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## Chapter 23

### Redesigning the Vox Pop: Civic Rituals as Sites of Critical Reimagining

## 23

### **Redesigning the Vox Pop: Civic Rituals as Sites of Critical Reimagining**

Joshua McVeigh-Schultz

The notion of DIY citizenship was originally framed by John Hartley as a way of accounting for the shifting cultural logic of television toward an emphasis on difference, choice, and self-determination.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, this framework of DIY citizenship also emphasized a movement away from values of sameness and identification with others. At the root of this argument is an embrace of a liberatory decoupling of addresser and addressee afforded by television. For Hartley writing in 1999, this decoupling is empowering for the do-it-yourself citizen, now free to appropriate meaning in ways unintended by television producers. But the same decoupling might be understood as disempowering in our contemporary media landscape, where audiences increasingly come to expect opportunities for richly mediated engagement or what Graham Meikle (chapter 27, this volume) describes in terms of “intercreativity.”<sup>2</sup> And indeed, Hartley’s

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later writing on the plebiscitary mechanics of vote-based reality television paints a different picture of participation, one that positions audiences as agents in an unfolding spectacle.<sup>3</sup>

How, then, might we rethink Hartley's original framework of DIY citizenship in light of increasing opportunities to *recouple* the link between addresser and addressee? How does the role of interactive platforms complicate the concept of DIY citizenship in relation to broadcast media? And how might reimagining the rituals of public representation provoke new ways of thinking about difference and identification?

The following chapter explores these questions through the lens of what I will refer to as civic ritual. By framing various modes of “speaking to,” or “speaking for,” the public in terms of civic ritual, I hope to position the architecture of address as, itself, an object of designerly attention. Aligning with Matt Ratto's notion of critical making,<sup>4</sup> this approach privileges the enacted experience rather than the designed object as an end in itself. Elsewhere I have described this methodology as “ritual design,”<sup>5</sup> taking a cue from Erving Goffman's notion of interaction ritual<sup>6</sup> and Julian Bleecker's adaption of this concept as a mode of design fiction.<sup>7</sup>

In particular, this discussion will focus on the ritual of the vox pop (“on-the-street”) interview as a site of design intervention. And I will explore alternate

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configurations of the vox pop ritual through a project called *Synaptic Crowd: Vox Pop Experiments*.<sup>8</sup> This work consisted of a series of interactive performances involving audience-driven interviews. The interactive component was informed by Ken Goldberg's Tele-Actor model,<sup>9</sup> in that online audiences used a voting mechanic to make decisions that impacted a live event. Drawing upon Marshall McLuhan's imagery of electronic media as prosthetic extensions,<sup>10</sup> the project explored the ways in which our projections about audiences (and by proxy, about larger social imaginaries) can be jostled by opening up interview interactions to live audience engagement. Mobile technology here figured as a catalyst for opening up new technosocial situations<sup>11</sup> by positioning a remote audience as a conversational partner. And I was interested in understanding how this repositioning might activate public space in ways that complicate familiar fantasies about "the street" as site of heterogeneous interaction.

The following discussion includes an examination of how the processes of identity construction embedded in the vox pop are complicated by hybrid virtual and physical interactions between performers and remote participants. I will argue that by shuffling the subject positions of the vox pop interview, the project opened up new lines of intersection between the personal and the political and suggested new strategies for activating public space. Such an approach proposes a reimagining of our civic rituals from the ground up, and in this sense attempts to

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address Megan Boler's appeal to trace the links between new subject formations and new theories of discursive power<sup>12</sup>—in particular, by locating these links within rituals of mediation and by situating live audiences as actors in the practice of place making.

Situating practices of civic design in relation to the discourse of DIY citizenship and critical making, I will argue for attention to this microsociality of mediated public life, and in particular, to a defamiliarization of the signification processes through which the public is reflected back to itself by the traditional vox pop of broadcast news. By reconfiguring the way that categories of “publics” are discursively constructed through particular forms of address, these performances engage in what DiSalvo (chapter 17, this volume) describes as “envisioning alternate socio-technical futures.”

