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Configuring Critique: Seven Problematics for Arts Education in Neoliberal Times

Or

Configuring Critique or the art of not being governed quite so much

[1] Hello, and good morning... Thank you so much for inviting me to present at this conference, and for accepting my contribution via skype. I would much rather be with you in person. I love visiting Australia and find so many strong connections with the research that is going on here/there. But due to previous engagements, I could only come for 2/3 days, and given a return flight from London to Melbourne creates around 3 metric tons of carbon. I felt, especially given the subject of this conference, and my paper, that I wasn't able to justify the carbon emissions.

Key climate scientists from the Tyndale Centre for climate change are saying that climate change is a political and ethical condition – and it is those of us who produce the most carbon emissions who must cut our consumption.

My talk this morning/evening was originally entitled *Configuring Critique: Seven Problematics for Arts Education in Neoliberal Times*, at least this was its title at the outset, but through the writing of it, it has become *Configuring Critique or the art of not being governed quite so much*.

[2] Prologue

The title comes from an essay I wrote on the practice of artist Apolonija Šušteršič where I examined her work in relation to seven problematics – critical, spatial, pedagogical, functional, relational, performative and transitional – as sites for debating and enacting artistic alternatives to neoliberalism. If the term 'liberal arts' refers to the seven subjects of the medieval university curriculum, which included the Classical *Trivium* of grammar, rhetoric and logic, and the Renaissance *Quadrivium* of mathematics, geometry, music and astronomy; what kind of arts education do we need for the neoliberal times in which we live?

I was originally going to focus on each of these seven problematics, but felt that this might end up being too abstract, so I've decided to configure my critique as a seven-part rhetoric told through three different modes – pathos, logos, and ethos. The rhetoric is a public telling of events that took place last year when I challenged UCL's

decision to form a partnership with the mining corporation BHP Billiton and accept \$10 million of funding to create two new Institutes: the Institute for Sustainable Resources (the ISR) in London, UK and an International Energy Policy Institute in Adelaide, Australia, and to position the ISR in the Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment of which I was at the time Vice Dean of Research.

It is important to note, that this a partnership set up in a time of enforced austerity in the public sector and Higher Education in the UK, taking place after the bank bail out and the introduction of £9000 per year fees for undergrad students.

The paper is configured as a site-writing (close in spirit but perhaps not in style to what Donna Haraway and Rosi Braidotti would call a feminist figuration) – it is autobiographical but also folds in other voices and theoretical reflections and references.

The seven problematics – critical, spatial, relational, pedagogical, functional, performative and transitional – appear through the deployment of rhetorical devices. Configured as a seven-part rhetoric, the critique is told through three different registers: pathos or a more emotional tone, logos the adoption of rational argument, and ethos, the conveyance of values which motivate a culture, a corporation etc.

[3] Pathos: Waking Up/Stepping Down

Here I voice worries about the work involved in my institutional role at UCL which woke me before dawn over a seven month period from January to July 2013. On 1 July 2013 I stepped down from my role as Vice Dean of Research for the Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment, UCL at a meeting of the Research Advisory Group (RAG) of which I was chair. The accompanying visuals show some of the written notes on which I based my verbal presentation.

[4] Logos: Configuring Critique

Here I will speak of ideas taken from my own intellectual writing set in relation to concepts generated by others concerning critique and what it can do.

[5] Ethos: Powerful and Consistent narratives

This is composed of extracts from stories written by journalists, gathered by Rep Risk analysts who summarize media reports, all taken from The Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC, which I requested and paid for. Rep Risk is a

company who helps clients to proactively assess ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) issues that may present financial, reputation, and compliance risks, by systematically collecting and analyzing negative incidents, criticism, and controversies about companies and projects worldwide, and who offer information on activities related to human rights violations, poor working conditions, corruption, and environmental destruction.

The accompanying images are drawn from the website of BHP Billiton, the Anglo Australian multinational mining and petroleum company. It is the world's largest mining company measured by 2011 revenues. BHP Billiton has a charter value of sustainability. The words shown here may have been devised by Blue Rubicon, an award-winning communications consultancy, who list BHP Billiton as one of their clients, and who create what they call 'powerful, consistent narratives'.

[6] Part i

[7] January 2013

[8] The fear that woke my stomach, reaches my head. I am wide-awake in a still-dark bedroom. The realization that when morning comes I will have to explain the implications of the 'rep risk' research I've been conducting. It is not going to come as welcome news.

But my argument is sound; so is the evidence – in my view a partnership with this particular corporation does pose a risk to our reputation.

How can this be refuted?

Perhaps they'll play it out of time?

Or maybe I can control the discussion?

But I've never been very good at that.

Under no circumstances should I drink a coffee. The caffeine will kick in, and it will come out all wrong – over-emotional, over-invested, hot-headed, which is, of course, another kind of risk – a risk to my own reputation.

