



DISTRIBUTED AESTHETICS:

**Global, open creative culture through unstable,
autonomous, illegal, unpaid,
and irregular practices.**

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INTRODUCTION

The World Wide Web is continually changing the way we interact. Not only does it enable us to technologically communicate with people instantly over any distance, it also changes the social and cultural grounding on which we see ourselves and others - and the way we work and produce.

Subsequently, it seems that new streams of ideologies have emerged on a global scale around creative work and leisure practices based less on old fashioned centralized ethics and more on decentralized synergetic open sharing principles in dispersed networks. Online, people group autonomously in socialities based on shared interest and they interact, communicate and bond - as well as work and produce - under principles that more often than not are fueled by creative motivation rather than economic incentives.

Recent years have seen the birth and massive application of ideas such as open source-principles, crowd sourcing, peer-to-peer file exchange technology, cordial licensing ideologies, wiki user-driven content databases and open sharing practices - in decentralized movements interacting in dispersed networks that have a distinct intrinsic social culture that transcends more traditional cultural barriers and forge interest-based relationships.

These social relationships often congregate around exploratory productivity and information exchange, while not only bridging traditional culture barriers, but also erasing the border between work and play and thereby between business and leisure. The essence of this movement is often referred to as open culture or free culture. People interact, produce, sample, develop, remix, co-work, appropriate and even, sometimes, cross the line of what is legal - but most significantly, they share their efforts and accomplishments in a reciprocal mechanism of giving and receiving. Rather than receiving economic compensation, the individual contributor is awarded credit and recognition by other nodes. People share ideas, labor and competences in synergetic reciprocity.

I myself take part in this culture in a series of ways; I tag photos and articles, run a blog (freeform101.org) on volunteer basis, comment on what others write in blogs and articles - and on a larger scale also run a record label which uses the cordial licenses of Creative Commons - which enables me to offer music freely for non-commercial purposes, and thereby encourage people to copy and redistribute legally, so that they can share it with their friends.

In general, this global, open, creative culture seems to represent a state of benevolence and solidarity, seeing that people are willing to share openly. But this does not happen without problems and large contradictions. While a global sharing and co-working social culture arguably exist, these vast global networks containing million of nodes also display high levels of inherent disorder. The networks contain the

same dishonesty, laziness, flakiness, egoism, irregularities and even illegality that we also see in offline society, only perhaps even more so in the virtual sphere, as the social ties on the web are arguably weaker and cause nodes to dis- and reengage with each other at a much higher rate than in the physical world. Online ties come with much less obligation, just as technology and physical distance between nodes serve to enhance this tendency.

This disorder in open creative culture make network interaction innately chaotic and in constant flux, as social ties disrupt or fade away just as often as they appear. Still, these networks have proved sustainable enough to foster this new type of sociability capable of cultivating innovation and productivity through a dispersed social network in an autonomous landscape spanning the globe.

To recognize this new type of networked cultural phenomenon, and to comprehend its immanent disorder and irregularities, theorists Anna Munster and Geert Lovink points out that we must look into its aesthetics. The significance of this new culture lies far beyond the actual network technology itself and the new subsequent set of social practices. They argue that we must look at what they call 'distributed aesthetics', thereby referring to these aesthetics as something that is not to be considered visual, as the common definition of the word would imply, but rather that we must recognize that this particular aesthetics science should be seen as a "philosophical praxis that investigates the very conditions of contemporary life" (2005). This, they point out, enables us to "deal simultaneously with the dispersed and the situated," and to understand the practices of the open creative culture network; which they argue "need to be apprehended within the complex ecologies in which they are forming" (2005).

By complex, they mean "unpredictable, often poor, harsh, and not exactly 'rich' expressions of the social" (2005). In other words, we must understand that disorder plays a major role in shaping the open creative culture.

I find this paradox very interesting: It seems that there is a tacit aesthetic quality to these networks that not only overcome the immanent disorder, but actually seem to turn it into a strength - even a benefit.

Examples of this correlation include, for instance, file-sharing practices (which are often illegal by law, but seem natural as a means of information exchange in networked relationships), crowd-sourced news formation (which traditional news aggregators claim is less credible and disorderly, but millions use as first source), non-proprietary software production (so called open-source work, where programmers work unpaid - but qualitatively match the produce of corporate software corporations) and so on.

We see how rules, conventions, organization patterns, laws - and even monetary compensation traditions - are transformed, bent and broken in the open creative culture without regard for order, structure or regularity. This has led me to the interesting thought that maybe this disorder serve to stimulate creativity? That disorder in this context is an order in itself?

PROBLEM FORMULATION

Based on the above considerations my aim in this thesis is an investigation of the relationship between this disorder and the open creative culture via the following problem statement:

What is the relationship between the disorder - that is, for instance, unstable, autonomous, sometimes illegal, mostly unpaid and highly irregular practices - that we see on-line today and the open creative culture?

My approach will be to account for the nature and dynamics of open creative culture as presented in theory by a wide range of acknowledged scholars. In doing so it becomes evident that the disorder is generally neglected in network theory, except for scarce hints in various theory accounts, so therefore I will to define what this disorder involve (see below in this section) as well as demonstrate the nature of this disorder.

I plan to do that via an analysis of the practices of open creative culture and the endemic disorder, and will use this analysis as grounding for a discussion that will enable me to explore this alleged relationship between the culture and the disorder that I set out to investigate in my problem formulation. In this process I will use the distributed aesthetics methodology, which will serve as an interpretive tool.

In my discussion I will also look into larger perspectives - including societal, social and global angles - to add broad frame to argumentation and understanding of the topic in question.

DEFINITIONS

There are two main entities in my problem formulation: Open creative culture as one, as its endemic disorder as the other. To enable me to deal with both concepts coherently and consistently, I will now define how I choose to delineate each of them.

Open Creative Culture

The term 'open creative culture' is the label out of many alternates I have chosen to use in this thesis to describe this Internet phenomenon. In theoretic work and across academic and societal fields, however, many other labels are used to explain the same practices. Luke Tredinnick calls it both 'digital culture' and 'digital information culture' (2008), and support the technological-cultural link implied in these labels by positing that "digital technologies have had, or are having, a transformational effect on cultural values" (2008: 3).

Lawrence Lessig refer to it as 'free culture' in his work (2004), and also emphasize how this definition pays attention to the fact that "free cultures are cultures that leave a great deal open for others to build upon; unfree, or permission, cultures leave much less" (2004: 30).

Charles Leadbeater have coined the term 'we-think culture' (2008), thereby referring to the collective and synergetic power of the common efforts, whereas business scholars Tapscott & Williams refer to it as 'wikinomics' in describing the practices of this grand-scale, global change. Thereby they not only refer to the literal connota-

tion of the word, ie. economics implications, but also the culture that lies behind it: "The new art and science of wikinomics is based on four powerful new ideas: openness, peering, sharing, and acting globally" (2006: 20).

Other scholars deal with this phenomenon. Richard Barbrook calls it New Digital Economy" (in Terranova 2004: 76), Vaidhyanathan refers to the change process as the 'techno-cultural revolution' (2004), Manuel Castells (2010) along with Terranova (2004), whose theories I will elaborate further in the later part of this section, use the term 'network culture' - and Hardt & Negri are famous for the definition of the 'multitude', which is another one of the grand theories I will delve into.

To capture the main essence of all of these relevant and peripheral theories and to label this particular phenomenon accurately, I have chosen to use the label 'open creative culture', which herein will cover all of the above - and also acknowledge the multi-modal nature of the phenomenon. By using this label I mean to refer jointly and broadly to all of the actors, practices and produce that constitute an environment of, for example, open sharing, prosumerism, copyright liberalization activism and collaborative development work.

Endemic disorder

The disorder in open creative culture is a difficult concept to define because it resides across many practices, contexts and operational fields. Abrahamson & Freedman, two scholars within the field of organization, mentions how organizational problems occur from disorder such as "clutter, mixture, time sprawl, improvisation, inconsistency, blur, noise, distraction, bounce, convolution, inclusion, and distortion" (2006: 78), whereas Lovink & Munster in the distributed aesthetics methodology refer to "unpredictable, often poor, harsh, and not exactly 'rich' expressions of the social" (2005) as a way to describe disorder. In my thesis title and problem formulation, as an enumerating and explicit description I use a listing of the words "unstable, autonomous, sometimes illegal, mostly unpaid and highly irregular practices" in order to contain the phenomenon I am focusing on.

In order to be able to deal with this concept in a proper academic way, however, I will need a fixed and firm definition before I delve into my research. But rather than try to find a word or list of words that encase all of these disorderly types of practices (as well as other types that I will encounter in my research), which would prove difficult if not impossible, I have instead chosen to go about this challenge in another way, namely by defining it through a set of criteria:

First, by breaking down the fundamental meaning of the word: dis-order, which implies it being in opposition to a given order. Secondly, by establishing that it relates to deliberate human action, while engaged in open creative culture practices - which debar technological malfunctions, accidental occurrences and other non-intentional types of incidents. This way all of the activities mentioned in the beginning of this paragraph would count as valid disorder, as well as any other occurrence that I will encounter which meet these criteria. So this is the definition for using the word 'endemic disorder' in this thesis.

Still, I will keep the list of disorders in my title as well as in the problem formulation for their descriptive purpose.

(On a side note, it can be argued that the first of these above mentioned criteria is self-contradictory, because disorder can in fact, from a point of view, be considered an order in itself, but for the sake of chronology, this is not something that becomes relevant before the discussion section, where I will make such conceptual considerations based on the findings in the analysis).

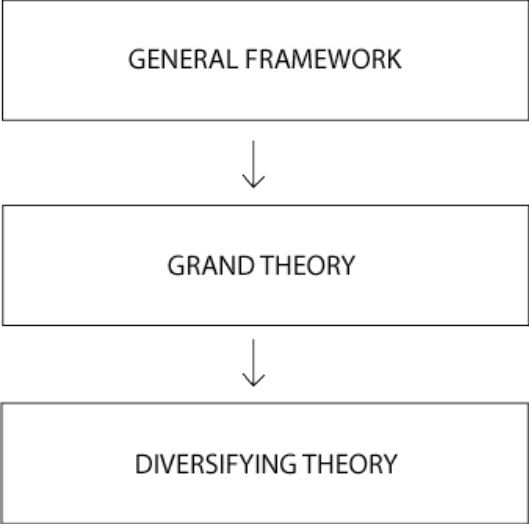
Having laid firm the definitions for these two central concepts, I will now illustrate the basic structure of this thesis and give an overview of the content.

STRUCTURE

The thesis comprises five sections; a preliminary section that includes introduction and problem formulation (this section), followed by a methodology overview of how I will conduct my research.

The third part is the theory section where the theoretical framework is presented, before moving onto the fourth section, which is the main body of the thesis containing the analysis and the discussion - and finally, the fifth conclusive section in which I will elaborate my findings and conclusions.

Introduction	Presentation of the overall framing topic of the project, namely open creative culture as a phenomenon, as well as the disorder that arguably exist in its practices. Also, I present briefly the idea of a methodological approach towards investigating this virtual phenomenon in the shape of Lovink & Munster's distributed aesthetics theory - leading up to the problem formulation that sets the ground of the thesis. Finally, this structure overview is presented (which is what you are reading now).
Methodology	As the backbone of the project I herein establish the scientific methodology that I will use to craft the project. Here I will consider perspectives of epistemology, source criticism, ontology and relationship between theory and research – as well as the research criteria that I will implement.

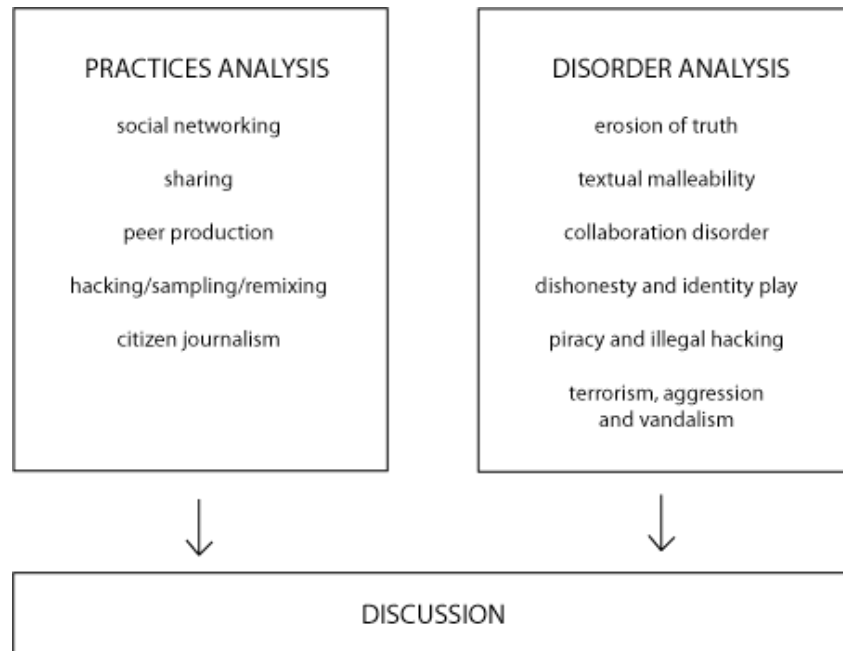
Theory section	<p>This section will consist of three parts; the first one describing the general perspectives of open creative culture and the contextual framing that surrounds it. The second part will give an overview of select grand network theory that explains open creative culture on a larger scale: Namely that of Tiziana Terranova, Manuel Castells, Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri and Siva Vaidhyanathan. After that, the third part will add a broad range of diversifying theory to supplement the grand theory in fully describing the open creative culture as applicable for this thesis.</p>  <pre>graph TD; A[GENERAL FRAMEWORK] --> B[GRAND THEORY]; B --> C[DIVERSIFYING THEORY];</pre>
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Analysis and discussion

In this, the main body of the thesis, I will delve into bringing forward a thorough, comprehensive collection of qualitative empirical data that I will analyze to investigate open creative culture practices and its disorders.

The analysis will consist of two parts: One that analyzes the actual tangible practices of open creative culture and one that analyzes its disorders.

The empirical data in this analysis will be derived from participant observation, scholarly accounts as well as from my own experience as an actor in this culture. I will reflect on my empirical data, re-search and analysis in the methodology section.



To ensure a firm structure, the two parts of the analysis will be divided into a range of subcategories, as the above figure shows. This serves as an overview to the analysis.

Throughout the analysis I will also hold my findings against the theoretical foundations of the theory section to ensure coherence between the various sections of the thesis.

After the analysis, according to the figure I will move on to discuss the findings and draw larger perspectives, using distributed aesthetics methodology, in order to describe the relationship between the open creative culture and the disorder it entails.

Conclusion	The final section in this project is the conclusion in which I will collect and sum up my findings from the analysis and discussion in order to present the most important revelations and naturally the answer to the problem formulation, as I have found it herein.
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Next, I will present my methodological considerations.

METHODOLOGY

In the following section I will consider my scientific methodology, through reflections on epistemology, source criticism, ontology, relationship between theory and research, as well as research criteria, as pertaining to this project.

However, when researching phenomena in the virtual world, one must be aware of the special circumstance that surrounds such a task. The Internet represents a distinct reality, which require a certain methodology in general for scientific scrutiny, as described by Steve Jones, who points out that the Internet is a "network of networks, each with their own design and unique structure" (1999: xviii), which follow some basic rules that allow them to interconnect. Social structures of the Internet, Jones argue "mimic this design" (1999: xviii).

This assertion explains well how I must be aware of the idiosyncrasy of the virtual sphere and the social cultures it represents - and naturally, that this is something that must be taken into account when deciding on which scientific method and research design should be used.

Furthermore, for the particular investigation of open creative culture and its disorders I will be applying the methodology of distributed aesthetics. As mentioned in the introduction, distributed aesthetics theory highlight how "networks cannot be studied as mere tools or as schematizations and diagrams. They need to be apprehended within the complex ecologies in which they are forming" (Lovink & Munster 2005), referring here, again, to the "unpredictable, often poor, harsh, and not exactly 'rich' expressions of the social".

In developing this methodological assertion, Lovink and Munster want to point out that we must first and foremost tackle the myth of seamless growth and unproblematic social interaction of the virtual networks. In our enthusiasm over the opportunities offered by the ubiquitous web and a myriad of social interaction services, we have forgotten, the authors argue, that the mere ability to create a link "can never account for the human labor required to create the link, to maintain it or the sudden death and change of direction for a network" (2005).

To investigate these phenomena, we must employ a methodology to deal with their aesthetics - the distributed aesthetics - which, as also cited in the introduction, "must deal simultaneously with the dispersed and the situated, with asynchronous production and multi-user access to artifacts (both material and immaterial) on the one hand, and the highly individuated and dispensed allotment of information/media, on the other" (2005).

Distributed aesthetics theory does not include or point towards concrete tools, nor does it describe pragmatically how exactly a researcher should implement it. Rather, it exists as more of a philosophical framework that can be amended into explorative research setting out to uncover new perspectives in critical network theory. This is exactly what I intend to do, as existing theory on open creative culture and network theory in general tend to neglect disorder – as I will describe further in the theory

section. That is why this thesis sets out to look into these otherwise overlooked disorders and investigate their relationship to the culture.

The special circumstances for virtual domain science must not only permeate our approach, but also our epistemological and ontological considerations. Steve Jones points out that when investigating the virtual sphere one should be aware of the specificity of the social perspective. Research in this area is truly unique to the Internet, Jones explains, because "there is no existing parallel social construct, and in many ways the Internet creates wholly new social constructs" (Jones 1999: xix). This is not to say that more conventional methodology holds no application, of course. The methodological approach to a task such as mine should be customized to fit the particular purpose of the study and comprise a combination of traditional and specific methodological elements.

To accomplish this task, I will rely on a foundation of conventional social science methodology, as presented primarily by Alan Bryman (2004) as well as from David Kaplan (2004) and Bridget Somekh et. al. (2005) - and then combine it throughout with the principles of distributed aesthetics theory by Lovink and Munster as well as with elements from among others Claire Hewson (2003), Steve Jones (1999), Lori Kendall (1999) and Ben Agger (2004) who all focus particularly on the special circumstances posed by making research in the virtual habitat.

EPISTEMOLOGY

There are several epistemological considerations to be made in order to keep an awareness of what can be considered valid information for scholarly argumentation on this particular topic.

INTERPRETIVISM VS. POSITIVISM

In general academic perspective the two research method strands within social science are positivism and interpretivism (Bryman 2004: 11-16), the first of which has its offspring in the natural sciences and in essence is concerned mainly with the development of general laws as derived by hard facts and logic. Interpretivism, on the other hand, which is the view I will adopt for this thesis, acknowledges how human action needs interpretation and requires the researcher to "grasp the subjective meaning of social action" (Bryman 2004: 13).

A position that is strongly based on theory of 'verstehen' (translates to 'understanding'), as developed by sociologist Max Weber, who pointed out how interpretivism and sociology is a science that "attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects" (*in* Bryman 2004: 13). This exact definition points out very accurately a large element in what I want to do in this thesis, namely to derive plausible interpretations and conclusions based on observations and findings.

The interpretative position will act to emphasize that what I will be dealing with is a social phenomenon where attention will also be focused on implicit dynamics, that is, beyond the physicality of the network, as focused on by the distributed aesthetics methodology. To tap into this sphere and investigate the open creative culture dis-

order I will need to focus just as much on the positive elements as the irregularities and unpredictability of human interaction in this context - and to interpret these mechanisms in order to be able to derive key perspective and well-argued conclusions of its aesthetics.

This interpretative element is a cornerstone in distributed aesthetics theory. Lovink & Munster explains that "over the past couple of decades aesthetics has been extended, stretched and turned upside down from a discipline that deals with the interpretation of the meaning and structure of the object of beauty into a philosophical praxis that investigates the very conditions of contemporary life" (2005). What is important is therefore to identify the often disorderly aesthesia of today's networked experience. "How do we perceive the socially invisible, yet all too real, relationships that are accumulating around us?," Lovink & Munster asks and elaborates: "Distributed aesthetics, as a project, needs to be understood as a participatory journey of network users, aiming to capture the not yet described, the not yet visualised, beyond poles such as real-virtual, new-old, offline-online and global-local. We should forget about exposing the links that are already there, and, with our capacity to engage a networked logic, forge links to what is in the network but not yet of the network" (2005).

By this they mean to invoke a project more akin to social aesthetics in which to "engage in and with the collective experiences of being embroiled in networks and being actively part of their making" (2005). In practice, I intend to use distributed aesthetics primarily in the discussion section as praxis to look beyond the tangibility of my findings in the analysis and thereby tap into the bigger perspectives of disorders relationship with the open creative culture.

In the collection of empirical data I intend to utilize my own experiences as part of this culture to gather supporting information that I can compare with the findings I apprehend through observation and through meta analysis of other scholarly accounts (this I will elaborate more in the following) - thereby comparing with the "production already captured by the codes and conventions of connectivity" (2005), as this participatory dualistic method is described as by Lovink & Munster in their methodology.

This approach could be argued to create a highly distorted research environment, since my own interpretations can easily lead to subjective or ungrounded conclusions. In order to accommodate to this challenge, I will therefore refer to the general view of empirical epistemology theory, as formulated by ao. John Locke and David Hume (*in Rønn 2006: 85-86*), pointing out that validity of knowledge ultimately must rely on observation (which I will apply by incorporating as many first-hand observations as possible), while also holding these observations against a broad field of acknowledged theory in order to gain an objective perspective. Many other authors support this necessary and challenging task.

Steve Jones note that "when doing Internet research, definitions are difficult to come by. Yet good research start with a definition of what is being studied" (Jones 1999: xviii). That definition I will delve into in the theory section using among other a bed-rock of grand theory by among other acknowledged network theory scholar Manuel Castells, who also recognize the importance of observation in pointing out that

"theory and research are only as good as their ability to make sense of the observation of their subject matter" (2010: xliii).

Another methodological concept that supports the validity of thorough observation is referred to as phenomenology; presented among other by scholar Alfred Schutz (*in* Bryman 2004: 13) explaining it as a "philosophy that is concerned with the question of how individuals make sense of the world around them and how in particular the philosopher should bracket out preconceptions in his or her grasp of that world". Bryman, based on the work of Schutz, points out that in this view, it is important for the researcher to make efforts to see things from the perspective of subjects being scrutinized, rather than as an outsider. This is important because it is the most objective way to interpret their actions, motivations and perceptions of the world.

Bogdan & Taylor, two other famed scholars in this field, explains this by saying that "in order to grasp the meanings of a person's behavior, the phenomenologist attempts to see things from that person's point of view" (*in* Bryman 2004: 14). In the case of the virtual this is a challenge, seeing how "the radically dispersed, distributed, yet 'placeless' nature of the 'field' entails different ways of thinking about participant observation and the bounding of sites from traditional conceptions associated with ethnographic and other forms of fieldwork. For example, online observations of necessity drag on 'connections rather than location' in defining their object or focus" (Hine *in* Someth et. al. 2005: 327-328). It is therefore crucial to employ views from different angles, which I intend to do in my analysis and discussion - because to establish truth in the virtual sphere there is simply no single point of view.

THEORETIC FOUNDATION

To account for the fundamentals of open creative culture I will rely on a thorough narrative comprised of both grand theory (by Manuel Castells, Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri, Tiziana Terranova). However, since these do not address the disorder that I am set out to investigate (this area is, as mentioned earlier, rather neglected in network theory), I will also include the ideas of Siva Vaidhyanathan who deals with anarchic structures in networks.

Additionally, I will add a range of diversifying theory to present an exact and scholarly picture of the particular practices of open creative culture relevant for this thesis. The diversifying theory will mainly constitute of so-called middle theory, which is a label for a certain type of theory that Bryman (2004: 6-7) refer to as implementing published texts that "fall somewhere between grand theories and empirical findings. They represent attempts to understand and explain a limited aspect of social life," in my case the relationship between open creative culture and the disorders. In other words, he continues, this approach serves to make the "relevant background literature relating to a topic fuel the focus of an article (...) and thereby acts as the equivalent of a theory" (2004: 6-7).

I have chosen this approach because of the volatile and ephemeral nature of the topic, which, as being in constant flux, deserves to be described through the implementation of varied and recent literature that deals specifically with the virtual

sphere, on top of the fundamentals established by the grand theories. This, I will argue, will enable me in best possible way to engage in the main body of the thesis, namely the analysis and discussion section (which I will describe later in this methodological account).

EMPIRICAL SOURCE REFLECTIONS

This leads me to consider the empirical sources of data I will analyze. As mentioned above by Lovink & Munster, "it is the conceptual, the unseen, and the immanent that the 'distributed' brings into play. Network theorization (...) must struggle with the abstraction of dispersed elements – elements that cannot be captured into one image" (2005). To accommodate to this challenge, I will rely on a diverse body of multi-modal empirical sources that serve to enable me to analyze the aesthetics - that is, the implicitness of - the interaction, communication, information exchange, productivity and the social codes that exist in the open creative culture and its disorders.

The sources will comprise of a broad spectrum of qualitative data within two main categories; one being observations of open creative culture practices (which I will elaborate on in the following) and the other being data derived from relevant theoretic publications across different academic fields; ie. sociology, economics, technology and more. Here I will incorporate selected findings and analysis of other work by other scholars – and reanalyze that as part of my empirical body.

My observations will consist of a broad view into open creative culture practices and disorders as they appear and function on the Internet. I will look into among other communication, interaction, platforms, norms and social codes in order to derive qualitative data that I will analyze. Furthermore, I will use my experience as an open creative culture participant – as described in the introduction – to support the findings I observe. This includes, of course, an ability to stay objective, because analyzing data derived from my own experiences could be argued to be subjective. To refute this argument, however, I will only use accounts of my own experiences to support observations made elsewhere, and never rely arguments or conclusion solely on something I have only experienced myself.

When using observations, several considerations apply - as noted above as well as later in the ontology section below - but the same goes for the analysis of others scholar's work. This is what is often referred to as 'double interpretation' (Bryman 2004: 15) - that is, interpreting knowledge that has already been condensed by another researcher, and therefore "providing an interpretation of others' interpretations". Others refer to it as 'meta-analysis', a label originally invented by Gene Glass in 1978, which, in the words of Kaplan, "refers to an analysis of the results of several studies for the purposes of drawing general conclusions" (2004).

Using other scholars' interpretation for further examination could arguably be seen to reduce of the validity of theses sources and the interpretation thereof, because of their second hand nature. Still, I will argue, these academically researched texts compose valuable assertions that serve to produce a nuanced argumentation in my thesis, especially since I will rely on a broad spectrum of sources and thereby pro-

duce accounts from several angles and thereby base my generalizations on more than one account.

SOURCE CRITICISM

Taking a critical look at the composition of this entire empirical body of data, several general considerations occur. For one, there are a series of technological concerns - lead by the issue of access. Jones mentions that "although the artifactual elements of online social relationships seem readily available", one should, as a researcher contemplate the ways one is able to "travel to the place occupied by a community, to observe, participate, to use traditional ethnographic methods" (1999: 17) - meaning that one should verify that there is in fact access to the interactions that are to be analyzed. This concern is a general issue in investigating the virtual sphere, because often certain processes or domains are protected from trespassing attempts from outsiders, including researchers. Access is, Jones confirms, "an issue in regard to being able to log on and being able to participate" (1999: 17). This, however, is less of a problem for my particular area of focus in the online sphere, because the nature of the open creative culture is, as the label implies - open - for everyone to enter anonymously, and will therefore not be barred from scrutiny.

Another concern in this vein, although more of a methodological one, is the dual purpose of the Internet when conducting science into the virtual sphere. As Somekh et. al. describes, it "involves a dual capacity" in the sense that it "functions as a 'research tool' and as 'a social medium' presenting phenomena to be researched (2005: 326). I will be careful to distinguish between these two of its roles.

Next, looking at the connection between the online and the offline world, a couple of questions also appear. One is recognized by Somekh et. al. (2005: 327) who is concerned with science that does not take the offline relation to the virtual sphere into account: "Relations between online and offline lives and environments are complex, varied and uncertain. This raises questions about the extent to which we can understand online social phenomena independently of their offline extensions" (2005: 327) - an assertion also posed by Kendall (1999: 61). But as pointed out by Lovink and Munster earlier in this section, we need to move beyond seeing offline and online practices linked firmly together per se and rather acknowledge the independence of the new aesthetics that have emerged in the virtual network. Although both positions can be argued to have validity, I have chosen to employ that of the latter and focus solely on what is online.

The same dialectic is posed when considering the time element and the ephemerality of online reality. As a scholar, it can be a problem if parts of empirical data are either changed, moved or deleted while under scrutiny in the thesis process. "Online spaces are notoriously non-permanent and transient. How can researchers be confident they will be left with a study in a month's time, let alone a year?", Somekh et. al. asks (2005: 327). For me, however, this poses less of a concern, as I am engaging into studies of generalities, not specific cases. As a result, I will seek to mainly draw general assessments based on plural findings and therefore be less vulnerable to this sort of predicaments with single sites being changed or removed.

Last, but not least, I will also address the challenge of conducting research in a sphere where communication is done mainly through representation and technological mediation: "Many social interactions in cyberspace are conveyed solely by text, or otherwise without any kind of embodied presence, creating issues for researchers and researched alike. Participants in online worlds and exchanges often have to be taken face value in terms of the identity they (choose to) present within that space," Somekh et. al. argue. "Identity play are common online. Thus researchers face challenges of authenticity and validation with respect to gathering, analyzing and interpreting data" (2005: 326-327) - as also pointed out by Hewson (2003: 115). This, however - as also described in the distributed aesthetics theory by noting that "the network is recruited to serve various strategies of representation" (Lovink & Munstner 2005) - is actually part of the special aesthetics; namely the disorder of identity blurring and subsequent dishonesty in conveying your true identity.

As such, empirical data of this kind is not to be seen as having weak empirical value, but rather as constituting an integral part in open creative culture and its disorders. A virtual identity holds no less validity than a real one, because it is part of a real virtuality (a term by Manuel Castells, which I will explain in the theory section) and therefore, in my view for this thesis, becomes not only valid, but also real. As such, "the virtual self is connected to the world by information technologies that invade not only the home and office but the psyche", as Agger points out (2004: 6).

ONTOLOGY

The basic ontological considerations (Bryman 2004: 16) reflect upon whether social entities are to be considered objective entities that have an existence besides the perceptions held of them by the social world they are part of - this is referred to as objectivism - or if they are to be considered "social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors" (2004: 16). In this view, which is called constructivism, knowledge is seen as a social construction that differs depending on who is observing and interpreting them.

As such, this can be seen as a highly unsteady and changeable way to look at knowledge, but as a social scientist it is of the biggest importance to choose a methodology that allows you to account for the social dimension of the world around us and the actual segment that you are scrutinizing - and that is particularly important when implementing distributed aesthetics theory. This is also why I have chosen the constructivist approach to this thesis, as this - in conjunction with my interpretivist position - enables me in best possible way to derive interpretative aesthetic assessments from observations and scholarly accounts.

When reflecting upon ontological dimensions of this project, one should also look at one's own position as a researcher, which I also touched upon earlier in my epistemological considerations, where I noted that I will be taking a observationist role - as well as use my own open creative culture role as supporting empirical data.

Observation in the virtual sphere is not without its challenges, though. Hewson suggests that when conducted online, "the scope for observational research (...) is

somewhat restricted, essentially being limited to what may be called 'indirect observation', by which we mean observation of the traces of behavior (...) as opposed to observations of behavior in real time and close proximity" (Hewson 2003: 46). I intend to compensate for that by incorporating my own experiences as open creative culture participant (blogger, free music publisher, information sharer, user of open source software etc.) as supporting empirical data to add direct observation dynamics to the analysis in what can be called an auto-ethnographic manner. Therefore I am indeed part of the social domain that I will be scrutinizing and that naturally influences the subjectivity of the way I interpret and discuss the empirical data and also the conclusions that I reach - and therefore should be considered carefully. To do that, I will, as mentioned, only use my own experiences as support for observations and scholarly accounts - in order to critically assess the validity as well as be certain to hold particular instances against broader and more established critical theory.

Agger explains this approach well: "Critical theory could be described or defined as an intellectual methodology for gaining distance, for thinking about the world as something other, going beyond everyday appearances to understand its deepest structures and its most distant reaches" (2004: 93). This is also something I will use as a method in the subsequent discussion (which follows the analysis) to apply bigger perspective to my findings - as Agger points out in the same paragraph, "this is one way of talking about globality".

Overall, it can be argued that there is no such thing as complete objectivity, and with this in mind will state as a premise (as a delimitation) in this methodology that I am aware of my own general position in the working process of this thesis; namely that although I will strive for the maximum level of objectivity, a certain amount of subjectivity can never be avoided - and that goes not only for my interpretations, but also those of the authors of the literature I will be using herein. As Bryman points out, "the researcher always presents a specific version of social reality, rather than one that can be regarded as definitive" (2004: 17). A concept also highlighted in the distributed aesthetics theory (Lovink & Munster 2005).

Therefore, in summary, I do not claim to be able to present the 100% objective truth, but rather the truth as interpreted by me at this certain place in time based on a frame of strong and diverse sources that include thorough observations and first-hand experiences in combination with a large theoretical body of acknowledged authors and scholars.

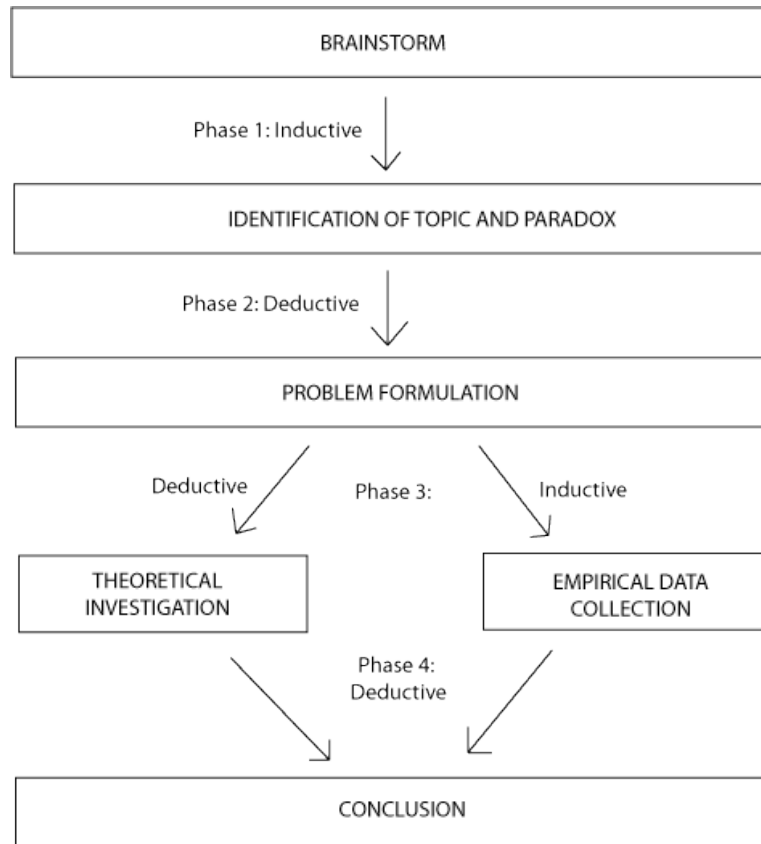
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEORY AND RESEARCH

Last, but not least, before moving on the research design of this thesis; I will present my considerations towards the relationship between theory and my research.

To describe this relationship, academics distinguish between inductive and deductive approaches, which describes two oppositional theoretic work methods - as described by ao. Bryman (2004: 8-11). The inductive method is used to develop theory that is the outcome of research, where observations, analysis and findings lead to establishing a new theory - or at least sprouts of ideas based on generalizations

found in the research. Contrary, the deductive research method sets out to investigate the validity of an existing theory or a hypothesis derived thereof, and aims to look at observations and findings through a prism of hypothetical theory in order to reflect upon the uncovered data.

I will rely on both in this thesis, as illustrated in the following figure:



In the brainstorming phase (Phase 1) I was inductively investigating a wide range of broad topics to single out which one to delve into as the selected one for this thesis. Once chosen - the topic of open creative culture and its alleged disorder - and thereby moving into the next phase (Phase 2), I thereafter undertook a deductive approach through literary research in order to narrow down the problem area towards a final formulation - until finally moving into the main phase (Phase 3) in which the actual thesis writing practice takes place. Here I employ a dual approach in using both methods: Deductively condensing theory while inductively researching for relevant empirical data. Final phase (Phase 4) is when I deductively draw my conclusions from the established findings of the analysis and discussion section.

Next, I will now also consider how to ensure that my research fulfils academic standards by setting firm my research criteria.

RESEARCH CRITERIA

Research criteria function to optimize the quality of the research. There are three basic criteria (Bryman 2004: 28), namely reliability, replication and validity - of which I will take use of the first and the last. By reliability is referred to the trustworthiness and general applicability of the data that is collected. I plan to ensure the highest possible reliability in my data collection by putting effort into finding data that appear to have a general exercise, rather than just one instance or occurrence. The broader appliance - or recurrence - of a practice or phenomenon, the more credible the data it will represent. This does not mean that I will not include accounts of deviation or special circumstance, but the point is that I will be careful not to over-interpret practices that are not common.

By validity is meant the concern with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research. My approach here has already been touched upon in the previous part of this section, namely that I will draw upon a triangular range of empirical data consisting of observation, scholarly assertions and my own experience - in order to ensure more than one view as basis of generalizations and conclusions. Especially when researching phenomena and practices that are not alone elusive, but also stretch over many modalities, it is important not to put too much importance in singular instances, but rather seek to draw general conclusions from larger bodies of data - and thereby ensure to the highest possible extent that misinterpretation does not takes place.

RESEARCH DESIGN

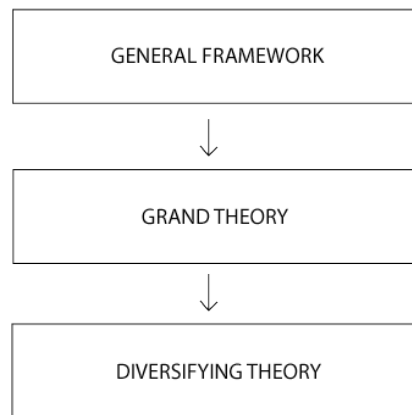
In Bryman's account (2004: 33-57) there are five fundamental designs which are common for social science; experimental design, cross-sectional design, longitudinal design, case study design and comparative design. For this project none of these apply precisely, as my research is more constructed. Therefore what I will be doing is rather using a customization of what Bryman calls 'cross-sectional design', where the researcher relies on many empirical cases rather than one. In practice, he explains, cross-sectional design "entails the collection of data on more than one case (usually a lot more than one), and at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantitative or quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables" (Bryman 2004: 41). As I will be investigating a very broad field of different data, the overall idea of this design fits well with my approach in this thesis, where I will draw my arguments and conclusions based on many different examples and assertions.

With my methodology and research design in place, I will now commence with the theory section.

THEORY SECTION

This section of theory is divided into three subdivisions, which will lay out the theoretical bedrock for this project by detailing open creative culture as well as hint towards the alleged disorder, in order to equip me uncover and analyze open culture practices and disorders in the next section.

The structure of the theory section is as follows:



As the figure shows, I start out in the first part with accounting for the **general framework** of open creative culture in order to outline the general conditions under which this phenomenon exists.

Secondly in this theory section, I will bring the fundamental theoretical elements of open creative culture into play through the use of **four grand theories**, the first three of which serve to describe the scope and nature of the culture in broad terms. These three theories are ‘network theory’ by Tiziana Terranova, ‘space of flows’, ‘timeless time’ and ‘real virtuality’ by Manuel Castells and ‘multitude’ theory by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri.

However, since neither of these otherwise immensely well-acknowledged authors specifically address the endemic disorder of the culture, I therefore also include a fourth grand theory, namely what Siva Vaidhyanathan calls ‘anarchist structures’ – in other to shed light on the existence of the endemic disorder that is – across critical network theory in general – surprisingly neglected. That is what I will engage in, in the analysis in the next section.

Before that, however, I will in this theory section add to above mentioned grand theories some selected **diversifying theories** from a wide range of scholars, whose particular ideas I deem important for my particular research query, analysis and discussion.

GENERAL FRAMEWORK

Open creative culture is a label that covers a broad phenomenon that unfold across the globe. It hinges on the use of the World Wide Web, the Internet, and while also moving out into the local sphere, outside of bits and into atoms, as I will describe later in the analysis and discussion, it is clearly driven by the advances in information technology that we have seen in the last 25 years and the emergence of a so-called virtual sphere – a seemingly boundless dispersed network.

In this first part of the theory section, the general framework, I will look at the chasis that constitute the conditions under which open creative culture exists. As an element in section I also consider why this phenomenon can even be considered a culture in itself.

WEB 2.0 AS HABITAT

In the last couple of years, the notion of 'web 2.0', coined by author Tim O'Reilly in 2005, has become a label for a new use of the Internet. As a label to distinguish the new use from the old, the '2.0' - which stems from software linguistics - signals that the Internet now has entered a second version, even if the technology has not physically changed, but just rather become faster. The change is therefore not itself technological, but rather social - yet it is still strongly interwoven with technology (I will touch upon this later in this section).

Dan Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams puts it accurately when saying that "while the old Web was about Web sites, clicks, and 'eyeballs', the new Web is about the communities, participation, and peering. As users and computing power multiply, and easy-to-use tools proliferate, the Internet is evolving into a global, living, networked computer that anyone can program" (2006: 19).

What is really pivotal in this quote are the elements of communities, participation, and peering - namely that Internet use has moved from passive consumption to active participation, which includes a central social element among Internet users across the globe. The development has shifted focus towards the ability to create, modify, and especially share content - not necessarily by having extended technical insight, but simply because web 2.0 is about enabling participation and to do that, the tools must be made available to the laypeople.

In effect, something that was previously "only available to centralized organizations which (...) paid staff to create content which generally was published only on that organization's site" (Kleiner & Wyrick 2007: 11), can now be done by all of us. Essentially the shift has been a matter of ceding control over applications, information, and data to the end user, thereby not only enabling them - but also encouraging them - to create, share, and reuse information in any way they like (Tredinnick 2008: 107) – which hints towards the more anarchic structures of disorder such an enabling of freedom entails.

Tredinnick further explains how "the shift of values this represents is associated with an attitude or outlook, reflecting the changing way in which information and knowledge are created, disseminated and consumed in the developed world. The

idea of Web 2.0 therefore transcends the particular technologies on which it depends" (Tredinnick 2008: 107), meaning that the infrastructure that enables people to take part in this culture is technological – that is, based on information technology.

I will now look into this infrastructure.

TECHNOLOGY AS INFRASTRUCTURE

That technology sometimes offers us tools to make substantial leaps in development is nothing new. Throughout the ages mankind has pursued technological advances in all fields of life, including also in the virtual sphere, as we see today with the emergence of among other web 2.0 practices as described above.

Technology, at its core, is the "collaborative act of humans using the environment to make tools to meet our needs", López et. al. explains (2007: 12). Yet, the technological advances that we are seeing now go far beyond creating better tools than previous ones, because the use of tools now move from that of being tools of physical use into being the main mediator of many of our social relations. Communication technology has gone from 'one-to-many' and 'one-to-one' to 'many-to-many', and the social bonds made by this plural interconnection are entirely dependent on the technological platforms made available by the Internet today.

Many scholars, of whom I will present a wide range herein, address this decisive development. Two of the most prominent are Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, famed for their multitude-theory, also described later herein, in which they present the idea that distributed networks now serve as a general condition (Lovink 2005: 8) when investigating social relations. This is a significant difference between our own age and what has come before, Tredinnick state: It is a difference "contained in, and determined by, our use of technology" (2008: 21).

If broken down, the technological advance that has enable this development is actually quite simple: Home computers have become cheap, Internet broadband connections have become fast and a series of advanced, yet easy-to-use collaboration tools have been made available. Separated from each other, neither of these advances would constitute a major shift, but combined they are what Tapscott & Williams call 'weapons of mass collaboration' (2006: 11) - new low-cost collaborative infrastructures, free Internet telephony and other communication tools and open source software (2006: 11 and Brafman & Beckstrom 2006: 59-63).

This development, as any other previous technological advancement, is pioneered by people, who are particularly skilled in the relevant areas. In this case, however, these people are not paid scientists or experts working for a corporation (some of them are, but the vast majority are not). This development has instead been lead by the laity, by skilled amateurs, in collaboration across national borders: "In these groups, they collaborate on the construction of the Internet's tools and protocols, often working with people they have never met face to face. (...) It's a model of collaborative work, often without any financial compensation, driven by a belief in the Internet, a need for its technology, or a fascination with its power and capability" (López et. al. 2007: 14).

This global techno-humanoid infrastructure offers great synergetic potential: "Individuals now share knowledge, computing power, bandwidth, and other resources to create a wide array of free and open source goods and services that anyone can use or modify," Tapscott & Williams explains. "What's more, people can contribute to the 'digital commons' at very little cost to themselves, which makes collective action much more attractive.

Indeed, peer production is a very social activity. All one needs is a computer, a network connection, and a bright spark of initiative and creativity to join in the economy" (2006: 12). It is this ease of participation that constitutes the open creative culture. There is no closed circuitry in this part of the new infrastructure. The open creative culture lives in open online meeting places, "neutral spaces for creative conversation, moderated to allow the free flow of ideas.

This is why, at their heart, these projects have open discussion forums and wikis, bulletin boards and community councils, or simple journals (...) so that people can come together in a way that allows one plus one to equal twelve many times over" (Leadbeater 2008: 77).

But why do an increasing amount of people across the globe want to spend their valuable leisure time like this? And why do they make their work available to others for nothing else than credit and honorable mention? The answer to these questions are central to open creative culture and will be investigated in the diversifying theory, in the 'motivation' subsection below that shows how the freedom to do what you want makes people want to work with pay – but is also brings with it large elements of disorder, which I will bring forward in the analysis.

The advance in technology and benefits of improvements in infrastructure goes way beyond the produce and exchange of free common goods, however. Unlike any previous communications technology advancement, this one is "not just a technology; it's a social movement that uses a technology" (López et. al. 2007: 14).

Lawrence Lessig, a Harvard law professor and advocate of keeping the information commons free acknowledges the cultural change that this shift has brought along: "The Internet has unleashed an extraordinary possibility for many to participate in the process of building and cultivating a culture that reaches far beyond local boundaries. That power has changed the marketplace for making and cultivating culture generally" (Lessig 2004: 9). In other words, there is a distinct cultural value to the change. This value I will describe in the following.

CULTURAL ANGLE

The social dimension of this online phenomenon is rather obvious, seeing how people interact with each other in large scale across the globe. But is enough to call it a culture? There are many forms of group interaction that are voluminous, interpersonal and clearly social, without being distinct enough to classify as a culture. How does this phenomenon distinguish itself from that and qualify for being called a culture? If we look at the traits of culture as a term, in general, it becomes clear that while not having either national, geographical or ethnic denominator, many scientists have reached the assessment that what we are dealing with is clearly cultural in

scope, although one that adds new perspectives to the term. I have chosen two scholarly assertions that describes this - the first one from Luke Tredinnick:

"In 2001 the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization defined culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, [that] encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs", as presented by UNESCO in 2001. Tredinnick here goes on to establish how these three elements are present in this online phenomenon: "social relations within a social system ('lifestyles, living together'); idea systems that mediate social practices and social relations ('value systems, traditions, and beliefs'); and the material products of social and cultural practices ('art and literature')" (2008: 3-4) - with 'art and literature' referring to the produce of the online efforts (software, science, tools etc.).

Additionally, and this is where this online culture adds to the spectrum of traditional traits in culture, Tredinnick emphasizes - that "with the latter of these can perhaps also be included the desire or drive informing their creation" (2008: 3-4). What he refers to here is the sharing mentality of the Internet culture.

A mentality that among other is especially characterized in the 'open source' idea, which is a focal part of the open creative culture, as I will investigate and explain in the analysis. Tredinnick's wraps up his statement by pointing out that "to be considered aspects of culture, such material products, social relations and idea systems must be 'distinctive', in this case 'of a society or a social group'," (2008: 3-4) relating to open creative culture's distinct produce of non-proprietary software and other specific innovative ideas the the culture has spawned.

To these claims, I would also like to add select elements from the work of open source pioneer Michael Tieman. Tieman points out how "anthropologists understand culture to refer not only to consumptions of goods, but to the general processes which produce such goods and give them meaning, and to the social relationships and practices in which such objects and processes become embedded. For them, culture thus includes art, science, as well as moral systems" (Tiemann 2008: 22). In other words, the practices of cooperation and the produce hereof can compose the pivotal core around which a culture exists.

It may seem rash to label such social relations that are purely mediated through technology, a 'culture' by itself. But as the world changes, it is widely recognized by many scholars that so do the measurements by which we label social relations. Culture can indeed also evolve solely around shared actions and aims. Hardt & Negri writes how "network has become a common form that tends to define our ways of understanding the world and acting in it" (in Lovink 2005: 8), and this school of thought is similar to that of George Yudice, who sees network culture as 'productive friction' between "inter-human dynamics and the given framework of software. (...) The aim of networks is not transportation of data but contestation of systems" (in Lovink 2005: 6).

The same Yudice has also presented a theory that he calls the 'expedience of culture', where he highlights performativity as one of the fundamental logics of social

life today (in Lovink 2005: 5). This obviously links well with the assertions of Tie-man, as mentioned above. In the same article Yudice suggests to see culture as a more of a resource, rather than a commodity: "Culture is an active and, potentially, innovative sector with the capacity to mobilize forces" (Lovink 2005: 3-4). In general, Yudice seem to grasp the changeability and functionality of culture in general and Internet culture in particular. One of his most preeminent claims is also simply that Internet culture is in a constant flux (in Lovink 2005: 5), and that is why we must constantly reconsider the nature of culture - especially in the online sphere, where all these social changes are taking place.

Having laid out the framework, I will present the fundamental theory that explains open creative culture as well as hint towards its endemic disorder. This is the grand theory section and is up next.

GRAND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

In my theoretical account of open creative culture, I will lay out a foundation of four grand theories. These are Tiziana Terranova's 'network culture' theory, Manuel Castels 'space of flows', 'timeless time' and 'real virtuality'-theory elements from his epic 'network society' trilogy publication, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's 'multitude'-theory and finally Vaidhyanathan's 'anarchist structure'-theory, which serve to point out the existence of disorderly traits that is missing in the three first theories. In combination they make up the basic perspectives of this phenomenon - which - in combination with the subsequent diversifying theory - is what I will build my analysis and discussion upon in the next section.

NETWORK CULTURE (TERRANOVA)

First, I will draw upon the work of Tiziana Terranova. In her extensive research of network theory, she has not put a particular focus on social and cultural changes, but rather on the considerable changes in communication and information exchange (2004: 7). In her overall thoughts about what she refers to as 'network culture', as mentioned above, she adheres to a belief that this cultural formation, a network culture, "seems to be characterized by an unprecedented abundance of informational output and by an acceleration of informational dynamics" (2004: 1).

Recognizing how this abundance permeates not only certain professional or social fields, but rather increasingly is moving into most dimensions of life and almost every country in the world, she indicates that at on a communicative level, we are actually dealing with a phenomenon that is not only global in scope, but also cross-cultural: "To think of something like a 'network culture' at all, to dare to give one name to the heterogeneous assemblage that is contemporary global culture, is to try to think simultaneously the singular and the multiple, the common and the unique" (2004: 2).

In this light she finds it difficult to distinguish cultural formations as distinct from each other, because everything is moving into the same domain. Network culture is becoming ubiquitous through the interconnectedness of the world, which, as she points out, is not necessarily to be considered technological: "Every cultural production or formation, any production of meaning (...) is increasingly inseparable from the wider informational processes that determine the spread of images and words, sounds and affects across a hyper-connected planet" (2004: 3). This apparent amalgamation of information and annihilation of distance is positive, she says, and calls it a "creative destruction, that is a productive movement that releases (rather than inhibits) social potentials for transformation" (Terranova 2004: 2-3).

Here Terranova also hints a disorderly dimension to the network culture, although doesn't delve deeper into it. Instead she focuses the transformative effect of what she calls 'free labor' and argues that it makes the Internet "a thriving an hyperactive medium" (2004: 73).

This, she says, is a feature of this specific cultural economy and highlights the "connections between the 'digital economy' and what the Italian autonomists have called the 'social factory' (or 'society-factory')". The 'society-factory' describes a process whereby "work processes have shifted from the factory to society, thereby setting in motion a truly complex machine" (2004: 74). Terranova here - in the words of the Italian autonomists - refer to the "voluntarily given and unwaged, enjoyed and exploited, free labor on the Net. (...) The Internet is animated by cultural and technical labor through and through, a continuous production of value which is completely immanent in the flows of the network society at large" (Terranova 2004: 73-74).

With these thoughts, Terranova addresses the vast scope of this cultural phenomenon. Next, I will head into the work of Manuel Castells to address three of his concepts that tie in with the mechanisms Terranova presents.

SPACE OF FLOWS / TIMELESS TIME / REAL VIRTUALITY (CASTELLS)

Manuel Castells is seen by many as one of the most prominent network society theory researchers, and is - among a extensive back catalogue of publications - acknowledged for his 'Network Society' trilogy (last published in 2010), that stands as a monumental part of the literary body covering this field. In his work are in particular three ideas that I think are essential when describing the central traits of open creative culture; namely 'space of flows', 'timeless time' and 'real virtuality'. To account for these ideas of his, I will rely on his own work as well as that of David Bell, who has published a book about Castells' ideas as a part of the 'Cyberculture Theorists'-series (2007).

Before delving into the three mentioned ideas, however, I would like to focus on one of his general statements, that acts as one of the headlines of his work in this particular field - and also serves to emphasize the relevance of space of flows, timeless time and real virtuality in dealing with network culture. In this quote: "The Internet culture is the culture of the creators of the Internet" (in Bell 2007: 84-85), Castells encapsulates the gist of web 2.0's participatory nature, as described earlier in this section. In elaboration, Castells express how engagement is necessary to be a part of

this culture: "The flexible structure of the network is governed by the simplest binary logic: on or off, inclusion or exclusion: networks are value-free. They can equally kiss or kill: nothing personal" (in Bell 2007: 63). Castells expresses a four-layer structure, which form this culture: "the techno-meritocratic culture, the hacker culture, the virtual communitarian culture, and the entrepreneurial culture" (2007: 84-85). These entrepreneurial functions, which also in the work of many other network scholars form pivotal roles, I will look at later in this section in a look at the participants of the open creative culture (in the diversifying theory).

Now to commence with the three mentioned ideas from Castells' work. For this, I will rely on the newly published second edition of 'The Rise of the Network Society', which forms the first part of three in the aforementioned network society trilogy. In this second edition, published in 2010, he adjusts a range of his definitions to refute some of the ambiguity that, in his own words, were to be found in the first edition, which was published over ten years ago.

In the first edition, he defined 'space of flows' as "the material organization of time-sharing social practices that work through flows. The network is a series of points, hubs or nodes - these can be people, cities, businesses, nation-states - connected together by flows of various sorts: flows of information, of materials, of money, of people. So the space of flows is both the nodes and the connecting flows" (Castells in Bell 2007: 69). In the second edition of the book, he elaborates how "it was the development of micro-electronics-based digital communication, advanced telecommunication networks, information systems, and computerized transportation that transformed the spatiality of social interaction by introducing simultaneity, or any chosen time frame, in social practices, regardless of the location of the actors engaged in the communication proces" (2010: xxxii).

This ability to disregard space, as we've seen in the recent decades is, however, only the most recent proliferation of development of techno-social interaction, as Castells point out: "All major social changes are ultimately characterized by a transformation of space and time in the human experience," (2010: xxxi) - but this recent technological change has, as opposed to technological advances before the information age, highlighted the almost complete annihilation of space as a social factor.

Castells accurately note that if "we look at space as a social form and a social practice, throughout history space has been the material support of simultaneity in social practice. That is, space defines the time frame of social relationships" (2010: xxxi), meaning that the space vs. time element that communication was subdued by it no longer a factor. In this sense, Castells says, "space is not a tangible reality. (...) It is a concept constructed on the basis of experience" (2010: xxxi).

Secondly, I will look at Castells idea of 'timeless time': "Humans experience time in different ways depending on how their lives are structured and practiced" (2010: xxxix). In a historical light he here highlights how time has been attached to perception and practice in various contexts - and depending on elements such as social organization, technology and culture. This is different now where we have the ability to reach everyone on the planet in an instant. Castells calls this 'timeless time' and

explains this development well by explaining that "time as sequence was replaced by different trajectories of imagined time" because time no longer had any physical restraints. "First, and most obviously, it refers to speeding up," he argues, "instantaneity is one form of timeless time" (Bell 2007: 75).

Another view of the same phenomenon is what he calls 'desequencing': "As a result of living in a multimedia age with limitless access to streams of live and archived material, as well as ever more wondrous ways to predict or imagine the future, we are exposed to a montage of instants wrenched from temporal context: past, present and future are disassembled and reassembled for us and by us" (Bell 2007: 75). In practice, what we experience is a "systemic perturbation in the sequential order of the social practices performed in this context" (Castells 2010: xli).

Third, and finally, I will bring about Castells' concept of 'real virtuality'. Here he addresses the validity of a shared virtual culture as compared to other concepts of culture that takes their departure in the material world. Castells does not differentiate between the real and the virtual in this sense. "Reality, as experienced," he says according to Bell (2007), "has always been virtual because it is always perceived through symbols that frame practice.

Culture, Castells argue, is virtual, because it is mediated, but real nonetheless" (2007: 82-83). Castells also roots this mediation in the symbolic environment that all cultures consist of: "There is no separation between reality and symbolic representation. In all societies humankind has existed in and acted through a symbolic environment." (Castells 2010: 403). This is why Castells use the term 'real virtuality', since this "opens up a space to discuss the culture of the network society. (...) The culture of real virtuality is woven from the heterogeneous experiences of the new multimedia environment, the global hypertext" (Bell 2007: 77). In essence, the technology of the dispersed network is the link between communication and culture, seeing that culture is at all times mediated and aggregated through our symbolic environment.

With Castells' ideas of central traits in open creative culture explained, I will now move on to look at the domain of participants - using the theory of 'multitude' by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri.

MULTITUDE (HARDT / NEGRI)

Hardt & Negri are also regarded as some of the most prominent voices in critical network society science. Famed for several texts, the two have also coined the idea of 'multitude' in the landmark publication of the same name (2004). Here they focus on the aggregated population of network culture, but in a very broad context, which I will include in this project as a part of the grand theory bedrock. Whereas the theory of multitude therefore only explains the populace of open creative culture in very general terms, I will later in this section go on elaborate further on some of the labels that other authors have attached to the participants of open creative culture.

By the world 'multitude', Hardt & Negri refer to network culture participants as a global grouping of people composed by numerous different individuals and classes, as the authors say, to signify that "the people synthesizes or reduces these social dif-

ferences into one identity. The multitude (...) is not unified but remains plural and multiple" (2004: 99-100). A wide range of other scholars, including Geert Lovink, have been inspired by this idea and concur in seeing that "much like the cultural studies shift from passive consumers and watchers towards 'prosumers' and users, the multitude expresses the diversity within the workforce, away from the homogeneous notion of class and the fixation on 'the proletarians'. Hardt & Negri use the multitude concept to describe today's social formations in a globalized world" (Lovink 2005: 7).

Referring to the individuals of the multitude, Hardt & Negri talks about singularities, by which they refer to "a social subject whose difference cannot be reduced to sameness" (2004: 99-100). Still, they argue that despite this difference, we can still talk about them as a shared identity. This is done because the nature of the multitude negates these differences. The authors put it very elegantly by saying that "the plural singularities of the multitude thus stand in contrast to the undifferentiated unity of the people" (2004: 99-100).

This plurality, however, does not entail fragmentation or incoherence. Rather, the multitude "designates an active social subject, which acts on the basis of what the singularities share in common. The multitude is an internally different, multiple social subject whose constitution and action is based not on identity or unity (or, much less, indifference) but on what it has in common" (2004: 99-100). Relying on what the multitude has in common also enables it to act in common and enable a rule of itself. In fact, Hardt and Negri claims, it is the only social subject capable of "realizing democracy, that is, the rule of everyone by everyone" (2004: 99-100). This leads them into addressing the autonomous nature of the plurality of this culture and the immaterial social labor that is predominant: "The central forms of productive cooperation are no longer created by the capitalist as part of the project to organize labor but rather emerge from the productive energies of labor itself. This is indeed the key characteristic of immaterial labor: to produce communication, social relations, and cooperation" (2004: 113). In this context, the social qualities of interaction in the multitude is increasingly blurring the borders between work and leisure: "An idea or an image comes to you not only in the office but also in the shower or in your dreams," as they put it (2004: 111-112).

This is also what creates one of the most significant impacts of the multitude, namely the synergetic value. "Singularities interact and communicate socially on the basis of the common, and their social communication in turn produces the common" (2004: 197-198). The authors thereby recognize how the production of subjectivity and of the common is woven together and forms a spiral of symbiosis: "Subjectivity, in other words, is produced through cooperation and communication and, in turn, this produced subjectivity itself produces new forms of cooperation and communication, which in turn produce new subjectivity, and so forth" (Hardt & Negri 2004: 197-198), they explain.

With main ideas from Terranova, Castells and Hardt & Negri now laid out to form an image of the fundamental nature and dynamics of the open creative culture. What

these authors do not address specifically, however, are the alleged disorders that the culture contains. As this is what I am investigating in this thesis and therefore want to analyze, I will now add a fourth grand theory element to this construction – namely Vaidhyathan's 'anarchic structures'-theory, as that – while not being explicit – represents a firm hint towards the disorder that rests in the practices of the culture and thus it becomes useful in the construction of my grand theory body.

ANARCHIST STRUCTURES (VAIDHYATHAN)

Often we tend to focus solely on the almost perpetual opportunities that the virtual sphere offers. However, Lovink & Munster argues, "to project positive predictions, hopes and desires onto networks is deceptive as it often distracts by focusing solely on the first, founding and euphoric phase of networks" (2005). Doing so will make one "ill-equipped to deal with the conflict, boredom, confusion, stagnation and other expressions of our playful nihilist culture that turn up in unmoderated channels such as lists, blogs and chatrooms" (2005).

Other scholars adhere to this view as well, ao. David Weinberger, who suggests that "there is no dorm room, divorce, or political scandal as messy as the World Wide Web" (2007: 189), and explains that this is in fact intentional: "There's an excellent reason for this: Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web, in his wisdom made sure that the Web is a permission-free zone. Anyone can post anything she wants, (...) all without alerting a central registry, without having to get approval, and without anyone saying exactly where to shelve the new material. So, the web has grown without a plan, which is exactly why it has grown like crazy" (Weinberger 2007: 189).

Siva Vaidhyathan mentions how "two revolutionary technical phenomena - digitization and networking - have amplified the sociopolitical trends we call globalization to stir up all kinds of messes," (2004: xii) as also supported by Tapscott & Williams who spell out that "even with good intentions, mass collaboration is certainly no panacea" (2006: 16). Charles Leadbeater concurs and furthermore address the fact that we only seen the beginning, and that over the next few years we are "likely to witness the growth of an enormous, collaborative, digitally enabled vernacular culture that will be both more democratic and creative than what preceded it but also more raucous and out of control" (Leadbeater 2008: 57).

The increasing democracy on micro-level and its uncontrollability and disorder is something Vaidhyathan has dealt extensively with. He points out how "anarchistic structures and tactics matter to our daily lives more each day. Implicitly, therefore, important social, spiritual, and communicative networks are building themselves along the principles of radical democracy - or, as it is sometimes called, anarchy" (2004: xvi). He explains how "peer-to-peer technology spreads cultural anarchy when it encourages both 'inconspicuous consumption' and 'conscious production', or, more accurately, conspicuous recombinant reproduction" (2004: 21). In other words, it moves power into the hands of the participant in the dispersed network, but with this development, we also see the natural disorder that it entails.

Although neither Vaidhyathan nor the other scholars move into offering tangible examples of these seemingly chaotic and disorderly practices, there is an evidence of Lovink & Munster's assertion of disorders as constitutive elements of open creative culture. This is what I wanted to add to my theoretical construction in order to be able to equip myself with the necessary foundation to conduct the analysis of open creative culture and its disorders. In this analysis, I will use this grand theoretical foundation to analyze my empirical data as collected in the field of the open creative culture virtual arena.

Before moving into the analysis, however, I will add to the theoretical body a range of diversifying theory segments on characteristics and practices in open creative culture, which is specifically relevant to investigate the relationship with the endemic disorders.

DIVERSIFYING THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Having now laid out the basic ideas of the grand theories that is relevant for this thesis, I will now append a range of theoretical elements to form a more detailed image of what distinguish open creative culture. This section of diversifying theory will constitute of bits of theory from a wide range of scholars, across different academic fields, but all touching upon central elements of this culture - that is, elements I have chosen in order to put focus on the relevant dimensions of open creative culture and the alleged immanent disorder.

INDIVIDUALITY AND IDENTITY

First, I will look into the aspect of individuality that Hardt & Negri also emphasize above in their caption of singularity. Going into specificity, scholar James Surowiecki suggests that the individuality in the open creative culture draws on an intrinsic heritage: "The assumption of independence is a familiar one. It's intuitively appealing, since it takes the autonomy of the individual for granted. It's at the core of the Western liberalism" (Surowiecki 2004: 42).

While this seem highly probable, one could also contend that this argument is too simple, simply because the open creative culture operate far beyond the virtual sphere in the geographical area that we associate with the political West. Particularly Asia, Central-, and South America are locales for millions of participants of the open creative culture, and so the reasoning must go beyond the scope of liberal western cultural and societal tradition. Rather, I will argue, we are seeing a new form of individuality. One that is specific for the open creative culture - and one that is a symbol of the bridging of national cultures.

Individuality in the virtual sphere is an area of much research. Surowiecki points out how decisions across groups are often better and more nuanced, if the people in the group are independent of each other (2004: 41) - an idea I will investigate in more depth in the 'diversity'-part later in this section. Castells has extensive thought in this area as well, and suggest the existence of a so-called 'networked individualism' based on how "virtual communities are 'me-centered networks' or 'personalized communities' wherein sociability is privatized" (in Bell 2007: 67-68). He explains

how the participants' virtual practices of producing and consuming (by some authors referred to as 'prosuming', a term I will elaborate in detail later) mediate a reflection of self-identity.

From this point of view, "individuals caught in the space of flows become networks themselves, and networked individualism becomes the new social pattern" (in Bell 2007: 67-68), he ponders, while adding, however, that it is not to be mistaken for isolation of these individuals. Rather, as also stressed by Surowiecki, the social aspect has a streamlining effect in the network: "Independence is hard to come by. We are autonomous beings, but we are also social beings. We want to learn from each other, and learning is a social process" (2004: 42).

This brings me to look at identity as a central element in open creative culture.

Identity, Luke Tredinnick points out, draws distinctly on both individual and collective strands. Tredinnick state that "identity is generally associated with the ways in which people label themselves or come to be labelled as members of social groups on the basis of shared values, experiences or characteristics." (2008: 135). Namely the interaction within the social world is central in this idea, because, as Tredinnick further explains, this is what makes identity something socially constructed: "The psychological and social components of identity meet in the internalization of socially constructed ways of classifying people in our sense of self and our sense of place. (...) Out of these aspects or our participation in social life we construct a sense of our place in the world. How identity is manifested may depend on the contexts and social situations in which we find ourselves.

People in a sense all play at being different versions of themselves, conforming to or transgressing the norms of social behavior in different contexts" (2008: 136).

This has special implications in the virtual sphere, where our ability to construct our own identity in one or more avatars have "placed into our hands the power to determine how we are defined within the socio-cultural sphere" (2008: 139). In the platforms of this sphere, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace etc., "we willingly share information about our lives, relationships and work, trading anonymity for the convenience and power of social networking. Second are the cultural capital and records of our cultural lives that we willingly submit so social media forums, such as YouTube and Flickr and post on personal websites and blogs." (2008: 139-140).

As a result, we are seeing "a separation of social identity and corporeal being," Tredinnick says. "Identity becomes disinvested from corporal being and reinvested in digital representations," he says. "In digital spaces we can adopt new personas, experimenting with aspects of our personality with which we are uncomfortable or ashamed" (2008: 142). This tendency has severe implications for the open creative culture and is one of the very distinct disorders, which I focus on in the analysis.

COGNITION AND GROUP DYNAMICS

Collaboration and social interaction is key word in open creative culture and make the very backbone of the phenomenon. Despite the many academic testimonials that establish the significance of individuality of the networked relationship, most of

them, across scientific fields, also acknowledge the interdependence of actors in any social setting. As mentioned above, we are social beings embedded in social contexts and therein, as Surowiecki notes, "influence as inescapable" (2004: 42). That is probably also one of the dominant links that creates a cognitive ability of a group. It is not all cognition, however.

Below this sense of doing the right things are certain norms and conventions that, themselves, have emerged from this relationship. These conventions implicitly serve to "reduce the amount of cognitive work you have to put in to get through the day. Conventions allow us to deal with certain situations without thinking much about them, and when it comes to coordinating problems in particular, they allow groups of disparate, unconnected people to organize themselves with relative ease and an absence of conflict" (2004: 93).

But how does it work, this somewhat unspoken commonality that permeates the open creative culture? Surowiecki has spent considerable time in his research to look into the work of William H. Whyte and Thomas C. Schelling, who suggested that "in many situations, there were salient landmarks or 'focal points' upon which people's expectations would converge" (2004: 91-92). Today these 'focal points' are known as 'Schelling points', which "show that people can find their way to collectively beneficial results not only without centralized direction but also without even talking to each other" (2004: 91-92). Schelling wrote, "People can often concert their intentions and expectations with others if each knows that the other is trying to do the same" (2004: 91-92).

These mechanisms have even more profound implications, Surowiecki says. Reluctance or uncertainty of the others network nodes' intentions can turn into trust: "People who repeatedly deal with each other over time recognize the benefits of cooperation, and they do not try to take advantage of each other, because they know if they do, the other person will be able to punish them. The key to cooperation is what Robert Axelrod call 'the shadow of the future'.

The promise of our continued interaction keeps us in line" (2004: 117). The basic of the theory of shadow of the future is that all a participant really trusts is "that the other person will recognize his self-interest. But over time, that reliance of his own attention to his self-interest becomes something more. It becomes a general sense of reliability, a willingness to cooperate (even in competition) because cooperation is the best way to get things done" (Surowiecki 2004: 124-125).

But how does groups manage to make the best decisions? To answer this, we must move beyond some of the preconceptions that exist in traditional controlled environments, for instance the reliance on rationality and democracy. Surowiecki, for one, points out how group dynamics often show "a significant deviation from the purely rational strategy," (2004: 125-126) but establishing this as a strength, not a weakness.

Another group of scholars, lead by Mushon Zer-Aviv address the disregard of democracy in virtual group processes: "Online communities are not organized as democracies", they argue. Often open creative culture groups substitute majority-based voting with the deliberate process of discussion. This derives from the com-

mon practice that projects are often initiated by some individuals and because participants are there of their own choice - suggesting that people can leave at any time. "Majority rule is not seen as inherently good or useful," Zer-Aviv et. al. explains (2010: 38).

These thoughts also lead onto another interesting idea. Namely that difference in responsibility and devotion also often hinge with a different skill level of participants. For instance, Scott Page, political scientist from University of Michigan conducted a long series of experiments. What he found was that "a group made up of some smart agents and some not-so-smart agents almost always did better than a group made up just of smart agents.

You could do as well or better by selecting a group randomly and letting it solve the problem as by spending a lot of time trying to find the smart agents and then putting them alone on the problem. The point of Page's experiment is that diversity is, on its own, valuable, so that the simple fact of making a group diverse makes it better at problem solving" (Surowiecki 2004: 30, Leadbeater 2008: 72).

This takes me to the next area of diversifying theory, namely looking into the characteristics of diversity among participants.

DIVERSITY

With a global scope, open creative culture is naturally an immensely diverse body of participants. This innately has comprehensive implications for collaboration and interaction, both negative - which I will look into later in this section, when looking at the disorder of open creative culture, but also on the positive side. Surowiecki is one of the scholars who has conducted extensive researched in this field, and points out how "diversity contributes not just by adding different perspectives to the group but also by making it easier for individuals to say what they really think" (2004: 39). The different perspectives, he mentions, is a big part of the creativity in these networks: "The more similar they are, the more similar the ideas they appreciate will be. (...) By contrast, if they are diverse, the chances that at least someone will take a gamble on a radical or unlikely idea obviously increases" (2004: 28).

Later in the same book, Surowiecki also explains how the spectrum of competences is broadened by diversity in a give collaboration: "Independent individuals are more likely to have new information rather than the same old data everyone is already familiar with. The smartest groups, then are made up of people with diverse perspectives who are able to stay independent of each other" (Surowiecki 2004: 41).

Next, I will now take a deeper look at the actors that constitute the mass of participants.

PARTICIPANTS

Make generalizing points about those who engage themselves in this culture is indeed a challenge, as the open creative culture, as described in the beginning of this section as well as in Hardt & Negri's 'multitude'-theory, is a phenomenon that transcends traditional cultures, professional disciplines, geographical groupings and a

myriad of other boundaries and categorizations. Still, according to a wide range of scholars general perspectives can still be pointed out.

One of the most prominent ideas is the characterization of the 'prosumer', which I also touched upon earlier. The concept of prosumption is a practice that has distinctly grown from the technological advances we've seen in recent years. David Bell explains how "adapting its horizontal networking, the Internet is argued to have flattened the distinction between producer and consumer, making all users 'prosumers'. It is argued to have further transformed the one-to-many logic, offering instead one-to-one and many-to-many at once" (Bell 2007: 78).

By 'all users', Bell naturally refer to those who can be considered part of the open creative culture, and the many-to-many communication he describes takes the shape of participant engagement in a wide spectrum of online practices: "Blogs, mashups, online collaboration sites and services, social networking, online photo and video sharing, Google Map archives, the tremendous growth of Wikipedia, Our-media.org and the Internet Archives, p2p webcasting, collaborative playlist sharing, and the countless new ringtone-creation tools...the list of participation-fueled sites and booming 'personal media' services gets longer and longer, while tens of millions of people are signing up just to be a part of something" (Leonhard 2008: 108). In other words, these practices - which I will thoroughly analyze in the next section - bring many different types of people together. People, who share a common denominator. How can we describe this?

Charles Leadbeater says the open creative culture is a "hybrid of odd ingredients," framing it out by mentioning "the geek, the academic, the hippie and the peasant" (2008: 59). Hardt & Negri's 'multitude' label is also an attempt to describe these people, as recounted earlier. In another essay, Leadbeater, in collaboration with Paul Miller, brings about the label 'pro-am' as an abbreviation of the words 'producer' and 'amateur'.

They note how "in the last two decades a new breed of amateur has emerged: the Pro-am, amateurs who work to professional standards. (...) The Pro-Ams are knowledgeable, educated, committed and networked, by new technology" (Charlie Leadbeater & Paul Miller in Barbrook 2007: 103).

Many other labels have surfaced, which tries to describe this grouping in society: 'Netocracy' (Alexander Bard and Jan Söderqvist), 'cybertariat' (Ursula Huws), 'the precariat' (Frassanito Network), 'digital citizen' (Jon Katz), 'creative class' (Richard Florida), 'netizen' (Michael & Ronda Hauben) and many, many more. Even back in the 1980's when the term 'hacker' came about, it was used to describe a creative group of people that took used brand new ideas and practices to lead towards a new reality.

The participants in the open creative culture - regardless of which of this plethora of labels is the most accurate - share a motivation towards engagement with each other. This motivation I will look at next.

MOTIVATION

Comprehending the motivation behind participants' willingness to engage in the open creative culture plays a significant role in understanding this phenomenon and also links towards the disorders that occur as a result of these interactions.

Sproull et. al. call it "one of the most striking social aspects of the Internet", that every day, "hundreds of thousands of people voluntarily help one another on the net with no expectation of direct reward" (in Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 139). And not only are the efforts unpaid, it is also costly, they note, as participants "incur substantial costs in terms of their own time" (Sproull et. al. in Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 147).

In general, it is safe to say that "money-oriented motivations are different from socially oriented motivations" (Yochai Benkler in Lessig 2008: 149), and perhaps the best universal way to describe this is to distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motives. Zer-Aviv et. al. explains that "individuals collaborate openly for a wide variety of reasons. Broadly speaking these can be divided into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic. In the former case people are driven by their own internal motives: curiosity, hunger for knowledge, the pleasure of participation or of belonging to something bigger than themselves. Extrinsic incentives on the other hand are stimuli provided by the outside world: money, prestige the promise of reward or the threat of punishment" (Zer-Aviv et. al. 2010: 31).

Open creative culture can therefore be characterized by being fueled primarily by intrinsic motivational factors. These can take many different shapes; for instance engaging to achieve feeling part of a community, or to receive recognition and reputation – that is, getting credit for participation or initiation. Others also engage as an act of resistance – for instance against authority or corporate interest, that often stand in direct opposition to the open nature of open creative culture.

Another recognized motivational factor is that of pro-social behavior, which can be characterized as volunteering to do work that benefits others – as often seen in charity work also. Sharing economy is also another mechanism that serves to motivate people to engage without pay – because in that context your contributions come back in the shape of help from others.

Further to these major strands in motivation, there are also a myriad of others. Lawrence Lessig suggests that "a large part of the motivation for contributing to these sharing economies comes from people just doing for themselves what they want to do anyway" (2008: 173). Brafman & Beckstrom offers another idea, that many people are "motivated by a desire to create a better product. They believe in an open system and respect one another's contributions - not because they have to but because they want to. (...) It's not just about community, not just about getting stuff for free, not just about freedom and trust.

Ideology is the glue that holds decentralized organizations together" (2006: 95-96). There are also scholars who point out that people seek to commit themselves, if you let them: "Volunteerism studies in the offline world have generally found that participation in voluntary association management can foster commitment. (...) Partici-

pants prefer to have an active role in the decisions made by the association, and not mere participation by showing up" (Simon et. al, Wilson in Sproull et. al. in Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 150). Or as Tapscott & Williams say: "We are becoming an economy unto ourselves - a vast global network of specialized producers that swap and exchange services for entertainment, sustenance, and learning" (2006: 15).

With the addition of the segments of diversifying theory, I have now established my theoretical framework for open creative culture. This shows that while being plentiful in describing the general dynamics and potential of this phenomena, none of the theories really address the disorder that Lovink & Munster, Vaidhyathan and a range of other scholars hint towards. That is why I will now engage in analyzing open creative culture to uncover not only the disorder, but also actual pragmatic practices of this culture where the disorders reside. This will enable me to draw direct connections between the practices and the disorders, as I will find them both by collecting and analyzing my empirical data.

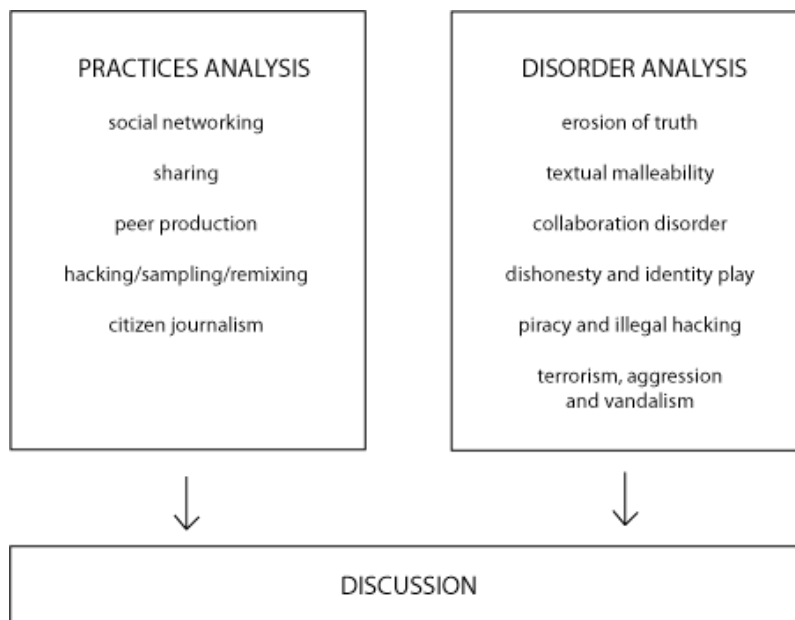
Another neglect with the four grand theories as well as in other critical network theory across the field - as also mentioned in the methodology - is that none of the authors present any tools for investigating and analyzing open creative culture and its disorders. That is why I have chosen to implement the methodology of distributed aesthetics, as that encourages interpretation in uncovering the relationship between the culture and the disorder - which is what I have set out to investigate in this thesis.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The next part of this thesis is the analysis section where I will use the theoretical apparatus to analyze my empirical body of data to uncover what is not present in other critical network theory – namely the relationship between open creative culture and its endemic disorders.

As the figure below shows, this analysis will consist of two parts; one where I examine the practices of open creative culture, and one where I examine the immanent disorder in these practices and the open creative culture as a whole.

After this dual analysis process, the findings from both parts will subsequently be discussed in the last part of this section, the discussion section, in order bring forward the relationship as well as larger perspectives.



It is in this discussion that I will rely on the methodological praxis of distributed aesthetics to interpret the explicit practices and disorders in order to find the relationship between them – including those that appear only implicitly.

First comes the analysis of practices in open creative culture.

PRACTICES ANALYSIS

To ensure systematic structure to this part of the analysis, I have chosen to divide it into several larger parts. These parts are 'social networking', 'sharing', 'peer production', 'hacking/sampling/remixing', and 'citizen journalism'.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

In the open creative culture, as mentioned in the theoretical framework section (Tapscott & Williams, Tredinnick) as well as in the grand theory-section (Castells), one of the most prominent dimensions in open creative culture is the social interaction that takes place. People's desire to engage with each other in social context is, in fact, as Sproull & Faraj point out, "one of the major turning point in the Internet's growth", and is what has fuelled "its emergence as a social arena.

The contemporary Internet has many social components", they say, and add that "it has been suggested that many people fulfill their most important social needs (those of affiliation, support, and affirmation) over the net" (*in* Amichai-Hamburger 2005: v) – an idea that concur with the community building motivational factors mentioned in the diversifying theory section on motivational factors.

In the virtual sphere, social networking takes on a myriad of shapes - from interaction and dialogue across blogs, discussion boards and forums to actual social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Friendster, Friendfeed and hundreds of others similar sites. The sociality goes beyond mere dialogue and includes a large amount of privacy disclosure, since people congregate around a substance consisting of information (text, photos, video) from the personal sphere - often very private in nature.

The content in social networking platforms - often referred to as social media - constitute a new type of Internet content, compared to what came before Web 2.0. Tapscott and Williams calls it 'digital commons', because even if it is private in origin, it becomes a part of the online commons the very second it is posted (2006: 19). Our perception of social relations has been given a new a new meaning in the virtual sphere, as Leonhard points out: "No longer do we only read the classified ads to find stuff, meet new people, make business connections or personal contacts, or find out what's happening. Instead we become an active piece of the puzzle, and contribute to the formation of virtual meta-conventions where people meet each other for different kinds of purposes" (2008: 110).

The social nature and people's general openness towards meeting virtually with people from across the globe often leads to more than just a new kind of friendship. People seek out others with whom they can share interests and, in many cases, co-work with to develop new ideas and even products - as also described by authors in the 'cognition and group dynamics' theory section (Surowiecki, Leadbeater, Zer-Aviv et. al.). Leadbeater explains that "social networking work when they foster a spirit of collaborative self-governance" (2008: 35), and this is where social interac-

tion moves from chit-chat to something more and thereby redefines common patterns of labor and competence sharing.

Terranova points out that "the digital economy is an important area of experimentation with value and free cultural/affective labor. It is about specific forms of production (web design, multimedia production, digital services and so on), but it is also about forms of labor we do not immediately recognize as such: chat, real-life stories, mailing lists, amateur newsletters and so on. (...) They have developed in relation to the expansion of the cultural industries and they are part of a process of economic experimentation with the creation of monetary value out of knowledge/culture/affect" (Terranova 2004: 79).

SHARING

Sharing is another one of the cornerstones that link participants together in the open creative culture, whether it's the sharing of a news article, a link, a picture, a file or something completely different.

Even if there are still barriers to sharing (copyrights etc.), virtual sharing is much easier and cheaper than offline sharing. "Cyberspace has a different architecture" than the offline world, Lessig argue. "Its' nature is therefore different as well. Digital content can be copied perfectly and practically freely" (2002: 120-121). And the sharing is not limited to intellectual property, Tapscott and Williams point out. "It extends to other resources such as computing power, bandwidth, content, and scientific knowledge" (2006: 27), seeing that people use their computers for interaction in many ways.

A good example of a very common sharing practice is that of meta-tagging, where people index content items the Internet to use other people's access. "Tags and ranking systems, such as del.icio.us, Reddit, and Digg, enabled readers of a blog or news article to mark it for others to read or ignore. These marks added meaning to the post or story. They would help it get organized among the millions of others that were out there", Lessig explains.

The significance of this practice is the meta-layer it creates, he argues, "providing (...) a public annotation - like a keyword or category name that you hang on a file, Web page or picture. And as readers explore the Web, users leave marks that help others understand or find the same stuff" (Lessig 2008: 59).

As people add meaning to content like this they enable collaboration and well as put power in their own hands - because they inadvertently redirect other participants' path in the information infrastructure towards what is being recommended the most. An example, also made by Lessig, is how "a major newspaper could have the highest-paid technology writer in the world. But what happens to that writer when it turns out that the columns read by more, and recommended by most, are written by eighteen-year-old bloggers?" (2008: 59).

Other examples include NASA's so-called 'clickworkers', where the space agency encouraged amateur astrologists to tag star maps and photos according to their individual amateur knowledge - resulting in a much larger portion of the solar system and galaxy becoming mapped than what NASA's experts had the time to do themselves (Sproull et. al. in Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 153).

In this way, participants are changing the way information is consumed as well as produced in the virtual sphere, as described in the theory section (in the 'Participants' and 'Cognition/Group dynamics' parts). Lessig explains this well by noting how "the Internet affects the content and the applications that meet existing demand. But this is only one part of how the Net is different from real space and ultimately, I believe, the less interesting part. Far more important is how the Net changes how people learn what they want and how these wants might be changed" (Lessig 2002: 132).

Speaking of what participants want brings me to one of the most profound open creative culture sharing practices, namely that of file sharing. With the emergence of broadband technology people became capable of quickly transferring large files between computers via the Internet, and quickly dedicated file sharing network technologies emerged that enabled users to easily and instantly find specific files offered by others. One of the first ones was Napster, which became huge – and was soon followed by services such as Kazaa, eDonkey, eMule and a huge list of other similar services.

To illustrate the scope of file sharing as a practice, Lessig points out that in 2006, "more than 5 billion songs were swapped on peer-to-peer sites" in 2006 "while CD sales, the industry's core revenue-producing product, continue to decline, dropping about 20 percent this year alone. And according to a recent report from Jupiter Research, things are only going to get worse. Young consumers are increasingly shunning music buying in favor of file-sharing, which is four times more popular than digital-music buying among ages 15 to 24, the report notes" (Lessig 2008: 110).

Today, file sharing primarily takes place through so-called bit-torrent technology, where files are split into thousands of bits that are exchanged between hundreds of computers at the same time, making it impossible to trace. Sites such as The Pirate Bay and Demonoid are some of the most used portals - and also the ones being targeted the most by content industries' efforts against illegal file sharing.

So far, that has not been possible, though, because as Brafman & Beckstrom points out, "although the small P2P companies don't have many resources at their disposal, they're able to react and mutate at a frighteningly quick pace" (2006: 41).

These torrent sites are also used for many other purposes than illegal file sharing. Independent record labels, which embrace file sharing and use it as an official distribution channel – a Google search reveals thousands.

I myself run such a record label and use a lenient license called Creative Commons which allows content creators to waive certain rights while retaining others, and thereby enable them to encourage redistribution and file sharing among their fans as a way to promote themselves. My motivation for running this label is clearly pro-social and community driven, as presented in the theory, in order to promote artists that I sincerely believe deserve recognition and with whom I feel I share a community.

What is significant with these torrent sites and their users, myself included is not that "millions of people take millions of files from them", as Vaidhyanathan points out, but rather "because millions of people compose, copy, place, and distribute millions of files on them" (2004: 21). The Pirate Bay has become a voice for the open creative culture's willingness to use the full potential of the technology at hand to swap files, I will argue, regardless if this is legal or not.

Their rebellious and even militant tone, as noted by Mason (2008: 55) and ability of constantly stay technologically ahead of the legal curve, has placed ideological seeds far beyond the virtual world. Last year, the Swedish Pirate Party, a legal political party that is not affiliated with the site in any way, yet shares a large part of it's ideology, achieved enough votes to become the third largest party in Sweden (Piratpartiet 2010), boasting a win of two seats in the European parliament and registering close to ten thousand members "lobbying for free culture on a global scale" (Mason 2008: 57).

This leads me to briefly look the role of copyright in this part of the open creative culture and how new ideas are gaining ground in this area. Basically, people across the globe have harnessed the power of sharing - and in particular file sharing - as a natural daily practice, negating copyright legislation and advocating a non-proprietary ideology that rests of completely different values than that of intellectual property and traditional corporate institutions.

The idea is, as Lessig explains, that there "there's a profound injustice in the difference of the law here, especially as it affects an emerging class of artists. Why should it be that just when technology is most encouraging of creativity, the law should be most restrictive?" (2008: 105). The open creative culture has shown not to be kept back by intellectual property law, but simply harness the power of the technology that is available.

In summary, sharing signifies a new way for participants to communicate based on a pro-social idea - as described in the theory section ('Motivation'). A new way that often, in its nature, clashes with intellectual property legislation and therefore makes participants practices illegal - often on a massive scale. This is something that I will analyze further in the second part of the analysis, when I deal with the disorder of the open creative culture.

PEER PRODUCTION

Just as sharing is a common practice in open creative culture, so is collaborative interaction. Hinged around sharing a creative interest as a social process, it is a mechanism that can be argued to have been around since the dawn of man, López et. al. state: "As humans, our tendency is to collaborate; it's the way we survive. We have always done so and collaboration within our weak, small, slow and rather clumsy species has helped us to survive and, in fact, come to dominate the world" (2007: 12).

This fundamental urge has, in the virtual sphere, been given a brand new vehicle. Now people can reach like-minds on a global scale through the Internet and engage in collaborative interaction across great distances (a central part here is what Cas-

tells refer to as space of flows and timeless time, as described in the grand theory). Basically, as Leadbeater points out, peer production is a "a working model, a social form of creativity in which many contributors have the capacity and tools to think, act and experiment together, that is both informal and structured. It is not enough for people merely to participate, to have their say; they have to find ways to collaborate and to build on what others are doing, so that whatever they are engaged in grows through accretion, mutual criticism, support and imitation. When people do pull of this trick - which is by no means always - they can create complex, valuable, reliable products: encyclopedias, software programs, computer games, news reports, scientific theories, epic poems" (Leadbeater 2008: 59-60).

Examples include for instance the world's largest encyclopedia, Wikipedia, which I will describe later herein, or perhaps more significantly, the production of so-called 'open-source software' - which is a concept where many people work on the same piece of software, and where no-one gets ownership because the source code will be made available to the public. As explained by Leadbeater, this makes it something that "everyone can use and anyone can improve".

Also, open-source licensing is "a way to hold ideas and information in common that under the right conditions can encourage mass collaborative innovation," he says (2008: 65).

Eric Raymond, one of the gurus of the open-source software movement, famously described mass collaborative innovation as "a bazaar - open, cacophonous, with no one in control - rather than like cathedral-building, where craftsmen implement a master plan" (*in* Leadbeater 2008: 64). This often also, however, leads to a range of collaboration disorders, which is one of the things I will investigate in the second part of this analysis.

At the heart of peer production is the decentralization of the network of collaborators. Power does not reside in one central location, and a lot of the important decisions are "made by individuals based on their own local and specific knowledge rather than by an omniscient or farseeing planner," Surowiecki argues (2004: 70-71). He goes on to explain that it "fosters, and in turn is fed by, specialization - of labor, interest, attention, or what have you.

Specialization (...) tends to make people more productive and efficient. (...) Decentralization's great strength is that it encourages independence and specialization on the one hand while still allowing people to coordinate their activities and solve difficult problems on the other" (2004: 70-71). However, there are also great challenges. One is how information may have a hard time reaching all participants (2004: 71), and also for instance how community formation (and therefore dedication from participants) can be much more difficult from a distance (Zer-Aviv et. al. 2010: 102).

An example of hugely popular open source software is the Apache web server software, Linux, an operating system.

The latter was founded by Linus Torvalds and exists now as a global community - which has sustained phenomenal growth in the last two decades, despite having no central control. By 2007 there were 655 Linux user groups in 91 countries, sharing ideas through websites and bulletin boards as well as face to face at conferences"

(Leadbeater 2008: 67-68), and as of 2006, Linux accounted for about 80 percent of servers on computer servers worldwide. "Every time anyone runs a search on Google they are a Linux user because Google's servers run on Linux", Leadbeater explains (2008: 66).

Scores of other open source projects are proliferating around the world. In 2007, more than 90,000 were listed on Sourceforge.net, which serve as a global hub (2008: 68) and around the world there are thousands of examples of open source software that is being implemented in all kinds of organizations at "unprecedented speed" according to Santner (2008: 135).

These ideas from free and open source software have since transcended into many other areas of the culture. The free software movement "inspired others to attempt to translate its ethics and practices to other fields, some closely tied to technology changes (including wikis and social media sites) allowing more access and capability to share and remix materials," Zer-Aviv et. al. point out (2010: 29).

One of the key issues is the openness and the motivation factor this provides, I will argue. This is something that also Tapscott & Williams brings forward: "If you consider the vernacular, the term 'open' is loaded - rich with meaning and positive connotations. Among others things, openness is associated with candor, transparency, freedom, flexibility, expansiveness, engagement, and access" (2006: 21). Brafman & Beckstrom goes to similar lengths and argue that "when you give people freedom, you get chaos, but you also get incredible creativity" (2006: 81).

HACKING / SAMPLING / REMIXING

The participatory element of open creative culture flourishes particularly in a range of practices in which people engage in deconstructing consumer products - be that either online digital content or actual physical products such as consumer electronics. These practices are known as hacking, sampling and remixing.

In the case of hacking (also sometimes called 'tinkering'), open creative culture participants who "want to improve what they've bought are studying how things work, whether the products are traditional electronics or things with a software component, and these customers are making adjustments - hacks, as they're known", Gillmor explains, and continues to explain that this is a way to "either make the products better or change their nature entirely. And they're doing it by informing each other, in an open source manner that brings the community's best minds to bear on common problems" (2006: 53).

Again, such behavior has its departure in the prosumption practice, as explained in the theory section ('Participants'). In this case, where participants dismantle products in order to re-assemble, modify and enhance them, we are seeing an advanced kind of prosumption, where customers "participate in the creation of products in an active and ongoing way. (...) The consumer actually co-innovates and coproduces the products they consume. (...) The most advanced users, in fact, no longer wait for an invitation to turn a product into a platform for their own innovations.

Instead they "form prosumer communities online, where they share product-related

information, collaborate on customized projects, engage in commerce, and swap tips, tools, and product hacks" (Tapscott & Williams 2006: 126). Often, Tapscott & Williams explain, these practices proliferate from experience-exchanging peer networks, as described in the previous part of this section, and also owe homage to the fact the consumer electronics are now so cheap that failure in experimentation is a bearable risk. Other practice enhancing elements are access to open source software, user-friendly editing tools, and reasonable affordable bandwidth (2006: 137).

The sharing of ideas is a central part of this sort of network, and as a result "this tinkering is no longer an isolated activity that you're doing in your garage," Lessig state. "You are tinkering with a community platform (...) You are tinkering with other people's stuff. The more you tinker the more you improve. The more you improve, the more you learn" (Lessig 2004: 46).

However, often this sort activity is not condoned, and at times even illegal, he explains: "The freedom to tinker with those objects is not guaranteed. Indeed (...) that freedom is increasingly highly contested. While there's no doubt that your father had the right to tinker with the car engine, there's great doubt that your child will have the right to tinker with the images she finds all around. The law and, increasingly, technology interfere with a freedom that technology, and curiosity, would otherwise ensure" (Lessig 2004: 47).

Therefore hacking - and tinkering - have a dark side to them as well. The ability to go beyond the facade also enables you to dig deeper behind the curtain and there some hackers choose to disregard the line between that is legal and what is not. Illegal hacking, as a disorder, is one of the practices I will address in the next part of the analysis.

Hacking as praxis - whether legal or illegal - has a root in close communities in open creative culture. Vaidhyathan recognizes how it has a set of ethics to which its participants adhere at all times, also when stepping beyond the law. This ethic "rests on openness, peer review, individual autonomy, and communal responsibility", he says (2004: 39). Steven Levy, another scholar on this topic state how hackers live by a philosophy of "sharing, openness, decentralization, and getting your hands on machines at all costs - to improve the machine, to improve the world" (*in* Barbrook 2007: 88). He further adds that this is in fact a gift to us all, in the sense that it drives technology forward.

A similar set of behavior surrounds the practices of sampling and remixing. Having its natural habitat in artistry - primarily music, video and text - it circles around creating new works from existing material. As first seen in hip hop music subculture in the late 70's (Tapscott & Williams 2006: 138) it later became a more common practice in the 90's with computers becoming powerful enough to actually enable lay-people to experiment with taking parts of one song, video segment or text (a 'sample') and putting it in new context to either create a new version of an existing piece (a 'remix'), or simply create something brand new in composition (using a 'sample'). As with the rest of the practices I describe, the presumption mentality has skyrocketed the spread of this practice in recent years. People now share their creations on

sites such as YouTube, MySpace and various blogs, and to use a technology metaphor, Lessig describes this change as a move from 'read-only' culture to 'read/write culture' (in short RW) (2008: 28-31), and describes how a music "remix is an essential act of RW creativity. It is the expression of a freedom to take 'the songs of the day or the old songs' and create with them" (2008: 56). In the same chapter, he explains how "there is a thriving RW culture for texts on the Net just now. Its scope and reach and, most important, sophistication are far beyond what anyone imagined at the Internet's birth. (...) This RW culture for texts has built an ecology of content and an economy of reputation" (2008: 57) seeing that people in the virtual sphere receive fame for mastering the craft of appropriation.

Palle Thorson, an artist and activist across many fields of open creative culture explain how he sees this area of creativity: "I always appropriate, borrow or steal other people's work to make something new. I live in, distribute, and take from the circulation of information. The configuration of the medial structures in which this information exists is the pipeline in which I work," he says. "The motivation for my work is to try to intervene in this structure and to create an alternative workspace, basically to make my becoming a place where I am free to appropriate again. (...) Right now it feels important to build the alternative playground of sharing and gift culture. (...) The primary means for this is collaboration and exchange of knowledge" (in Mute 2005: 68).

Lessig, who acknowledge the collaborative dimension, also describes this ideology: "Remixes happen within a community of remixers. In the digital age, that community can be spread around the world. Members of that community create in part for one another" (2008: 77) - a tendency that is accelerated by modern technology, Leonhard explains: "Entertainment devices used to be receiving devices, now they are 'trans-ceiving' and trans-sharing devices - we no longer just 'get' stuff, we also change it, forward it, and share it" (2008: 110).

This is something that also moves beyond artist sphere, as Lessig described already back in 2004: "We live in a 'cut and paste' culture enabled by technology. Anyone building a presentation knows the extraordinary freedom that the cut and paste architecture of the Internet created - in a second you can find just about any image you want; in another second, you have it planted in your presentation. But presentations are just a tiny beginning", he argues, recognizing how most users turn remixers when acquiring Internet material for use in other contexts of our day to day computer use (Lessig 2004: 105-106).

CITIZEN JOURNALISM

The Internet and open creative culture is having a profound impact in the media landscape too – for both producers and consumers. Before web 2.0, news aggregation and commenting were limited to those companies and persons holding mass media broadcasting positions, but with the emergence of so-called citizen journalism and consumer-controlled media in the shape of blogs, wikis and more, we are witnessing "yet another example of how mass collaboration and co-creation are

erasing the previous boundaries between companies and consumers", described earlier herein.

"In a world where all one needs is a camera phone to report on one's surroundings, it is no longer as straightforward to pigeonhole a person's role. In the emerging prosumption paradigm, a person can seamlessly shift from consumer to contributor and creator" (Tapscott & Williams 2006: 143). Tredinnick points out how "digital technologies have allowed users to compete with publishers and broadcasters in producing cultural capital" (2008: 105).

Leonhard explains this by stating that we are longer "accepting one opinion or one point of view as 'real' just because that's all we can get right now; instead now we Google everyone and everything, and find others who may have something to add that sparks our interest" (2008: 109). Now, more than ever people can "have their say, post their comment, make a video, show a picture, write a song" (Leadbeater 2008: 59).

In that sense the Internet is perhaps the most important medium since the printing press, Gillmor argue (2006: 236). "It subsumes all that has come before and is, in the most fundamental way, transformative. When anyone can be a writer, in the largest sense and for a global audience, many of us will be. The Net is overturning so many of the things we've assumed about media and business models that we can scarcely keep up with the changes; it's difficult to maintain perspective amid the shift from a top-down hierarchy to something vastly more democratic and, yes, messy" (2006: 236).

The mechanism we take part in hold significance in more than one way, as we have an "active role in not only what kind of information and knowledge gets passed on, but also the make-up of that information and knowledge", according to Tredinnick. He explains how "individuals intervene in content, re-sharing, re-contextualizing and reconstructing its meaning" (Tredinnick 2008: 106), and thereby points out the massive scale on of this transformation.

Examples of citizen journalism includes aggregation sites such as Digg, Reddit, BoingBoing and Slashdot, where users pitch articles for others to read - and serve as news and information exchange hub for millions of users everyday. I myself have pitched stories that have been picked up; for instance in the spring of 2009 (<http://www.boingboing.net/2009/04/23/pirate-bay-judge-had.html>) where I was duly credited for submitting a translation of an article about The Pirate Bay (and getting credit for it was all I was hoping for in doing so - as that enabled me to boast on my blog that I had been "Boing-boing'ed", as people call that).

Another type of selective consumption is RSS-technology, where you can use reader-software to customize your exact daily news feed by subscribing to pick-and-choose content from your preferred blogs, news sites and community forums, including those mentioned before.

I myself also take active part in the citizen journalism landscape by publishing my own blog, freeform101.org, where I re-broadcast stories from other sources, available as RSS-feed, but with my comments added. As the sole editor-in-chief I select

what stories make it onto the blog and which ones do not. With over 300 daily visitors - and growing - I thereby have an impact on the intake of information for that group of people. Just as other bloggers selections and word influence me.

On a more grand scale we also see bloggers who actually have a following that enables them to make first hand coverage; an example of that is 'Send Me Money And I'll Go To Iraq'-campaign, where a blogger invited his readers to chip in, so he could go to Iraq to report on the war (Gillmor 2006: 156). Another example of grand scale blogging the South Korean OhMyNews portal as also discussed by Gillmor (2006: 126). This site "brings together 55,000 citizen journalists to provide a news service that rivals that of traditional, mainly conservative newspapers and television stations" (Leadbeater 2008: 34).

On this scale, Leadbeater says, "bloggers can swarm together and produce something like shared intelligence" (2008: 33). Tapscott & Williams state that the so-called blogosphere, as of 2006, consisted of more than 50 millions "personal commentary sites that are updated every second of the day. Some of the largest weblogs (blogs for short) receive a half a million daily visitors, rivaling some daily newspapers" (2006: 12). The participatory dimension of open creative culture is increasingly setting its park on public discourse.

Another recently emerged collaboration tool of revolutionary nature, I will argue, is the so-called 'wiki'-technology. Supposedly Hawaiian for 'quick' as well as an acronym for 'what I know is', a "wiki is a technology that allows Web site users to easily (and quickly) edit the content of the site themselves" (Brafman & Beckstrom 2006: 73). Contrary to traditional static websites, created by the sender and read by the receiver, the information contained by the wiki "is not independent of the use to which it is put or the sense that people make of it, but is constructed in the interactions of users", Tredinnick explains. "It becomes a constantly mutating text that reflects the changing understandings of its users.

The folksonomy exploits the interaction of users with the information system itself to build constantly changing classification structures that resituate knowledge and information in line with the changing social environment. Meaning emerges through the social dynamic in which claims to truth are resituated and contextualized" (Tredinnick 2008: 112).

A wiki is entirely dependent on content being fed by users, and that has proved to be practice that is embraced in the open creative culture. As Lessig points out, "when you invite the world to participate, there are enough volunteers in a range of categories of work to make the whole thing function quite well" (2008: 159). Brafman & Beckstrom concurs and state that when you put people into an open system, "they'll automatically want to contribute. And not only do people contribute; their contributions are remarkably accurate. In fact, an investigation led by Nature magazine found that Wikipedia and the Encyclopaedia Britannica are almost equally accurate" (Brafman & Beckstrom 2006: 74).

Wikipedia, as mentioned above, is seen as the most popular and successful example of wiki-collaboration on a large scale, with millions of users and contributors.

Started by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger, the site set out to create the world's largest encyclopedia by harnessing the wisdom of the crowd, ie. letting everyone contribute. They have succeeded in doing so, as within five years, Wikipedia was "available in two hundred languages and had extensive articles - more than one million in the English-language section alone" (Brafman & Beckstrom 2006: 73-74).

Wikipedia is based on peer review, which means that people can edit each others articles - indefinitely, which means that Wikipedia will at all times be a product of who ever takes the time to add knowledge. This, it could be argued, would lead to chaos and immense vandalism, but that is actually not the case: "Wikipedia draws strength from its volunteers who catch and fix every act of vandalism. When vandals learn that someone will repair their damage within minutes, and therefore prevent the damage from being visible to the world, the bad guys tend to give up and move along to more vulnerable places," Gillmor explains (2006: 149).

This gives us an insight into significant facts about participants mentality - namely that, as Brafman & Beckstrom points out, "the fact that Wikipedia isn't overrun by vandals is testament to the fact that most people, given the chance, want to make a positive contribution" (2006: 91). The community that surrounds Wikipedia have themselves, ungoverned, enabled a set of norms that is respected and policed by users themselves to correct the mess and disorder that inevitably occur when millions of people work together.

In fact, as founder Jimmy Wales point out, "not all of the work within Wikipedia is writing original articles. Indeed, the vast majority of work is editing content - correcting spelling or formatting errors, rewriting submissions to conform to the NPOV [Neutral Point Of View] norm, or simply 'softening a claim to be more broadly acceptable. According to one estimate, only 10 percent of all edits add substantive content. The rest is cleaning up those additions" (founder Jimmi Wales in Lessig 2008: 158).

These numbers show the impressive governance that self-control in open creative culture is capable of. As such, Tapscott & Williams say, "a wiki is more than just software for enabling multiple people to edit web sites. It is a metaphor for a new era of collaboration and participation" (2006: 18).

Also here I have taken an active role as an author, by posting an entry on movie director Charlie Ahearn, famous for producing and directing the world's first feature length movie on hip hop and graffiti, 'Wild Style'. After having the pleasure of interviewing him in New York in 2007 for an article I was writing for a music magazine, I noticed that he was not to be found on Wikipedia (which, by the way, was the first place I looked to research before the interview). Subsequently, I wrote him a biography and posted it in late 2007 - and today, in early 2010, I can see that several revisions have been made by other users since then.

In this process, facts that were inaccurate have been corrected, formatting has been improved and users, myself included, have discussed the content to come up with the most accurate account. My contributions were made under the alias 'autofunk78', which means that I will not receive credit in my own name, but I still feel pleasure from my hours of work on the article, as I believe it will become of use

to others, and further that I believe that Charlie Ahearn, of whom I am a supporter - and even a fan - deserved such attention. To such a cause I am willing to contribute without personal gain, monetary or credibility-wise - which can indeed be seen as a testament to the motivational factors mentioned in the theory.

My motivation is supported very well in another quote by founder Jimmi Wales, who says that "we are gathering together to build this resource that will be made available to all the people of the world for free. That's a goal that people can get behind" (in Lessig 2008: 159).

In summary, it is obvious, I will argue, that knowledge creation and consumption is undergoing major changes as a result of this citizen participation in the open creative culture. Tredinnick has a good point when asserting that "we are moving away from an individualizing objectivist view of truth and knowledge (...) towards a pragmatic constructivist idea of knowledge creation and transmission. (...) This re-investment of authenticity in the social process has resulted in a diffusion and proliferation of truths, leading to what some theorists identify as a post-modern cultural mode where all truths become equal" (Tredinnick 2008: 97). I disagree with him that all truths become equal, because that is an exaggerated generalization, but the principle behind his statement presents well the foundation of the new reality we are in the middle of and with that I agree.

Having now completed the first part of the analysis - the practices of open creative culture - I will now move on to the second part in which I will bring forward the endemic disorderly practices and analyze them based on the theoretical accounts.

DISORDER ANALYSIS

As pointed out by Vaidhyanathan, Lovink & Munster and more authors in the previous sections, open creative culture's autonomous nature brings with it a great deal of endemic disorder, which is what I will analyze in the following second part of the analysis.

To add a systematic structure to the analysis I have divided it into subsections that serve to give a better overview of the most common types of disorder according to my research of the empirical data. These subsections are 'erosion of truth', 'textual malleability', 'collaboration disorder', 'dishonesty and identity play', 'piracy and illegal hacking' and finally 'terrorism, aggression and vandalism'.

EROSION OF TRUTH

One of the scholars who assume the strongest opposition against the general development of the Internet right now is Andrew Keen, famed for his book 'The Cult of the Amateur'. In it, he explains that "one chilling reality in this brave new digital epoch is the blurring, obfuscation, and even disappearance of truth. Truth, to paraphrase Tom Friedman, is being 'flattened', as we create an on-demand, personalized version that reflects our own individual myopia.

One person's truth becomes as 'true' as anyone else's" (2007: 16-17). In elaboration, he argues that "what the Web 2.0 revolution is really delivering is superficial observations of the world around us rather than deep analysis, shrill opinion rather than considered judgment". He then goes on to say that "the information business is being transformed by the Internet into the sheer noise of a hundred million bloggers all simultaneously talking about themselves," (2007: 16) and also states that the Internet as a medium is ruled by "the law of digital Darwinism", and that it only supports the survival of the "loudest and most opinionated" (2007: 15).

"Today", he puts it bluntly, "on a Web where everyone has an equal voice, the words of the wise man count for no more than the mutterings of a fool" (2007: 30). As a result, our attitudes about authorship are, too, undergoing change as a result of today's newly democratized Internet culture (2007: 23), Keen says. "In a world in which audience and author are increasingly indistinguishable, and where authenticity is almost impossible to verify, the idea of original authorship and intellectual property has been seriously compromised" (Keen 2007: 23). This is something I will also touch more upon later in this analysis.

What is happening is a fundamental change in many of ways we acknowledge what truth is - in media as we as society. Luke Tredinnick points out that "one of the most striking characteristics of digital culture is the general disintermediation of knowledge transmission and use. While in the age of publishing and mass media control over the apparatus of mediation became largely synonymous with control over discourse, digital technologies increasingly place power over the creation, dissemina-

tion and use of content in the hands of consumers" (2008: 105). Keen puts it much more straightforward: "The monkeys take over. Say good-bye to today's experts and cultural gatekeepers - our reporters, news anchors, editors, music companies, and Hollywood movie studios. In today's cult of the amateur, the monkeys are running the show" (2007: 9).

The participatory mode of digital culture blurs distinctions between truth and opinion, creating an "undermining of truth that threatens the quality of public discourse, encourages plagiarism and intellectual property theft and stifles creativity", he argues (*in* Tredinnick 2008: 108). But not only civic discourse is threatened: "Democratization, despite its lofty idealization, is undermining (...) belittling expertise, experience, and talent", and in fact, he believes, it is threatening the future of our cultural institutions (2007: 15).

He goes on to visualize how the implications can and will increase extremism in society: "With the decline in the status of truth comes also the threat of the manipulation of the new mode of knowledge creation, dissemination and authentication by individuals and groups pressing particular political ends. Extremists, fundamentalists and criminals use the blurring of truth to perpetrate misinformation and lies" (*in* Tredinnick 2008: 109).

Tredinnick calls this a "fractured social experience", where dissent against traditional forms of authority "occasionally hardens into religious and political fundamentalism, and where ideological formulations are replaced by a pick-and-mix approach to political, religious and theoretical ideas. In the digital age, the very idea of truth as an objective and collective experience seems to be in doubt" (Tredinnick 2008: 99). I will look into the issue of extremism later in this section.

We also see occurrences of other types of disorder that spring from this erosion of truth. One is what Gillmor (2006: 185-186) call 'cyberspinning', and thereby refer to contorting truth into serving one's own purpose - an approach often used in politics. Keen also writes about this in describing how "blogs are increasingly becoming the battlefield on which public relations spin doctors are waging their propaganda war" (2007: 18).

This sort of behavior links to other phenomena that have a natural habitat in the virtual sphere, namely that of defamation and libeling - as also recognized by Gillmor (2006: 192) - that is, using easy-to-publish online tools to target enemies and spread malicious information across the web.

Information fraud, in general, is easy to fabricate on the Internet, Gillmor explains, seeing that "technology has given us a world in which almost anyone can publish a credible-looking web page. Anyone with a computer or a cell phone can post in online forums. Anyone with a moderate amount of skill with Photoshop or other image manipulation software can distort reality. Special effects make even videos untrustworthy" (2006: 174). Gillmor himself uses the example of how several Hollywood studios were caught making fake fan websites for new movies:

"The exposure of the deception again brought to focus a reality of the modern age: for manipulators, con artists, gossips, and jokesters of all varieties, the Internet is

the medium from heaven" (Gillmor 2006: 174). In this realm we also see fraud such as stealing private data – credit information, social security numbers etc. - for exploitation.

TEXTUAL MALLEABILITY

The malleability of text is a disorder that goes way beyond that of evil intent. With a growing amount of communication being mediated textually, as well as being shared, remixed, cut and pasted, its reproduction often suffers. Tredinnick explains that as texts have "become integrated into communications processes, they have taken on some of the characteristics of oral utterances, leading to a general orthographical drift. (...) The proliferation of texts has also led to a decline in the stability of the textual medium; because dissemination occurs through duplication, individual texts tend to be subject to more drift.

Text is becoming again a more mutable and malleable medium. (...) Texts are becoming a more social medium, subject to ongoing emendation to fit the purposes to which they are put" (2008: 75). What is different from before this practice is that "digital texts break the chain of duplication that printing erected to tie the text to its creation. They are less likely to be seen as a site of authority in their own right, and more as a site of the construction of meaning through social processes" (2008: 75).

The implications of this type of disorder are severe, he posits: "This destabilizing of the cultural status of both the textual medium and individual textual works poses considerable challenges for how we negotiate cultural practices, norms and conventions in the digital age" (2008: 76). With the emergence of this new digital textuality the security of information or knowledge itself seems to come under threat, as the "stable vessels of the past give way to a more mutable digital culture. The authenticity and authority of writing are undermined by the rise in informal publishing" (2008: 76), because history has programmed us to "identify value with the stable, fixed and finalized text. (...) Digital texts resist final signification and stability" (2008: 76). In general, our previous textual system is unable to cope with the new communication practices. The legislative frame, copyright regulation and conventions "buckles under the ongoing use and reuse of texts" (2008: 76), he argues. Copyright implications are something I will also describe further below in this analysis.

Alone the reproduction process poses problems in the shape of inaccurate duplication. "When we cut and paste text, we can run into trouble. Sometimes the cutting removes relevant information. On occasion, words of sentences are changed to utterly distort the meaning. Both practices can prove harmful, but the latter is downright malicious" (2006: 175).

COLLABORATION DISORDER

One of the most central practices in open creative culture is collaboration. As described earlier, sharing and interacting around collaborative projects constitute a focal point between participants in the network, and as a result, much of the disorder develops around this exercise. Ned Rossiter points to how disorganized labor is

immanent, but also that it might "institute a mode of organizing sociality immanent to networked forms of communications media" (2006: 27). Abrahamson & Freedman, the two scholars within the field of organization mentions how problems occur from for instance "clutter, mixture, time sprawl, improvisation, inconsistency, blur, noise, distraction, bounce, convolution, inclusion, and distortion" (Abrahamson & Freedman 2006: 78).

Slacking and free-riding are also well-known problems in any collaboration-context, but more so in the virtual sphere because of the disparity of such networks. Brafman & Beckstrom explains by saying that "it's easy to join, and with numbers you get diversity". But at the same time, "when circles take on more than fourteen or so members, the bond breaks down. Members become more anonymous, and that opens the door to free-riding or destructive behavior. No longer does everyone have to pull their weight (2006: 89-90).

The broad diversity in open creative culture also brings with it other type of potential antagonism, when people with different world views have are being brought close together.

"People often think in different ways because they have very different values; what matters to them differs. (...) The trouble is that people with fundamentally different values often find it difficult to agree on what they should do and why. Diverse ways of thinking are essential for innovation," it is argued, but "diverse values, based on differences about what matters to us, often lead to squabbles. (...) Diverse groups can become very unproductive when their differences overwhelm them, provoking conflicts over resources or goals" (Leadbeater 2008: 80).

Squabbles are in general another disorderly practice that is widespread. Some people in the virtual sphere spend a considerable amount of time on initiating quarrels among other random participants. In fact, they might spend time getting into groups, forums or blog commenting sections before instigating their real purpose: "There are figures - they're called 'trolls' - who live for the fights they can gin up in these spaces. They behave awfully.

Their arguments are (in the main) ridiculous, and they generally make comments spaces deeply unpleasant" (Lessig 2008: 64-65). Also Gillmor addresses this disorder: "Trolls can be identified by their disengagement from a conversation or argument. They do not believe what they say, but merely say it for effect. (...) A troll isn't necessarily insulting, snide or even impolite. Only the crudest, most obvious, forms of trolling can be identified so easily" (2006: 183). I myself have encountered 'trolls' in my blogging work, but one quickly learn to stay clear of such individuals.

Other issues revolve around the usage and exploitation of shared resources that are made available without governance: "The frequent criticism of the commons as a system of organization is that it often fails because individuals with unlimited access to a shared resource will over-use it. (...) Something that is everyone's property fast becomes no one's property and so gets abused," Leadbeater argues (2008: 51).

DISHONESTY & IDENTITY PLAY

In general, dishonesty is a major source of disorder in open creative culture. In a world of oral agreements, constantly changing conventions and unwritten rules, trust is the binding matter that makes people rely on each other and each others word. Zer-Aviv et. al. explains that "open collaborations are based on mutual trust, and trust alone can be too fragile a social fabric to support human interaction". Contrary to relationships bound under a contract, where terms of collaboration are clear and legally binding, open creative culture collaboration is much less obligatory.

Instead, "the binding terms can be a shared passion, a common goal, a sense of community (or lack thereof)", but nevertheless, in a collaboration, "the need for implicit and explicit structure remains" (2010: 35). Surowiecki address this also when highlighting that "the social benefits of trust and cooperation are (...) relatively unquestioned. But they do create a problem: the more people trust, the easier they are for others to exploit. And if trust is the most valuable social product of market interactions, corruption is its most damaging" (2004: 126).

There are, as in the real world, in-numerous types of dishonesty, but in the virtual sphere some of these have a particularly hospitable environment. Stealing other people's work and presenting it as one's own is a practice that is much easier on the Internet. "A culture of cut-and-paste is made to order for the Net, where an almost-anything-goes attitude prevails.

Cutting and pasting is not, by itself, a bad thing; quoting the work of others is a routine aspect of research, for instance. But when people routinely pass off the work of others as their own, it goes too far" (Gillmor 2006: 200). This also ties in with another practice which is highly disorderly, namely that stealing other people's identity: "Turkle", an author in this field, "discussed the way in which online environments allow the opportunity for identity play, leading us to confront aspects of ourselves that we would rather remained hidden.

She argues that this can lead to a transformation in our understanding of the nature of our identities in real-life contexts", Tredinnick argues (2008: 137) - a notion that touches upon some of Castells work, where he states "with the rise of networks, the role of civic society in the construction of identity declines, and the individual construction of identity shifts to an oppositional mode in which the self is defined in relation to that which it is not." (*in* Tredinnick 2008: 137)

Tredinnick furthermore points out how "we can always escape our digital surrogates, leaving them behind to form new bonds, new relationships and new lives in different skins" (2008: 143). This work both ways, however, so "the price we pay for being able to become whoever we want to be is uncertainty about who anyone else is" (2008: 143).

This ability brings forward many types of malicious behavior: "Terrorists, spam remailers, criminal groups, pornographers and hackers all exploit the liquidity of identity in the digital age to conceal their tracks" (2008: 143), which is something I will address later when investigating disorder such as terrorism and aggression.

PIRACY & ILLEGAL HACKING

Whereas some of the previous disorders move mostly in the grey areas between legality and illegality, piracy and illegal hacking are entirely illegal practices in open creative culture. Basically, a pirate is "anyone who broadcasts or copies someone else's creative property without paying for it or obtaining permission" (Mason 2008: 36). But unlike the meaning of the word 'pirate' in the offline world, a virtual pirate refers not necessary to an organized criminal, but in most cases to laymen who use file sharing technologies to acquire digital content – for instance The Pirate Bay, as mentioned earlier in the first part of this analysis section.

In fact, Keen explains, "the pasting, remixing, mashing, borrowing, copying - the stealing - of intellectual property has become the single most pervasive activity on the Internet. And it is reshaping and distorting our values and our very culture" (2007: 142). Whether this is the case is a contested and much discussed topic. Some, such as Leadbeater hold that "if people are not going to be paid for their music or software then they will stop producing it.

Everyone will be worse off" (2008: 51), a stance naturally supported by the music- and movie business associations, film production companies and major record labels. Others, on the other hand argue that cultural production is finally unleashing itself from the constraints of immaterial property hegemonies. Regardless of this, however, it is still illegal.

"The problem is not just pirated movies and music", Keen argues. "It's become a broader quandary over who-owns-what in an age when anyone, with the click of a mouse, can cut and paste content and make it their own. Web 2.0 technology is confusing the very concept of ownership, creating a generation of plagiarists and copyright thieves with little respect for intellectual property" (2007: 143).

The same infringement of intellectual property is central to the practice of illegal hacking. Unlike legal hacking, which refers nowadays to the practice of disassembling either software code or electronic consumer products to learn how they work (thereby most often losing the warranty), illegal hacking refers to the same practice, but in data systems where it is forbidden. Both types of hacking practices is surrounded by extensive communities who often do it for the challenge, rather than the end-product. As Cory Doctorow points out, they're "proud parasites" (2008A: 195) and as for the illegal ones, no system is safe from their lock picking.

TERRORISM, AGGRESSION AND VANDALISM

Entering into the most harsh types of disorder of the virtual sphere, I will now look into illegal practices with malevolent intent, namely that of terrorism, aggression and vandalism. Each of these labels overlap with each other, but also cover a great deal of activities - and not all in the grand scale as seen in, for instance, television made by religious networks such as al-Qaeda.

Terrorism can be described as systematic use of terror as a means of achieving coercion - and therefore assume any scale, from global to local. However, when found

in the virtual sphere, research say that those committing terror is better "able to target specific segments of the population with a more subtle and complicated 'informational' strategy" (Malamuth et. al *in* Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 164).

In fact, referring to other studies made by scholar Tsfaté & Weimann, it has become that "on the Internet the terrorist groups played down their violence and were much more 'pacifistic' in their rhetoric than in other media outlets. The researchers suggested that their intent here was to attract web surfers sympathetic to issues of human rights and free speech".

Another finding showed that "the sites offered visitors ample and varied possibilities to take action such as soliciting donations, protesting, disseminating messages, but advocating violence was rarely one of the approaches" (*in* Malamuth et. al *in* Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 164-165).

While the practice of terrorism is mostly targeted specifically at a certain aim, other types of malevolent disorder in open creative culture include general aggression. As a part of human nature also in the offline sphere, Malamuth argues, virtual sphere aggression is perhaps not worse, but actually "more widespread and easier to accomplish" (*in* Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 166-166).

Aggression has different types of motivation, they say, and refer to a "widely used distinction in the social psychological science" is between "hostile and instrumental aggression".

Definitions of instrumental aggression emphasize that "any harm is primarily a tactical means of attaining other goals, such as social status or money," (Geen, Berkowitz *in* Malamuth et. al *in* Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 167), whereas "hostile aggression instead intends to physically injure an opponent", studies show. "These definitions as distinctions are especially important when thinking about aggression and the Internet," where "instrumental aggression is bar far the most prevalent" (Malamuth et. al *in* Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 167). "For example, aggression from senders whose identities are shielded may take the form of written or audio-verbal messages designed to hurt or humiliate.

Indirect aggression, which may take such forms as telling lies or stealing in the form of destructive messages, codes, 'viruses' or 'worms' designed to hinder or destroy other people, unseen by an usually unknown to the message computer, are used to urge others to engage in the violent behavior" (Lagerspetz et. al. *in* Malamuth et. al *in* Amichai-Hamburger 2005: 168).

Finally, there is also the more randomly aimed practice of vandalizing. Sometimes associated with illegal hacking, vandalizing can take the shape of taking over website, or even just typing in wrong information in open collaboration software such as for instance wiki's. Brafman & Beckstrom point out that this behavior too is more common online, where participants - as noted earlier - can take different identities, and also in general feel less socially committed to each other.

Brafman & Beckstrom exemplify to saying that "it's easier to vandalize someone's page on Wikipedia if you never have to meet him in person. (...) When you see people face to face, it's harder to brush them off" (2006: 89-90).

Having now completed both analysis parts: The analysis of practices and the analysis of disorder, I will now commence with discussing the findings as well as add larger perspective to determine the relationship between open creative culture and its disorders.

DISCUSSION

I now initiate the discussion section in which I will debate the findings in my analysis above, as well as add larger perspectives to the topic in order to establish the relationship between open creative culture and its endemic disorders.

After investigating and condensing this broad scope of empirical data in the analysis, I deploy the methodology of distributed aesthetics and seek to "capture the not yet described, the not yet visualised, beyond poles such as real-virtual, new-old, off-line-online and global-local", as well as acknowledge the importance of both "the dispersed and the situated" (Lovink & Munster 2005) from the analyzed data by interpreting them, based on the theoretical foundation as well as my insight into the practices of the open creative culture from the research process.

In practice, as described in distributed aesthetics methodology, I will interpret the analysis findings to derive the implicit dynamics of open creative culture. These interpretations will be laid out during this following discussion and the most prominent point summarized in the conclusion.

INDIVIDUAL EMPOWERMENT

We have learned that self-control is one of the driving factors in the open creative culture, as mentioned in the first part of the analysis ('Peer production'), which, according to Surowiecki (in the diversifying theory) is indicative of a proliferation of the liberal independence tradition in Western philosophy and society.

The empowerment of the individual in our society today (at least in large parts of the world) brought about by web 2.0 is blurring the old boundaries between media and citizens, as described in the 'Citizen Journalism' analysis section, building upon the idea of the 'prosumer' as mentioned by David Bell earlier.

What is interesting to look at here is the actual power of the individual, I argue, and how it is embedded in the autonomous prosumption practice. If we, for one, look at the scale of this prosumption idea, we will see that there are millions of blogs out there (of which many are both popular and powerful), but I believe that to suggest that the blogosphere is as powerful in terms of attention reach and opinion forming power as the established news and media industry is a grave exaggeration. The empowerment lies elsewhere, I believe, and is one part of the distributed aesthetic, namely the empowerment of self-image through access to knowledge. Having access to information is a strength and the individual gain is rather to be found in this sphere.

Lessig talks about this also, when noting how blogs "give millions the opportunity to express their ideas in writing. And with a practice of writing comes a certain important integrity. A culture filled with bloggers thinks differently about politics or public affairs, if only because more have been forced through discipline of showing in writing why A leads to B" (2008: 92-93).

The empowerment is also to be found in other ways. As uncovered in the first part of the analysis (in 'Sharing', 'Citizen Journalism' and 'Hacking'), individuals shape

the information landscape through their sharing habits too. By tagging or forwarding content between each other they put social value, meaning and personal context to content before pushing information further out into their networks, and thereby influencing and intervening in the attention span of others as well as disturbing how information flows in the virtual sphere - as compared to traditional transmission flows of the old world.

Lessig too notices the democratic value of these practices (2008: 67) and also Hardt & Negri acknowledge that networks undermine and deconstruct power (in Lovink 2005: 8), which indicate that these authors have ideas similar to this claim of empowerment of the individual.

CREATIVITY THROUGH OPENNESS & SHARING

One of the most prominent dimensions of open creative culture is the social interaction, as highlighted in both the theory section and the analysis (among other in 'Social Networking'). Participants fulfil a range of social needs via the interaction with their peers and flock with people with whom they share interest. These interactions are often hinged on collaboration, for instance in open source projects (as analyzed in 'Peer Production'), and sharing of information and files (as mentioned in the analysis 'Sharing' and 'Hacking' parts).

These interactions range across many fields, including not only software, and new ideas emerge every day in a proliferation of creativity. The Internet has proven a particularly fertile arena for innovation, and, I will argue, that is much because of the autonomy and anonymity its environment ensures.

Weinberger calls it a 'permission free zone' and George Yudice point out that the virtual sphere has created a place where "individuals can develop their own practices" (in Lovink 2005: 4). This is a focal point of open creative culture, I will suggest, as well as part of the distributed aesthetics, because participants here can utilize the exact means necessary to realize their ideas - even if these are sometimes not rational, not democratic and not legal.

File sharing as practice has reached immense heights, as also described in the analysis ('Sharing' and 'Piracy and illegal hacking' parts). Vaidhyathan mentions that an estimated 77 million people engaged in file sharing in 2004, which, he argues, show how people in their open creative culture practices disregard the fact that many (in fact, most) files are protected by copyright.

This disorderly behaviour is indeed a problem for rights owners, commercial interests claim, but supposedly that does not cause participants to change their new habits. I believe this is a symbol of new views upon property that reflect the open nature of the new culture. With participants contributing without financial reward, they also expect to be able to consume without having to pay.

Vaidhyathan pose an assertion that elegantly contains this new conflict between legislation and common practice by pointing out how "conventional wisdom posits a crisis in the enforcement of intellectual property in a wired world when actually there is a crisis of confidence in intellectual property" (2004: 90), entailing the failure of previously successful regimes of copyright, patent and trademarks. In his words, the open creative culture practice of sharing - in particular illegal file sharing

- has become the "central battleground between the forces of anarchy and the forces of oligarchy", which is something I will come back to later in this discussion.

File sharing is seen by these commercial industries as a chaotic disorder in the virtual sphere, while others - headed by scholars and open licensing activists (as also described in the analysis, my self included) argue that digital content (also referred to as intellectual property) is different from offline sphere property because it is not scarce, which is the parameter that decides the price of a commodity in a normal market mechanism. Vaidhyathan exemplify by stating that "if someone steals my car, I am left with no car.

Yet if someone photocopies my book, I still have my book. The fundamental purpose of intellectual property law is to create artificial scarcity" (2004: 87), and this domain has now - with the emergence of open creative culture and high-speed digital infrastructure - been undermined.

Seeing that copying files does not worsen the quality of the original, it can be argued that digital sharing is not a disorder in itself. In this sense, this type of alleged disorder is in fact an order (a practice) that serve as a central mechanism in open creative culture - a mechanism that symbolizes a new type of creativity (disorder as order is something I consider and debate in the next part of this discussion). In an evolutionary perspective, technology has made intellectual property rights obsolete.

Piracy has historically had this role, Matt Mason explains: "It's how inefficient systems are replaced. Wherever you tune in, somewhere you will find a pirate pushing back against authority, decentralizing monopolies, and promoting the rule of the people: the very nature of democracy itself. The pirate mentality is a way to mobilize communities, drive innovation, and create social change" (Mason 2008: 67). This assertion links well with my finding in the 'Sharing'-part of the analysis, in which I described how in Sweden, piracy ideology has moved into politics.

Whether one is in favour of this development or not, Lessig points out, technology cannot be killed. It cannot be un-invented. "We can only criminalize it", he says. We can only make millions of people into 'pirates'. "So does this criminalization make sense?," (2008: 109) his rhetorical question goes. According to open creative culture ideology, it does not.

Other types of value can be attributed to piracy, some authors argue. Tim O'Reilly, for instance wrote once that "Piracy is progressive taxation, being well-enough known to be pirated is a crowning achievement" (in Doctorow 2008A: 73) thereby referring to the reputational dynamics I also present in the diversifying theory section ('Motivation') as well as in the analysis. Virtual reputation and credibility are starting to become real factors, "something that was once reserved to MIT geeks, hackers, and assorted 'get a life'-ers," Leonhard points out (2008: 110). The social capital of reputation is part of the distributed aesthetics, I will claim.

One of the traits of the dispersed networks in open creative culture is the decentralization, as pointed out in the analysis. Collaborations are characterized by not having central control. This plays a central role in the spawn of creativity, researchers argue. Let me explain: Vaidhyathan points out in the grand theory section

how "distributed systems tend toward anarchy. Centralized systems tend toward oligarchy" (Vaidhyanathan 2004: xiv). This lack of central control and direction, Brafman & Beckstrom argue, is a wonderful incubator for "creative, destructive, innovative, or crazy ideas. Anything goes. (...) Institute order and rigid structure, and while you may achieve standardization; you'll also squelch creativity. Where creativity is valuable, learning to accept chaos is a must" (Brafman & Beckstrom 2006: 203).

Even economic scholars Tapscott & Williams concur and state that in the years to come this new mode of peer production will "displace traditional corporation hierarchies as the key engine of wealth creation in the economy" (2006: 18). But will the open creative culture accept such an acquisition? I believe not, because resistance towards propriety and exploitation is endemic to the ideology of the open creative culture ("The urge toward anarchy depends on oligarchic abuses," Vaidhyanathan argue, 2004: 188) - which is also a part of the distributed aesthetics, I will argue. Or at least the attitude with those participants who drive open creative culture forward (hackers, open license activists etc.).

Many participants openly engage primarily in order to level the market, Zer-Aviv et al. point out (2010: 95): "By publishing software under free licenses, the individual hacker is not merely improving his own reputation and employment prospects. (...) He also contributes in establishing a labour market where the rules of the game are completely different, for him and for everyone else in his trade" - as well as improve products and systems as pointed out in the analysis ('Hack-ing/Sampling/Remixing'). Commercial exploitation is also in dissonance with open creative culture's bedrock of intrinsic motivations, as explained in the diversifying theory ('Motivation').

Even if recognition, as one type of intrinsic motivation, could be commoditized in such a context, it would still entail disapproval from other participants, for instance hackers, who are known to live by a set the ethics that includes keeping things free and open, hence the hacker slogan 'Information wants to be free' (as presented by ao. Bell 2007: 85).

SOCIAL INTERACTION & CROWD DYNAMICS

As initially stated in the paragraph above, social interaction is one of the central traits of open creative culture. The social interaction is the tangible glue that connects people - not the actual physical network of technology. This is also what Lovink & Munster point out in their distributed aesthetics theory, namely that the mere ability to create a link "can never account for the human labor required to create the link, to maintain it or the sudden death and change of direction for a network" (2005).

Though ungoverned in conventional sense, the open creative culture has an impressive way of governing itself, as we learned in the analysis ('Citizen Journalism', 'Peer production') as well as in the grand and diversifying theory sections. Group dynamics seem endemic and, as described above, creativity flourishes in this open landscape across the globe. Innovation happens despite no centrally controlled leadership, and authors point out how various strands of shared intelligence can be argued

to exist, among other in Schelling Points-theory (as presented in the diversifying theory) or in Scott Page's research that point out the strengths of diversity compared to homogenous group collaboration (also described in the diversifying theory). The verve of pro-sociality, as presented earlier herein is a testament of the reciprocal bonds of mutual trust that tie in open creative culture and creates an infrastructure of social capital.

However, I will argue that what is really interesting for this thesis is the assertions made by Surowiecki, who had looked into positive outcomes of non-rational decisions or Zer-Aviv et. al. who described how open creative culture groups often mitigate or even disregard democratic processes in their decision making (both in the diversifying theory).

I think this makes a strong link to some of the types of disorder in this culture, which - as listed in the analysis in 'Collaboration disorder' include "clutter, mixture, time sprawl, improvisation, inconsistency, blur, noise, distraction, bounce, convolution, inclusion, and distortion", as well as slacking, free-riding and squabbles (as presented in the same paragraph). These types of disorder are often considered as necessary evils in traditionally centrally controlled collaborations, but with the assertions of Surowiecki and Zer-Aviv et. al. as presented before, it now shows that in open creative culture - in the dispersed networks - irrationality and non-democracy, or should I rather say radical democracy to use the wording of Vaidhyanathan, tend to play a role and thereby, as I see it, take use of some of the disorder mentioned before, including for instance improvisation, noise and inconsistency, when making decisions. With disorder being constitutive to the open creative culture, I think we are starting to see, perhaps, an image of new types of crowd dynamics and social relations emerging in open creative culture - one that seem to harness disorder as a strength rather than a weakness - which is an idea I will return to later in this discussion.

Other types of disorder in the social interaction sphere seem to have ambiguous roles, as I will argue. In the analysis I looked into how identity play and even identity theft are relatively common practices - and there it was even pointed out that trust alone can be too fragile a social fabric to support human interaction. The ease with which identity play can be committed in the virtual sphere makes it increasingly more common, and this is commonly seen as very disorderly.

However, I would like to look more into this apprehension of identity play as something negative. For one, as pointed out by Tredinnick in the diversifying theory section, identity is a social construction and therefore can be argued to have equal value whether it has its root in a corporeal being or in a imagined one - because, as Castells argues, summarized in the grand theory section above, and that is my second point here, real virtuality implies that also virtual identity should be considered real and valid.

The argument here, as also presented in the analysis, is that we are seeing is a transformation of our understanding of the nature of our identity - or identities - in off-line context. Based on that argumentation, I will suggest, identity play as disorder

might not be a disorder after all, but rather an extension of our capability to engage (or converge) naturally in different contexts.

ORDER THROUGH DISORDER

As the second part of the analysis showed, there are many types of disorder endemic in open creative culture. A consequence of its dispersal, decentralization and non-governed nature, of course, but also as a result of diversity of the millions of participants who take part and their different habits, values and social codes. With freedom comes chaos, it is argued in the analysis section (in 'Peer production') and it can be argued that with such a scope and perpetual growth of the open creative culture networks it would be utopian to think that an order could ever emerge by itself on a grand scale – unless this order would be in the shape of disorder as an order, which is the idea I am debating in this paragraph (and which was also what I hinted at in the introduction when setting the criteria for the defining of disorder, as understood in this thesis).

Abrahamson & Freedman argue that in the Western hemisphere we have a bias toward neatness programmed into our minds, which is why we "distrust the idea that mess can work better than neatness" (2006: 5). Contrary to this mental programming, I will argue, we must realize that in this context disorder can indeed be an order in itself - as many authors agree.

Weinberger, for instance, explains that when ordering matters in one way, you are also disordering them in another (2007: 88). Or Abrahamson & Freedman, who point out that mess isn't necessarily an absence of order. Rather, they claim, apparently messy systems can in fact contain several types of order instead of just one (2006: 71).

Perhaps even more accurate for open creative culture, I believe, are Brafman & Beckstrom's idea that suggest that even if groups of participants do not have any kind of explicit hierarchy and structure, this does not mean that they are lawless. This just mean that instead of rules, they depend on norms. Norms work in such way, the authors argue, that participants "realize that if they don't enforce the norms no one will," so they enforce the norms with one another. In doing so, "members begin to own and embrace the norms as their own.

As a result of this self-enforcement, norms can be even more powerful than rules. Rules are someone else's idea of what you should do. But with norms, it's about what you as a member have signed up for, and what you've created" (2006: 90). That disorder is also an order is part of the distributed aesthetic of open creative culture.

What is interesting then, I suggest, is what the norms actually allow participants to do. We've already established that, for instance, illegal file sharing takes place in extreme measures, so if Brafman & Beckstrom's theory holds truth, we are witnessing a set of norms that do not adhere to traditional law, for example. These norms, as a set of not firmly defined omnipresent guidelines for open creative culture could be a part of a distributed aesthetic, I will argue and would thereby serve as a type of social protocol. Yet still one that implies and individual understanding and thus

ties in with Vaidhyathan's theory of anarchic structures in open creative culture. Here he explains how anarchy is not necessarily chaotic and dangerous: "It is organization through disorganization - anarchistic tactics generally involve uncoordinated actions toward a coordinated goal" (2004: 3). Furthermore, he argues, anarchy is by definition non-hierarchical, radically democratic and "oppose and deny the authority", as well as "propose governance through collaboration, deliberation, consensus, and common coordination".

This idea of disorder as an order in itself can also be argued to have relevance in mediating terms. In the analysis when dealing with 'Textual malleability', 'Erosion of truth' and 'Citizen Journalism', I talked about how stable information vessels of the past give way to a more mutable digital culture, where some would argue that we are seeing a blurring, obfuscation and even disappearance of truth - as well as a general disintermediation of knowledge transmission.

In sum, a decline in the quality and stability of text as a medium. In this sphere, the disorder can also be seen in a different light, namely - as also proposed in the analysis - that we are experiencing a construction of meaning through social processes. Tredinnick explains that traditionally, knowledge and information has been understood as something that exists independently of cognition and social processes, "a resource that can be drawn on to form opinions and beliefs" (2008: 110).

Now, he says, "the rise of participatory culture undermines this sedimentation of objective knowledge in the vessels of its transmission and dissemination precisely because it undermines the stability of the cultural artifact itself" (Tredinnick 2008: 110). As substantiated in the analysis ('Citizen Journalism'), we are no longer accepting one opinion or one point of view as real. Instead, the alleged disorder offers a myriad of views and thereby institutes a new order per se. A new order tied in with the distributed aesthetics.

GLOBALIZATION AND SOCIETAL PERSPECTIVES

Open creative culture and its global scope represent transformative potential that invites debating societal perspectives as well as its implications in a globalized view, I will propose. With the recent recession in mind it would be obvious to think about the idea that old regimes must be broken down for new ones to emerge. Economist Joseph Schumpeter once said that "economic development requires gales of creative destruction" (in Mason 2008: 14).

Here, of course, I am thinking about whether open creative culture could, to some extent, inflict transformative change with larger repercussions outside of the virtual sphere. As posed in the analysis with the example of the Swedish pirate political party, we are seeing tangible connections in the political arena, and throughout the theory I've also on several occasions included assertions by economist scholars Tapscott & Williams, who have coined the term 'wikinomics' as a label to describe the "deep changes in the structure and modus operandi of our economy, based on openness, peering, sharing, and acting globally," as the authors point out earlier herein (in the 'Peer Production' theory part).

As such, I will argue, wikinomics are not so much to be considered a concept on macro-level as it is on micro-label. