaks: iPhones, wireless fridges that remind you what to buy, the Internet of Things? Could it be that, with the passage of time, he has finally fallen off his board? As Jay Merrick wrote in a review of the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale, directed by Rem:

*despite his craving for data, Koolhaas has become increasingly concerned about what he referred to at the Biennale launch event as 'digital regimes'. And he added: 'I seriously question if it's safe and sane to surrender more and more of our information ... if our current involvement with digital technology continues, our houses will betray us.'*³⁴

For those who feel they have witnessed a different kind of betrayal—by the members of the post-critical international star system who seem willing to build anything for anybody anywhere—a turn to architecture as activism appears to offer an ethical alternative.³⁵ Amid present-day efforts to instrumentalize architecture once again—but this time as agent of environmental and social redemption—has the argument for semi-autonomy come full circle?

Activist architecture does, as in Stanford

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Anderson's model, seek to detach itself from the dominant culture—or at least distance itself from it. What is its economic model, after all? Some activist work is funded by grants, which is to say potentially by surplus accumulation of capital channeled—or some might say laundered—through philanthropic entities. Other activist work is enabled through pro bono professional services and volunteer labor, which is to say again by surplus accumulation that enables members of one class to donate their time to assist another. Could we say that these kinds of activist work follow a traditional development aid model, in which there is a charitable transfer of wealth without necessarily being accompanied by capacity building? If so, would research work in international development ethics come into play on these issues?

Anderson's criteria for quasi-autonomy include the capacity for fundamental and generalizable contributions to the discipline. Activist work, however, can be characterized as having exhibited an abundance of goodwill and, initially at least, a shortage of theory. Have such contributions to the discipline occurred—can they occur—if the existing discourse, the existence of a discipline per se are brought into question by activist praxis? Do activist practices, then, mirror the predicament of Michael Speaks, in that from their perspective there is no disciplinary world in which to place the other foot?

What theory and discourse as do exist seem to have emerged from areas such as critical urban studies, but these fields, with their emphasis on bottom-up spatial production, are by nature suspicious of elite professional interests.³⁶ The next ethical frontier, I suggest, is to determine how the design disciplines and professions can get on board, in an intellectually productive way, without leaving some of their most valuable baggage behind, and without hijacking the bus. This baggage includes the fundamental and generalizable contributions that Anderson still valued so highly: those “new ways of conceiving material form, space, light, and [...] implications for use and meaning” that can establish “new references within the discipline,” but pursued without the exclusive “life of the mind [...] or of coercive power” leading to that impoverishment of self, discipline and community he feared so much.³⁷

ENDNOTES

1. K. Michael Hays, “Critical Architecture: Between Culture and Form,” *Perspecta* 21 (1984): 15.
2. Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation),” trans. Ben Brewster, in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (Monthly Review Press, 1971). Originally published in

- La Pensée*, 1970. Accessed June 30, 2014, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm>.
3. Stanford Anderson, "Quasi-Autonomy in Architecture: The Search for an 'In-Between,'" *Perspecta* 33 (2002): 30.
 4. *Ibid.*, 33.
 5. *Ibid.*, 35.
 6. *Ibid.*, 37.
 7. Hays, "Critical Architecture," 16.
 8. *Ibid.*, 17.
 9. *Ibid.*, 22.
 10. Louis Martin, "Frederic Jameson and Critical Architecture," in *The Political Unconscious of Architecture: Re-opening Jameson's Narrative*, ed. Nadir Lahiji (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 198.
 11. Mary McLeod, quoted in Louis Martin, "Frederic Jameson and Critical Architecture," in *The Political Unconscious of Architecture: Re-opening Jameson's Narrative*, ed. Nadir Lahiji (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 173.
 12. Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting, "Notes around the Doppler Effect and Other Moods of Modernism," *Perspecta* 33 (2002): 74.
 13. *Ibid.*, 75.
 14. *Ibid.*, 77.
 15. Indeed, as Ole Fischer has pointed out, in "post-critical" work, "[d]iagrams, slogans, logos, and new media are deployed as a kind of 'mental PowerPoint' to reduce the complexity of architectural projects to recognizable icons, core messages, or brands, and thus to promote a fast, approximative perception and an intensive experience or atmospheric 'feeling' – particularly with regard to a broad audience of occupants, consumers and clients," in contrast to the difficulty and resistance of "critical" work. I thank Dr. Fischer for drawing my attention, after the first presentation of this paper, to his excellent essay which tackles similar issues at greater length. The reader is directed to that paper for a finely nuanced and more extensive discussion of the theoretical ramifications of "the critical." See Ole W. Fischer, "Architecture, Capitalism and Criticality," in *The SAGE Handbook of Architectural Theory*, eds. C. Greig Crysler, Stephen Cairns, and Hilde Heynen (London: SAGE, 2012), 59.
 16. Michael Speaks, "Architectural Theory and Education at the Millennium, Part 3: Theory Practice and Pragmatism," *A+U* 372, no. 9 (2001): 24.
 17. *Ibid.*, 22.
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. George Baird, "'Criticality' and Its Discontents," *Harvard Design Magazine* 21 (2004): 18.