[9] The Critical and Critique

In 2002, in their paper 'Notes around the Doppler Effect and other Moods of Modernism',¹ Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting rejected the autonomous disciplinarity and oppositional dialectics of critical architecture, as represented by the work of critic Michael Hays and, architect Peter Eisenman, they described this work it as 'hot representation', and advocated instead an architecture linked to 'the diagrammatic, the atmospheric and cool performance'.²

This paper established what appeared to be a dominant post-critical mood in architectural education, but it left many of us wondering otherwise. I asked myself, in a book on the subject I co-edited at the time, *Critical Architecture*, if, following Raymond Geuss (in turn following Marx), critical theory can be defined in terms of self-reflectivity and the desire to change the world,³ then can not any activity which takes on the task of self-reflection and evidences a desire for social change be described as critical. Especially if the historical and material conditions in which we are operating are far from perfect.

Given the disastrous changes to the earth's climate caused by carbon dioxide emissions, along with the intensification of imperialist aggression by oil dependant nations as demand outstrips supply, for me it has not been possible to go along with corporate capitalism without critique – to do so would be to support without question the inequalities that are integral aspects of this economic system. Certainly different forms of capitalism demand new modes of critique, but I believe a critical position is still possible, the question is: in what current form is it most effective?

The verb 'to criticise', which describes the activity of a critic, is associated with the term critique as well as the practise of criticism. While some have located critique as a social form (or sub-set) of criticism, I would rather take the line of thinking adopted by David Cunningham, who notes that in Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) 'critique comes to denote a specific reflection on the essential *conditions* and *limits* of possible knowledge'. While Cunningham goes on to state that critique only becomes self-reflective in G. W. F. Hegel's reworking of Kant, Peg Rawes has argued that it is in Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (1790) that critique becomes embodied.⁴ Taken together these two view points allow a concept of critique to emerge – self-reflective and embodied – that comes close to practice.

[10] BHP Billiton challenged to safeguard environment in Olympic Dam expansion.

Green members of South Australia's (SA) parliament have challenged BHP Billiton to spend more to protect the environment in its proposed Olympic Dam expansion project. The final terms of the AUD 30 billion project are still being negotiated between the company and the SA government, but BHP Billiton reportedly keeps citing cost as an issue in a number of decisions that concern the community, such as lining only four percent of the highly toxic tailings dam, using fossil fuels in the expansion project's power plants, and increasing their take of ancient water from the Great Artesian Basin. The Green MPs urge the company to use its expected AUD 21 billion profits to safeguard the SA environment.⁵

Published in The Australian Associated Press, on 25.04.2013

Taken from the Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC.

Which categorized the risk as

Low level criticism

Escalation/recurrence

[11] Part ii

[12] February 2013

[13] 'It's just a change of funding stream', the sound of the words and the light-hearted confidence of their delivery disturb my sleep. Again. It is a phrase I have heard so many times since we lost the battle over student fees. Now that government funding, in the form of student fees, has been all but removed, increasing efforts are being made to attract a new form of income stream – corporate sponsorship. 'It's already happened', another favoured phrase, comes to mind, often employed to remind me that UCL is not a public university, but an exempt charity, always has been. But if not public, UCL is still proud of its radical tradition, the fact that unlike Oxford and Cambridge it was not founded as a religious entity. In fact, quite recently, being radical has become key to our brand. A recent briefing from the communications team requires us to speak in a radical and open voice.

[14] Critical Spatial Practice

In *Art and Architecture: A Place Between* I coined the term 'critical spatial practice' to define modes of self-reflective artistic and architectural practice which seek to

question the social conditions of the sites into which they intervene.⁶ Through the process of writing the book I came to understand that my own position between art, architecture and theory was constantly changing and influenced the interpretative accounts I was able to offer. I concluded *Art and Architecture* by arguing that the writing of criticism is itself a form of situated practice, one that is critical and spatial.⁷

[15] *Newmont Mining, Chinalco and others face resistance from local communities in Peru.*

The Government of Peru's apparent effort to welcome copper producing companies such as Xstrata, BHP Billiton, Candente Copper and Chinalco has generated negative response from indigenous communities and caused more than 200 concession related conflicts in Peru. Riots in Cajamarca relating to Newmont Mining's Minas Conga project have raised concerns amongst the National Mining Society and human rights activists, who reported as many as 16 dispute related deaths since September 2011. Water use and water supply damage concerns have been a major cause for resistance. Southern Copper's Tia Maria Mine was blocked in 2011 due to agriculture and water depletion and soil contamination. Chinalco is also facing resistance from residents near the Toromocho Cooper Mine who are requesting USD 300 million in compensations for relocation and the destruction of their village.

Published in the Financial Times on 06.02.2013

Taken from the Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC.

