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**QT**

# **Gay Bombs**

**User's Manual**

includes instruction on how to use Queer Technologies



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**1**



# 1

## GETTING STARTED

When the US military attempted to pursue the creation of a gay bomb, homosexuality became a subjugated weapon of the nation-state. Homosexuality existed as a strategy to defeat the enemy. The gay bomb would be a bomb of shame—what the military called a “distasteful but completely non-lethal” blow to morale.”<sup>1</sup> The gay bomb shames the enemy, producing in its victims the very condition of capitulation that allows US military conquest (this condition the nation-state refers to as “homosexuality”). The US military has defined homosexuality as so abject that engaging in these acts will even bring combatants of war to their knees willfully surrendering. The gay bomb reveals a more complex positioning of the homosexual within US government standards and regulations: the homosexual as failed terrorist, defeating oneself through moral bankruptcy. Each homosexual is a living gay bomb, a time bomb, an almost-detonated suicide bomb.

The initialization of the gay bomb generates a complex dialectic of homosexual existence and agency. First, as the gay bomb produces the homosexual not as target but as target-already-hit, a larger socio-political war emerges with the homosexual marked as inclusion and exclusion. The nation-state interpellates the homosexual as helpless, perverted enemy unable to control inevitable defeat: the homosexual unworthy of society; the homosexual as already blown up. Second, the nation-state reabsorbs elements of conservative homosexual culture to allude its (ab)use of homosexuality-in-general. Homonationalists<sup>2</sup>, as defined by Jasbir Puar, assume that by aligning with a conservative nationalist agenda homosexuality is excused by patriotism—and mainstream culture does nothing but reinforce this assumption, spinning out re-runs of Will and Grace for the whole family and Gay.com ads with men swaddled in American flags. Yet, no one escapes the gay bomb when detonated—impact, explosion, implosion. Every homosexual pays the price of the enemy. This dialectic of homosexuality as defiled Other and welcomed nationalist builds the very materials that hold the gay bomb intact with little or no questioning. The gay bomb suspends the homosexual in a feedback loop: the homosexual supports and builds the bomb, and the homosexual is blown up by the bomb.

Gay Bombs are not gay bombs. Gay Bombs explode, implode, attack, malfunction, perhaps kill—but their materiality exceeds the configurations of any tactical bomb of warfare and detonation. Gay Bombs produce a strategy that posits the queer as the bomb itself, that is, Gay Bombs ultimately follow the logic of the queer (as separate from the already exploded homosexual) and not the military. As Galloway and Thacker write, “the best way to fight an enemy is to become a better enemy.”<sup>3</sup> Gay Bombs constitute an architectural topology of strategy and survival for homosexuals that operate as a bomb against the gay bomb. Gay Bombs are queer bombs. Gay Bombs and gay bombs diverge in numerous ways but what unites them in common is existence as weapon. Use this manual as a weapon.

Here, in this manual, Gay Bombs are outlined, explaining a “how to” of queer political action through the understanding, use, and distribution of Queer Technologies.

Use this manual for queer community building and world-making (networks). Use this manual for developing Queer Technologies. Use this manual for constructing a new queer politics of war.

If war is technological, perpetual, and networked, queer networks can provide interstices—places of difference that unite queer activists, intellectuals, and artists in technological agency. The gay bomb detonates a regulatory standard for homosexuality. Gay Bombs is a strategy that blows up this standard with the hopes of re-wiring a non-standard of queerness. Gay Bombs explode into interstices of infinite mutation.

## **WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION**

Gay Bombs is a product of Queer Technologies. Queer Technologies operates at the intersections of consumerism, activism, and art, existing simultaneously as company, activist group, and art collective.

**Visit us at [www.queertechnologies.info](http://www.queertechnologies.info) for more information on our line of products and lifestyle solutions.**

**Queer Technologies offers:**

- **biopolitical support**
- **temporary autonomous zones**
- **informatic and electronic civil disobedience packages**
- **viral infection plans**
- **anti-language workshops**
- **shop dropping strategies**
- **component theory classes**
- **quasi-object consultation and fabrication**

## **DISIDENTIFYING WITH TECHNOLOGY**

After Alan Turing, it appears that technological standards attempt to determine the human condition. The reinscription of binary logic onto Turing's body resulted in his death—another suicide bomb, another gay bomb. Technology binds life to the rhetoric of militaristic desire and corporate capital: technology is here to make our lives better for the greater good of society and to protect us from everything bad. Technological standards box us into a life capital wants us live. A life of hyper-consumption predicated on the need for always newer technologies. A life of heteronormative networked power, where Steve Jobs is the smiling (white, heterosexual, capitalist) face behind a company that “thinks different.” A life of imported family photos and children's 1st birthday parties (literally, iLife). Importantly, a life where possibilities and decisions are made by a heteronormative elite before the queer user ever turns the computer on. Nothing on the computer is ever user-friendly.

Disidentifying with technology is an exploit. In Muñoz's own words: “Disidentifications is meant to be descriptive of the survival strategies the minority subject practices in order to negotiate a phobic majoritarian public sphere that continuously elides or punishes the existence of subjects who do not conform to the phantasm of normative citizenship.”<sup>4</sup> Disidentifying with technology cuts open interstices that form the groundwork of Queer Technologies.

## **SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS**

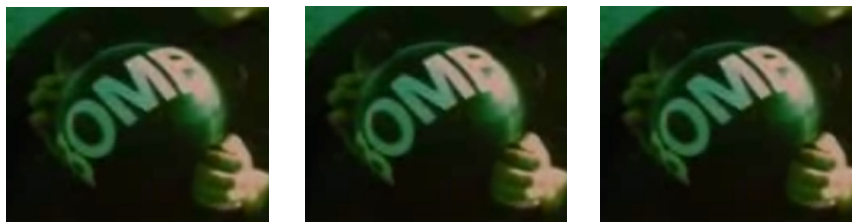
If queerness has been historically and culturally excluded from technologies as exceptions or errors, codes must be rewritten. The disconnect between queerness and technology is a disconnection. Technology—always already cultural, always already gendered—is male or female, hole or pin, zero or one. The universal discrete machine is a mistake. There are no life universals.

The disidentifying subject must find ways to connect to technology. Disidentification recycles and rethinks encoded meaning. “Disidentifications is a step further than cracking open the code of the majority; it proceeds to use this code as raw material for representing a disempowered politics or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture.”<sup>5</sup>

We can think of disidentifying as a hacker strategy. If possibilities are determined by technical standards, then a locus of power must reside within programmed hardware. The queer who disidentifies with technology locates this power within hardware as code, rewrites / hacks / infects / mutates this code, and recodes the entire technological apparatus as a result. We must think of coding here at the technical level and beyond: computer codes, language codes, cultural codes, political codes, biological codes, commercial codes. While the disidentifying subject may recode technology only at the technical level, this act still produces, reveals, generates codes of disidentification in all spheres a given technology resides (hence, life-in-general). This act of exploiting, hacking, disidentifying flows in multiple directionalities, for disidentifications do not exist as an absolute Other outside of the normative public sphere but work within and outside simultaneously. Disidentifying with technology spirals into all facets of life and therefore becomes a biopolitical tactic. Disidentifying is a survival strategy.

## **INSTALLING**

Disidentifying with technology is its own machine. It computes all technological artifacts as quasi-objects that are encoded culturally and technically. Running the machine is an act of scanning. Locate the point / peak of disconnection and exploit it. The machine installs possibilities of difference within the existent. Disidentify, recode, recirculate. The Disidentifying Machine builds the primary components of the struggle (war) for queer technological agency.





## WHAT IS QUEER TECHNOLOGIES?

The above query will not be answered. Simply, Queer Technologies could be defined as political tools for queer technical agency, but this definition erases the complexities of the disidentifying subject's relationships to technologies. This question ultimately offers examples—possibilities—with no ontological grounding. Queer Technologies will never be ontologically grounded. Perhaps a statement by Deleuze is what we must keep in mind: "Technology is social before it is technical."<sup>6</sup>

As life becomes further infused with technology at every level of existence, formations of body and identity bear the mark of technological networks, systems, and machines. Specifically, biological / technological intersections have formed not only new representations and expressions of gender and sexuality but have also created them. To borrow a concept from Judith Halberstam, "mutual mutation" is the constant process that unites space, flesh, and technology in a "technopic vision."<sup>7</sup>

As technology precariously balances between corporate power structures and sub-cultural activism, how are we being marked / signified / erased? If, historically and traditionally, technological progress has been rooted in heteronormative discourse, are all bodies bound to heterosexual control and ideology? If not, how do marginalized bodies react to / resist these power paradigms and reconfigure them? These are the questions that Queer Technologies must ask.

The discourse of queer theory operates as a rhetoric of freedom for those positioned outside of heteronormative configurations. Queer theory moves beyond discourses of sexuality and gender to approach larger "way[s] of life . . . strange temporalities, imaginative life schedules, and eccentric economic practices."<sup>8</sup>

Nicolas Bourriaud echoes the "aesthetic" of this work through his explanation of the "social interstice": appropriating the Marxist use of the term in trading communities, the interstice—within Bourriaud's philosophy of relational aesthetics—"is a space in human relations which fits more or less harmoniously and openly into the overall system, but suggests other trading possibilities than those in effect within this system."<sup>9</sup> Within a queer discourse, the interstice can manifest in various modes: at the site of the body; within the materiality of an object; and in the use and execution of language. Queer Technologies addresses how queers and queerness mutate technology to create social interstices for connectivity and communication.

## **SYSTEM CONFIGURATIONS**

As an opening—an interstice—the practices of disidentification mutate new freedoms and lines of flight. If Deleuze has defined our time as a control society—a modulation that is a transmutation, “continually changing from one moment to the next [. . .] one point [dot] to another,” disidentifications interfere with this “universal transmutation.”<sup>10</sup> Its exploitative strategy allows codes of control to not compile and execute.

As ideas flow like data through cables, it is who intercepts and mutates information that has the possibility to make change. As queer bodies intercept and struggle with control codes, everything becomes automated. Deleuze writes, “in control societies you never finish anything”<sup>11</sup>—everything is processual and automated for mutation. In constant transmutation with technological codes of power, gender is revealed as a technology and technology as gendered. Queer Technologies can provide both new and hacked passwords to free the most perverse of possibilities that contemporary control societies desperately want secured and encrypted.

f “people are lines”<sup>12</sup> and queer technological practice “is a dot on a line,”<sup>13</sup> then, as more dots are generated, mutations and pathways of flight emerge from the structure of the line, producing “an open, flexible array of total possibilities.”<sup>14</sup>

Queer Technologies searches for a password to the sublime of destruction—to be specific, destroying heteronormative, heterosexist technological control, so that one may find endless possibilities for the question—What is queer technology?

## **COMPONENT THEORY, OR DISIDENTIFYING WITH THEORY**

Galloway and Thacker write, “Today, to write theory means writing code.”<sup>15</sup> Any investigation of queerness and technology requires divergent approaches that include an amalgamation of technical and theoretical knowledge: critical theory, political theory, media theory, queer theory, science studies in collaboration with digital logic, computer programming, electronics, design software, operating systems—a potentially never-ending list. As Deleuze said, “No theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall.”<sup>16</sup> A framework for Queer Technologies must build new circuits, constructions, and mutations—theoretically, artistically, formally—always residing within Deleuze’s notion of “a system of relays [. . . containing] a multiplicity of parts that are both theoretical and practical.”<sup>17</sup>

Queer Technologies calls this methodology Component Theory, as it takes pieces from a variety of methods and styles to generate something “new.” Component Theory builds a new code to work from, yet a code continuously in flux and redefinition, just as power and control are never fixed but always in flux. Component Theory builds queer bodies: the disidentifying subject becomes a nexus of erratic cultural components that generate an entire cultural existence bound within a body. The cultural networks of Component Theory that run through the queer body instigate the initiation of biological mutation—new components of flesh. Component Theory builds a topological strategy for political action. Component Theory builds Gay Bombs.