20. Ibid., 21.

21. Michael Speaks, "Design Intelligence [Parts 1-12]," *A+U* 387-399 (2002-2003).

22. Clayton Christensen, *The Innovator's Dilemma* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2011), quoted in Craig Lambert, "Disruptive Genius," *Harvard Magazine*, July-August 2014, 39.

23. Ibid., 41.

24. See, for example, my "After the Flood: Disaster Capitalism and the Symbolic Restructuring of Intellectual Space," *Culture and Organization* 17, no. 2 (2011): 123-137.

25. Reinhold Martin, "Critical of What? Toward a Utopian Realism," *Harvard Design Magazine* 22 (2005): 107.

26. Greg Lynn, "A New World Trade Center," *Max Protetch*, www.maxprotetch.com/SITE/PREVIOUS/ANEWWTC/FORM/index.html, quoted in Reinhold Martin, "Critical of What? Toward a Utopian Realism," *Harvard Design Magazine* 22 (2005): 107.

27. Martin, "Critical of What?," 107.

28. "Design Intelligence – Speaks & Co in Delft," *Archined*, published March 27, 2006, accessed June 24, 2014, <http://www.archined.nl/archined/5303.0.html>. Spirited and subtly argued defenses of criticality in architectural practice and theory were also mounted by the contributors to the "Critical Architecture" conference of 2004 and publication of 2007. On the relationship to autonomy, see particularly the editors' introductory essays in that volume and those of Leach, Cunningham, Benjamin, Heynen, Barber, Dovey, and Rice. Eds. Jane Rendell, Jonathan Hill, Murray Fraser, and Mark Dorrian, *Critical Architecture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).

29. Rem Koolhaas, "Understanding the New Urban Condition: The Project on the City," *GSD News* (1996): 13.

30. Louis Martin, "Frederic Jameson and Critical Architecture," 198.

31. Mark Leonard, "Power housing," *Financial Times*, March 6/7 2004, W6-7.

32. See Cynthia Davidson, "Introduction," *Anyhow* (Cambridge, MA/New York: MIT Press/Anyone Corporation, 1998), 10, and John Rajchman's essay in the same collection.

33. Passages in this section appeared in my introduction to *Architecture, Ethics and Globalization* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009).

34. Jay Merrick, "Rem loves the smell of information in the morning," *Architects' Journal*, June 6, 2014, 53.

35. See, for example, "Architecture and Ethics," *Architectural Record*, June 2014, 167-206.

36. As discussion with colleagues, after the first presentation of this paper

in Delft in 2014, suggested, a further productive conjunction might be made with the arguments of Erik Swyngedouw regarding the post-political in environmental debates. Although the proponents of the post-critical in architecture celebrated the expanded ability of designers to embrace the complexity of issues embodied in any contemporary project, it is through professional and technological expertise that this expansion is achieved. Swyngedouw too is skeptical about expertise so mobilized and its ability to neutralize sociopolitical debate.

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37. Anderson, 5.