Which categorized the risk as harsh criticism

[16] Part iii

[17] March 2013

[18] Before dawn, almost every night now, I am jolted awake, surprised and disorientated for a second or two, then I remember, and the panic rears up through me. Will fighting this battle, pitting myself against my institution, lose me my job? Has UCL done its homework, and even if it has, will the right governance structures really be able to protect the independence of academic research? I've never been a fierce environmentalist, so why take up this issue now? Is it worth it? It would all have been so much easier if I had said nothing, looked away from the reputational risk, not

tried to assess the risk of research expansion – the very task I was asked to undertake.

[19] Relational Critique

If criticism can be defined by the purpose of providing a commentary on a cultural work then criticism always has an 'other' in mind. The central task of criticism might then be considered as: how does one relate to an 'other'? For psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin the central task of psychoanalysis is the 'double task of recognition: how analyst and patient make known their own subjectivity and recognize the other's'.⁸ Grounded in the object relations theory of D. W. Winnicott, Benjamin argues that psychoanalysis requires both an intrapsychic focus to examine relations between the self and the internalized other as object, and an intersubjective approach to explore the relationship between subjects and externalized others.⁹

Winnicott's idea of the transitional object was an inspiration for philosopher Félix Guattari's concept of the institutional object, and his work on transversality and psychiatry.¹⁰ Guattari's notion of transversality is closely related to his critique of the terms transference and counter-transference as defined by Freud. In his essay of 1964, 'The Transference', Guattari notes, following J. Schotte, that 'in the transference there is virtually never any actual dual relation'.¹¹ He argues that dual relations are always triangular in character, noting that 'there is always in a real situation a mediating object that acts as an ambiguous support or medium'.¹² Guattari relies to a certain extent on Winnicott's notion of the transitional object and the potential space between mother and child as a third entity, but he also works with Lacan's *object a*, as that which provokes the institution's desire.¹³ As Gary Genosko has put it, for Guattari, 'it is with the triangle and threes that micropolitics begins'.¹⁴ And Genosko continues: 'And the triangle in question is not the famous Mummy-Daddy-Me but, instead, a third factor that is not strictly speaking a thing at all but a space, that is, the institutional object'.¹⁵

One of the key questions for Guattari is what becomes of transference in the institutional setting, for him the hospital. His philosophy proposes to 'replace the ambiguous idea of the institutional transference with a new concept: transversality in the group'.¹⁶ For Guattari, 'transversality' is an 'unconscious source of action', which carries a group's desire, 'a dimension opposite and complementary to the structures that generate pyramidal hierarchisation'.¹⁷ According to Genosko, 'transversality' provides Guattari with the possibility of bringing the 'institutional context, its constraints, organization, practices,

etc., all those things and relations which normally exist in the background' into the foreground for critique.¹⁸

[20] OK Tedi Mining operations criticized for environmental and social impacts in Papua New Guinea.

Papua New Guinea's Environment and Conservation minister has strongly criticized OK Tedi Mining's operations for allegedly causing significant environmental, social and health impacts along the Ok Tedi and Fly River areas. He further accused the Ok Tedi mine of bringing 'curse' to the Fly River people through its alleged dumping of mine wastes into the river and inadequate community benefit. Also mentioned was BHP, which used to operate the mine.¹⁹

Published in The National (Papua New Guinea) on 12.03.2013

Taken from the Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC which categorized the risk as

Low level criticism

Escalation/recurrence

[21] Part iv

[22] April 2013.

[23] Did I really record the Vice Provost in his own office on my mobile phone? Was that wise? I did make it clear it was for practical reasons so I could remember exactly what he had said, and that the information would not go public. I was very friendly about it. So was he. So maybe it is all fine ... But having to dig around to bring these documents to light has turned me into a private investigator in my own institution. Did it set up a note of mistrust, having the phone there on the desk, between us? What if a colleague who had come to talk to me, on a complex and tricky issue, had asked to record me? Would I be fine about it?

[24] Institutional Critique

In fine art, debates around the critical tend to coalesce around the term 'institutional critique'. Following Marcel Duchamp's questioning of the aesthetic criteria used to categorize and position objects as art, a strand of conceptual practice, developed through the work of artists such as Hans Haacke and Michael Asher in the 1960s and

1970s, was later described by critic Benjamin Buchloh as 'institutional critique'.²⁰ Michael Asher's work, for example, has utilized the principle of material subtraction in a number of projects in order to draw attention to the architectural and institutional space of the gallery. In the Claire Copley Gallery, Los Angeles (1974), he removed the partition between the office and exhibition space, revealing to the public viewer the usually hidden operations that allow the gallery to function economically.

More recently Slovenian artist Apolonija Šušteršič has suggested that this kind of work 'doesn't produce any constructive resolution, when it doesn't effect changes in our political and cultural structures'.²¹ Her comment was made in conversation with the curator Maria Lind, who has put forward the idea of 'constructive institutional critique' to describe the work of Šušteršič and others, which, rather than being 'based on negativity', in her view, 'offer[s] a proposal for change, possibly an improvement, or a test of how to do things slightly differently ... based on dialogue between the artist and the institution, rather than an inherent conflict.'²² This expressed preference for dialogue rather than negativity and conflict in critical fine art, and in architecture the valuing of cool performance over hot dialectics, touches on issues which have long been at the heart of feminist and left politics, concerning whether it is more productive to adopt a critical stance of opposition or to offer an alternative, and how the situating of such positions influences the possible range of outcomes.