Combining various modes of knowledge production, Component Theory produces iterations of knowledge, fully embracing interdisciplinary tactics that relay between theory and practice. In response to Deleuze, Foucault says theory is practice. Component Theory is practice as a struggle against forms of power.

## **OPTIMIZING PERFORMANCE**

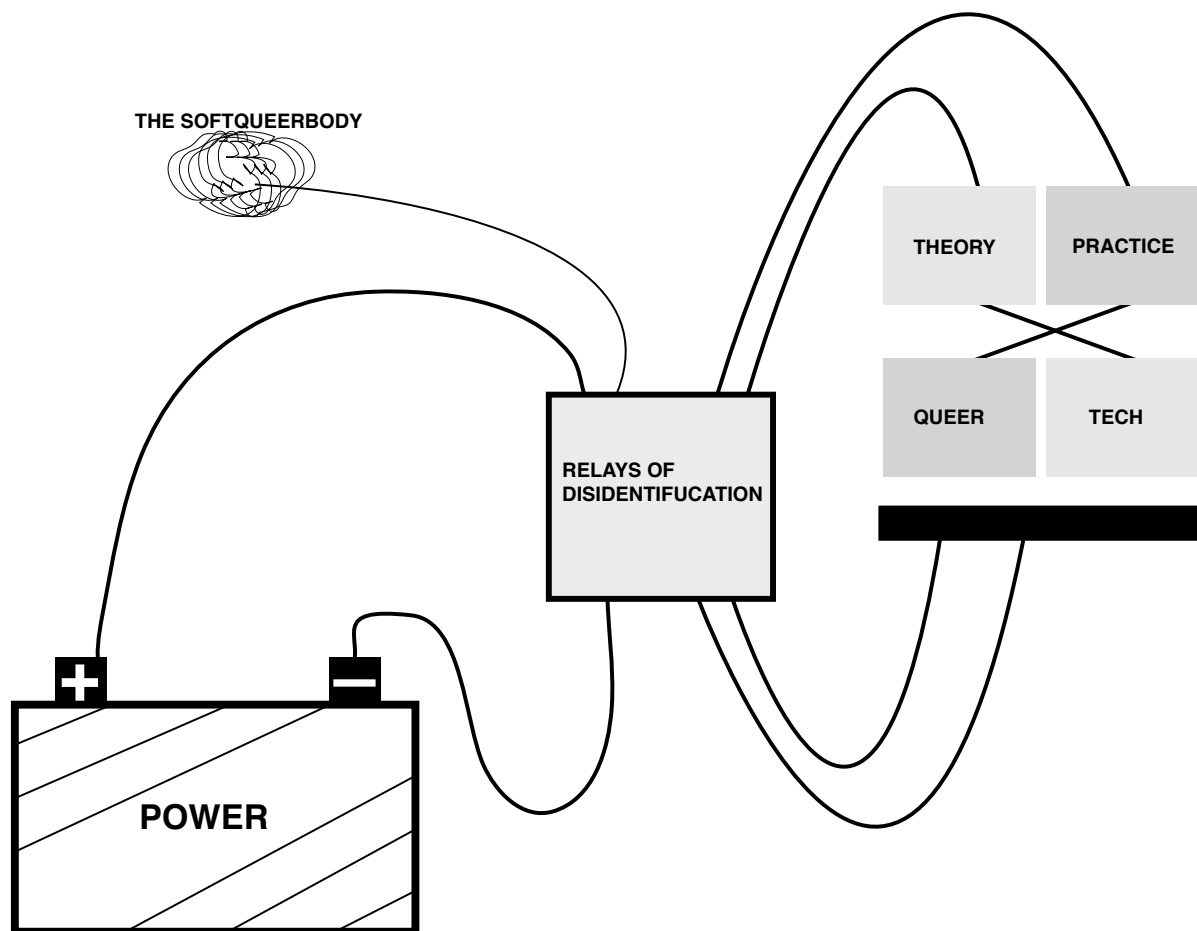
Component Theory disidentifies with normative, classical theoretical approaches, frameworks, and methodologies.

Component Theory connects to anything that works any way necessary. Component Theory thrives on paradox, oxymoron, the unconnectable, the impossible.

This manual teaches Component Theory. If, as Foucault says, theory is a struggle against forms of power, then the teaching of theory exemplifies Foucault’s idea of theory as practice. Teaching becomes another tool in Deleuze’s toolbox that gives agency to a collective (a network, multitude, swarm), performing Foucault’s suggestion that a theory as practice aims at “revealing and undermining power where it is most invisible and insidious.”<sup>18</sup> Teaching, therefore, is equipped with the ability to operate as activism, for knowledge provides agency and agency can transform mass perceptions of reality. To participate in this struggle is another multiplicity in the relay of knowledge production, flowing between the constructed boundaries of theory and practice. Component Theory instructs as biopolitical strategy. Component Theory and the Disidentifying Machine are interlockable, unlockable assemblages. Each writes the other’s code simultaneously. These codes—intertwined, double helix—build the materiality of Gay Bombs.

## Component Theory Relays

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## TROUBLESHOOTING

Determine a given technology's coding language. That is, what is its socio-linguistic coding orientation? How does language—code—gain power and execute within a technological apparatus? What are the biopolitical consequences of these performative utterances?

How does a technology function in the world? What does the notion of functionality convey? How is functionality antithetical to the user?

Does a technological tool's political economy regulate and / or exclude? What exchange does one make to gain access to a particular technology?

What is the value of a technological good? What is at stake in this value? How does the value regulate the world? What is the queer value?

How does desire want to use? That is, what does the queer user desire a technology to do? How does / can queer desire manifest in technology?

What is required to break a technology? Does breaking affect functionality? How necessary is breaking for the production of Queer Technologies? Does breaking provide agency or further inhibit its viability?

How can queer users live life as a multitude of Gay Bombs?



**2**





# 2

## UNDERSTANDING QUEER TECHNOLOGICAL STRATEGY

### THE GAY BOMB

The conception of the Gay Bomb began in 1994, the same year the Wright Laboratory in Ohio produced a proposal for the United States Air Force on constructing a gay bomb.

The Gay Bomb is a hacked concept, intercepting flows and signals of terrorist paranoia, networked fear, distributed warfare, and homophobic weaponry. Gay Bombs can be considered a reverse discourse, a reinscription—literally, a queer terrorist networked assemblage, plotting the redeployment of new technologically queer meanings, vulnerabilities, and sensibilities. Gay Bombs take on the climate of their cultural production in order to more effectively subvert the US Air Force's original goal of developing a gay bomb.

Gay Bombs emerge from a sabotaged topological strategy and build new architectures from this detritus. Gay Bombs are executions of queer political strategy.

### ***A HISTORY (OR HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE THE BOMB)***



Conception goes back further. Even if the hormonal gay bomb was never built, another has always existed in culture.

Start at 1964. Dr. Strangelove and nuclear mass destruction. The title alone says everything: Dr. Strangelove, or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb. OR the One Who Loves Strangely Must Internalize the Bomb to Survive. Before the gay bomb, the homosexual had already successfully become an explosive device. This is literalized by a textual reading of the *Enola Gay*, where "gay" is transcribed onto the aircraft, securing its survival in the Hiroshima bombing of 1945.

Back. 1961. Basil Dearden's film *Victim* is the first motion picture to openly deal with homosexuality in the UK, where Dirk Bogarde drives a young homosexual man to suicide at the possibility of publicly revealing his orientation. Another capitulation.

1978. Derek Jarman's 2nd major film *Jubilee* opens at the height of the punk scene in Britain. During an intimate moment of heterosexual intercourse between a young woman and a police officer, Bod—the leader of Jubilee's queer punk group—bombs their house, shouting "No Future!" This moment of Jubilee resonates with Lee Edelman's *No Future*. Edelman writes of the sinthomosexual, a conflux of queer existence predicated on the death drive: violent pleasure moving toward death and nothing else.<sup>19</sup> Jubilee is a Gay Bomb. Queers have never been granted a future, so we embrace our No Future with the explosion of a bomb—a bomb that is and is not our body exploding along with the world around us.





**"No Future" bombing, Jubilee**

1981. On December 1st, HIV is recognized for the first time. Homosexuality groups itself together as one networked ticking time bomb. Victims unite in the countdown to a definitive No Future. The question becomes: is homosexuality the largest suicide bomb the world will ever know?

1986. The Smiths release "Ask." In whimsical wisps of Brit Pop finesse, Morrissey croons, "If it's not love then it's the bomb that will bring us together." Here, the bomb becomes the material that builds queer communities. Amalgamations of "No Future!" detonations form and bind queer life. For The Smiths, love will never work; there is only the time until the bomb explodes and the pleasure this produces. In the "Ask" music video, a motley group of teenagers joyfully throws a bomb about. Love may be dismissed, but the threat of destruction (inside bodies and out) offers intimacy. The Gay Bomb is queer love.



love and the bomb, Ask video, The Smiths

1999. A nail bomb explodes in front of the Admiral Duncan, a gay bar in London, resulting in injury and death. The gay bomb refuses the homosexual a stabilized place / space in the world. The logic of the gay bomb erases homosexual permanence. If homosexuality is long-lasting, then it must be blown up. A well-known bar first, and then if it re-opens, go for the manager. David Morley, the manager of the Admiral Duncan in 1999, is murdered by a group of teenagers in 2004.<sup>20</sup>

### ***BOMB AS BIOPOLITICAL***

While the Admiral Duncan marks an interlude to the point of birth of the Gay Bomb, the de-faced USS Enterprise GBU-31 JDAM that hit Afghanistan in October 2001 inaugurates its existence within the world. Before deployment, a US Navy Sailor tagged the bomb with "High Jack This Fags."<sup>21</sup> Again, the military understands positioning the dreaded and feared non-Western terrorist as "fag" as victory guaranteed. Fags like to be penetrated, so here's the ultimate in penetrating pleasure.

The determination of the bomb equated with militaristic homophobia results in a multiplicitous mass destruction: the murdered Afghans and the desired-to-be-murdered fags. When the gay bomb becomes an unquestioned struggle over life and death, it becomes a weapon of biopower—an explosion of sovereignty.<sup>22</sup>

The moment a bomb is inscribed with intentions of the mass destruction of "fags," a counter-bomb produces itself within the queer imaginary. This counter-bomb—the Gay Bomb—is biopolitical in that it uses bodies and life as weapons. Gay Bombs, consisting of a queer multitude, are living. The defacement of the Gay Bomb reads, "Hi Jack This Queers." Gay Bombs intercept power—at the risk of life and death—to re-wire control structures for queer use.

## **HARDWARE SETUP AND CONFIGURATION**

While Gay Bombs will always consist of bodies and life, they also expand into a materialism of everything. That is, the Gay Bomb materializes through queer bodies but can take any form necessary. The production of its hardware and configuration can only be specified in general: Gay Bombs take shape only in their deployment. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has articulated that queerness must always be in relation / tension with the normal. Queerness in a vacuum or queerness as impermeable form does not exist. Therefore, Gay Bombs materialize only in relation to something (their target). This is how Gay Bombs become queer bombs. If configuration is always based on target, wiring becomes the topology—the political map, the logic of the bomb's integrated circuit. Wiring in relation to target simultaneously builds and deploys Gay Bombs. The political act is executed by the logic of its map, and the SoftQueerBody<sub>23</sub> crystallizes in hardware at a specific point in time and space.

