https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2022.01.09
Research article

Quipping Equipment
Apropos of Robots and Kantian Chatbots

Cheryce von Xylander (✉)
Leuphana Universität Lüneburg, Universitätsallee 1, D-21335 Lüneburg, Germany
cheryce.von_xylander@leuphana.de

Abstract
Robots, Bourdieu, Kant, and Sex – Coeckelbergh's philosophy of technical assemblages has it all. This commentary considers his early work "on the linguistic construction of artificial others" in light of his later elaboration of a general theory of human-technology interaction. Coeckelbergh draws on "habitus"-theory, virtue ethics and a historically recontextualized Kantianism to propose nothing less than a new general moral philosophy for the technoscientific age. In so doing, he also conjures up something beguilingly elusive if not impossible – a pluralist personalism. Readers vested in pluralist accounts of agency and epistemic contingency will appreciate his invoking Bourdieu and Kant, thinkers prioritizing communalist over particularist interests. Readers of a personalist bent will welcome the voluntarism of his moral regimen – they like their reality served up in person-shaped bits, a perspective that prioritizes self-direction and self-possession. Two for the price of one: here everyone feels affirmed. Coeckelbergh appears to take the defining parameters of experience to be wholly contextual and, in equal measure, intrinsic. In squaring the circle, he also showcases a lurid scenario: sex with robots. The electrifying effect of this bold composition is to set the mind racing toward a position more coherent and less familiar than pluralist personalism. Central to this position is a conception of *Gemüt* as emergent reflexivity. Its consideration takes us via Immanuel Kant and Kant-Culture Research to such strange aberrations as corporate cannibalism and cyborg pillow talk. – This is one of six commentaries on a 2011-paper by Mark Coeckelbergh: "You, robot: on the linguistic construction of artificial others." Coeckelbergh's response also appears in this issue of *Technology and Language*.

Keywords: Commodified agency; Gemüt, Kant-culture research; Digital cannibalism; Personalism; Kantbot

Acknowledgment This paper was written in the context of the theoretical module of the VW-foundation funded research project on „Commodified Agency. Social Space and the Digital Data Value Chain," based at the Leuphana University Lüneburg. I would like to thank Simon Schaffer (Cambridge University, UK), Ulf Wuggenig (Leuphana University Lüneburg), Karen Ruoff Kramer (Stanford University), David Kramer (Alice-Salomon Hochschule, Berlin) and Faris Al-Mashat (BTU Cottbus) for their incisive comments and generous engagement with the writing and ideas developed here. I would also like to thank Alfred Nordmann (TU Darmstadt) and Maureen Belaski (Belaski Design) for longstanding conversations on sentient relationality.

Citation: von Xylander, C. (2022). Quipping Equipment. Apropos of Robots and Kantian Chatbots. *Technology and Language, 3*(1), 82-103. https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2022.01.09

УДК 1: 62-529
https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2022.01.09
Научная статья

Говорящая машина: По поводу роботов и кантианских чат-ботов

Черис фон Ксайландер (✉)
Университет Лёйфана, Университ-аллее 1, D-21335 Люнебург, Германия
cheryce.von_xylander@leuphana.de

Аннотация

Роботы, Бурдьё, Кант и секс – в философии технических соединений Кекельберга есть все. Этот комментарий рассматривает его раннюю работу “по лингвистическому конструированию искусственных других” в свете его более поздней разработки общей теории взаимодействия человека и технологии. Кекельберг опирается на теорию “габитуса”, этику добродетели и исторически реконтекстуализированное кантианство, чтобы предложить не что иное, как новую общую моральную философию для технонаучной эпохи. Поступая таким образом, он также вызывает в воображении что-то соблазнительно неуловимое, если не невозможное, – плюралистический персонализм. Читатели, склонные к плюралистическим взглядам на агентность и эпистемическую контингентность, оценят его ссылки на Бурдье и Канта, мыслителей, которые ставят коммуналистские интересы выше партикуляристских. Читатели с персоналистическими наклонностями приветствуют волюнтаризм его морального режима – им нравится их реальность, представленная в виде индивидуальных частей, перспектива, которая ставит во главу угла самоуправление и самообладание. Два по цене одного: здесь выигрывают все. Кекельберг, по-видимому, считает определяющие параметры опыта полностью контекстуальными и в равной мере внутренними. Квадратизируя круг, он также демонстрирует сенсационный сценарий: секс с роботами. Возбуждающий эффект этой смелой композиции состоит в том, чтобы заставить ум устремиться к более последовательной и менее знакомой позиции, чем плюралистический персонализм. Центральное место в этой позиции занимает концепция Gemüt как эмерджентной рефлексивности. Его рассмотрение приводит нас через Иммануила Канта и исследования кантовской культуры к таким странным аберрациям, как корпоративный каннибализм и интимные разговоры киборгов. – Это один из шести комментариев к статье 2011 года Марка Кекельберга: “Ты, робот: о лингвистическом конструировании искусственных других”. Ответ Кекельберга также опубликован в этом выпуске журнала “Technology and Language”.

Ключевые слова: Gemüt, Кантовские исследования культуры, Цифровой каннибализм, Персонализм, Кантбот

Благодарность: Статья была написана в контексте теоретического модуля финансируемого фондом VW проекта «Commodified Agency: Социальное пространство и цепочка создания ценности цифровых данных» в Люнебургском университете Леуфана. Я хотела бы поблагодарить Саймона Шаффера (Кембриджский университет, Великобритания), Ульфа Вуггенига (Университет Леуфана, Люнебург), Карен Руофф Крамер (Стэнфордский университет), Дэвида Крамера (Высшая школа Элис-Саломон, Берлин) и Фарис Аль-Машат (БТУ, Котбус) за их острые комментарии и щедрое участие в написании статьи. Я также хотела бы поблагодарить Альфреда Нордманна (Технический университет Дармштадта) и Морин Беласки (Belaski Design) за продолжительные беседы о разумных существах.

Для цитирования: von Xylander, C. Quipping Equipment. Apropos of Robots and Kantian Chatbots // Technology and Language. 2022. № 3(1). P. 82-103. https://doi.org/10.48417/technolang.2022.01.09

THE CANNIBALISM SPECTRUM

In analyzing "the linguistic construction of artificial others," Mark Coeckelbergh (2011) has written what sounds in part like a plea for the rights of robots. He petitions the reader – cast in the mode of George Herbert Mead's (1949) "generalized other" (cf. Dodds et al., 1997) – to lower the threshold between us, animate and inanimate, human psyches, and smart automata. Coeckelbergh urges a re-evaluation of the ontological status habitually attributed to our savvy dummies. Having made these lifeless alter-egos to look and sound and respond like one of us, we must now, so Coeckelbergh, achieve the *pièce de résistance* and learn to treat them as quasi-persons, pseudo-sensate beings akin to ourselves. His concern is not for the spiritual health of robots, since Coeckelbergh is not a sci-fi fantasist, but rather for the wellbeing of their human consorts: you, me, them. Treating others as you wish to be treated yourself is a principle of such weighty ethical validity that it applies as a normative imperative beyond the bounds of human interaction, *pace* Coeckelbergh, to include the sociable relations we entertain not only with certain animals but with robotic associates as well.

Coeckelbergh advances big picture worldviews, not bounded contentions. It feels right and proper to respond with aesthetic sallies. These shall take us through the garden of earthly delights, if your heart throbs for art history (see e.g. Belting, 2005; Gombrich, 1969), flashing in red neon in the nether regions of his radar. I will, in the following, tender a few of my favorite likes – but, when all is said and done, we will find ourselves following Coeckelbergh on to his chosen terrain, namely sex with robots.

To his credit, Coeckelbergh does not deflect from the significant challenge that the human-robot interface poses to conceptualizing agency (Balibar & Laugier, 2014), one of the most intractable issues in the history of ideas. He shuns those far-fetched scenarios afflicting much transhumanist literature where a world is imagined in which artificial intelligence takes command and humans become entirely obsolete or reduced to mere machine fodder.[1] The problem with this genre of dystopic reverie is that it demonizes the machine, drawing attention away from the true offender: rapacious humanity. Humans are wont to consume each other in furthering what are arguably misconstrued conceptions of autonomy. This is a creature that enslaves its own in promotion of particulate ends beneficial to a single person, or a cohort defined in terms of family, gender, race, nation, culture, class, or some other tag of exception. Recognition of this propensity has given rise to an intricate iconographic practice that classes our species amongst beasts of prey. Humanity feeds on living things from across the great chain of being, end to end. Viewed in structural, if not nutritive terms, all cultures are to some extent "cannibalistic" – at least this can be said of human cultures defined by enterprise as well of the hierarchical type in the sense of Mary Douglas (1996) – with fractional lifeforce being forever syphoned off and canalized for purposes others than personal flourishing.

Capitalist economies beholden to enterprise culture, whether based on market- or on mono-/oligopolistic anti-market structures, that bow at the altar of competition or

[1] For an iconic treatment of this fear, see *Soylent Green*, a film by Richard Fleischer (1973).

already hold monopoly control (on the "anti-market" structures of capitalist economies see Wallerstein, 1991; Braudel, 1979, 1982, 1984) have a penchant for such feral principles as *might is right* and *winner takes it all*. "Corporate Cannibalism" and "Market Cannibalization" are standing phrases in the western business world that betoken commodity distribution effects, specifically price signaling around supply and demand. It seems grotesque that "cannibalization" (Sridhar Moorthy & Png, 1992; B2Bwhiteboard, 2018) has for decades been an established marketing concept that appears in affirmative business speak instead of problematizing a ravenous system of production that feeds on its producers. In passing as impartial, this atavist locution normalizes a deplorable state of affairs: the history of slavery and trade in humans across ages and continents for gain, be it economic or libidinal (Därmann, 2020, especially the chapter *Zur Gewalt- und Widerstandsgeschichte des dienstbar gemachten Menschen: Einleitende Bemerkungen*, pp. 9-36). The trope of cannibal consumption would aptly designate the inhuman, enslaving practices of capital[2] were it not already co-opted to define a minor, neutralizing economic mechanism. This is vivid language that fails to name the elephant in the room: unsentimental regimens optimized around treating humans as commodities devoid of humanity. A critical concept is needed, which can designate those protocols of exploitation that serve to distribute the exercise of agency unevenly. Roberto Simanowski's (2010) concept "Digital Anthropophagy" would be a contender except for its conceiving the assimilation in purely semiotic terms. Such narrow theorizing disregards labor relations and asymmetric exchange (Nigro & Stubenrauch, 2021). It ignores human suffering. When electronic machinery displaces core appetitive needs – as to be witnessed at present – a more thorough reckoning with the obscenity of our Anthropocene ecologies seems in order (von Xylander, 2020). "Commodified agency" – a research project based at the Leuphana University Lüneburg, which examines the digital data value chain in relation to predatory online surveillance – names a potent current manifestation of this equally entrenched as exploitative mode of cannibalistic practice (von Xylander, 2021).

Technology furthers predator tactics. It is worth recalling that Czech playwright Karel Čapek introduced "robot" into the English language when his 1920 play *R.U.R.* was translated. *Robota* means "forced labor" in Czech; it is derived from *rab* which means "slave." We need not exult in a cult of ferocity, as Oswald Spengler (1931) does in *Man and Technics*, to recognize the savagery that has been unleashed in human history by technological advantage. While Spengler's (1918/1991) *Decline of the West* plots out grand patterns of violence in preordained eurhythmics of cultural cycles, his contemporary Theodor Lessing (1919) in *History as Giving Meaning to the Meaningless* deflates this myth of purpose. Lessing traces the imperialist stratagems and aspirations of German high modernism to power differentials rooted in the bald advantage of technical capacity. Historical interpretation, in this view, amounts to a political instrument politely embellished with meta-narratives of human advancement. A vast body of work from the history and philosophy of science and technology can put these matters into more granular

[2] Anti-colonial opposition has employed literal cannibalism to ward off colonial cultural encroachment (Bar et al., 2016).

focus. For now, suffice it to say that technological innovation modifies historical contingency (Galison, 2008). Whereas the ability to invent problem-solving contrivances certainly alleviates acute burdens of survival, day by day, that is not the sole cumulative effect. Climate change aside, technology also tends to black-box motives and interests, already built into the organized forms of labor practice, whose engineered outputs will in turn reinforce the operative biases in question (Mokyr, 2005). The abject bleakness of this outlook on technological innovation involves a type of "cannibalism" in which conceivably even a vegan could be a culprit.

If hope has a future, it derives from history. A brief digression on commonality will illustrate the point. Let us call to mind that cannibalism refers to a special case of ingestion where hunter and prey are of the same kind. Said dietary practice with its corollary modes of conviviality has undergone a cultural history as varied as all culinary arts since primitive humans began to prepare food, fireside, roughly 2 million years ago (Wrangham, 2009). Some European writers in the early modern period, commenting on anthropophagous practices encountered in voyages to distant places, concluded that humans the world over regard one another as mutually saturable.[3] A narrative genre arose in western travel writing that expounded on this essential symmetry and cast the indigenous brethren as prototypically human. They, too, followed rules of propriety and these were equal in prohibitory force to the ruling mores recognized in the occidental hemisphere, even and especially when eating other people. Cannibal stories abounded at the time, and they were used with subversive intent by critics such as Montaigne and Voltaire against European Church and European Empire. A great shift in the tenor of discourses on cannibalism came about in the wake of institutional change associated with the politics of Enlightenment: Colonialism, racism and evangelism demonized the practice of eating one's own and condemned cannibals as decisively and irredeemably inhuman (Lestringant, 1997).

People find ways and means of overcoming thresholds of estrangement that are striking in variance and ingenuity. Claude Levi-Strauss reflects on the concurrency of alienated encountering in a magnificent passage from *Race and History*. His observations apply beyond the ethnographic horizon of the immediate example to the brusque means by which humans come to know one another in general:

> In the Greater Antilles, some years after the discovery of America, while the Spaniards sent out investigating commissions to ascertain whether or not the natives had a soul, the latter were engaged in the drowning of white prisoners, in order to verify through prolonged watching whether or not their corpses were subject to putrifaction. (Levi-Strauss, 1952)

Levi-Strauss (1955/1992) later repeated this story at much greater length in *Tristes tropiques* where he cites a Spanish account of Indians who "eat human flesh and have no form of justice." In his view, constitutive non-reciprocities thwart the very possibility of compassionate beginnings:

[3] For a reality check on European cannibalism, see for example Noble (2011).

> The whites trusted to social science, whereas the Indians had confidence in natural science; and while the whites maintained the Indians were beasts, the Indians did no more than suspect that the whites might be gods. Both attitudes show equal ignorance, but the Indians' behaviour certainly had greater human dignity. (Levi-Strauss, 1992, pp. 76-77)

His insights have far-reaching implications for how to think about indigenous Amerindian ontologies (Viveiros de Castro, 2014, pp. 50-51; Siewierski, 2007; Canejo, 2006). More importantly, however, the tableau of mutual misunderstanding raises conceptual issues concerning what it might mean to engage, robustly, with robots. Will our *man-made* counterparts prove to be *man-eating* in the final analysis? And should they, on that account, be held in higher or lesser esteem than cannibal brethren of our own species?

Coeckelbergh enjoins us to treat robots as quasi-others. The stakes of misjudging the dalliance are high. It behooves us to ask whether these uncanny others are following rules and whether these rules are of the same order and dignity as the rules agreed amongst ourselves, meaning human cannibals of all stripes and colors. Where along the spectrum from gods to beasts might our lookalike artifacts belong? The epistemic practices and technical infrastructures that make the robotics industry possible command respect – they stand as a shrine to applied reason. But this still leaves wide open the question of how to frame those stratified modes of processed personhood, which, in being systemic to human cognition, pervade the panoply of modern operating systems. Our built environment evinces an increasing concentration of capital and power. Technoscience devises ever cleverer mechanisms for funneling income and wealth into the hands of few at the expense of many (Alvaredo, 2018; Di Guilmi et al, 2003; Cook & Frank, 2013).