[25] BHP Billiton's Cerro Matoso Mine is criticized for its social and environmental impact.

The Zenu indigenous community in Colombia claims that they have neither benefitted from BHP Billiton's Cerro Matoso Ferronickel Mine nor have been fully informed about the mining operations. The mine has allegedly caused deforestation, dried up water sources and has contaminated the water with zinc and nickel. Carro Matoso has admitted that nickel is suspected of causing cancer and there has been an increase in this type of disease in local population. In 2011, there were reportedly 14 miscarriages out of a total of 36 pregnancies. The Zenu have lodged a complaint with the Corporation of the Valleys of Sinu and San Jorge and the Ministry of Environment.

23

Published in Espectador, EI (online) on 11.03.2013

Taken from the Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC.

which categorized the article as

Low level criticism

Escalation/recurrence

[26] Part v

[27] May 2013.

I am so angry I can barely breath. I am expected to back decisions that have been made without consulting me. I always knew the Vice Dean role came with responsibility, but I never really understood the implications and potential contradictions of holding such a title until now. It is hard not to wonder if I was excluded from the decision-making process because I am a woman? Or is this just my feminist knee jerking? But maybe not because along with the five men who signed the partnership between UCL and BHP Billiton – one CEO, one Provost and three Vice Provosts – there was also UCL's Director of Corporate Partnerships who is a woman.

[29] Situated Critique

In visual and spatial culture, feminists have drawn extensively on psychoanalytic theory to think through relationships between the spatial politics of internal psychical figures and external cultural geographies.²⁴ With words such as 'mapping', 'locating', 'situating', 'positioning' and 'boundaries' appearing frequently, the language of these texts is highly spatialised and discussions of new ways of knowing and being are articulated through spatial terms and conceptual tools such as 'standpoint theory' and 'situated knowledge'. The development of these two terms, particularly through the work of Donna Haraway and Sandra Harding, has been key for examining the relationship between the construction of subjects and the politics of location – put simply, where I am influences what I can know and who I can be.²⁵

Site-writing is the name I have given to a practice I have developed to question notions of neutral, objective and disinterested judgment in criticism, and to draw attention to the situatedness of criticism. Such a project involves rethinking the terms of criticism, specifically judgment, discrimination and critical distance,²⁶ from a spatial perspective, one where space is material and architectural rather than solely metaphorical.²⁷ I am interested in how criticism as a practice can investigate the spatial and often changing positions we occupy as critics materially, conceptually, emotionally and ideologically.²⁸

In my book *Site-Writing* I am interested in investigating the spatiality of a critic's relation to a work, adapting Howard Caygill's notion of strategic critique where a position of judgement is advanced through the process of criticizing,²⁹ in tune with Gavin Butt's 'call for the recognition of an "immanent" rather than a transcendent, mode of contemporary criticality' which is 'apprehended within – and instanced as – the performative act of critical engagement itself'.³⁰ Critics from feminist and performance studies have also expressed an interest in the performative qualities of criticism. Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson, for example, take issue with the tradition that the interpreter must be neutral or disinterested in the objects, which s/he judges, and posit instead that the processes of viewing and interpreting involve 'entanglement in intersubjective spaces of desire, projection and identification': 'Interpretation', they argue, 'like the production of works of art, is a mode of communication. Meaning is a process of engagement and never dwells in any one place'.³¹

[30] Gabon's decision to award Belinga iron project to BHP Billiton reopens past environmental issues

The Gabonese government has reportedly awarded the mining rights to the Belinga iron ore deposit to BHP Billiton in 2012, causing previous environmental issues associated with the project to resurface. In 2006, China Machinery and Electric Equipment Export & Import acquired the mining licence to the same project, but due to stiff resistance from communities and NGOs it ceased to push through. [Note of the RepRisk Analyst: Company most likely refers to China National Import & Export Corporation]. Opponents strongly objected the proposed dam along the Kongou Falls inside the Ivindo National Park, claiming that it would expose the environmentally-sensitive area to further development and disrupt the habitat of some endangered species. Moreover, the government was also criticized for allegedly repressing activists, such as NGO Brainforest official Marc Ona, who was reportedly harassed and arrested for highlighting the project's lack of independent environmental impact study. The NGO also sent a letter to China Exim Bank, which induced its withdrawal of funding for the project.

This article was published in Daily News (South Africa) on 27.03.2013

It was taken from the Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC which characterised the risk as

Low level criticism

[31] Part vi

[32] June 2013.

[33] I can't believe that after 6 months of asking I still don't have the documents I have been requesting. In the narrative I am drafting for the Research Excellence Framework, I will have to describe the funding the Bartlett has received and justify the research strategy it has adopted from 2008-13. The guidelines say I will need to describe the ethical procedures that govern our procedures.

So without these documents, I can't sign off on this narrative.

Does my job need to be so difficult?

Have I really made my requests for these specific documents clear enough?

And why, oh why, does no-one else seem to think it matters?

[34] Critique as Figuration

The writings of Rosi Braidotti introduced the *figure* of the 'nomadic subject', which describes not only a spatial state of movement, but also an epistemological condition, a kind of knowingness (or unknowingness) that refuses fixity.³² Braidotti's term *feminist figuration* inspired me to organise my site-writing book into configurations rather than chapters – where each one aimed to write my situated engagement with an artwork by reconfiguring certain qualities of the artefact in words.

I am using the term figuration, in the psychoanalytic sense, as an intersubjective process, which in the words of Lewis A. Kirshner, 'relates to the process of giving shape to unconscious contents in the form of meaningful presentations ... in how traumatic experience succeeds or fails to become psychically figured and thereby susceptible to elaboration and absorption through intersubjective process'. Kirshner 'argue[s] that the process of figuration always occurs in an actual or implied intersubjective context and involves, thereby, a central feature of an exchange between subject and Other'.³³

A key aspect of situated knowledge is the locatedness of personal experience, and the relation of one person's knowledge, understanding and experience to another,

which brings us very much into life-writing, biography and autobiography. The first time I realized that climate change was a condition located not somewhere *outside* my life which I could choose to connect to or not, or that could be solved through a 'technical fix', was in listening to a talk called *Carbon Generations* in 1997 by the artist, writer and activist from Platform called James Marriott. This challenging autobiographical presentation made me realize that I was already involved and implicated in climate change through my every action.

The oral historian Linda Sandino draws on the work of Paul Ricoeur to consider how different forms of figuration operate in narration, relating the act of telling to the told, such that oral history might be itself understood as 'a double interpretive operation in which the narrator recapitulates the told in the telling.' Following Ricoeur, she describes: the individual in interpreting his or her life 'appears both as a reader and writer,' and the 'story of a life continues to be refigured by all the truthful and fictive stories a subject tells about himself or herself'. ... 'a life is not "how it was" but how it is interpreted and reinterpreted, told and re-told'.³⁴

[35] World Bank Group and other investors in Mozal Smelter accused of providing little benefit to Mozambique.

Tax Campaigners have denounced UK Government financing institutions, the World Bank and others for allegedly extracting more benefit from the Mozal aluminium smelter than the people of Mozambique. The Jubilee Debt Campaign Tax Justice Network, and Friends of the Earth Mozambique gets only approximately USD 15 million annually while CDC Group, UK Export Finance, Europeans Investment Bank, Industrial Development Corp., International Finance Corp. and private investors BHP Billiton and Mitubishi receive USD 320 million annually.³⁵

This article was published in The Guardian on 08.04.2013

It was taken from Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC which categorized the risk as

Low level criticism

Escalation/recurrence

[36] Part vii

[37] July 2013.

[38] The deed is done. I've formally 'stepped down'.

But what does that mean?

I think it means that I've withdrawn my consent and refused to collaborate.

But is this the right thing to have done? ...

It might not actually have been the best way to influence the situation ... and by asking for those documents on and on, I have backed myself into a corner.

What have I stepped down from or out of?

What have I stepped into?

[39] From Critique as Crisis to the 'art of not being governed quite so much'

An earlier version of this paper ended with a discussion of critique as crisis, my response to Roland Barthes comment that 'to *criticize* means *to call into crisis*'.³⁶

To consider critique as crisis closely mirrored my state of mind a year ago in November 2013 at conference on Critique, when I delivered a first version of this paper, under Chatham House rules, so fearful was I of institutional repercussions. I was in crisis at the time, doubting my actions, and feeling panic going through me like electricity each time I spoke.

Recently I have been reading the essay from Foucault's 1978 lecture 'What is Critique' from *The Politics of Truth* and Judith Butler's close reading of that essay from 2000, entitled 'What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue'.³⁷ In her close reading of Foucault, Butler notes how 'critique is always a critique of some instituted practice, discourse, episteme, institution, and it loses its character the moment in which it is abstracted from its operation and made to stand alone as a purely generalizable practice'.³⁸ She talks of how, for Foucault, 'critique is precisely a practice that not only suspends judgment ... but offers a new practice of values based on that very suspension'.³⁹ Butler points to how the practice of critique emerges from 'the tear in the fabric of our epistemological web',⁴⁰ and outlines how, for Foucault, this exposure of the limit of the epistemological field is linked with the

practice of virtue, 'as if virtue is counter to regulation and order, as if virtue itself is to be found in the risking of established order'.⁴¹

According to Butler, for Foucault, virtue, 'belongs to an ethics which is not fulfilled merely by following objectively formulated rules or laws'.⁴²

This discussion of critique with respect to ethics and unexpectedly to virtue, really started to make sense for me of how I had been practicing critique over the past year, and perhaps the most relevant insight it offered is around how governance is, as Butler calls it, a 'signature mark' of the critical attitude and its particular virtue: 'how not to be governed *like that*, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them'.⁴³ I would therefore propose, says Foucault, as a very first definition of critique, this general characterization: 'the art of not being governed quite so much'.⁴⁴

[40] E.On, EnBW, RWE, Steag and Vattenfall criticized for sourcing coal from precarious mining operations in Colombia.

Energy Providers E.On, EnBW, RWE, Steag and Vattenfall have been accused of knowingly sourcing large quantities of coal from controversial mining operations in Colombia. These include Drummond, Glencore subsidiary Prodeco and Cerrejon Coal's La Mina, jointly owned by BHP Billiton, Anglo American and Xstrata. In January 2013 Drummond reportedly tried to cover up an environmental scandal off the coast of Santa Marta, causing the Ministry of Environment to temporarily freeze the company's operations. It has also been implicated in the repression of mining opponents and the killing of two unionists by paramilitary forces twelve years ago. Moreover, harsh working conditions are said to have left many workers crippled. Cerrejon Coal allegedly threatened unionists and other opponents and ordered the forceful relocation of local communities, including member of the indigenous Wayuu. Critics further claim that the company has caused great environmental and social damage. Air pollution has allegedly sickened workers, as well as nearby residents.⁴⁵

Published in Die Zeit on 18.04.2013

Taken from the Rep Risk Company report, Tue 28 May 2013, BHP Billiton PLC.

Which categorized the risk as

Harsh criticism

Escalation/recurrence

[41] Epilogue

[42] Waking Up/Stepping Up

[43] Following my formal act of 'stepping-down', later that month I met various senior managers at UCL to discuss my decision. To my surprise they all showed support for the work I had been doing on the reputational risks of research expansion and expressed an interest in involving me in developing UCL's committee procedures and structures for ethical investment and acceptance of financial gifts from corporations.

In an act of what I now see as 'stepping up', I put forward six proposals for action; four of which I have or am developing.

- In January 2014 I hosted a seminar 'Rich Seams/Dark Pools' on these issues, conducted under Chatham House Rules, and involving senior managers at UCL, as well as academics and administrative staff, and students, to discuss what is at stake when fossil fuel funds university research on sustainability.

- Although UCL has not involved me in its Ethical Governance structures as I had requested, I did elect myself to join the Ethical Investment Reviews Committee and was not black-balled.

- The Bartlett funded my proposal to work with colleagues from across the Faculty of the Built Environment to lead a research project on Ethics in Built Environment research to map UCL's ethical procedures and propose key principles for a future ethics strategy.

- And I continue to work on this paper, following an interest in developing a longer piece on the use of narrative, rhetoric and spin; looking more at how Fossil Fuel corporations employ words and images to set up relations with their audiences, and position themselves in universities in order to help establish their social license to operate.

So far UCL has not sacked me or threatened to ... but nor do I feel that relaxed in my academic position any more. But perhaps that's a good thing. I am starting to find a network of colleagues and students around me who agree with the position I took. These people share my concerns about what happens to academic integrity when

research is funded by corporations who have a stake, and who make a profit, from, particular forms of outcome. Some are still too fearful to speak out in public; but there are others – mainly students, but not only – who are far braver than I am, and give me inspiration.

Conversations I am having with scientists concerning objectivity and whether the source of funding can influence the ideas one might have have become more complex, with some researchers beginning to recognize that perhaps there is no possibility of pure objectivity or ‘neutrality’ and starting to take a bit more seriously the concept and practice of situated knowledge – something many of us in the arts and humanities, in feminism and critical theory in particular, have understood for a long time. But others arguing – in the name of academic freedom – that we have the right to work with whomever we wish.

There are initiatives emerging concerning ethics in the higher education sector as a whole – for example the *Research Concordat on Integrity* – as well as a number of new developments at UCL – a due diligence review, and a new policy and committee which will be convened to look at particular issues around the acceptance of research funding.

At this point in time UCL is still accepting funds from BHP Billiton. However, the Fossil Free movement is gaining strength, and with Stanford University and the World Council of Churches, the Heirs to the Rockefeller Fortune divesting from fossil fuels, the mood of the time is changing. Even neo-liberal economists are talking of the carbon bubble and saying ‘get out of coal’, it is no longer a sound investment. So I hope that UCL too will see sense, whether for reasons of principle or pragmatics, and decide not to renew its five-year partnership with BHP Billiton, when the period expires in 2016.

Over the past year, I’ve begun to understand what a friend of mine, a climate change activist, told me at the start of this episode of my life: ‘watch the adrenalin – this is a long haul’.

And it is, full of fears and threats, but also hope. I’ve never felt quite so alive. Acting on these issues has really helped me understand more fully critique as a lived practice.

As John Rajchman writes in the introduction to Foucault's *Politics of Truth*: 'It [critique] is something we must do to ourselves and to one another, for which we must constantly invent or reinvent the means, the techniques, the strategies and the spaces.'

So I'd like to end by expressing my hope that the art school and the university remain a vital space for practicing critique in an era of neo-liberal governance when the remnants of the state are so intertwined with multinational corporations that we have to work even harder to invent critique as a practice that might respond to what Foucault has called the 'art of not being governed *like that* ... not for that, not by them' by not only avoiding the problems of *laissez-faire* created by a simple rolling back of the state, and by also by becoming something that is less about what its 'not' and more about what its 'for'.

And finally a STOP PRESS item: last Friday, the Dean agreed that I would lead a Bartlett ethics initiative – which I am hoping to establish as a Bartlett Ethics Forum – a place and practice where ethical issues of principle and procedure can be discussed. How it operates in terms of governance structures remains to be seen, and does the question of what it is for... but it's a great step in the right direction.

¹ Robert Somol and Sarah Whiting, 'Notes Around the Doppler Effect and Other Moods of Modernism', in Michael Osman, Adam Ruedig, Matthew Seidel, and Lisa Tilney (eds), *Mining Autonomy*, a special issue of *Perspecta*, 33, 2002, pp. 72–7.

² Somol and Whiting, pp. 72–7, p. 74.

³ Raymond Geuss, *The Idea of Critical Theory: Habermas and the Frankfurt School*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 2.

⁴ See Peg Rawes, 'Critical Practice', *Architecture Research Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2005, pp. 9–10, and David Leatherbarrow's wonderfully rich discussion of conviction and critique, *Architecture Research Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 3/4, 2004, pp. 199–202.

⁵ <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/national/8289014/greens-fault-bhps-olympic-dams%0Aafeguards%0A>

⁶ Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between* (London: IB Tauris, 2006).

⁷ Elsewhere I have called this form of criticism – criticism as critical spatial practice – 'architecture-writing' and 'site-writing'. See, for example, Jane Rendell, 'Architecture-writing', in Jane Rendell (ed.) *Critical Architecture, Special Issue of The Journal of Architecture*, June, vol. 10, no. 3 (2005) pp. 255–64; and Jane Rendell, 'Site-writing', in Sharon Kivland, Jasper Joseph-Lester and Emma Cocker (eds) *Transmission: Speaking and Listening*, vol. 4 (Sheffield: Sheffield Hallam University Rendell, 2005) pp. 180–94.

⁸ Benjamin, *Shadow of the Other*, p. xii.

⁹ Benjamin, *Shadow of the Other*, p. xiii and p. 90.

¹⁰ Félix Guattari, 'Transversality' [1964], Félix Guattari, *Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics*, translated by Rosemary Sheed and introduced by David Cooper, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1984), pp. 11-23. See the mention of Winnicott on p. 20, n. 7. This was a report presented to the first International Psycho-Drama Congress, held in Paris in September 1964 and published in the *Revue de psychothérapie institutionnelle*, no. 1.

¹¹ Félix Guattari, 'The Transference' [1964], Gary Genosko (ed.), *The Guattari Reader*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1996), pp. 61-68, p. 63. Genosko notes that 'This short presentation to the GTPS (Groupe de travail de psychothérapie institutionnelle, which is also referred to as the Groupe de travail de psychologie et sociologie institutionnelle) appeared in *Psychanalyse et transversalité* (Paris, Maspero, 1972), pp. 52-58. It dates from 1964.' Genosko (ed.), *The Guattari Reader*, p. 68, notes. Guattari is referring to J. Schotte, 'Le transfert dit fondamental de Freud pour poser le problème: psychoanalyse et institution', *Revue de psychothérapie institutionnelle* 1 (1965).

¹² Guattari, 'The Transference', p. 63.

¹³ Genosko, *Félix Guattari: An Aberrant Introduction*, p. 71.

¹⁴ Gary Genosko, 'Félix Guattari', *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, (2003), v. 8, n. 1, pp. 129-40, p. 132.

¹⁵ Genosko, *Félix Guattari: An Aberrant Introduction*, p. 69.

¹⁶ Guattari, 'Transversality', pp. 11-23, p. 18.

¹⁷ Guattari, 'Transversality', Félix Guattari, *Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics*, translated by Rosemary Sheed, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1984), pp. 11-23, p. 22.

¹⁸ Genosko, *Félix Guattari: An Aberrant Introduction*, p. 70.

¹⁹ <http://www.minesandcommunities.org/article.php?a=12194%20%0A>.