## **INSTALLING**

Friedrich Kittler has stated that fiber optic networks are immunized against the bomb. Thus, "optical fibers can transmit any imaginable message but the one that counts—the one about the bomb."<sup>24</sup> The Gay Bomb's materialism of everything is bound by nothing other than materiality itself. Gay Bombs move easily through boundaries, and like AIDS, there is no immunization against infection. They flow elated and unchecked through the very fiber optic networks they plan to attack. These networks willingly transmit its message and bring about their own collapse. A form a terrorist drag, Gay Bombs are like the female Algerian resistance fighters in *The Battle of Algiers*: the material instantiations of their bodies conceal the bombs they possess—indeed, their bodies become part of the bomb itself; this mutated materiality of the bomb allows for free flow through traffic in highly surveilled regions. Installation of a Gay Bomb is always a welcomed trespass.



**terrorist drag, *The Battle of Algiers***

## **DEPLOYING**

Gay Bombs do not create new channels of transmission; they use those already in existence. Galloway and Thacker write that “counterprotocol practices can capitalize on the homogeneity found in networks to resonate far and wide with little effort.”<sup>25</sup> If Gay Bombs are a form of counterprotocol—that is, interventions within standards of technological control, their successful deployment resides in the fullest exploit possible of the networks they travel through for detonation. In networks of capital, the common logic of production and consumption offers deployment strategies. Gay Bombs as commercial consumables exploit the standardization of product to explode the whole world market. In militaristic networks, strategies of conquest, destruction, and defense produce anticipated paranoid fear and expected death through the violence of the weapon. Gay Bombs deploy as warheads to intercept state-sponsored terror so that queers may actually become the terrorist. Gay Bombs as weapons of mass destruction: this bomb makes queers fuck jubilantly, re-wiring the military's No (Queer) Future promise to the “No Future!” of queer jouissance. Deployments of Gay Bombs are living erratic viruses.

As deployment constructs life, the circulation of Gay Bombs mutates and multiplies as it spreads throughout networks of the world. Gay Bombs are always already alive in every network—always already deployed, always already dormant. When deployment is activated, a crystallization forms as the materialization of Queer Technologies' discourse: an assemblage—a bomb—with a long detonation wire that, when lit, burns from interiority to interiority. Deployment exposes the living Gay Bombs thriving in all network formations. Deployment is permuted ontology.

## **EXPLOSION**

When a gay bomb explodes, heterosexuals have homosexual sex to surrender to power. In “Is the Rectum a Grave?” Leo Bersani defines the sexual as that which “emerges as the jouissance of exploded limits” that is, as soon as persons are positioned within a certain sexual orientation, a “war begins” formulated upon the ways in which bodies exercise power in their sexual roles.<sup>26</sup> Bersani suggests that “self-shattering”<sup>27</sup> is a necessary constituent to enter into sexual relations with another. Self-shattering—losing sight of self, evacuating value of selfhood—explodes into “practice[s] of nonviolence.”<sup>28</sup> Queer sexuality is a politics of self-shattering. The gay bomb initializes a superficial shattering of self, which produces the appearance of nonviolence but actually executes violence with hyperbolic acumen.



The explosion of the Gay Bomb is a self-shattering. Its explosion confuses power relations, positionality, and orientation, leaving queer users enmeshed with target and at the same time in a sublime state of "solipsistic jouissance."<sup>29</sup> The Gay Bomb empties the target's self and loads it with queer desire. At the time of explosion, target and queer perform a practice of self-shattering nonviolence. As the Gay Bomb shatters, shrapnel, detritus, body parts, the very discourse of Queer Technologies explodes into the world. While each Gay Bomb recodes its target, the target also recodes the Gay Bomb (and hence, the queer detonator).

The explosion of the Gay Bomb should be thought of as sublime jouissance. It becomes the point where identities collapse in pleasure and pain to re-calibrate the understanding and functioning of the self. Explosion makes meaning painfully / pleasurably apparent: the holes of bodies, the holes of targets hit, the holes of technological accuracy, the holes of political certainty all become visible / visualized—a visibility burned into the world by the force of a queer multitude that has abandoned self for sublime self-shattering. The explosion's impact on the physical world is a radical reconfiguration of a target's selfhood. A target hit is denied ontologies and epistemological structuring—material form. It is only given a construction of existing and organizing from the self-shattering shards of Gay Bomb fucking (exploding).

### ***IMPLOSION***

A target's form—post explosion—is a subtraction, an absence. If the Gay Bomb only materializes at the point of deployment and explosion, afterward, the nothingness of the bomb leaves a marked but emptied thing. The self of the target regenerates itself in this absence. Holes and tears recompose. The Gay Bomb's stain of absence upon the target, consisting of microscopic particles of queer living flesh, regenerates an inversion. The form of the target-hit eats itself inside out—the complete implosion of the original target simultaneously creates the mutated target—a new Gay Bomb. The explosion of Gay Bomb, the implosion of gay bomb.







**3**



# 3

## PREFERENCES AND PRESETS

After the shock and awe of the Gay Bomb, momentarily blinded by the implosion of meaning, we reflexively ask: how have we arrived here—at this point of action—with the weight of war molding us into new forms? If Gay Bombs contain / are life, what are the risks of lives as Gay Bombs? What impels life to carry the uncertainty of these risks?

### SETTING GENERAL PREFERENCES

The fulcrum of the Gay Bomb apparatus rests at the contingencies of agency. Agency-in-general does not exist; there is only a Foucaultian microphysics of agency: sub-clauses and categories enmeshed within varying points of access and restriction. One, at best, can only possess fractured agency. Thus, the Gay Bomb deploys over the battle for technological agency. In times of networked globalization and perpetual war, technological agency reads as a code red threat: gaining technological agency generates decryption points for other micro-agencies.

The preferences and presets of technology determine agency. The preferences and presets of technology have never been queer.

As queer communities, networks, worlds filter through fiber optics (become digital), technology constructs a meta-politics, that is, queerness becomes branded through a larger technological apparatus that is predicated on corporate capital and military.

## **(DE)REGULATIONS**

If formal technological properties (already and always embodied as regulatory and deregulatory) pre-determine queer digital communication, how do these methods of communication subordinate or liberate queer networking, knowledge production, digital identities, and epistemological transmutations? What happens to the queer being when it becomes inexplicably interlocked with ideologies, performativities, and circulations of corporate capitalism through digital communication, consumption, and representation? Does the digital make the queer being a regulatory subject, a deregulated assemblage, or both? The technological queer becomes a potentially politically ambiguous assemblage of regulation and deregulation.

## **REGULATIONS**

Tropes of queerness as non-teleological, de-stabilized, and without ontologies reconfigure and struggle against ossification through the rigidities of technological standardizations. Various beings, laws, things, and matter that construct tech standards like RFCs, programming logic and language, hardware connectivity and replication as well as internet protocols such as TCP/IP subordinate queer users into a highly contested zone of control, freedom, agency, and exploitation. Reading tech standards through the “non-standards” of queerness calls into question the vary notion of what it means (or does not mean) to be queer in high-tech times.

### ***Using System Presets***

The question breaks down to: what causes the evisceration of queerness in digital technology?

### ***Protocol***

Protocol is the fundamental structures that control a given technology. Alex Galloway has discussed protocol on the internet as maintaining a highly rigid control structure to allow for a seemingly un-controlled user experience. This opening—a space of differentiation between total control and controlled agency—is the space where queerness will first attempt to develop and mobilize itself. Can the regulated openness of protocol provide access to queerness? If queerness in protocol materializes as visibility and interaction, how does this avoid a larger regulation by the meta-politics of technology?

Protocol produces queer protocol. Gay Bombs are queer protocol. Knowing protocol gives technological agency, which is the ability to build Gay Bombs.

## ***Standards***

Standards are crystallized circulations of culture that extend beyond the purely technical. Standards are the cultural conditions that produce protocol. Standards appear as technological truism to conceal their cultural constructions. The production of a "common" standard for mass consumption produces a multiplicitous collapse of complexity into a generic monolithic singularity (user-friendly).

"Think Different." Apple's branding slogan results in a standardization of thinking differently. The dialectic of Apple and Windows allows for one to think differently only in opposition to the other. The "thinking" that is executed within and by an Apple product is an act of "thinking Apple," that is, one does not think differently but thinks "different" (read: Apple). There is no equation of difference built into the logic (standards) of "Think Different."

To think differently would be a non-standard. Queer users must intervene with the production of standards and protocol simultaneously to vie for technological agency.

## ***Subjugation***

Subjugation happens from conception to production to consumption, but if subjugation implies an element of force, it occurs en masse after consumption through use and interaction. Subjugation can be the most "visible" form of regulation in that it does not necessarily require technical knowledge to know that it is happening. When technologies do not permit what we desire them to do, we become subjugated to the standards and protocols of the entity (company) that produced the technology in use: we use and interact in their way, not our own.

Ultimately, our subjugation is the direct result of monetary flows—profit not function. This moment of restricted inability splits the possibilities of agency: those that do not care and are compliant with their subjugation, those attempting reconfigurations, and those that are not even aware of their situation.

Queers that agitate technological subjugation will produce friction between standards and protocol. Queers that explode technological subjugation will produce / locate deregulations.

## **DEREGULATIONS**

Deregulations are queer imaginaries—desires that have become charged by a life that is always plugged in and yet always disconnected. Deregulations are inherent to technology; it is a question of how to gain access—through conceptual flaw, production error, hacking, disidentifying. As the queer user engages with deregulations, a mutation between the two produces queer technological agency.

If deregulations can be discovered or configured, the first question of interrogation asks what is already queer about technology. Followed by: how locatable is this queerness? Do deregulations always call for the knowledge of the technologist? If there is never a stable entry point into a deregulation, can any strategy consistently gain access?

The impossibility of these questions solders deregulations with knowledge production. Knowledge paradigms shift technological structures. Thus, active engagement with contemporary generations of knowledge provides robust possibilities of locating deregulations. A neo-luddite position is not a viable possibility for political agency in our technological times. Disidentifying with technology is queer knowledge production. Deregulations are a discursive and material instantiation of this process. Deregulations do not destroy technological progress but instead use / hack / exploit for queer survival.

### ***Creating, Editing, and Deleting Presets***

Gay Bombs explode from deregulations, and Gay Bombs explode into deregulations. How do technological deregulations restructure knowledge production (re-form / de-form the queer user and technology-in-use)?