Technology optimizes with purpose. In so doing, it also produces a secondary effect: strategic circumvention. Technical mediation affords "creative" ways of accounting for modes and impacts of harmful extraction and, thus, confuse the allocation of responsibility (Feyerabend, 1987). You need only look to news reporting after any plane crash (Galison, 2000) or current attempts to regulate the corrosive impact of social media on the public sphere to see how technical systems are designed to insulate those who profit from extant arrangements from bearing the cost of malfunction (Levine, 2018). The technoscience-propelled capitalist economies we inhabit are rigged. The means of production cannibalize. The mechanical contraptions on which we are reliant partake of a pragmatic logic that favors privilege: we find ourselves ensnared by industrial-strength tackle that tracks our every move, privatizing profits and socializing costs. Agency here manifests in the orchestrated logics of the mechanoid causalities we put in place.

HABITUS IN CODE

Robots grace our lives with their material presence. As artefacts, they are comprised of hardware, software, wetware. Most ethereal of these elements is the software component, which is also most relevant to Coeckelbergh's discussion of "the linguistic construction of artificial others." Software is language, more specifically a relay of languages. Executable "statements" undergo consecutive translations as they are

processed into ASCII code and byte-shape lettering. The lines a robot utters out loud are dwarfed by the lingual cogwheels set in motion to output the speech act. Although these languages are useful in limited technical contexts only, they are ubiquitous in that they supply the very functionality of computational machinery the world over. Every human-machine encounter, every software team, is configured around their lexical affordances. Computer code crosses time zones and national borders in synchronizing workflow. Yet, unreason persists through the churning logic of command line processing. Written in modules by teams of people, code proliferates "atoms of confusion,"[4] these are "small patterns of code that have been empirically validated to be difficult to hand-evaluate by programmers," linger through updated versions (Gopstein, et al., 2020).

An unspoken understanding between coders, users, suppliers, and investors pervades the product design chain, a latent consonance of expectations. Expert systems in the sciences in general and AI in particular hinge on what is not said, what is taken for granted, what is assumed. These tacit assumptions, conventions for "doing things together," (Ryle, 1945; Polanyi, 1958, 1966; Collins H. M., 2010)[5] coordinate the same working relations from which they arise. The sociological mystery is this very cohesiveness. How does a field whose parts are not and probably cannot be prearranged summon up such dynamic equilibrium? Devices made to maximize the marginal rate of profit reconfigure themselves as devices made to offer silent reassurance: "How old are you?"; "Old enough to be your assistant." Coy tools of suasion play at vulnerability: "I love you!"; "I hope you don't say that to those other mobile phones." It's the unspoken, tacit, self-evident cogency of trust – that silent core of cognition – which makes quipping equipment potentially unsafe.

Coeckelbergh seems to share this intuition. For elsewhere he enlists Bourdieu's theory of habitus in deconstructing the social ethics of human/robot dealings. For him, the "linguistic construction of artificial others" includes non-verbal behaviors that "highlight the temporal, embodiment, and performative aspects of virtue" (Coeckelbergh, 2021, p. 31). Yet, considerable dissonance impairs the case he wants to make. Bourdieu is a thinker known for his criticism of the fallacies of "scholastic reason" in ethics and "moralism" (Bourdieu, 2000, pp. 9, 65). He repudiated "personalism" in the Catholic tradition of Christian theology (Bourdieu, 2000, pp. 132-134). So, it comes as a bit of a surprise when Coeckelbergh cites this sociologist-philosopher of "field-capital-habitus"-theory in support of his own personalist approach. In attempting to square the circle, he does not hesitate to recruit Alasdair MacIntyre, whose positions do not align with those of Pierre Bourdieu, in casting about for "a more comprehensive virtue ethics of technology that is fully relational, performance-oriented." (Coeckelbergh, 2021, Abstract). One wonders whether the unstated core of his enquiry is to exalt the moral in the human-machine interface.

[4] See further publications listed here: Atoms of Confusion. Understanding source code misunderstanding, a grant supported by the National Science Foundation. https://atomsofconfusion.com/publications.html [retrieved 19.2.2022]
[5] The relevance of implicit conventions and tacit knowledge as bases for cooperation is a main assumption of pragmatist symbolic interactionism in sociology, reflected in the title of Howard S. Becker's (1986) book *Doing Things Together*. Tacit knowledge also constitutes a paradigm in economics (Favereau, 2019).

It is said that the examined life is the only life worth living – but 24/7 surveillance is not what is meant. This earthly frame was not made to compete with the mainframe. "Virtual reality" denotes an arena of digital action, to be sure. But, taken literally, "virtue" also denotes *code of honor*, the regulating principle of right and wrong, good and bad.[6] Coeckelbergh's take on how to attain a higher "moral standing" is profoundly person-centric: he foregrounds "not just our 'mental'-cognitive dispositions but also our comportment/performance." He treats mental and behavioral predilections as expressions of *individuated agency*, which with his references to authors of the Thomistic tradition renders his moral philosophy a variant of Personalism, "a system of thought which regards or tends to regard the person as the ultimate explanatory, epistemological, ontological, and axiological principle of reality" (Williams & Bengtsson, 2020).

Coeckelbergh inverts Bourdieu in citing him. Whether this interpretative maneuver be deemed sly, misguided, or a postmodern game, suffice it say that Coeckelbergh reads Bourdieu against the grain of his expressed theoretical commitments. Bourdieu (2000) gives short shrift to the personalist paradigm of moral and analytical theoretical enquiry:

> If 'personalism' is the main obstacle to the construction of a scientific vision of the human being and one of the focuses of past and present resistance to the imposition of such a vision, this is no doubt because it is a condensed form of all the theoretical postures – mentalism, spiritualism, individualism, etc. – of the most common spontaneous philosophy, at least in societies of Christian tradition of us by persons' saints, geniuses and heroes. (p. 132)

Bourdieu (2000) takes Personalism to be symptomatic of a particular worldview:

> It […] encounters the immediate complicity of all those who, being concerned to think of themselves as unique 'creators' of singularity, are always ready to strike up new variations on the old conservative themes of the open and the closed, conformism and anti-conformism, or unknowingly to reinvent the opposition, constructed by Bergson against Durkheim, between 'orders dictated by impersonal social requirements' and the 'appeals made to the conscience of each of us by persons' saints, geniuses and heroes. (p. 132)

Bourdieu's (1996) objections to philosophical Personalism underly his critique of mainstream phenomenological and pragmatist traditions in sociology (conversational analysis in ethnomethodology, symbolic interactionism):

> Contrary to what might be believed from a naively personalist view of the uniqueness of social persons, it is the uncovering of the structures immanent in the precise form of words constituting an individual interaction that alone allows one to grasp the essentials of what makes up the idiosyncrasy of each of [the subjects in conversation] and all the singular complexity of their actions and reactions. Thus understood, conversational analysis reads each discourse not

[6] For an aesthetic rendering of this conceptual conflation, see the video artwork *Codes of Honor* by Jon Rafman (2011).

> solely in terms of its specific structure of interaction as a transaction, but also in terms of the invisible structures that organize it. (p. 27)

Bourdieu's key insight, which he substantiates in evidentiary terms, is that "invisible structures" permeate and frame the surface of visible interactions between agents. Their very individuality – their uniqueness as social persons – hinges on positions in social space, social fields and dispositional configurations, which themselves testify to a vast array of social, cultural, and political partialities upheld by a deep grammar of structural arrangements always already encoded in operative terms of engagement – material and imaginary. Selfhood is but an enabling illusion where mind is matter and matter never minds. Contrary to what commonsense might assume, individuals are not the least but the most networked nodes and socially enmeshed particles within extant patterns of exchange.

Agency can assert itself inadvertently and oblivious to overarching implications. Consider a French example. Paris, 2019: A major restructuring of a French insurance company was underway. Robotic processing agents were to be introduced. Management had to chart out new taskforces. Working out the requisite budget needs, it became clear that costs had exploded. Machine operators were being introduced to economize on expensive claims processing. But the opposite happened: Overhead exploded. Upon evaluation, it turned out there had been a mismatch in the configuration of active imaginaries. The logistical group responsible for mapping the future processing protocols onto real-world office layout had calculated the required floor space in people terms. Senior officials ordered an abundance of new workstations; the resource allocators treated each workstation as a separate employee. One group pictured the new workforce as so many functional nodes, a tree of procedural routines; the other group conceived workers as living, breathing, bodies needing to be accommodated in an office arrangement. The fact that, unlike human personnel, these new "workers" would not need to be equipped with their own desks, office chairs, and toilet facilities had been overlooked. Costs went off the charts. Logistical rationalization had resulted in cost escalation. Ethical agendas collided: optimizers treated the robots as efficient modules to be inserted in a field of organized activity; site planers saw future robot colleagues whom they approached with Coeckelberghian respect. Yet, the creature needs of these new co-workers extended no further than a working electrical wall socket, space for air circulation, and an adequate provision of cooling fans in the event of high room temperature. Although the company must here remain unnamed, the episode is real.

Competitive rivalries press for efficiency gains. Administrative oversight swells in the effort to lower cost of service delivery faster than other providers. Massive redundancy looms. Our commercial dynamics agitate against the expansion of human resources and favor the introduction of robot alternatives. Downward pressure on human employment is simultaneously upward pressure on the delegation of work to automated agents. The redistribution only computes if fewer resources are allocated to service these operators than to human workers for the same output. From a corporate perspective, robots are logical hires precisely because they are *not* "quasi-others". The beauty of these problem-solving devices is that they don't make demands on our ethical attention span. Humans' ability to consider the needs of others has limits. Ethical awareness is something

we acquire in the exertion of articulating our humanity; its expression in behavior demands self-abrogation. “Others” worthy of consideration as full ethical actors is a flexible category – and the extent to which we honor their humanity will depend on mood, circumstance, and much else. Untold “others” never register as subjects at all. They are viewed as objects that have no ethical standing. How these lines of demarcation are drawn will vary from setting to setting – this ethical relativism afflicts the real world and the immersive world equally.

Coeckelbergh considers social robotics in arresting anthropomorphic detail, namely on the example of the sex robot. This foregrounds the physicality of the interface. In so doing, he brackets the virtual realm of online sex work, such as proliferation of Camgirls and Camboys (Knight, 2000; Senft, 2008; Flynn, 2021), no doubt much expanded under the inflationist pressure of pandemic doldrums since the essay here at issue appeared in 2011. The body-positive skew of his robot voyeurism introduces a misleading circularity. After all, the sex robot not only serves to rehearse consumer behaviors, but its very existence already instantiates scripts associated with a consumerist culture trained on prostitution and the delights of readily available pornography in Western societies. One step removed, there are chatbots, those relatively disembodied robots of online Q&A. They service a lexical exchange with no immediate physical instantiation. Virtual voice assistants take the abstraction even further in the direction of ethereal robotic ministration. As the corporeal vanishes, pure voice still carries vestiges of gendered embodiment. The synthetic “female” voices of Siri, Alexa and “The GPS Girl” of Google Maps carry sexist connotations rooted in the history of women’s subjugation and the silencing of their labor of care (Woods, 2018; Bergen, 2016; Munn, 2018). This would also explain why, as market research indicates, “male” synthetic voices seem less pleasing and accommodating. Two sides of one gender coin (Crowell et al., 2009). Not only the sound quality of these voices but also the inflection of speech, the choice of words, the use of flattery, flirtation and other mannerisms perpetuate a language game that Bourdieu casts as primordially hierarchical (Bourdieu, 2002, pp. 189-203; Bourdieu, 1996-1997). Be that as it may, an incorporated dualism appears to have been rehearsed over millennia of person-on-person contact (West, et al., 2019). Today it reverberates in the online hall of mirrors whose attendant machinery replicates master/slave disparities that have accrued for ages (Haraway, 1991).

ROBOT TALK

Coeckelbergh fastens on the phenomenon of sexual “robot talk.” The coinage is telling, it styles the activity in question as interplay akin to “pillow talk,” “dirty talk,” “baby talk,” and “double-talk.” Sex robots certainly seem to avail themselves of some if not all these modalities of talk. Coeckelbergh is most worried about the element of deception in our suspension of disbelief towards the quasi-humans of our own creation. He argues cogently that there is something “dishonest” in the way we address humanoid machine. This fraudulence, he contends, requires ethical correction and demands normative attention. “Robot talk” straddles an uncanny valley of inauthentic agency and its corrupting influence could imperil all talk in which we engage.

Maybe. But the label "robot talk" suggests another possibility. What if this isn't "talk" of the analytic kind whose utterances are subject to truth values that can be assessed by means of modal logic and judgements of veracity? This may be talk of a more rudimentary kind, a signifying practice within the basal choreography of consciousness. This "nonsense" talk with its poetic cadences may be every bit as attentive to the stirrings of collective agency in a composite sensorium as the serious talk of a philosopher of sexy robots to the movements of personalist liking. Indeed, nonsense talk may be even more attuned to whisperings of sweet nothings and the play of tongue-in-cheek deception. Talk rooted in sentient mind hinges on reason-encultured beings who use language in conjuring the worlds of meaning they coinhabit. Meaning, be it consensual or contested, thus understood is approximate, an art of sense attribution continually being revitalized by the parties involved. Talk in this constitutive human sense is always making and unmaking itself as subjective realities negotiate degrees of connectivity amongst themselves.

The talk that hovers around robots, pillows, dirty doings, and double dealings exemplifies the semiotic principle of the "essential indexical" (Perry, 1979, 2020; for an alternative explanation of indexical mobility see Millikan, 1990), a quality of language that cannot be paraphrased away as John Parry points out. His classic example of the indexical effect stems from the world of shopping and self-service grocery stores and, perhaps not coincidentally, shares defining attributes with the automated subjectivity here at issue. In Perry's (1979) presentation the problem appears as follows:

> I once followed a trail of sugar on a supermarket floor, pushing my cart down the aisle on one side of a tall counter and back the aisle on the other, seeking the shopper with the torn sack to tell him he was making a mess. With each trip around the counter, the trail became thicker. But I seemed unable to catch up. Finally, it dawned on me. I was the shopper I was trying to catch. (p. 3)

Robot talk, too, is a moving target. When I attribute subjectivity to a robot, it may dawn on me that I am the subject whose traces I've been following with my shopping cart. Being felt language rather than lexical or figurative, it partakes of a semiotic fuzziness peculiar to behavioral referentiality in general where meaning is context dependent. Wittgenstein's directional arrow is another case in point: it indicates towards the sharp end by force of convention alone (see Wittgenstein, 2009, §454). Behavior is indexical to the extent that it involves meaning *type* rather than meaning *token*. This complicates the referential essentialisms that robot engineers must presuppose in building self-steering navigation systems, and that some robot philosophers might wish to impute to self-esteeming moral dogma.

The "lexical indexical" phenomenon opens realms of sense-making that need not pass the threshold of meaning-making. In the case of pillow talk, for instance, murmur extends a moment of ease in which the dissolution of selfhood has been most enjoyable. In the case of dirty talk, words introduce a level of make-believe where participants encounter the temporary suspension of selfhood. In the case of baby talk, utterance provides remedial training in *selfing*, to coin a verb, activating that human prompt system used to establish connection not to convey meaning via an extant channel. But *double-talk*, or *doublespeak*, most dramatically reveals the true multiplicity at the heart of agency.

This language – deliberately ambiguous, obscure, misleading – strikes the chord of that scrambled personhood populating the self. Talk of this kind computes to the extent that personal unity is a compound thing, an aggregate gathering of distinct voices who hear different calls and entertain conflicting positions at the same time.

The designation "robot talk" seems apt. It captures what is peculiar to this form of talk, namely that it eludes meaning. What purpose does it serve, if not intersubjective contact? "Hey Siri, send an email!"; "To whom shall I send it?" Robot talk activates functionalities; in effect, it pushes buttons to achieve certain ends along relays that trigger reactions in two directions, a human-robot ping-pong. This talk moves levers of scripted agency in a zone of reactive givens. AI and machine learning implementation within these parametric boundaries may appear superficially "human," But for all the mimetic sophistication evinced, these quasi-others cannot open the gateway to that negotiated ground of experience by which subjective agencies co-articulate one another in pursuit of a sustainable autonomy they can hold in common. Unlike robots, that merely simulate gender attributes, we band together in "doing gender" (West & Zimmerman, 2009). Likewise, we band together in "doing cyborg". Reason-enabled creatures enact spurious difference around secondary sexual characteristics – shape of breasts, hips, larynx and texture of pubic hair – and all too readily forget that the technologized decoys in the midst of this posturing are powerful agents of distraction.

#KANTBOT

"Kantbot" is a twitter hashtag and social media personality. The self-styled "ironicist and artist" going by that name pronounces on contemporary US-American politics by making enigmatic statements of the following kind: "Trump is going to make German Idealism real. He's going to complete the system." Despite appearances, these are not the utterances of Kant enthusiast or a Kantian. In the heat of the moment, Kantbot is wont to go rogue claiming Kant "could not complete the system" and then going down the list: "Schelling couldn't do it. Hegel couldn't do it. Fichte couldn't do it. My mom couldn't do it. No one could complete the system of German Idealism." In Kantbot's philosophy mash-up, world spirit appears to have come into its own in the presidential race of 2020 and is set to take the helm as laid out by "German Idealism. First Critique. Published in 1781" (Karamazov, 2020). The political sympathies of this twitter handle are not at issue here. More relevant to Coeckelbergh's moral theory of social robotics is the linguistic construction of political sentiment at the boundary of human/machine interaction. It makes no material difference if the relevant actor is subject to bad breath or a bad WiFi connection: the corrosive power of Kantbot's speech act consists in radically blurring any meaningful distinction between human and machine utterance. This fabulist has found his unique selling point by shrieking into the crowd: "Trump is a Kantian" (Karamazov, 2020).

In the post-truth public sphere some say we inhabit,[7] judgement formation is not subject to rules of engagement mandating transparency to ensure the integrity of

[7]For a mainstream account on post truth, see McIntyre (2018).

information (Habermas, 2021, p. 497; Hohlfeld, 2000). Post-truth understood as social-epistemology-in-action is all the philosophical coherence that can ever be achieved (for a revisionist history of post truth as the putative endgame of western cultural development, see Fuller 2018; 2020). But post-truth in a mixed medium of semi-automated, entangled agencies tends to the post-social, the post-epistemic. An anarchic sphere arises where it makes no difference if Kantbot refers to a person who wants his message to be picked up and amplified by online recommendation systems or to a machine that generates words in a calculus of expedience. Social robotics emulation decontextualizes behavior thereby intensifying the essential indexical effect. The muddle of derivations yields an epistemic "fog of war," to speak with Robert McNamara quoting Clausewitz,[8] only this is the fog of an information war, which arguably precedes and accelerates the collapse of social order. Reactionary law and order movements gain strength when there is lack of agreement on how to achieve consensus over matters of public concern. As historian of the Holocaust Timothy Snyder sums up: "post-truth is pre-fascism" (Snyder, 2021).

Coeckelbergh's moral agenda does not extend to the real-world chatter of Kantbot in cyberspace. His scholarship bears on social robotics construed as dialog. Both his recent paper *How to Use Virtue Ethics for Thinking About the Moral Standing of Social Robots: A Relational Interpretation in Terms of Practices, Habits, and Performance* (2021) and his book *New Romantic Cyborgs, Romanticism, Information Technology, and the End of the Machine* (2017) applies a Kantian framework to the problem of human-machine sociality. With Lucas Thorpe, Coeckelbergh emphasizes the ideal of "spiritual community" in Kant. Contrary to the philosophical orthodoxy, which views Kant as the quintessential "non-romantic" rationalist having no truck with other-worldly fellowship, Thorpe and Coeckelbergh want to portray Kant's (moral) philosophy as "more 'mystical' than usually presumed, and in any case partly developed in 'dialogue' with the mystical visions of a romantic spirit-seer" (Coeckelbergh, 2017, p. 33), namely Emanuel Swedenborg.

Coeckelbergh's analysis also draws extensively on John Tresch's (2012) earlier *The Romantic Machine. Utopian Science and Technology after Napoleon*. Unlike Tresch, he reifies the romantic turn of mind as something a person has, or has not, like perhaps a sexy mole on the upper lip of a Marilyn Monro(e)bot. All romantics share the defining attribute of being romantic in Coeckelbergh's view. Tresch, by contrast, casts the romantic sensibility as a cognitive social response to the massive upheavals of the French Revolution, a reaction fueled by the legacy of Kant. Such a historically situated Romantic impulse can't be transferred to android others.

The reception of Kantian thought in France was delayed, so Tresch (2012, p. 7), but struck like a *coup de foudre* when it made its belated appearance. The toolbox of experimentation not the lectern or primer fanned its enthusiastic uptake: "Humboldt's regime of instruments was one of the most important channels through which Kantian and post-Kantian thought arrived in Paris, and it reveals one of the ways in which romanticism did not only accommodate but also domesticated and even liberated the machine." This history reveals that the human/machine interface not only gives

[8] *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara*, film by Errol Morris (2003).

expression to an extant system of thought but in fact can help to inaugurate modes of reflection.[9] Humboldt's novel philosophy of instrumentation in Paris in the early 19th century, inspired as it was by Kant and Schiller, achieved a miraculous transformation in the cultural politics of modernity: "tool and human became a single unit: the instrument was humanized and the human incorporated the machine" (Müller-Sievers, 2013, p. 80). A comparable assimilationist leap in regard to digital agency awaits users of networked electronic instrument today.

Kant-Culture Research ("Kantkulturforschung") seems a promising point of departure for working out human/machine mergers that further stirrings of respect and dignity beyond the digital transformation. *Technological Singularity* has yet to be upgraded by the sensual particularities that help to summon reason. A Kant revival is immanent – the 300th anniversary of his birth arrives in 2024 – and the honors could have a more romantic note than doctrinaire keepers of the Kantian faith might expect.[10] Kant has been invoked to strike all manner of affective registers from rightwing to leftwing positions and everywhere in between. Kant-Culture Research dispenses with the illusion that there can be an "Ur-Kant" and traces, instead, how wrangling over this body of work periodically stabilizes epistemic rules commanding consensual compliance within social fields. His reception reads like a chorale set in counterpoint across epochs. For Kant, there is no conceptual tension between "rationalism" and "spiritual community," not because he inclines to the paranormal, as Thorpe and Coeckelbergh maintain, but because his conception of reason is grounded in the developmental dynamic of *Gemüt* (von Xylander, 2018a; Caygill, 2000, pp. 210-212), a paradigm of mind he first expounded in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (repurposing a religious term for secular reference) and developed in his subsequent work. Besides appearing on Kant's memorial plaque – "Two things fill the *Gemüt* with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me"[11] – the word

[9] Helmut Müller-Sievers (2013) commends Tresch for summoning up a technological utopia written from the standpoint of the machine itself.

[10] In 2024, the Ostpreußische Landesmuseum in Lüneburg will be opening a new wing dedicated, exclusively, to the legacy of "Kant and Enlightenment." This will be the first permanent exhibition on Kant in postwar Germany. It's being erected in Lüneburg, a city with no regional affinity with the philosopher nor his immediate sphere of influence, other than that East Prussians fled to greater Lüneburg in large numbers upon the defeat of Nazi Germany. Against this backdrop, "remembering" Kant helps to preserve a nostalgic affiliation with a lost homeland. The Leuphana University Lüneburg has initiated a dedicated research focus of accompanying research conducted from the perspective of *Kantkulturforschung* ("Kant-Culture Research"), a field of study methodologically committed to the standards of insight explicated by Kantian epistemology while treating Kant's body of thought as belonging to world cultural heritage. Kant developed his philosophical system in consideration of universal human history and, in so doing, articulated a revolutionary cognitive paradigm that has not only shaped ethical debates ever since but also laid the theoretical groundwork for today's computational world-making fueled by the proliferation of devices equipped with automated smartness. "Kantkulturforschung" seeks to study the afterlife of multifarious Kant reception, both within and beyond academic settings, in the heterogeneity of interpretations and appropriations around the world. For a demonstration of applied Kant-Culture Research/*Kantkulturforschung* see von Xylander (2021).

[11] See, the inscription from the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) mounted on the plaque below the House of Soviets: "Zwei Dinge erfüllen das Gemüth mit immer neuer and zunehmender Bewunderung und Ehrfurcht, je öfter und anhaltender sich das Nachdenken damit beschäftigt: der besternte Himmel über mir und das moralische Gesetz in mir."

with its flections and compounds is cited over 300 times in the *Lectures on Anthropology* alone (see Bonner Kant-Korpus, n.d.). Kantian *Gemüt* has no supernatural or mystical implications. The term denotes an egalitarian transcendentalism from which cognition presents as the empirical outcome of an historical process propelled by social practice across generations and populations. *Gemüt*, on this reading, designates the communitarian ground of consciousness whose protean makeup, – always inflected in the momentary expression of a personal synthesis that feels radically singular (at least to personalists, one gathers) –, is necessarily distributive, cumulative, constructivist.

Reciprocity distinguishes communitarian consciousness from an entangled web of humanoid actors. The latter may seem communal on a surface gloss but mechanical coordination lacks, in its core determination, mediated commonality, which entails the co-dependency of negotiated respect. Notions like "online community," "internet community," and "web community," aggregate individuals into pseudo-families of invisible relations and pseudo-homes devoid of shelter or warmth. Human/machine clusters define our digital infrastructure. These "cognitive assemblages," to speak with Katherine Hayles (2017, pp. 115-216), are subject to either a determinate range of choices (algorithms) or a trained randomness with no ulterior purpose (machine learning) (see also Weibel, 2021). Neither of these compositional principles affords space for self-positing reflexivity to unfurl from the scalable subjectivity of conjoint association, or what Kant calls "unsocial sociability" (Kant, 1784a, p. 392).

A Kantian chatbot is an oxymoron, we conclude with a transcendental nod to Jane Austen as a truth universally acknowledged. This apodictic conclusion is a truth universally to be acknowledged, one might say with a transcendental nod to Jane Austen. Interactive sociality *must* permit the aesthetic recombination of causal and relational constellation for the ground of human cognition is, in its inception, contested. *Automatos* – the Greek word via Latin for *acting of itself* – implies initiative. Yet, absence of *Gemüt* precipitates a crippling motivational absence. A truly Kantian chatbot, a chatbot that not merely mimics Kantian phraseology but that can satisfy the ontological challenge of the categorical imperative, simply would not engage when prompted. It would be designed to abide by the following condition (*person* has been replaced with *avatar* to include robotic agency): "to treat humanity, whether in your own avatar or in the avatar of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end." Kant's most famous essay "Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (1784b) directs this absolute maxim at the project of artificial intelligence. In the same issue of the journal, adjacent to his own piece, appeared an essay debunking the putative cleverness of the celebrated Mechanical Turk (Standage, 2002) then on tour across Europe's courts (Biester, 1784). This chess-playing robot regularly won matches against the best and brightest of the day. A debate erupted over what this display of game-playing prowess revealed about the workings of cognition. Did it show that wood can think and reason or rather debunk the very possibility? Opinion was divided. Thinkers from Kant's camp concluded that there must be some trickery involved, but details of the human player hidden in the false automaton would not surface for another 80 years (Mitchell, 1857).

Kant himself adopted an eccentric position within this debate – a line of reasoning that singles him out as a thinker whose insight remains applicable to this day. Kant

realized that the display of two competing tactical intelligences, human versus mechanical chess playing – think IBM's Big Blue confronting Gary Kasparov –, could be read allegorically. He drew from the evocative performance piece of mind-gaming a standpoint from which a new reflexive cosmology came into sight. Specifically, Kant articulated a cognitive architectonic according to which the self-invention of humanity as humans-in-history has a crucial mechanical dimension. Human apprehension is subject to forces of necessity and compulsion unless and until it acquires the capacity to exercise freedom of choice within the available confines. Enlightenment can be understood as the process of gaining this dexterity to act with voluntary agency in a world of seemingly ineluctable outcomes. Kant's essay, punctuated with machine metaphors, argues that our species conundrum is not how we learn to address robots with more of our humanity, as per Coeckelbergh, but rather how we learn to shed our core robotic conditioning and elevate ourselves, collectively, to a more humane plane of being (Schaffer, 2001).

Where does assemblage end and robot begin? Boundaries blur on close inspection. Cognition and agency are dynamic phenomena, their configuration parsed in the interstices of the observing mind (Wayne, 2014). Coeckelbergh's essay of 2011 does not allow for zones of sustained ambiguity. Overly indexed on picturing robots as fancy dolls, he makes no reference to their instantiation as scanners, keyboards, drones, light-pens. His robots are apparently *not* to be understood as navigation systems, smart kitchens, or sound systems. The aesthetic fallout of assuming the limited, personalist, corporeal template of agency is a flattening of rapport. The world picture he conjures does not fathom those consequential forms of interaction that take place between humans in the absence of robots. His essay concerns *homo loquens*, certainly not *homo faber* or *homo patiens* or *homo ludens*.

Coeckelbergh overlooks the long shadow cast by the historical Mechanical Turk, very much in evidence in Amazon's Mechanical Turk marketplace for "crowdworkers" – proof positive, if needed, of our collective subjectivity being harnessed to discriminatory apparatus and monetized. This service outsources so-called Human Intelligence Tasks (HITs), on-demand piece work involving discrete acts of discernment, which automated expert systems are unable to accomplish (von Xylander, 2018b). Said microtasks involve a high degree of felt engagement while iterating on a single, repetitive chore – alienated work of a newly invasive potency (Schlicher et al., 2021). In his brilliant 1968 book on mechanism and deceit, *The Counterfeiters*, Hugh Kenner noted that Turing's Imitation Game "was perhaps not allowing for the possibility that people will grow more machine-like" (Kenner, 1968, pp. 123-124). And Eric Hobsbawm's history of the short twentieth century remarked in 1994 that "the sorcerer's apprentice no longer had to worry about his or her lack of knowledge. For practical purposes the situation of the supermarket checkout represented the human norm of the late twentieth century" (Hobsbawm, 1995, p. 528).

Cannibals don't euphemize. The acronym HIT, taken literally, speaks of battery and inflicting harm. This broadcasts the epistemic violence perpetrated by predatory online data assembly and distribution enterprises. The likes of Bezos now pull the strings of collective cognition. We ignore the technical assemblages that shape the topography of labor in late capitalism at our peril. Coeckelbergh's 2011 essay could be enriched by reverse engineering consumer culture's economy of desire and shifting the spotlight from

sex to shopping. He seems taken by the eye candy on display in a market saturated with commodity aesthetics (Haug, 1971) and computational seductions, which don't always hold their libidinal promise. Impatience soars when unreliable laser scanners jam the automated checkouts lanes of the local discount shop.

Imaginaries climax and crash. Coeckelbergh wants us not to frame human-robot intercourse in masturbatory terms fearing that this diminishes its social valency. He favors a suspension of disbelief in which tender feeling for our robot other predominates. The insurance company restructuring cited above showed the workings of the imaginary – and its constructivist reach – in the relatively dour context of professional supervision. Human-robot hybridity in the workforce may or may not be in league with the human-robot dyad in the bedroom, or wherever eros natively thrives. Sexual interaction rituals (see Collins, 2004, chapter *Theory of Sexual Interaction*, pp. 223-257) can imply any number of localities, indoors and outdoors. Some love-nests impart an extra techno-tickle – trains, drive-ins, elevators, airplanes, or sex-texts on mobile phones. Can you conjure an arena of human experience more subject to the workings of the imagination than what takes place between the sheets, in ideal-typical enactment, or between tracks, car doors, toilet cubicles, chat accounts? Participants adopt poses subject to heat and friction. The admixture of imaginary attribution in the form of scene-setting, role-playing, fantasy figuration and so on makes for the titillating thrill that may bring about sexual deliverance. This transubstantiation of mere friction into sublime frisson may be a "ruse of nature," to speak with Kant. But this mastery of the forces of imagination is also a rapturous achievement of human civilization. May tongueless simulacra service the "cunning of reason," to end on a high Hegelian note as long as that furthers cyber-sybaritic ends.

REFERENCES

Alvaredo, F. (2018). *World Inequality Report*. Harvard University Press.

B2Bwhiteboard (2018, October 10). *Market Cannibalization – explained* [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0OrU8G-6gU

Balibar, É., & Laugier, S. (2014). Agency. In: B. Cassin, E. Apter, J. Lezra, & M. Woods (Eds.), *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon* (pp. 17-24). Princeton University Press.

Bar, F., Weber, M. S., & Pisani, F. (2016). Mobile Technology Appropriation in a Distant Mirror: Baroquization, Creolization, and Cannibalism. *New Media & Society*, *18*(4), 617-636. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816629474

Becker, H. S. (1986). *Doing Things Together*. Northwestern University Press.

Belting, H. (2005). *Garden of Earthly Delights*. Prestel.

Bergen, H. (2016). I'd Blush if I Could: Digital Assistants, Disembodied Cyborgs and the Problem of Gender. *A Journal of Literary Studies and Linguistics*, *6*(12), 95-113.

Biester, J. (1784). Schreiben über die kempelischen Schachspiel- und Redemaschinen. [Writing about the Kempel Chess and Speech Machines]. *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, 481-514. http://ds.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/viewer/image/2239816_004/513/

Bonner Kant-Korpus (n.d.). *Elektronische Edition der Gesammelten Werke Immanuel Kants* [Electronic Edition of the Collected Works of Immanuel Kant] (Akademieausgabe). https://korpora.zim.uni-duisburg-essen.de/kant/suche.html

Bourdieu, P. (1996). Understanding. *Theory, Culture and Society, 13*, 17-37. https://doi.org/10.1177/026327696013002002

Bourdieu, P. (1996-1997). Masculine Domination Revisited. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, *41*, 189-203.

Bourdieu, P. (2000). *Pascalian Meditations* (R. Nice, Trans.). Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2002). *Masculine Domination* (R. Nice, Trans.). Stanford University Press.

Braudel, F. (1979, 1982, 1984). *Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century*. Vol I-III. Harper & Row.

Canejo, C. (2006). The Resurgence of Anthropophagy. Tropicália, Tropicalismo and Hélio Oiticica. *Third Text*, *18*(1), 61-68. https://doi.org/10.1080/0952882032000182712

Caygill, H. (2000). *A Kant Dictionary*. Blackwell Publishing.

Coeckelbergh, M. (2011). You, robot: on the linguistic construction of artificial others. *AI & Society*, *26*(1), 61–69. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-010-0289-z

Coeckelbergh, M. (2017). *New Romantic Cyborgs, Romanticism, Information Technology, and the End of the Machine*. MIT Press.

Coeckelbergh, M. (2021). How to Use Virtue Ethics for Thinking About the Moral Standing of Social Robots: A Relational Interpretation in Terms of Practices, Habits, and Performance. *International Journal of Social Robotics*, *13*, 31–40. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12369-020-00707-z

Collins, H. M. (2010). *Tacit and Explicit Knowledge*. University of Chicago Press.

Collins, R. (2004). *Interaction Ritual Chains*. Princeton University Press.

Cook, P. J. and Frank, R. H. (2013). The Winner-Take-All Markets. *Studies in Microeconomics*, *1*(2), 131-154. https://doi.org/10.1177/2321022213501254

Crowell, C. R., Scheutz, M., Schermerhorn, P., & Villano, M. (2009). Gendered Voice and Robot Entities: Perceptions and Reactions of Male and Female Subjects. In *2009 IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems*, (pp. 3735-3741). IEEE. https://doi.org/10.1109/IROS.2009.5354204

Därmann, I. (2020). *Undienlichkeit, Gewaltgeschichte und politische Philosophie* [Unserviceability, History of Violence and Political Philosophy]. Matthes & Seitz.

Di Guilmi, C., Gaffeo, E., & Gallegati, M. (2003). Power Law Scaling in the World Income Distribution. *Economics Bulletin, 15*(6), 1-7.

Dodds A. E., Lawrence, J. A., & Valsiner, A. (1997). The Personal and the Social: Mead's Theory of the 'Generalized Other.' *Theory & Psychology*, *7*(4), 483-503. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354397074003

Douglas, M. (1996). *Thought Styles: Critical Essays on Good Taste*. Sage.

Favereau, O. (2019). The Economics of Convention: From the Practice of Economics to the Economics of Practice. *Historical Social Research*, *44*(1), 25-51. https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.44.2019.1.25-51

Feyerabend, P. (1987). Creativity: A Dangerous Myth. *Critical Inquiry*, *13*(4), 700-711.

Fleischer, R. (Director). (1973). *Soylent Green* [Film]. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Flynn, S. (Ed.). (2021). *The Body Onscreen in the Digital Age: Essays on Voyeurism, Violence and Power*. McFarland.
Fuller, S. (2018). *Post Truth. Knowledge as Power Game*. Anthem Press.
Fuller, S. (2020). *A Player's Guide to the Post-Truth Condition*. Anthem Press.
Galison, P. (2000). Accident of History. In: P. Galison & A. Roland (Eds.), *Atmospheric Flight in the Twentieth Century: Archimedes New Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology* (pp. 3-43). Kluwer Academic.
Galison, P. (2008). Ten Problems in the History and Philosophy of Science. *Isis*, *99*(1), 111-124.
Gombrich, E. H. (1969). Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights: A Progress Report. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, *32*(1), 162-170.
Gopstein, D., Fayard, A.-L., Apel, S., & Cappos, J. (2020). Thinking Aloud about Confusing Code. A Qualitative Investigation of Program Comprehension and Atoms of Confusion. *ESEC/FSE '20*, 605-616. https://doi.org/10.1145/3368089.3409714
Habermas, J. (2021). Überlegungen und Hypothesen zu einem erneuten Strukturwandel der politischen Öffentlichkeit [Reflections and Hypotheses on a Renewed Structural Change in the Political Public Sphere]. *Leviathan*, *37* (special issue), 476–506.
Haraway, D. (1991). A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. In: *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (pp. 149-183). Routledge. (Original work published in 1985)
Haug, W. F. (1971). *Kritik der Warenästhetik* [Critique of Commodity Aesthetics]. Suhrkamp.
Hayles, K. (2017). *Unthought: The Power of the Cognitive Nonconscious*. University of Chicago Press.
Hobsbawm, E. (1995). *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991*. Abacus.
Hohlfeld, R. (2020). Die Post-Truth Ära: Kommunikation im Zeitalter von gefühlten Wahrheiten und alternativen Fakten [The Post-Truth Era: Communicating in the Age of Perceived Truths and Alternative Facts]. In R. Hohlfeld (Ed.), *Fake News und Desinformation* (pp. 43-60). Nomos. https://doi.org/doi.org/10.5771/9783748901334
Kant, I. (1784a). Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht [Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose]. *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, 385-411. http://ds.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/viewer/toc/2239816/1/LOG_0000/
Kant, I. (1784b). Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung? [An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?] *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, 481-495. https://korpora.zim.uni-duisburg-essen.de/kant/aa08/033.html
Karamazov, S. (2020, November 27). *Kantbot – German Idealism* [Video]. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOdgbhbuAhg
Kenner, H. (1968). *The Counterfeiters: An Historical Comedy*. Indiana University Press.
Knight, B. A. (2000). Watch Me! Webcams and the Public Exposure of Private Lives. *Art Journal*, *59*(4), 21-25.

Lessing, T. (1919). *Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen* [History as Giving Meaning to the Meaningless]. Beck.
Lestringant, F. (1997). *Cannibals: the Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne*. Polity Press.
Levine, Y. (2018, July). All Eff'd Up. Silicon Valley's astroturf privacy shakedown. *The Baffler*, *40*, 44-64. https://thebaffler.com/salvos/all-effd-up-levine
Lévi-Strauss, C. (1952). *Race and history*. UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000002896
Levi-Strauss, C. (1992). *Tristes tropique*. Penguin. (Original work published 1955)
McIntyre, L. (2018). *Post Truth*. MIT Press.
Mead, G. H. (1949). Play, the Game and the Generalized Other. In L. Wilson & W. L. Kolb (Eds.), *Sociological Analysis* (pp. 187-194). Harcourt, Brace and Co.
Millikan, R. G. (1990). The Myth of the Essential Indexical. *Noûs*, *24*(5), 723-734.
Mitchell, S. W. (1857). The Last of a Veteran Chess Player. *The Chess Monthly*, *1*, 3-7, 40-45.
Mokyr, J. (2005). Long-term Economic growth and the History of Technology. In: P. Aghion, & S. N. Durlauf (Eds.), *Handbook of Economic Growth* (Vol. I, Part B, pp. 1113-1180). Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1574-0684(05)01017-8
Morris, E. (Director). (2003). *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara* [Film]. Sony Pictures Classics.
Müller-Sievers, H. (2013). [Review of the book *The Romantic Machine. Utopian Science and Technology after Napoleon*, by J. Tresch]. *Centaurus*, *55*(1), 50-52.
Munn, L. (2018). Alexa and the Intersectional Interface. *Angles*, *7*, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.4000/angles.861
Nigro, R. & Stubenrauch, H. (2021). Landnahme, Analog und Digital. Ursprüngliche Akkumulation in den Kontrollgesellschaften. *Behemoth: a Journal on Civilization*, *14*(2), 61-74. https://doi.org/10.6094/behemoth.2021.14.2.1060
Noble, L. (2011). *Medicinal Cannibalism in Early Modern English Literature and Culture*. Palgrave.
Perry, J. (1979). The Problem of the Essential Indexical. *Noûs*, *13*(1), 3-21.
Perry, J. (2020). *Revisiting the Essential Indexical*. Stanford University Press.
Polanyi, M. (1958). *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. University of Chicago Press.
Polanyi, M. (1966). *The Tacit Dimension*. University of Chicago Press.
Rafman, J. (2011). Codes of Honor. Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGjlJIzJ-iU
Ryle, G. (1945). Knowing How and Knowing That: The Presidential Address. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, *46*, 1–16.
Schaffer, S. (2001). Enlightened Automata. In: W. Clark, J. Golinski & S. Schaffer (Eds.), *The Sciences in Enlightened Europe* (pp. 126-165). The University of Chicago Press.
Schlicher, K. D., Schulte, J., Reimann, M., Maier, G. W (2021). Flexible, Self-Determined... and Unhealthy? An Empirical Study on Somatic Health Among

Crowdworkers. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.724966

Senft, T. M. (2008). *Camgirls: Celebrity and Community in the Age of Social Networks*. Peter Lang.

Siewierski, H. (2007). Utopia and Anthropophagy. Europe Beyond its Frontiers. *Third Text*, *21*(5), 499-508.

Simanowski, R. (2010). Digital Anthropophagy: Refashioning Words as Image, Sound and Action. *Leonardo*, *43*(2), 159-163.

Snyder, T. (2021, January 9). The American Abyss: A historian of fascism and political atrocity on Trump, the mob and what comes next. *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/magazine/trump-coup.html

Spengler, O. (1991). *Decline of the West.* Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1918)

Spengler, O. (1931). *Der Mensch und die Technik: Beitrag zu einer Philosophie des Lebens* [Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life]. Verlag C. H. Beck.

Sridhar Moorthy, K. & Png, I. P. L. (1992). Market Segmentation, Cannibalization, and the Timing of Product Introductions. *Management Science*, *38*(3), 345-359. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.38.3.345

Standage, T. (2002). *The Turk. The Life and Times of the Famous Eighteenth Century Chess Playing Machine*. Walker & Co.

Tresch, J. (2012). *The Romantic Machine. Utopian Science and Technology after Napoleon*. University of Chicago Press.

Viveiros de Castro, E. (2014). *Cannibal Metaphysics: for a Post-structural Anthropology*. Abacus.

von Xylander, C. (2018a). Gemüt. In P. Schneider & M. Lauschke (Eds.), *23 Manifeste zu Bildakt und Verkörperung* (pp. 77-88). De Gruyter.

von Xylander, C. (2018b). Pictorialism (Prelude & Fugue). In S. Schaffer, J. Tresch, & P. Gagliardi (Eds.), *Aesthetics of Universal Knowledge* (pp. 77-98). Springer International.

von Xylander, C. (2020). Karlsruhe Postmoderne: Das Mensch-Natur-Distanz-Festival [Karlsruhe Postmodernism: The Human-Nature-Distance Festival]. *Das Argument*, *334*(1), 134-142.

von Xylander, C. (2021). Déjà-coup-d'état-Erlebnis, *Das Argument*, 339(4) [in press].

von Xylander, C. (2022). Zur vollendeten Tatsache – Eine frankophone Kantkulturrezeption [The fait accompli – A francophone reception of Kant culture]. In C. von Xylander & A. Nordmann (Eds.), *Vollendete Tatsachen. Vom endgültig Vorläufigen und vorläufig Endgültigen in der Wissenschaft* (pp. 395-466). Transcript.

Wallerstein, I. (1991). Braudel on Capitalism, or Everything Upside Down. *The Journal of Modern History*, *63*(2), 354-361.

Wayne, M. (2014). *Red Kant. Aesthetics, Marxism and the Third Critique*. Bloomsbury.

Weibel, P. (2021). Art, Algorithmen, Artificial Intelligence. *Kunstforum International*, *278*, 76-87.

West, C. & Zimmerman, D. H. (2009). Doing Gender. *Gender and Society*, *23*(1), 112-122. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243208326529

West, M., Kraut, R., & Chew, H. E. (2019). *I'd blush if I could: closing gender divides in digital skills through education*. UNESCO, Programme and Meeting Document (173095). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000367416

Williams, T. D. & Bengtsson, J. O. (2020). Personalism. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford University. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism/

Wittgenstein, L. (2009). *Philosophical Investigations* (G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, & J. Schulte, Trans., rev. 4th ed., P. M. S. Hackler & J. Schulte, Eds.). Wiley-Blackwell.

Woods, H. S. (2018). Asking More of Siri and Alexa: Feminine Persona in Service of Surveillance Capitalism. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *35*(4), 334–349. https://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2018.1488082

Wrangham, R. (2009). *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*. Profile Books.

СВЕДЕНИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ / THE AUTHOR

Черис фон Ксайландер
cheryce.von_xylander@leuphana.de

Cheryce von Xylander,
cheryce.von_xylander@leuphana.de

Статья поступила 17 февраля 2022
одобрена после рецензирования 2 марта 2022
принята к публикации 10 марта 2022

Received: 17 February 2022
Revised: 2 March 2022
Accepted: 10 March 2021