[figure 23.1 here]

Combining browser and mobile-based interfaces, the Synaptic Crowd platform enables online participants to nominate and vote on a series of questions (or statements) via a browser application while they watch a live interview unfold in near real time. For users of the online platform, interaction proceeds according to the following flow: first, the user submits a question or statement to the public pool; second, by selecting their favorite option, the user casts a vote and increases

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the likelihood that this question or statement will be enunciated through the phone.

The text of a question or statement with the most votes at any given time is relayed to the phone of a remote intermediary figure located in physical space with an interviewee. This text then gets enunciated through the intermediary's phone as voice synthesized audio while online participants watch live streaming footage of the interviewee's answers.

I conducted initial performances in Santa Cruz during the spring and summer of 2009, and subsequently, performed demos of the project at various conferences and exhibition spaces between 2009 and 2011.<sup>13</sup> In November 2010, the project was demoed at the DIY Citizenship conference's Exhibition/Hack Space.

In these performances, I was interested in understanding how allocating the responsibility of question formation to a live audience might alter parameters of social interaction in interview scenarios. In particular, I wanted to know what might happen to processes of symbolic mediation when an interviewer is no longer a stable interactional proxy for invisible audiences. What happens when live audiences can represent themselves through mediating technologies and engage directly with interviewees? How are contextual cues negotiated in such circumstances? And how might interviewees adapt to the contextual uncertainty

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implied by remotely distributed audiences? Would interviewees take the opportunity to turn the tables and pose questions to their collective interviewers? And how might online participants grapple with these new forms of agency? Such questions complicate the interviewer's role as mediator in a vox pop encounter and point to new opportunities for distributed audiences to intervene as actors in public space.

### **The Ritual of the Vox Pop**

While the vox populi term predates broadcasting technology, television has nevertheless formalized the vox pop form into a set of easily recognizable structures. Usually they involve a single question posed to a succession of people, then edited to emphasize inherent juxtaposition and range among the responders. Due to the way these responses are framed, vox pop sequences are not supposed to be taken as expert testimony. Instead, as Greg Myers argues, the purported news value they offer has more to do with the way that interviewees are asked to perform their opinions and account for them as signifiers of various categories of “public.”<sup>14</sup>

Vox pop encounters usually take place in public space, but more specifically, they take place in interstitial locations where people are in the process of doing something else (walking in the street, pumping gas, playing in a

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park, etc.). The “street” here functions as a fantasy of a kind of rough-and-ready Habermasian café, a physicalized antidote to Cass Sunstein’s critique of digital enclaves<sup>15</sup>. But the reality of course is that our public spaces are rarely utilized for this kind of fluid interaction (where people from a variety of membership categories can engage with each other based solely on their co-presence in “the street”). Pedestrians don’t normally accost one another in order to ask questions about topical issues of the day. But as a public ritual, the vox pop activates a fantasy about precisely this kind of world and the camera’s presence (in on the street interviews) licenses a particular mode of public testimony in response.

In its edited form, the vox pop presents an imagined community made up of various prototypical categories of citizen: “the young professional,” the “mom,” the “construction worker,” etc. And the interviewee is put in the tenuous position of having to figure out which of these stereotypical categories they are representing. Along these lines, Myers frames the vox pop as a kind of guessing game organized around the tacit negotiation of identity categories.