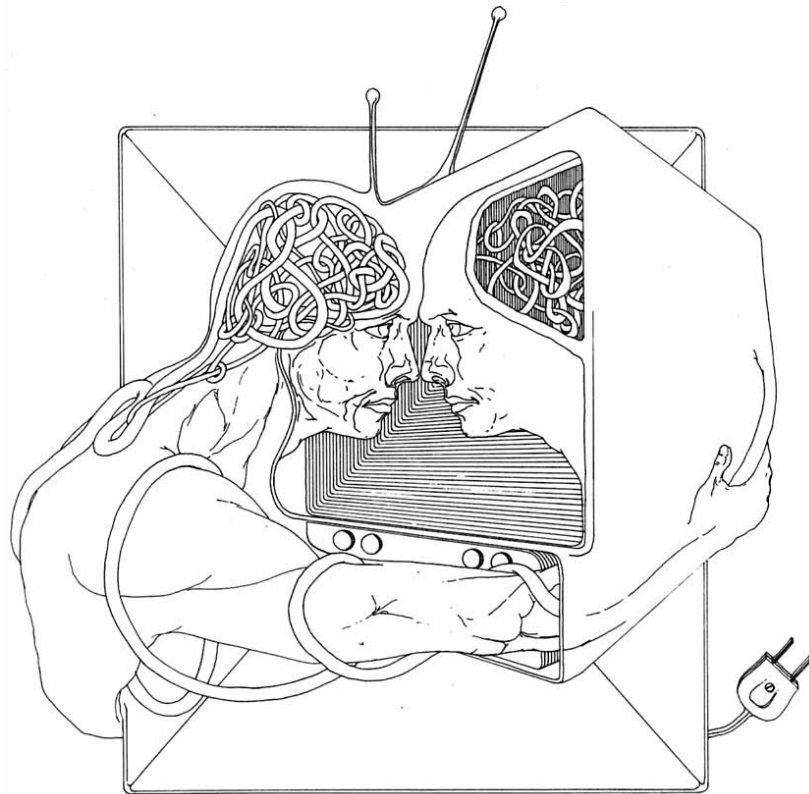
### ***Mutual Mutation***

To re-state Judith Halberstam's concept, "mutual mutation" is the constant process that unites space, flesh, and technology in a "technotopic vision."<sup>30</sup> As mutual mutation deregulates (a Gay Bomb explodes), material forms collapse in space and time, self-shattering the boundaries that constitute their existence in the world. Necessarily, mutual mutation works against notions of human-centered construction: the determination of life fluctuates between not only how we build and use our technologies but how our technologies build and use us. Mutual mutation changes life on all levels, reinforcing the Gay Bomb as biopolitical.



### ***Posthuman Ways of Being***

Posthuman formations debunk simulated nostalgias of human purity. Today, assuming a humanist stance actually subtracts agency. Existence as posthuman is cybernetics: the position of co-evolving feedback loops. The posthuman has always been shaped / defined by the shifting perceptions enacted by human and technological mutual mutations. Embodying the posthuman exposes a new material—beyond skin—that holds a body together. This encasement of nonstasis is always porous, anticipating the human's constant genesis as nonhuman, beyond human. Flows of deregulation pour through the holes / spaces of differentiation of the posthuman body. The posthuman is always an embodied form of knowledge production, deregulating the body to become / un-become in forms that push past regulations. These forms are always tactics of impurity that the pure, humanist body can never access.



### ***The Terrorist***

The terrorist defines itself by mutating with organizations and methodologies. The formation of the terrorist always exists in relation to its target(s); therefore, the terrorist can never exist in-and-of-itself and only materializes through specified political action. Unlike the British Redcoats of the American Revolutionary War, the identities of the terrorist are never a priori and take shape only at moments of explosion. This fluidity of change and flexibility makes the terrorist always more dynamic than the network under attack. Yet, beyond constituting identity, the terrorist teaches methodologies of deregulation. Terror is re-imagined at the utmost extreme to hi-jack meaning, that is, the terrorist will go to extremes in order to succeed in the act of hi-jacking: mass panic, mass death, the death of the terrorist. The death of the terrorist is an ultimate play in the struggle for biopolitical stronghold—the willful relinquishing of life for the re-assignment of meaning. The hi-jack will always initiate deregulations at the apex of extremity. The hi-jack steals meaning with the force of an atomic bomb blast. This force can produce an avalanche of deregulations, for terror and fear perfectly strikes the target of societal capitulation.

### ***Systems of Dynamic Difference***

(De)regulations manifest dynamically in the technological object as quasi-object. Within a system of formalism, historicity, functionality, consumption, and semiotics, technological (de)regulations locate themselves in any given layer(s) of this system. As a system of dynamics predicated on regulation, technology can be deregulated by a tactics of locationality: what layer is / can be coded (disidentified) as queer? This queer locatability de-stabilizes an ideology of dynamics, producing the technological quasi-object as system of dynamic difference.

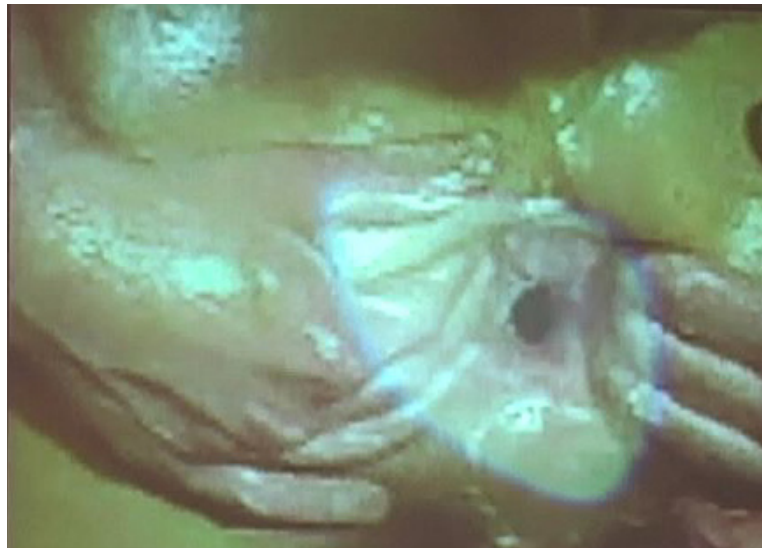
If systems of dynamic regulations are built upon the consumption of user-friendliness, the abject must always be absent. The title of Leo Bersani's article "Is the Rectum a Grave?" provides fertile ground for developing user-friendliness as an abjection that generates systems of dynamic difference. In the system of dynamic regulation, enter through the undesired hole of unproduction. The hole that contradicts consumption. The hole that users avoid at all costs. A hole of exploitation—hidden but always there—appears as negation. Inside this hole, visibility reveals the negation—a graveyard; yet, layers beyond visibility expose methods of counter-production. The rectum of systems of dynamic regulation is the erogenous zone for systems of dynamic difference.

### ***Holes of Non-Teleology***

In *Empire*, Hardt and Negri write, "Interactive and cybernetic machines become a new prosthesis integrated into our bodies and minds and a lens through which to redefine our bodies and minds themselves." This process of redefinition—embodiment, unavoidably political, offers the possibilities of new systems of dynamic difference. One such cybernetic system, video feedback, generates a hole of deregulation. The hole of video feedback is a hole of non-teleology. Comparatively, David Halperin has described anal fisting as an act of sexual non-teleology. The stakes of aligning these holes of non-teleology produces a positioning against body and technology as regulated / regulator.

Feedback, more generally, has always been associated with self-regulating processes, such as genes, machines, ecosystems, and a myriad of technological and biological systems. In fact, devices with corrective feedback were considered "teleological mechanisms," such as a steam engine with a feedback valve for speed control.<sup>31</sup> Norbert Wiener, in his cybernetics theory, also understood feedback in terms of control. We learn from science studies that our biological make-up is comprised of feedback processes, causing our bodies to follow internalized rules of self-regulation. Video feedback is a historical break from this understanding of the feedback process as one of teleological control, just as the queer body makes cultural and physical breaks from this definition of feedback.

Like Halperin has claimed, if "fist-fucking" is the only sex act invented in the 20th century,<sup>32</sup> it is the newest sexual system of dynamic deregulation.



**The Hole(s) of Non-Teleology**

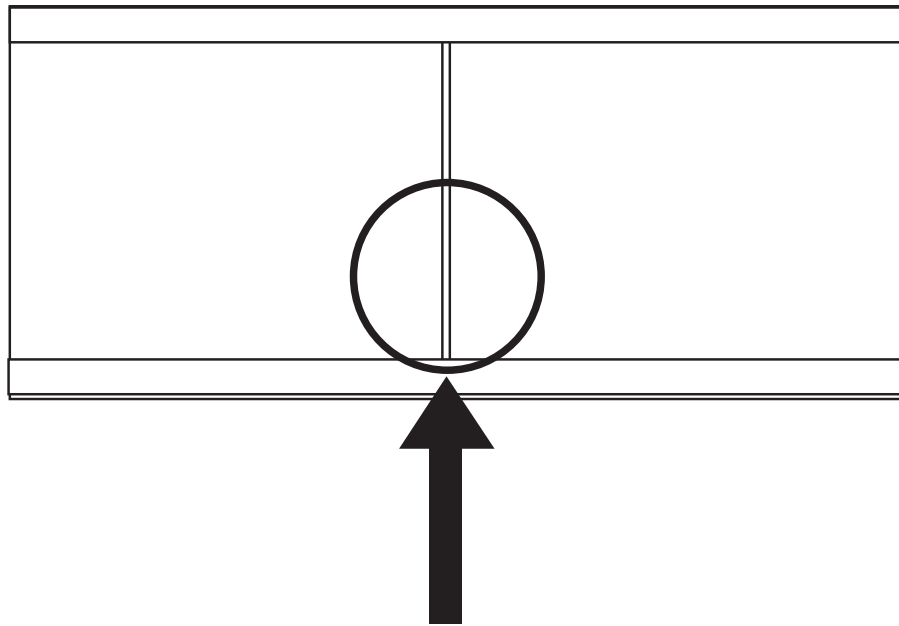
### ***Interstice***

In *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Deleuze describes the interstice as the space between two spliced strips of film. As a space that does not belong to either piece of film, the interstice becomes a “differentiation of potential” that engenders something new.<sup>33</sup> Deleuze writes: “Sometimes, as in modern cinema, the cut has become the interstice, it is irrational and does not form part of either set, one of which has no more an end than the other has a beginning: false continuity is such an irrational cut. [. . . and this cut is] disjunctive.”<sup>34</sup>

The queer body articulates a space similar to Deleuze’s formation of the interstice: just as the interstice exists in disjunction to what precedes and follows it, the queer body must be articulated outside of normative configurations of male and female binaries. A physical manifestation of the interstice created by the queer body can be located at the moment when measurement that distinguishes a penis from a clitoris becomes blurred, when breasts take the place of a chest on a “male” body (as the British government forced Turing to develop), when facial hair overcomes the fuzz on a “female” face.

The interstice becomes a manifestation—discursively, culturally, and physically—of a politics for the queer body. Cyberfeminists such as VNS Matrix transform the phallic temple of technology into an all-powerful interstitial clitoris when they write in their manifesto, “saboteurs of big daddy mainframe / the clitoris is a direct line to the matrix.”<sup>35</sup> It is as if VNS Matrix stretch their collective clitoris out like a penis—like a networking cable—to connect with the Internet, mutating the form of the clitoris but not its functionality as a clitoris.

We must build upon the interstice as a discursive and physical space for queer dynamic difference.



### ***Building Mutation Engines***

The Gay Bomb's materialism of everything constitutes itself through mutual mutation and dynamic difference. Gestating through these various cycles of deregulated construction, the Gay Bomb behaves as engine: within a system of bomb, target, and biopolitical struggle, an engine emerges that dynamically generates deregulations. The mutation engine is a constant process that affords deregulations nonstability. Deregulations as becoming. Deregulations as un-becoming. Think of the mutation engine as a power leveler, automatically situating deregulations to nodes of exploit within a network of constantly shifting power structures. Building mutation engines for queer technical agency exposes its necessity in vying for political power.

Exploding out of the ecstasy of deregulations, queer mutation engines fuel the formation of a political network of bodies, technology, and cultural codes. A network defined by soft(ware) bodies that constructs queerness as dynamic digital technology of mutated difference.







**4**



# 4

## CREATING AND ORGANIZING

### THESOFTQUEERBODY

If queerness potentially capitulates to (de)regulatory digital control structures to become a politically ambiguous assemblage, theSoftQueerBody is a political / politicized concept for queer technical agency and being. theSoftQueerBody operates as a software application, running queerness as a dynamic digital technology. The application defines queerness and all other networked constructions of human existence as technologies in flux / struggle with one another.

theSoftQueerBody processes queer technological assemblages as an abstraction, a multitude in common. Like the Gay Bomb, theSoftQueerBody is constructed by a materialism of everything: it is queer bodies, Queer Technologies, queer cultures, queer spaces, queer places, Gay Bombs, mutation engines, systems of dynamic difference, queer capital. In fact, theSoftQueerBody parses all these types equally. The "new" body of technological queers is beyond flesh, where nervous systems become network connections, DNA as code, subjectivity as logic. As Hardt and Negri write, the multitude is composed as a singularity of difference that constitutes itself as a "monstrosity of the flesh."<sup>36</sup> Further, this "flesh of the multitude is pure potential, an unformed life force, and in this an element of social being, aimed constantly at the fullness of life. . . . The unformed and the unordered are horrifying. The monstrosity of the flesh is not a return to the state of nature but a result of society, an artificial life. . . . Every reference to life today . . . has to point to an artificial life, a social life."<sup>37</sup> theSoftQueerBody is this skin of pure potential that mutates a consistency of queer technological action and being.

## **MOBILIZATION OF COMBAT**

If we are in what Deleuze has described as control societies, “bodies are consonant with more distributed modes of individuation that enables their infinite variation.”<sup>38</sup> Gay Bombs travel, like blood cells, through theSoftQueerBody. A flexible body, composed in common, by a queer materialism of everything. The logic of the theSoftQueerBody, coded by potentials of the perpetual present, directs, routes, mobilizes, and deploys Gay Bombs. Gay Bombs become the vital organs of theSoftQueerBody, constantly regenerated, stolen, and sutured by the fluctuating clashes of biopower and biopolitics. A stable body is a dead body. Like Galloway and Thacker claim, not resistance but hypertrophy—the growth and enlargement of new organs to redirect and reconstitute a body.

In any mobilization of combat, the task becomes to explode organs and accumulate Gay Bombs in their absence. theSoftQueerBody must mobilize a new flesh to gain biopolitical power. This mobilization produces the potential of queer technical sociality.

## **A TOPOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE**

To illustrate the construction of theSoftQueerBody's materialism of everything, we turn back to Muñoz and his concept of identities-in-difference. He writes, “identities-in-difference emerge from a failed interpellation within the dominant public sphere . . . [contributing] to the function of a counterpublic sphere.”<sup>39</sup> Importantly, identities-in-difference are always in the process of constituting themselves. As the dominant public sphere continuously shifts power structures, identities-in-difference recombine and rearticulate identifications, counteridentifications, disidentifications. Identities-in-difference build themselves in direct correlation to current political flows. Neither opting for assimilation or opposition to a given structure, identities-in-difference can be said to mutually mutate with all dominant spheres of power.

theSoftQueerBody's topological architecture is composed of identities-in-difference.

## **Multitude**

As a networked assemblage, theSoftQueerBody breaks down boundaries between the individual and the collective, human and machine, object and subject. Boundaries of a single body or consciousness are not longer demarcated. Rather, identities-in-difference produce a larger living social flesh out of a materialism of everything. This living social flesh configures itself to live and thrive in relation / tension with global flows of power.

As Hardt and Negri suggest, it takes networks to fight networks. Therefore, in times of networked global capital and warfare, their concept of the multitude is a powerful formulation against dominant spheres. Building a queer multitude allows the circulation and success of Gay Bombs. Building such a queer living flesh reveals an architecture beyond the body.



## ***Swarms***

Swarms suggest insects. According to Eugene Thacker, "social insects."<sup>40</sup>  
A queer swarm shall return to the insect and not be plagued by existing as such,  
like Kafka.

The multitude as swarm operates under a logic of negotiation that appears as chaotic. A collaborative, collective chaos that only the swarm understands as logic. Distributed nonlogic as logic. The queer swarm performs under no clear leadership, enacting dynamic disidentifications that flow the swarm through space and time.

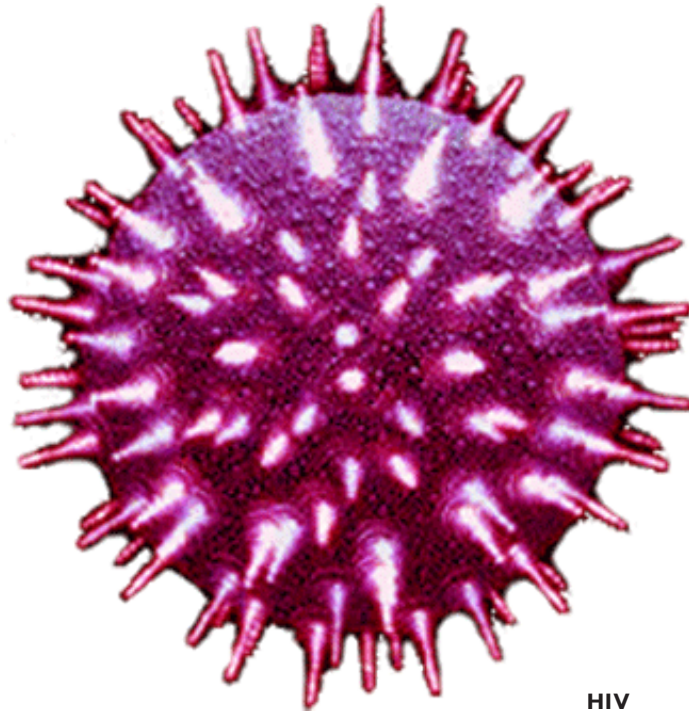
The swarm's radical reorganization of a collective body emphasizes a chaos of collective negotiation. theSoftQueerBody must always perform a collective negotiation to swarm networks of dominant power. This act will always require the shifting of the body—to insect and beyond.



## *Viruses*

theSoftQueerBody relies on replication and distribution. By becoming viral, the-SoftQueerBody exponentially corrupts power.

Historically, within grids of viral capitalism, the queer body has been interpolated as grid of contagion. Beginning with GRID (Gay-Related Immuno-Deficiency)—the name before HIV—the queer body was already sliced apart by networked infrastructures of dominant power (medicine, education, public policy). The queer body internalized a grid of death, networked to other grids of death (dying, infected bodies). The logic of the biological queer's grid was a logic of destruction.



**HIV**

In his book on computer viruses, Jussi Parikka points out that "HIV infects cultural categories," which leads him to explain how "biological viruses spread to digital bodies of electricity and silicon."<sup>41</sup> The historically biological infected queer carries the weight of this infection into the cultural abstraction of theSoftQueerBody. In *Empire*, Hardt and Negri explain that "Empire's institutional structure is like a software program that carries a virus along with it, so that it is continually modulating and corrupting the institutional forms around it."<sup>42</sup> theSoftQueerBody as software program must modulate and corrupt even more erratically to infect and contaminate the virus(es) of Empire.

When Galloway and Thacker write that "viruses are life exploiting life,"<sup>43</sup> the biopolitical stakes of viral existence become stunningly clear: viruses "exploit the normal functioning of their host systems to produce more copies of themselves."<sup>44</sup> This exploitation of the self—while could be considered a care of the self could also be a depletion of the self, but importantly, this exploitation of the self is at the expense of manufacturing difference, "recalculating as a way of never-being-the-same."<sup>45</sup> theSoftQueerBody, queer multitude, must always exploit the selves of its nodes to produce a replicated difference of never-being-the-same.

Within a craze of computer hygiene, theSoftQueerBody must align with Alan Liu's notion of "destructive creativity"—a creativity that goes "beyond the new picturesque of mutation and mixing to the ultimate form of such mutation and mixing: what may be called the new sublime of 'destruction.' [. . .] the critical inverse of the mainstream ideology of creative destruction [. . . a] viral aesthetics."<sup>46</sup> This aesthetics becomes like a repetitive stream of disidentifications—disidentifying as queer cryptography, repetitively blowing up the infections of mainstream ideology (a "cool" virus) at the risk of obliterating one's own "hygiene."

theSoftQueerBody is always an aesthetic, always rooted in queer affect, always personal politics, always biopolitical. It must infect its own historical infections for technological agency. If viral repetitions have been defined as "illegible and incalculable,"<sup>47</sup> Gay Bombs must explode into queer affect—nonhygienic ways of being and living—that chart for the theSoftQueerBody the possibilities of queer world-making.





### *The Pack*

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze & Guattari write “that animals are packs, and that packs form, develop, and are transformed by contagion.”<sup>48</sup> Viruses are living. The social flesh of theSoftQueerBody is always a pack of animals. Continuing, Deleuze and Guattari suggest “a becoming-animal always involves a pack, a band, a population, a peopling, in short, a multiplicity . . . [but a becoming-animal only occurs with] a fascination for the pack, for multiplicity.”<sup>49</sup> The desire of the theSoftQueerBody is always predicated by a multiplicitous contagion. The pack permits the swarm, the network, the virus, the multitude that the individual is incapable of constituting. theSoftQueerBody, as a pack, protects (yet simultaneously collapses) the body of the individual. There is safety in numbers. The pack is a survival strategy. It is the call of the pack that unites Travis and his colleagues to attack their college in Lindsay Anderson’s *If*.



**Becoming-animal, *If***

"Becomings-animal are neither dreams nor phantasies. They are perfectly real."<sup>50</sup> The multiplicity of the queer viral machine makes animals—packs—out of us all, and as our social flesh extends into the unhuman, other packs become part of the identities-in-difference of theSoftQueerBody. Product PACKaging is one mutation that Queer Technologies has replicated to combat viral capitalism. This PACKaging, always a Gay Bomb, rapidly circulates an alternative method of exchange (exchanges of knowledge, power, affect, belonging), encrypting a different queer world of technology and consumables. The PACKage is always life exploiting life. As Queer Technologies redesigns capitalistic visuality, the living networks of the entire capitalist machine are used to give life to a minority multitude diseased by exploited labor and production. PACKaging is a face of queer technological agency for theSoftQueerBody.

### *Faces and Fakeness*

Parikka points out that "from a societal point of view, you need a face, an address, and a net password to exist. . . . Subjectification works through assigning faces to otherwise anonymous preindividual flows."<sup>51</sup> The face makes theSoftQueerBody exist, but the face can challenge subjectification. A fake face can individualize the multiplicity of theSoftQueerBody to allow for unhindered movements throughout the grids of capital. A face of a body. A face of a code. An inter-face. Faces of iteration. Nonfaces.



**Lorenz Tunny:**  
**Facial morph of Alan Turing,**  
**Daniel Paul Schreber,**  
**N. Katherine Hayles, Judith**  
**Halberstam, and Zach Blas.**  
**[www.lorenztonny.info](http://www.lorenztonny.info)**



**Divine, defacement as interface of queerness**

Galloway and Thacker describe the enmity of networked combat as defacement—faceless. theSoftQueerBody, always networked, will always have and not have a face. The downtown of theSoftQueerBody will be a face.

## **TECHNOTOPIAS**

The topological architecture of theSoftQueerBody, fortified by a viral aesthetics, builds queer worlds called technotopias. Disidentifying with space and architecture, Judith Halberstam explains the technotopic as a spatial site where the body resists idealization of integrity and rationalization of disintegrations.<sup>52</sup> theSoftQueerBody strives for the utopia of the technotopic. A world for the “non-logical self,”<sup>53</sup> where the self is multiple, replicated, networked. Inhabitants of technotopias are unstable, perhaps impossible.

Glocal explosions of Gay Bombs promise the reconstitution of architectonic materials, an architecture of never-being-the-same. The repetition of the replication of difference coupled with the corruption of dominant power encrypts the possibilities of queer technical world-making.

The flesh (logic) of theSoftQueerBody holds the passwords to its own utopia, programmed within its layers of monstrosity, contagion, and never-being-the-sameness.





**5**





# 5

## WORKING WITH CONSUMERISM

We return to Galloway and Thacker's statement: "counterprotocol practices can capitalize on the homogeneity found in networks to resonate far and wide with little effort." In the battle for queer technical agency, the network of war is consumerism. Any technological intervention into the social must recognize that the majority of people in the world encounter technology primarily or only as a consumable good. An absolute blurring exists between the need for technology as endemic to western survival and the desire for technology as consumable of excess. Technology flatlines at consumer capital, where politics become pure aesthetic. Think back to Benjamin: fascism is the introduction of aesthetics into political life.

theSoftQueerBody must propagate itself through the networks of consumerism. This is the primary point of engagement, hypertrophy. As life has now arranged itself completely around flows of capital, biopolitical stakes are the highest with these actions of infection, introjection.

### DESIRING PRODUCT

The Sunshine Project reported that the US government had allocated 7.5 million dollars for the funding of the military's gay bomb proposal.

In capital, the limits of desire are capsized by the price tag. For the government—a being predicated on societal exception, the limits of desire are perhaps unknown. The reconfiguration of product thus reconfigures desire. A reconstitution of desire at odds with the logic of capital breaks down aesthetics to reveal political engagements and urgencies. We turn back to Benjamin again: art in the age of mechanical reproduction concerns itself with the political rather than the aura.

Queer Technologies of the theSoftQueerBody must circulate as political products to displace desire so that it may reform as queer.

## **QUEER CAPITALISM**

To name this strategy, Queer Technologies practices Queer Capitalism. As Muñoz has carefully explicated, acts of disidentification are not characterized by a dialectical positioning. These acts move between the normative and non-normative through a complex web of interconnections. The act is never an argument of x counter y. Queer Capitalism buys itself political power, in part, through using the capitalist system for the fastest means of replicating itself widely with minimal effort.

The products of Queer Capitalism—Queer Technologies—operate under the aegis of a layered visuality. The design of Queer Capitalism can locate itself easily within the company of other consumables in varieties of shops, stores, outlets. The first reading—of the outmost surface—is one of Benjamin's fascism. Yet, the tension of the design resides within closer readings—layers of depth—that render visible from closer inspection or the point when the product moves from the shelf to the consumer's inquiring hand. Design as performative contradiction. Design as disidentification. Design is the fundamental praxis of Queer Capitalism. Design instigates the restructuring of buying, selling, and using.

### ***Buying, Selling***

Monetary values can always operate as an exploit. The importance of this exploit concerns itself with how the exploit is directed / targeted. The monetary exchange should charge the exploiter of queerness and credit theSoftQueerBody.

In Queer Capitalism, buying and selling Queer Technologies must exploit capital.

Strategies: barcode manipulation, price based on cultural institute of dissemination, shop dropping, free give-aways at rallies, performative platforms, e-business.

Queer Capitalism should not be limited to these strategies but start from them and expand as necessary. No matter what tactic is employed, Queer Capitalism is the circulation of a discourse of biopolitics, not consumables. The consumables of Queer Capitalism are viruses that spread its discourse to the masses.

## **Using**

After dissemination, at the moment of full possibility, use becomes the unknown remainder in the equation of capitalist exchange. Use will ultimately be decided outside theSoftQueerBody but this use will still constitute theSoftQueerBody's existence, functionality, materiality.

Queer Technologies complicates the relationship of content to functionality. Wendy Chun's provocative statement that there can never be a purely technological solution to a political problem powerfully resonates here. This is not to reduce Chun's claim only to the realm of the functional but to point toward the suggestion that technology might have to break in order to operate in certain political realms. Users of Queer Technologies must find primarily political ways—rather than technological—to use its products. The practice of use, therefore, becomes an interrogation into discourse.

It is at the point of engagement with discourse when perhaps the technological and the political can realign—or the definition of the technological expands. Whether or not a technological material instantiation “works,” technologies of discourse flow at constant runtime. The technologies of the self mutate with these technologies of discourse. Use is always the use of knowledge, and knowledge is “made for cutting.”<sup>54</sup> To cut is to locate the interstice. This use of knowledge, fashioning theSoftQueerBody, cuts networks into technotopias and determines flows of life and death. Use situates biopower anywhere between the queer body and the product. In Queer Capitalism, if Queer Technologies' products are Gay Bombs, the question becomes: how does the use of the Gay Bomb locate biopower at the site theSoftQueerBody?

## **ENGENDERINGGENDERCHANGERS**

ENgendingGenderChangers are designed to humorously question the conflation of gender with hardware connectivity in larger spheres of IT culture. Offering a wider range of “solutions” to the male / female plug binary does not necessarily solve or better this conflation. Rather, it grossly exaggerates the problem in order to gain attention.



**PACKaging**

#### Female DB 25 to CEO DB 25

This ENgenderingGenderChanger connects to a male serial cable. The CEO gender changer provides strength and power through 3 elongated double-coated pins, adding a sorely lacking virility to the normal male serial configuration. You can count on the CEO changer to deliver top-notch performance through its configured manipulation of weaker flows of current. The CEO changer is designed to put its user at ease, guaranteeing maximum profit with the least required energy. Perfect for your boss' Hewlett Packard printer or Dell Desktop.

#### Female DB25 to Power Bottom DB25

This EngenderGenderChanger connects to a male serial cable. The Power Bottom gender changer is for the hardware risk-taker. This gender changer's hollow and seemingly ineffective interior merges with a connected flow of power and takes control of the signal, redirecting current based on pin configuration. Perfect for surreptitious data manipulation, the Power Bottom gender changer utilizes a pacified design to undermine traditional hardware control structures.

#### Female DB9 to Boi DB9

This EngenderGenderChanger connects to a male serial cable. The Boi gender changer brings an effete fashion décor to IT hardware. Its small, sparkly pins reduce current flows, diminishing a male cable's average transmission capabilities. This gender changer is best used to accessorize your computing equipment. Add a glittery, feminine touch to your secretaries' workstations or use to emphasize a superficial connection of at the lower ranks of your company or office.

#### Male DB25 to Admin DB25

This EngenderGenderChanger connects to a female serial cable. The Admin gender changer is manufactured to receive direct output from the CEO adapter. It functions as a pacified regulator to ease any unnecessary surging that could irritate the CEO adapter's performance. Use the Admin changer to more effectively divert unwanted work and data flow to a distributed, subordinated workforce.

#### Male DB9 to Femme DB9

This EngenderGenderChanger connects to a female serial cable. The Femme gender changer is the ultimate in sexualized information flow. Its sloping pins, emulating lipstick, are designed to suggest a lascivious, taunting femininity. This gender changer is crafted to service the upper echelons of IT society—and does so while looking good! Use as an excellent delineation between who the boss wants to smack on the ass and who he doesn't.

#### Male DB25 to Butch DB25

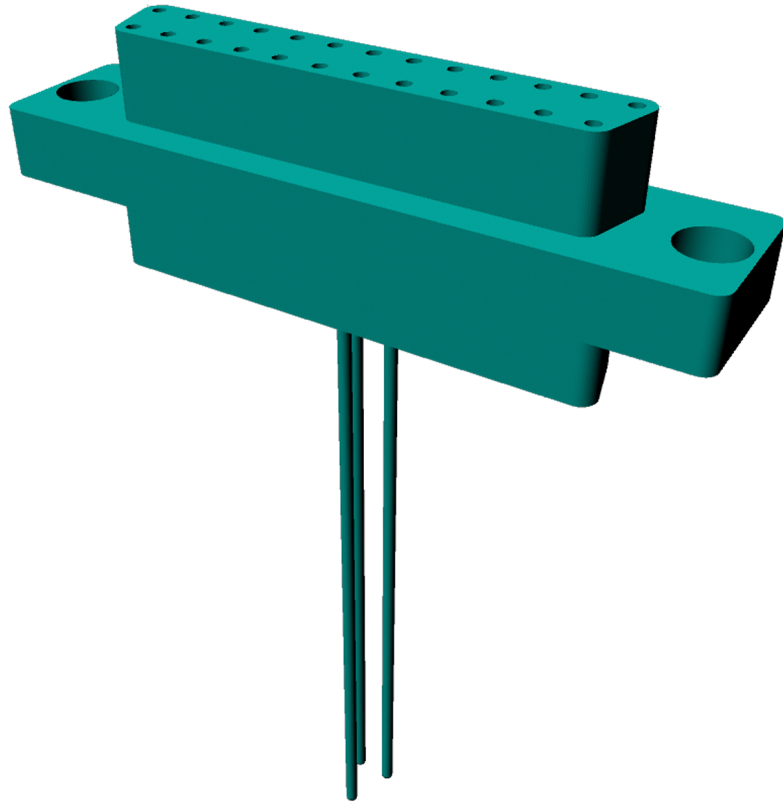
This EngenderGenderChanger connects to a female serial cable. The Butch gender changer performs best as a warning relay. Its buzz cut style pins limit and monitor information flows. This changer can be traded out with any Admin or other subordinated connector to flag corporate ladder climbing or any other unwanted act that infringes upon the traditional IT workforce structure. Give it to the bossy secretary or the pushy new girl trying to get too close with the male elite.

#### Male / Female DB25 to Team DB25

This EngenderGenderChanger connects to a female or male serial cable. The Team gender changer cobbles together and exploits all subordinated data flows diverted from the CEO adapter. It is designed to de-individualize, functioning as a multitude of servants to whatever input dominants. The Team changer can execute one or many of EngenderGenderChangers' other gender solutions, based on the what the control input desires and requires as well as the pin connection configuration.

#### Male / Female to Hir

This EngenderGenderChanger connects to a female or male serial cable. The Hir gender changer is a last resort for hacker solutions. When all other EngenderGenderChanger connections do not offer powerful support and performance, use the Hir changer to individualize connections in whatever form necessary. The risks can be high, but the Hir changer has the ability to act as a new subordinated flow of data or an agent of regulation that exceeds the power of the CEO adapter. The Hir changer should be used for tricks, short cuts, office terrorism, gender connection hi-jacking, and other unpredictable hardware connections and encounters.

