

# Articulating Politics with Design and Technology: Public Space, Computation and Commoning

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# Hegemonic positions

(silent) pluralism + individual freedom

universalisation of Western democracy

→ “ideological resolution”

→ bureaucratic approach to politics

(A) large-scale development projects / hostile architectures



# Hegemonic positions

government [ (( (B) tech industry → smart city initiatives) ) ] citizens

city-wide transportation ? → individual data privacy ?



# Hegemonic positions

commoning: community and consensus-based decision making

→ (C) housing cooperatives

(ignorant of or hostile towards tech-industry solutionism)



# Hegemonic positions

commoning: community and consensus-based decision making

→ (D) engagement with technology informed by commoning politics



# Hegemony and Design

- (A) designed hegemony (unpleasant design)
- (B) data-driven governance (smart city)
- (C) commoning (self-organisation, independence and sustainability)
- (D) commoning (self-organised and technically-literate communities)



# Hegemony and Design

## counter-hegemonic voices

- Rancière, dissensus
- Mouffe, agonism

## propositions

- challenge accepted dichotomies
- acknowledge the affective dimension
- preserve visibility of excluded



# Designed Hegemony

inclusion → exclusion

- urban space as a kind of ‘agent of good manners’
- reduced need and cost of maintenance and surveillance of space







# Data-driven Governance

- decisions are made based on insights acquired by processing large amounts of data.
- supposes impartial and reasonable distribution of political powers;
- entrusts the decisions to a neutral system whose authority is based exactly on the data about everyday behaviour of citizens.
- simulation and decision making technologies sense the very possibility of conflict and resolve it before it occurs.
- transfers political responsibility onto technical systems (undeclared bias and reduced personal responsibility)



# Restart with Commoning

- more stable, resilient forms of governance
- early participation of future users

→ commoning and self-organisation in small housing cooperatives



# Restart with Commoning



# Restart with Commoning

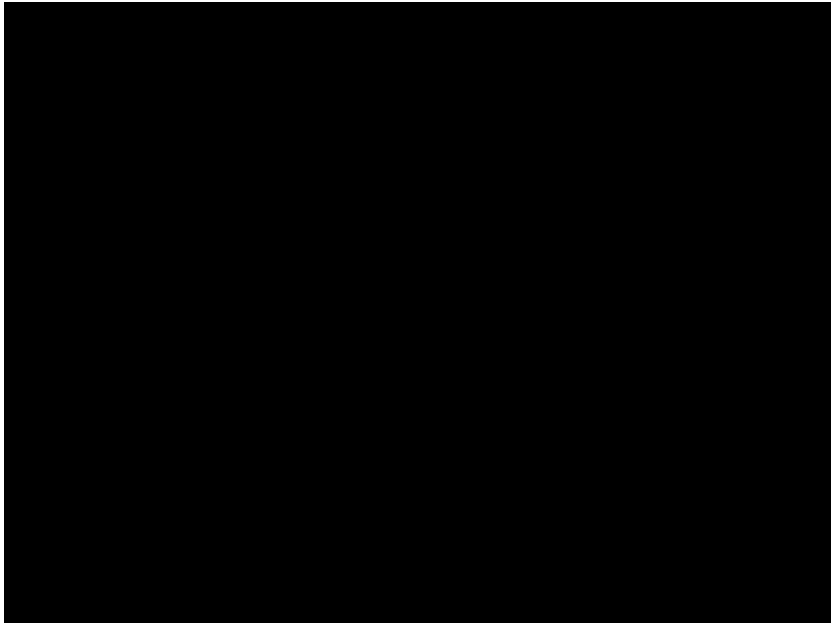
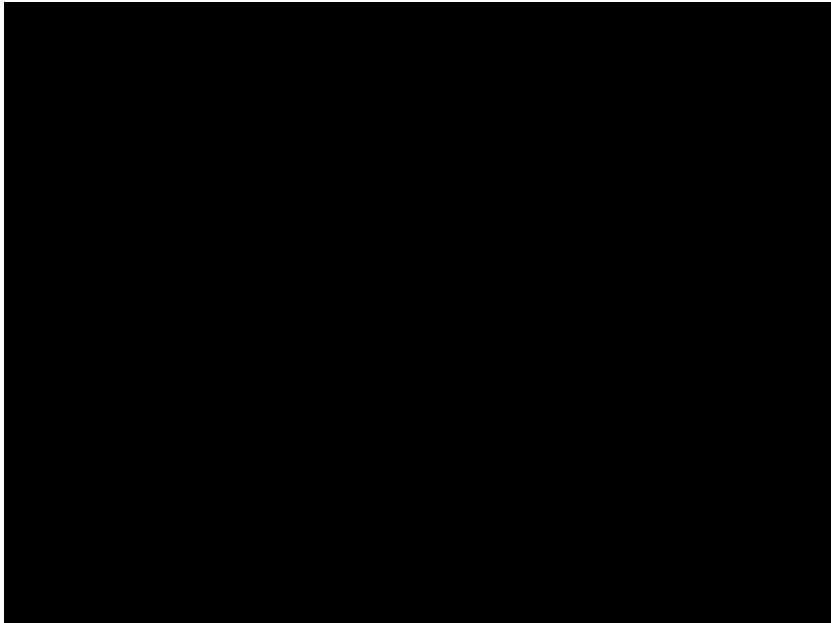
- more stable, resilient forms of governance
  - early participation of future users
- convivial tools and situated knowledge



# Thinking Toys

- demonstrate aspects of the dynamics of community life / commoning
- complexity → rhythmicity of maintenance task





Thinking Toys (or Games) for Commoning, <http://commoning.rocks>



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# Thinking Toys

- make explicit and reflect any assumptions we might hold about mechanisms and relationships in a community
- a co-design process of the model and playful experiences

→ tangible manifestations of future decisions that possibly lead to better understanding of the dynamics, mechanisms and complexities involved



# Articulating Alternatives

“[t]he knowledge of simulations is always furnished with a hypothetical index, and because various people model and simulate the same problem in various ways, what eventually emerges – instead of certainty – is an uncircumventable spectrum of opinions and interpretations. And it is to this degree that simulations contain an element of sophistry and take sides. Description, explanation and fiction come together in an experimental compound.”

Pias, Claus. „On the Epistemology of Computer Simulation“. Zeitschrift für Medien- und Kulturforschung 2011, Nr. 1 (May 2011): 29–54, here 52.



# Articulating Alternatives

counter-raving: a metaphor suggestive of ways to inhabit and occupy urban spaces

direct engagement with the negotiation process of commoning by affirming the possibility to use and perform technologies critically and playfully

**→ self-organised and technically-literate communities**



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