It is assumed that one already has an opinion . . . and the task now is to account for it, to explain why you hold it or how it came about. And this involves categorization; the question in a vox pop is not “what do you say” but “what does someone like you say”—and it is the interviewee’s job to figure out what “somewhat like you” means in this case.<sup>16</sup>

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By selecting and framing these identity types, broadcast journalism reflects a particular version of the public back to itself. But in this way, traditional broadcast news also plays the role of gatekeeper by compartmentalizing the public into a set of easily digestible, inherently juxtaposed categories, with news moderators conveniently cast as neutral arbiters—an ideological stance that Nick Couldry has critiqued as the “myth of the mediated center.”<sup>17</sup>

In my own experience asking prospective interviewees to participate in impromptu interviews, the potential interviewee typically asks the question “What is this for?” This question not only points (“in”) to the here-and-now of the interview context, but also points (“out”) to a there-and-then of future addressees—a mysterious audience that is both present and not-present at the same time. At stake here is the risk of recontextualization. While the question “What is this for?” can have a specific answer (e.g., “a documentary on [subject X]”), the actual process of mediation may be more complicated. A camera operator’s answer to the question, then, is likely to be only half of the story. Potential interviewees must also resolve this question of context on their own by playing detective. How is the camera operator dressed? Do I trust their face? How official does the equipment look? Seizing upon these clues, the interviewee orients themselves to their nonpresent audience. In this way, the interviewee’s



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question “What is this for?” points implicitly to another question: “To whom am I speaking?”

This implicit question is, in some ways, the flip side of Michael Warner’s conception of a public as discursively constituted through address.<sup>18</sup> Within Warner’s framework, the core question is not “To whom am I speaking?” but rather “To whom is this media addressed?” Or, alternatively, “How do *we* receive it?”—insofar as Warner’s conception of “counterpublics” underscores the possibility of resistant readings. By contrast, for an interviewee in a vox pop, the interviewer’s role as an interactional partner threatens to overdetermine the answer to the question “To whom am I speaking,” and by extension also constrains the related question “Who am I (within this discourse)?”

### **Redesigning the Ritual of the Vox Pop**

If the traditional vox pop of broadcast journalism invites interviewees to answer two implicit questions: “To whom am I speaking?” and “Who am I (in relation to this audience)?” then how might the vox pop be redesigned to address these questions differently, and what new modes of civic engagement—what new rituals of participation—might be possible if we change the way these questions gets answered? By enabling a live feedback loop between audience and subject, the Synaptic Crowd shuffles the agencies of the interview and enables participants

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to renegotiate the answers to these implicit questions in real time, presenting new intersection points between the personal and the political.

In these performative experiments, I often took on the role of the intermediary (holding the phone and initiating contact with potential interviewees). In such encounters, an atmosphere of performative play seemed to be licensed by my admission to the interviewee that I was not the originator of the question but merely the conduit for a group. This atmosphere contrasts sharply with traditional vox pop interviews I have conducted where interviewees seemed more wary about the risk that uninvited cameras can carry. By directly indexing an audience in the here-and-now, this threat seemed to be destabilized. And freed from concerns about how to address an abstract future audience, interviewees seemed remarkably comfortable in light of the novelty of the experience.

A key affordance of the platform during these performances was the ability of online participants to watch the interviewee's response as they formulated follow-ups (a feature that sets the Synaptic Crowd apart from other sorts of online question aggregation and vote-ranking tools). In this way, online audiences participate in the negotiation of context by making active decisions not only about which questions to ask, but also about when to ask a follow-up and when to introduce a new line of questioning.

### **Jostling Subject Positions**

The structure of Synaptic Crowd encounters obstructs any smooth reconciliation between different subject positions. Instead, questions operate like pivot points that suddenly shift the remote participants' footing from one subject position to another. I have started to refer to these sorts of pivots as "inter sequitors": questions or prompts that demand an ad hoc reweaving of context, encouraging the interviewees to jump in and out of different subject positions as they grapple with an unpredictably evolving relationship to an unseen audience. We see this pivoting between different subject positions often prompted by questions that locate the interviewee in physical space. For example, an interview in which remote participants started out by asking topical questions about health care suddenly pivoted to raise questions about the interviewee's boyfriend and purpose at the beach.