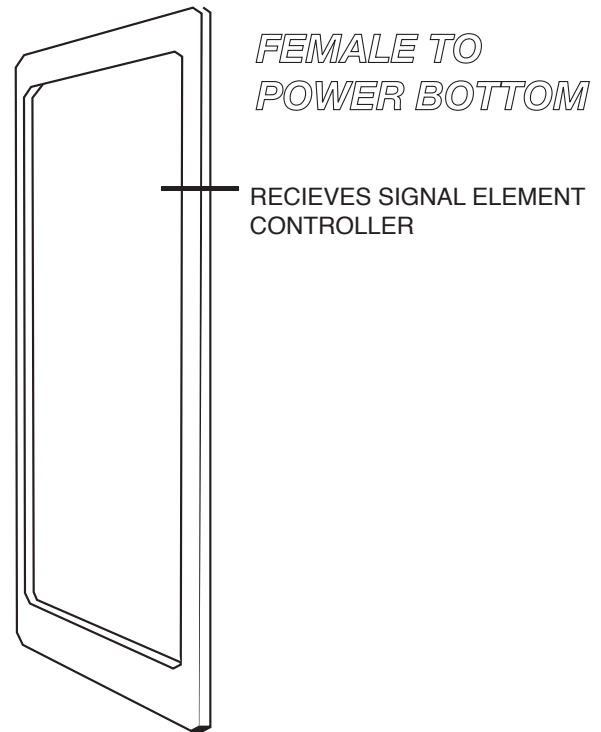
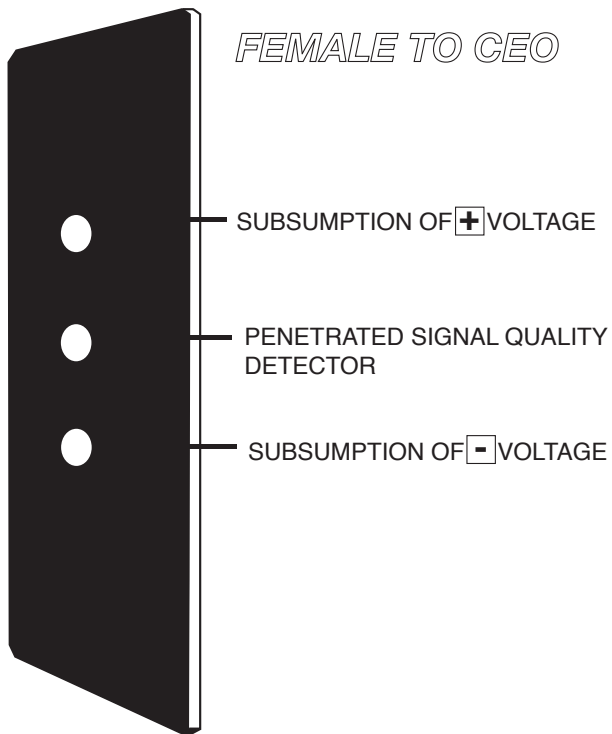


**female to ceo component**

ENgenderingGenderChangers are mass produced and covertly distributed in Radioshacks, Best Buys, Circuit Cities, and other consumer electronics stores across the nation.

## Component Configuration Data Sheet

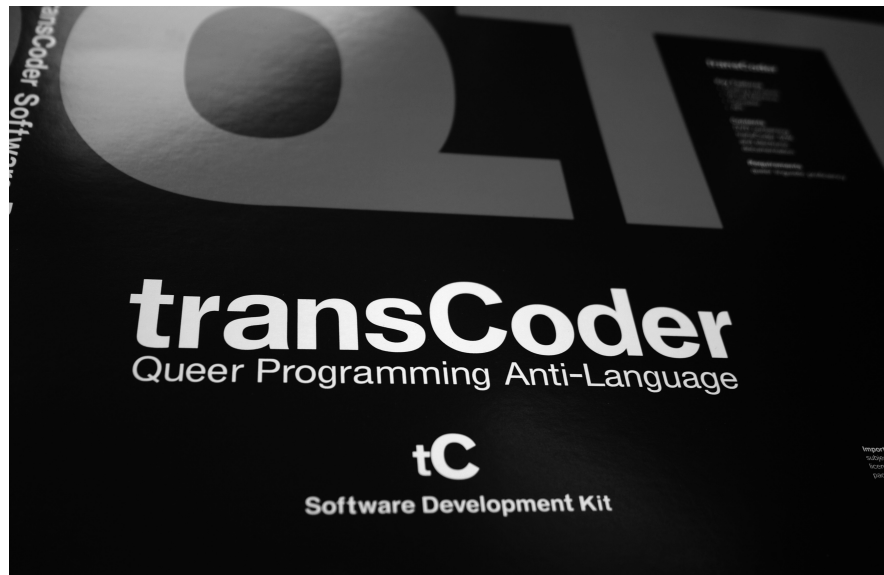
---





## **transCODER**

transCoder is a play on transgender and Lev Manovich's fifth principle of new media – transcoding. Manovich writes, "to 'transcode' something is to translate it into another format." Within computing and new media, Manovich identifies a "cultural layer" and a "computer layer" affecting each other: "we can say that they are being composited together. [. . .] Cultural categories and concepts are substituted, on the level of meaning and/or language, by new ones that derive from the computer's ontology, epistemology, and pragmatics."



**PACKaging**

transCoder is programmed to transcode between Manovich's cultural layer and computer layer. Specifically, as queer programming anti-language, transCoder offers libraries rooted in theories of queerness as an attempt to sever ontological and epistemological ties to dominant technologies and interrupt the flow of circulation between heteronormative culture, coding, and visual interface.



**transCoder DVD**

Manufactured as a software development kit, transCoder offers experimentation and open-ended construction between queerness, technology, writing, language, theory, and meaning.

transCoder literalizes Galloway and Thacker's statement, "Today, to write theory means writing code." Code can morph to endless choices of queer non-essentialism: from Boolean statements transferring to a multitude of states beyond and between true or false, loops fluctuating wildly and unpredictably, if / then logic dissolving into if / if / if / if ad infinitum, small comments between pieces of code becoming digital manifestos for queer empowerment, the "logic" of queer discourse undermining control operators, variables stripped of heterosexist terminologies, to coding structures resembling passages from Haraway and Butler rather than C++ or Java.

## Code Sample

### Butler's Destabilization Loop (Citing the Other)

destabilizationLoop()

breaks apart any process that acts as a continuously iterating power

### Haraway's Taxonomies for a Genderless Future

noTax()

collapses an epistemological interpretation of syntax to incite deviation from official notions of a processual experience of computation

### Fantabuloso Discursivity (Polari Play)

todgeOmeePalone()

enjoys input

## Slash Goggles Algorithm

Excerpt from BioCylon User Manual<sub>55</sub>

### VII - Visual Informatics

#### Section 7.13 - Slash Goggles Algorithm

##### 7.13.1 - Core Function

In human society, gender (male or female) is an important consideration in selecting recreational sexual partners. While preference for the opposite gender is most common, a significant minority sometimes or always select partners of the same gender [11.8 - Human-Cylon Interaction: Sexuality]. To improve HCI, BioCylons are equipped with an algorithm ("Slash Goggles") which establishes, based on visual data, the variant sexual preferences of human subjects.

For reference, the relevant section of the code package is reproduced here, with annotations [2.2 Software: CyCL (Cylon Core Language)].

```
function slash_goggles($desire) {
  global $humanform;

  // check activation status
  if (theCloset('null')) {
    qtime('image' => finger("toggle_$body->type") ? q($body->created))
  }

  // define subjects
  foreach ($humanform as $body => $desire) {
    $humanform->template->assign($body == 'identity' ? 'gender' : $body, $desire);
  }

  // identify data
  if (destabilizationLoop('image')) {
    $desire = array(noTax('identity', 'gender'));
  }
  else {
    $desire = array(mutMutate('identity', 'gender'));
  }
}
```

```

    'characterization' => $TPTB['subtext'],
    'mise-en-scene' => leaky('subtext', 'image'),
    'performance' => nonteLeo($body),
    'narrative' => schizoA(exe($TPTB)),
    'metatext' => buggery('queer', vBody()),
  });

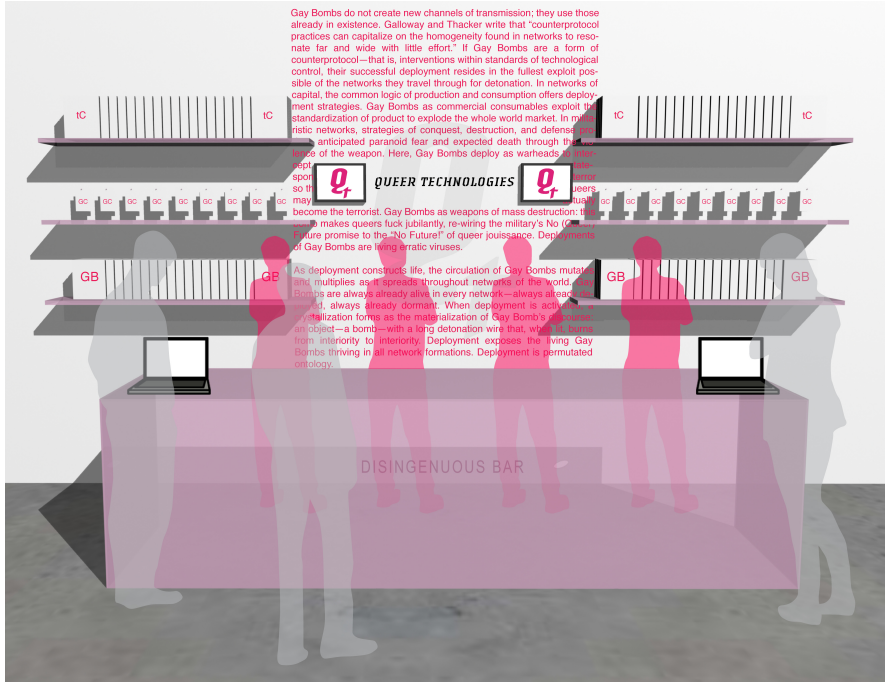
  // execute function
  $humanform->template->parse('queer');
  $slash = $body->$body->text('queer');
  $desire->$body->reset('queer');
  return $slash;
}

```

As you can see, this script primarily calls functions and variables established elsewhere in the HCI package. Its specific role is to associate each \$body with a property, \$desire, that is determined by parsing the array of visual information defined here.

When activated, the Slash Goggles algorithm is marked by a pink tint in the ocular organ [1.16 - Hardware: Visual Apparatus].

# DISINGENUOUS BAR



## **FAQ**

### ***What is the Disingenuous Bar?***

Designed as a play / attack on Apple Computer's Genius Bar, the Disingenuous Bar is a heterotopic space that offers non-technical support for "technical problems." Dispelling the conflation of "genius" with technology in grids of capitalism, the un-geniuses of the Disingenuous Bar make no promises about computer "geniuses" offering "technological" solutions to ideological problems.

The Disingenuous Bar attempts to generate a performative platform of political inquiry through the examination, discussion, and distribution of Queer Technologies.

Disingenuous Bar appointments can be scheduled in advance or freely visited during times of operation.

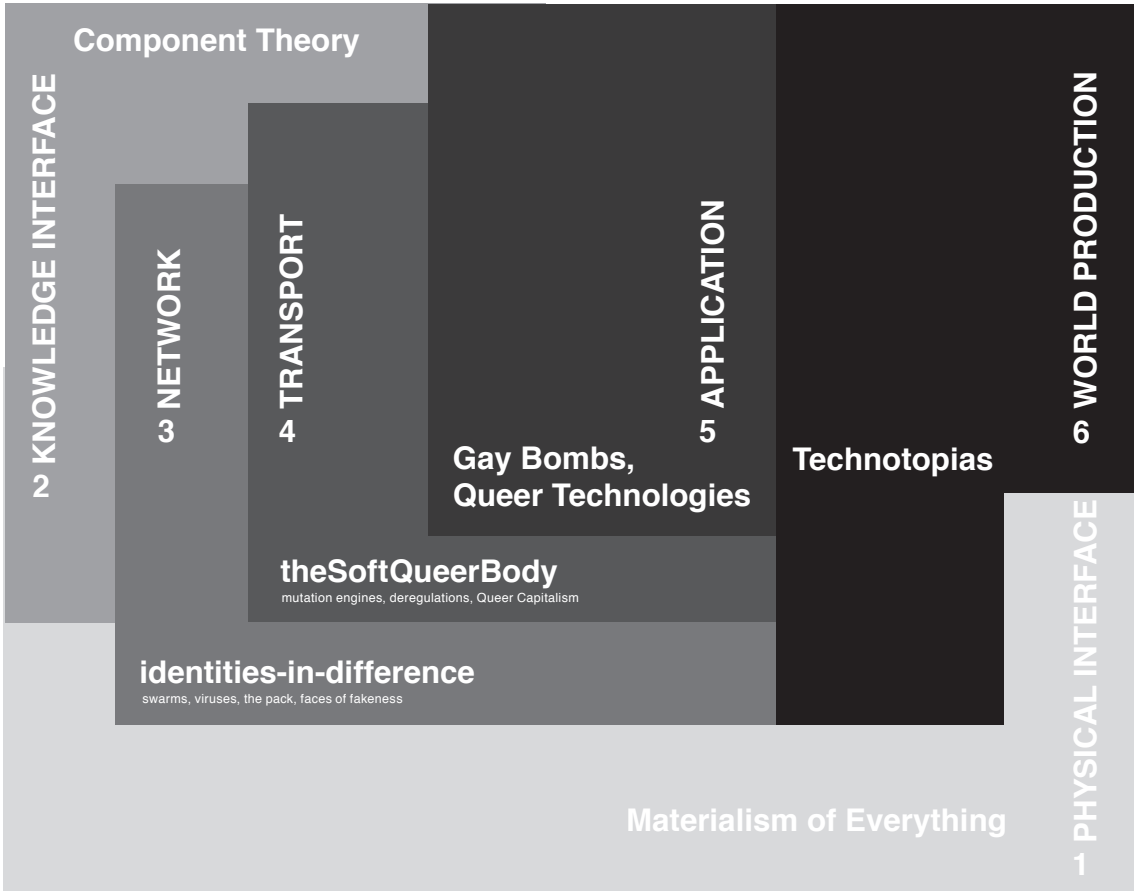
### ***Who works at the Disingenuous Bar?***

The un-geniuses of Queer Technologies claim all knowledge is disingenuous. Knowledge can never assume to know, and therefore, all disseminators of knowledge must be un-geniuses. To know knowledge—always a possible unknown—means to know between something and nothing but never everything. The un-geniuses know, and yet this knowing is always unqualified for the receiver, or rather, it is a type of situated knowledge, grounded in a physical and historical specificity, that might equate as nonknowledge to receivers.

### ***Why visit the Disingenuous Bar?***

While most tech support bars assist with technical concerns, the Disingenuous Bar is designed for critical and political inquiry. Rather than the genius passing down an official knowledge of "how to," un-geniuses think through knowledge with visitors. "What is the problem?" does not have to preface an occasion. The problem could be unknown and most often is. The queer un-genius feels knowledge and offers this as a strategy into the contestations of queer technical agency.

# Architecture of Queer Technologies







6



# 6

## MANAGING OUTPUT

### THE STATE OF (THE EXCEPTIONAL) QUEER

The Gay Bomb hinges upon the queer as non-normative—a queerness that has avoided heteronormative subsumption. Thus, the effectiveness of proliferations of Gay Bombs requires that queerness remain a dynamic non-normativeness of never-being-the-sameness. Any questions regarding the management of output pushes toward the concern: is queerness at a point of total absorption into heteronormativity?

In her discussion of homonationalism, Jasbir Puar writes that queerness cannot fit into a “tiny vessel.”<sup>56</sup> Yet, culture appears to have produced a queerness that bottles itself within this tiny vessel. The queer eye of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* produces a queer visuality—a queer way of looking and being seen—that results in a homonormative perspectivalism. The vessels of Gay Pride parades become tax-deductible expenses for multinationals, where the banner of the company and the rainbow flag exist as one. The collapse of queerness, capitalism, and heteronormativity suggests an emptiness of the word “queer.” This emptying out leaves homonormativity in its place, what Puar defines “as a formation complicit with and incited into the biopolitical valorization of life in its habitation and reproduction of heteronormative norms.”<sup>57</sup> Conversely, a queerness as exceptional—exclusive of homonormativity—risks regulation. Building upon Agamben’s theories of the state of exception, Puar urges that a queerness that locates itself as a cultural exception becomes regulated by power: “Queerness here is the modality through which ‘freedom from norms’ becomes a regulatory queer ideal that demarcates the ideal queer.”<sup>58</sup>

Queer homonormativity, queer exceptionalism—both not mutually exclusive—contest every fiber of queerness. The location of queerness is the position of possibility. That said, where does queerness as dynamic non-normativeness of never-being-the-sameness locate itself? Has the word “queer” emptied out beyond reconstitution? Is the mobilization of the nameless a tactic to embrace? How would this mobilization execute without reducing to sexual difference? Are the localizations of power within technology adequate points of possibility to acquire a form of agency that is not homonormative, that is not sexual exceptionalism?

Is the Gay Bomb a “tiny vessel,” even though it is constructed by a materialism of everything?

## WAR



The Gay Bomb is a weapon and, while at war, wages the dangers of direct appropriation. Asking if the Gay Bomb's representation might impede on itself asks what is the violence of the Gay Bomb, how erratic is this violence, and does this violence ultimately defend and create? Hardt and Negri state that “democratic violence can only defend society, not create it.”<sup>99</sup> Looking back toward Alan Liu's concepts of destructive creativity and viral aesthetics, we must virulently debate the creative possibilities of destruction. If we entertain the idea that the Gay Bomb defends and creates, what does weaponry offer our future?

"We need to create weapons that are not merely destructive but are themselves forms of constituent power."<sup>60</sup> Perhaps the weapon in times of war returns to a question of use. Yet use seems unable to determine—qualify—the violence of the Gay Bomb, for what is enacted after use—the explosion—is the true risk of potential. Just as the violence of the word queer now defends a homo/hetero-normativity, the violence of the words Gay Bomb promise the risk of a historical violence—a violence of the gay bomb before the Gay Bomb. Once again, that which is nameless returns: are the promises of a weapon that allude representation by no name fruitful? When Galloway and Thacker describe the defacement of enmity as that which is faceless, would a faceless, nameless weapon offer the most constructive violence, a constructive destruction? As they postulate in "The Politics of Nonexistence," love situates as that which is nonrepresentable. Shall new weaponry of theSoftQueerBody offer the violence of nonexistence? Not through a negative destruction but a willful rendering to a fundamental deletion of being. A deletion of being that reconstructs society at the fulcrum of never-being-the-sameness. This is a question of love. Instead of The Smiths' lyric "If it's not love then it's the bomb that will bring us together," the bomb will bring love. Specifically, the Gay Bomb will bring love as a positive nonexistence, deleting representations of the queer face and name, generating new unknown materialities, somewhere between bomb and body.

## **BOMBING**

The final questions: how does the act of bombing network love to theSoftQueerBody? Does a bomb of nonexistence provide the fullest access to queer technical agency and technotopias or are there other tactics of weaponry, beyond nonexistence, that build the components of agency in more democratic ways? Can the tactic of bombing ever be democratic? What is the promise of explosion? What is the threat of annihilation? Will the bomb ultimately destroy everything if we continue to use it and do not push past its history and semiotics? Was the Gay Bomb fundamentally flawed from the beginning, and if so, how much does this matter now?

***This manual, meta-Gay Bomb, has now exploded  
in your hands.***

# Queer Technologies Weapons Chart

WEAPON	USE	EXECUTION (BOMBING)	VIOLENCE	AGENCY	PRODUCTION OF LOVE (NON-EXISTENCE)
transCoder	Communication	Generation	breaking logic of languages	executing communicable dissent; tongues of the subaltern	cryptography; code
ENgendering Gender Changers	Connectivity	Mutation	connecting the unconnectable; linking forbidden space	new modes of penetration	non-teleological interactions; unknown encounters; hardware as unknowable / pure possibility
Disingenuous Bar	Dissemination	Appropriation	death of the genius	circulating collectively produced knowledge	grids of potential as faces of fakeness









## END NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> BBC News America. "US Military Pondered Love Not War." BBC News, 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/4174519.stm> (accessed February 7, 2008).
- <sup>2</sup> Jasbir K. Puar. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
- <sup>3</sup> Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker. *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 98.
- <sup>4</sup> José Esteban Muñoz. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 4.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.
- <sup>6</sup> Gilles Deleuze. *Foucault*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 40.
- <sup>7</sup> Judith Halberstam. *In a Queer Time and Place*. New York: NYU Press, 2005), 103.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.
- <sup>9</sup> Nicolas Bourriaud. *Relational Aesthetics*. (Les presses du reel, 2002), 16.
- <sup>10</sup> Gilles Deleuze. "Postscript on Control Societies." *Negotiations*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 180.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>12</sup> Galloway and Thacker quoting Deleuze. *The Exploit*, 49.
- <sup>13</sup> Bourriaud. *Relational Aesthetics*, 21.
- <sup>14</sup> Galloway and Thacker. *The Exploit*, 64.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.
- <sup>16</sup> Donald F. Bouchard, ed. "Intellectuals and Power: A Conversation Between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze." *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 206.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.
- <sup>19</sup> Lee Edelman. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).
- <sup>20</sup> "Admiral Duncan Pub." Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Admiral\\_Duncan\\_pub](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Admiral_Duncan_pub) (accessed on February 13, 2008).
- <sup>21</sup> "Fag Bomb." Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fag\\_bomb](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fag_bomb) (accessed on February 13, 2008).
- <sup>22</sup> Foucault has defined biopower in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* as "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations." As a technology of power, biopower exercises control over life and death.
- <sup>23</sup> theSoftQueerBody is the swarm assemblage of networked queer technologists. See Part 4.
- <sup>24</sup> Friedrich Kittler. "Gramophone, Film, Typewriter." *Literature Media Information Systems*. (Amsterdam: G & B Arts International, 1997), 31.
- <sup>25</sup> Galloway and Thacker. *The Exploit*.
- <sup>26</sup> Leo Bersani. "Is the Rectum a Grave?" *Reclaiming Sodom*. (New York: Routledge, 1994), 217 – 218.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 222.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Halberstam. In a Queer Time and Place, 103.
- <sup>31</sup> "Cybernetics." Wikipedia. < <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cybernetics>> (accessed May 1, 2006).
- <sup>32</sup> David M. Halperin. *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 92.
- <sup>33</sup> Gilles Deleuze. *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> VNS Matrix. "Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st Century." <http://www.sysx.org/gashgirl/VNS/TEXT/PINKMANI.HTM> (accessed on 29 April 2007).
- <sup>36</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. *Multitude*. (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 190.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid., 192 – 193.
- <sup>38</sup> Galloway and Thacker. *The Exploit*, 47.
- <sup>39</sup> Muñoz. *Disidentifications*, 7.
- <sup>40</sup> Eugene Thacker. "Pulse Demons." *Culture Machine* 9. [http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk/frm\\_f1.htm](http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk/frm_f1.htm) (accessed on 6 April 2008).
- <sup>41</sup> Jussi Parikka. *Digital Contagions: A Media Archaeology of Computer Viruses*. (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 126.
- <sup>42</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. *Empire*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 197 – 198.
- <sup>43</sup> Galloway and Thacker. *The Exploit*, 83.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., 87.
- <sup>46</sup> Alan Liu. *The Laws of Cool: Knowledge Work and the Culture of Information* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 325.
- <sup>47</sup> Galloway and Thacker. *The Exploit*, 83.
- <sup>48</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 242.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., 239 – 240.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 238.
- <sup>51</sup> Parikka. *Digital Contagions*, 144.
- <sup>52</sup> Halberstam. *Queer Time and Place*, 124.
- <sup>53</sup> Halberstam quoting Eva Hesse, 124.
- <sup>54</sup> Michel Foucault. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." *The Foucault Reader*. (Pantheon Books: New York, 1984), 88.
- <sup>55</sup> cyborganize, "the Slash Goggles Algorithm," <http://community.livejournal.com/thearchive2/1465.html> (accessed on April 10, 2008).
- <sup>56</sup> Puar. *Terrorist Assemblages*, xv.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., 9.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., 22.
- <sup>59</sup> Hardt and Negri. *Multitude*, 344.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid., 347.

**QT**