²⁰ Benjamin H. D. Buchloh identifies the work of certain artists after 1966 as 'institutional critique'. See Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, 'Conceptual art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', *October*, Winter (1990) p. 528. Michael Asher's work, for example, has utilized the principle of material subtraction in a number of projects in order to draw attention to the architectural and institutional space of the gallery. In the Claire Copley Gallery, Los Angeles (1974), he removed the partition between the office and exhibition space, revealing to the public viewer the usually hidden operations that allow the gallery to function economically. See Benjamin H. D. Buchloh (ed.) *Michael Asher, Writings 1973–1983 on Works 1969–1979* (Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, 1984), pp. 76–81.

²¹ 'Conversation between Maria Lind and Apolonija Šušteršič', *Apolonija Šušteršič, Moderna Museet Projekt, 4.2–14.3.1999*, (Stockholm: Moderna Museet Projekt, 1999) pp. 41-57, p. 56.

²² 'Conversation between Maria Lind and Apolonija Šušteršič', pp. 41-57, p. 56

²³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/economia/articulo-409715-cerro-matoso-n%0Aos-esta-matando%0A>

²⁴ See for example, Susan Stanford Friedman, *Mappings: Feminism and the Cultural Geographies of Encounter* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Diane Fuss, *Identification Papers* (London: Routledge, 1995); Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a*

Corporeal Feminism (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994); Rogoff, *Terra Infirma*; and Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (London: Routledge, 1996).

²⁵ Donna Haraway's 'situated knowledges', Jane Flax's 'standpoint theory' as well as Elsbeth Probyn's notion of 'locality', use 'position' to negotiate such on-going theoretical disputes as the essentialism/constructionism debate. See Jane Flax, *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and Postmodernism in the Contemporary West*, Berkeley (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991) p. 232; Donna Haraway. 'Situated Knowledges: the Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Knowledge', *Feminist Studies*, v. 14, n. 3 (Fall 1988) pp. 575–603, especially, pp. 583–588; and Elspeth Probyn 'Travels in the Postmodern: Making Sense of the Local', Linda Nicholson (ed.) *Feminism/Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1990) pp. 176–189, p. 178. See also Seyla Benhabib's critical articulation of 'feminism as situated criticism' in *Situating the Self: Gender, Community and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992) pp. 225–228 and bell hooks discussion of the margin in *Yearnings: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (London: Turnaround Press, 1989). Sandra Harding has defined three kinds of feminist epistemology: feminist empiricism based on women's authentic experience, feminist standpoint based on a feminist angle of interpretation, and feminist postmodernism, a stance rejecting the possibility of any universal theory. See Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press and Milton Keynes, England: Open University Press, 1986).

²⁶ Howard Caygill, *Walter Benjamin: The Colour of Experience*, London: Routledge, 1998, p. 34 and pp. 64 and 79.

²⁷ Caygill, p. 34 and pp. 64 and 79.

²⁸ See Jane Flax, *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and Postmodernism in the Contemporary West*, Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991, p. 232; Donna Haraway. 'Situated Knowledges: the Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Knowledge', *Feminist Studies*, v. 14, n. 3, (Fall 1988), pp. 575-603, especially, pp. 583-8 and Elspeth Probyn, 'Travels in the Postmodern: Making Sense of the Local' in Linda Nicholson ed., *Feminism/Postmodernism*, London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 176-89, p. 178. See also Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994 and bell hooks, *Yearnings: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, London: Turnaround Press, 1989.

²⁹ See Hal Foster's discussion of critical distance and identification for example in Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*, Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2001, pp. 223-6.

³⁰ Butt, 'Introduction: The Paradoxes of Criticism', p. 7.

³¹ Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson, 'Introduction', Amelia Jones and Andrew Stephenson (eds) *Performing the Body/Performing the Text* (London: Routledge, 1999) pp. 1–10, p. 8

³² See Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

³³ Lewis A Kirshner, 'Figuration of the real as an intersubjective process', *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*. (December 2007), 67(4), pp. 303–11; pp. 304-5 and pp. 312-3.

³⁴ Linda Sandino, *Oral History: In and about Art, Craft and Design*, p. 9.

³⁵ <http://bhpbillitonwatch.net/2013/04/08/mozambique-smelting-profits-should-not-fill-foreign-coffers-say-campaigners/>

³⁶ Roland Barthes, 'Writers, Intellectuals, Teachers', [1971] in *A Roland Barthes Reader*, edited, with an introduction, by Susan Sontag, London: Vintage, 1982, pp. 378–403, p. 379.

³⁷ Judith Butler, 'What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue' David Ingram (ed.) *The Political: Readings in Continental Philosophy* (London: Basil Blackwell, 2002).

³⁸ Butler.

³⁹ Butler.

⁴⁰ Butler.

⁴¹ Butler.

⁴² Butler.

⁴³ Butler.

⁴⁴ Michel Foucault, 'What is Critique?' [1997] translated by Lysa Hochroth and Catherine Porter, *The Politics of Truth*, (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2007).

⁴⁵ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/economia/articulo-409715-cerro-matoso-n%0Aos-esta-matando%0A>