Similarly, subject positions were jostled by questions that identify topical or political themes in response to interviewee answers that otherwise seemed rooted in personal experience. In one interview, for example, a seemingly benign prompt, "Describe the best day of your life," gave way to a strikingly intimate discussion of an interviewee's experience in the military. In such cases, personal topics took on political weight, but due to the way this line of questioning emerged organically from accounts of personal experience, these questions

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licensed interviewees to speak candidly about political or topical subjects. When the remote participants asked for this interviewee to state a position “for” or “against” the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, she pivoted again to reframe the question in terms of the *experience* of being called to duty, a discursive frame in which questions of political approval or disapproval could be treated as secondary to that of duty. Such examples stretched the boundaries between personal and political in ways we rarely see in typical on-the-street interviews.

In the design process, we decided to use a text-to-speech synthesized voice as the delivery mechanism for the utterances that the participants chose. From the perspective of the interviewee, the remote participants “speak” in one voice through the phone. This decision was made in part because we wanted the intermediary figure—the one holding the phone and initiating contact with people in public space—to hear the question or statement at the same time as the interviewee. This design decision made the process of negotiating what was appropriate much more transparent but also potentially risky.

### **The Role of the Intermediary**

My role as intermediary required a great deal of improvised “accounting” for the remote participants’ intentions, but this mode of “speaking on behalf” carried risk

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in that their subsequent contributions could contradict my attempts to serve as their proxy. Such risk, however, might be refreshing in the context of representative democracy where politicians and pundits are rarely called upon to account for the rhetorical strategies they use to represent others.<sup>19</sup>

In earlier writing on the experience, I remarked that “my role . . . as the intermediary, is to mediate these responses post facto, repairing context when necessary and giving the remote participants’ speech acts a contextual wrapper so that these acts makes sense as interactional moves.”<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, this responsibility to provide context also aligns the intermediary figure with the interviewee in a way that a typical vox pop interviewer never has to contend with. For example, in one particular exchange the remote participants actually voted for the statement “You’re boring” as a way of short-circuiting the interview. Feeling as if they were attacking me as well, I got in front of the camera and retorted: “No, you’re boring. Ask better questions!” In my experience, this kind of confrontational orientation to the remote participants was rare, but the fact that the agency of remote participants was so immediate, so directly implicated, meant that the interview encounters transformed the relationship between interviewee and intermediary, insofar as their shared performative risk aligned these two roles as allies with a mutual stake in responding creatively to online participants.

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In many cases, the questions asked exceeded the boundaries of what I would have felt comfortable asking had I been an actual interviewer framing the questions myself. To safeguard the interviewees, I would explain at the outset that they could pass on any question that didn't suit them. However, more often than not, the interviewees were more than happy to answer questions that I would not have felt comfortable asking. Having a live audience of remote participants interact directly in this way opened up a kind of engagement that would have been impossible to achieve otherwise, raising questions about why we don't have similar expectations for live participation in other aspects of civic life.

### **Reconfiguring Public Speech**

By positioning remote addressees as drivers of vox pop encounters, the project disrupted the typical processes through which interviewers and interviewees improvise various categories of “public” and orient themselves in relation to imagined audiences. As Warner points out, our subject positions as the imagined addressees of public speech play a crucial role in the discursive construction of publics as social imaginaries.<sup>21</sup> However, Warner's framework is grounded by familiar examples from broadcast and publishing models of mass media, while multidirectional platforms of communication remap the relationship among speaker, addressee, and public—and in doing so make possible new kinds of

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subject formations that complicate Warner's insights about the orientation of mediated public speech toward "strangerhood." For example, questions or statements that directly index the interviewee's embodied subject position (such as "I like your shirt") situate the remote participants in the role of conversational partner—a break from the kind of "address to strangers" that Warner associates with public speech.

In this way, the Synaptic Crowd shuffles the agencies of the interview and destabilizes the compartmentalizing logic of the traditional vox pop. Questions about the identity and role-inhabitation expectations of addresser and addressee can be renegotiated in real time, creating collisions between personal and political modes of address. Not only does the question "What are you doing at the beach?" not only invites a more intimate speech register, it also recasts any parallel talk about topical or political issues not as "merely" public, but as public performance by a situated subject who can be addressed as such.

This jostling or shuffling of subject positions also meant that different kinds of questions could be asked and different sorts of encounters and revelations were possible. Sometimes the remote participants would begin the interview flirtatiously ("You're hot!"), or at other times sought to call attention to the awkwardness of the phone's disembodied voice ("Is this interview weird?"). In

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such cases, the audience itself was positioned, not as a generalized other, but as a particularized interactional partner located in the here-and-now.

This configuration created opportunities for interviewees and remote participants to build trust with one another, and intimacy emerged as a collaborative achievement born out of a willingness to follow wherever the interview led. For example, an interview of a sunbathing couple that started out about exercise led to a bawdy conversation about sex and live action role-playing, and an interview about a long-distance relationship led to strikingly intimate revelations about PTSD, heartache, and nightmares. Such topics were made speakable due to the repositioning of audience as a live interlocutor. Within this context, interviewees demonstrated a willingness to explore intimate registers as a form of public speech.

### **Defamiliarizing the Vox Pop**

By using live audience participation to drive on-the-street interviews, the project pulls back the curtain on the way that identity categories are coconstructed in the performative ritual of the vox pop. This remapping serves as a mode of defamiliarization, a term first used by Victor Shklovsky<sup>22</sup> in the early twentieth century to describe literary techniques that disrupt the habituation of perception



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by making the familiar seem strange. This strategy is now a common feature of the methodologies of both ethnography and design.<sup>23</sup>

By mediating live audiences we disrupt the processes by which this coconstruction of audience and interviewee subject positions occurs. Engagement with a diverse collection of remote participants encourages the swapping of different registers, from personal to political and vice versa, and this pivoting defamiliarizes the ways that particular formations of subjecthood get constructed in relation to imagined audiences. In so doing, we reveal the masquerade behind the curation of identity types that the vox pop of broadcast media traditionally employs.

Increasingly this process of curating the public into a series of prototypical identity types has become a key feature of how TV news shows incorporate social media into their live broadcast model—using topical tweets, for example, to provide a gestalt snapshot of the public mood on a particular issue. Representing social media in this way frames the public as a series of prototypical objects of exhibition, rather than as an intelligent agent to engage.

But what happens when the public can serve as its own gatekeeper and curate its own voice? Audiences that self-organize can be threatening to the broadcast model, and we saw this in CNN's reluctance to acknowledge the #CNNFAIL meme during the initial stages of the Iranian protest movement in

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2009. In such cases, broadcast news can no longer compartmentalize the public into vox pop sound bites and must instead begin to address their audience as a thinking entity capable of critique.

### **Conclusions**

By defamiliarizing the seamlessness of our civic rituals as media spectacles, we reveal their implicit interactional rule sets and open up the possibility that they could be otherwise. In this way, strategies of critical making can be applied to rituals as well as objects, and in particular, there are opportunities to reimagine our civic rituals from the ground up by enabling audiences to intervene into public space. My approach to reconfiguring civic rituals shares with critical making an emphasis on process over product. However, rather than focusing specifically on the processes of material engagement, I emphasize the collaborative disruption, contestation, and reformulation of ritualized processes of interaction. In this sense, the approach parallels the breaching experiments of Harold Garfinkel<sup>24</sup> and also borrows aspects from the improvisational strategies of Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed<sup>25</sup> as well as situationist methods of *détournement*.

For Ratto, critical making uses material interventions as a collaborative space for imagining alternative constructions of the relationship between society and technology,<sup>26</sup> and in this sense the methodology echoes Bruno Latour's

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interest in transforming matters of fact into matters of concern.<sup>27</sup> In my own work, I am similarly interested in troubling the commonsense “facthood” of civic rituals.

If remotely mediated audiences can reshape public space, we have an opportunity to defamiliarize the taken-for-granted separation between addresser and addressee that so defined twentieth-century public discourse. Along these lines, I conceive of DIY citizenship as an active engagement with, and reimagining of, the implicit performative templates that trace discursive lines between categories of “public” and everyday life. A remapping of the architecture of address, however, entails new kinds of subject positions that complicate Warner’s framework of publics as discursively constituted by an imagined community of nonpresent addressees. If remote audiences can collectively “play at” the subject position of a conversational partner, then what discursive work does this new positionality imply? Drawing on Judith Butler’s description of the constitutive nature of the encounter, according to which “the ‘doer’ is variably constructed in and through the deed,”<sup>28</sup> we might ask what new kinds of “doers” and what new kinds of interactional “deeds” does the concept of DIY citizenship offer? Hartley’s description of plebiscitary models of audience engagement in reality television<sup>29</sup> provides an important clue, but there is also an opportunity to resituate this kind of plebiscitary practice as a new mode of encounter, one that leverages what Michael Hancher calls cooperative speech acts.<sup>30</sup>

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For John Hartley, the era of DIY citizenship implies that television and popular media have the potential to proffer dreams of alternative identity formations—dreams that, while possibly unrealistic, can nevertheless serve as transformative catalysts for imagining change.<sup>31</sup> While self-determination in Hartley’s sense is an important fantasy, one that sets the stage for the possibility of alternative identity formation, I would argue that social imaginaries like DIY citizenship have always also been about questions of “to-whom” and not just about “by-whom.” In this sense, attending to the rituals that construct “the public” and mediate audiences provides a very different lens for understanding participatory culture. Using this perspective as a provocation for design research turns our attention to the structuring processes of civic rituals themselves and helps us defamiliarize their taken-for-granted facthood as a matter of concern.

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Figure 23.1

An intermediary holds a camera and a phone while remote audiences nominate and vote on questions (or statements) as a live vox pop interview streams online.

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### Notes

1. John Hartley, *Uses of Television* (London: Routledge, 1999). Note that Hartley’s framing of DIY citizenship as marked by difference (and by a shift away from identification with others) contrasts with more contemporary observations of participatory culture that emphasize “shared content worlds” as enablers of fan cultural production.

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For example, see Neta Kligler-Vilenchik et al., “Experiencing Fan Activism: Understanding the Power of Fan Activist Organizations Through Members’ Narratives,” *Transformative Works and Cultures*, February 4, 2011, <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/322/273>.

Similarly, Henry Jenkins (chapter 3, this volume) makes observations about how identification with a shared content world can scaffold large-scale civic engagement through a process he terms ‘cultural acupuncture.’

2. Meikle here is adapting Tim Berners-Lee’s concept of “intercreativity.”
3. John Hartley, *Television Truths: Forms of Knowledge in Popular Culture* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007).
4. Matt Ratto, “Critical Making: Conceptual and Material Studies in Technology and Social Life,” *Information Society* 27, no. 4 (2011): 252–260; Matt Ratto, “Open Design and Critical Making,” in *Open Design Now: Why Design Cannot Remain Exclusive*, ed. P. Atkinson et al. (Amsterdam: BIS Publishers, 2011).
5. Joshua McVeigh-Schultz, “Making Trouble: Redesigning the Rituals of Civic Life,” in *ISEA* (Istanbul, 2011).
6. Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual—Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1967).

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7. Julian Bleeker, “Design Fiction: A Short Essay on Design, Science, Fact and Fiction,” *Near Future Laboratory*, 2009,

<http://www.nearfuturelaboratory.com/2009/03/17/design-fiction-a-short-essay-on-design-science-fact-and-fiction/>.

The approach I outline here also shares ground with other reflexive or critically engaged methodologies such as “critical design,” “adversarial design,” “experiential scenarios,” and “reflective HCI.” See Anthony Dunne, *Hertzian Tales: Electronic Products, Aesthetic Experience, and Critical Design* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008); Carl DiSalvo, *Adversarial Design* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012); Stuart Candy, “The Futures of Everyday Life: Politics and the Design of Experiential Scenarios” (Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2010); Phoebe Sengers et al., “Reflective HCI: Articulating an Agenda for Critical Practice,” *CHI* (2006): 1683–1686; Paul Dourish et al., “Reflective HCI: Towards a Critical Technical Practice,” in *CHI*, 2004.

8. The Synaptic Crowd platform was codesigned by Joshua McVeigh-Schultz and Brian Alexakis in 2008 and 2009. McVeigh-Schultz conceived of and designed early prototypes of the idea in 2008. Alexakis was hired as a collaborator to program the web and mobile application interfaces and developed the first fully functioning prototype in early 2009.

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9. Ken Goldberg et al., “Collaborative Online Teleoperation with Spatial Dynamic Voting and a Human ‘Tele-Actor,’” in *IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation*, 2002.
10. Marshall McLuhan and Lewis H. Lapham, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).
11. Mizuko Ito and Daisuke Okabe, “Technosocial Situations: Emergent Structures of Mobile Email Use,” in *Personal, Portable, Pedestrian*, ed. Mizuko Ito, Daisuke Okabe, and Misa Matsuda (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 261–273.
12. Megan Boler, ed., *Digital Media and Democracy: Tactics in Hard Times* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).
13. Performances were conducted near the Santa Cruz Boardwalk (May 9, 2009) and at interACTIVATE, UCSC’s Digital Arts and New Media MFA show (at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History on June 24, 2009). These events inform my writing on the project. Classroom demos employing students as remote participants and camera/phone wielding intermediaries were also conducted in various contexts between 2009 and 2011. Live demonstrations of the project were also presented at the HASTAC III conference (April 20, 2009), at the Visible



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Evidence XVI Conference (August 13, 2009), at the Association for Integrative Studies conference (October 8, 2009), at the International Broadcasting Convention (September 12, 2010), at the Open Video Conference (October 2, 2010), and at the DIY Citizenship conference's Exhibition/Hack Space (November 13, 2010).

14. Greg Myers, *Matters of Opinion: Talking about Public Issues* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

15. Cass Sunstein, "The Daily We: Is The Internet Really a Blessing for Democracy," *Boston Review*, 2001, <http://bostonreview.net/BR26.3/sunstein.php>.

16. Myers, *Matters of Opinion: Talking about Public Issues*, 209.

17. Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach* (London: Routledge, 2003).

18. Michael Warner, "Publics and Counterpublics," *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002): 49–90.

19. For an extended discussion of the role of accounting in interactions between politicians and the public, see Stephen Coleman, "Direct Representation: Towards

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a Conversational Democracy” (Location: The Institute for Public Policy Research, 2005), <http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~sjklein/direct-representation.pdf>.

20. Joshua McVeigh-Schultz, “Synaptic Crowd: Vox Pop Experiments”

(University of California, Santa Cruz, 2009).

21. Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics.”

22. Viktor Shklovsky, *Art as Technique*, ed. Robert Con Davis, *Contemporary Literary Criticism: Modernism through Poststructuralism* (New York, London: Longman Press, 1986).

23. Genevieve Bell, Mark Blythe, and Phoebe Sengers, “Making by Making Strange: Defamiliarization and the Design of Domestic Technologies,” *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction (TOCHI)* 12, no. 2 (2005): 1–25.

24. Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology (Social and Political Theory)* (London: Polity, 1967).

25. Augusto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed* (New York: Theater Communications Group, 1979).

26. Ratto, “Open Design and Critical Making.”

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27. Bruno Latour, “A Cautious Prometheus? A Few Steps Toward a Philosophy of Design (with Special Attention to Peter Sloterdijk),” in *Design History Society* (Falmouth: Universal-Publishers, 2008), 2.

28. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson, *Thinking Gender* (London: Routledge, 1990), 181.

29. Hartley, *Television Truths*.

30. Michael Hancher, “The Classification of Cooperative Illocutionary Acts,” *Language in Society* 8, no. 1 (April 1, 1979): 1–14.

31. Hartley, *Uses of Television*.

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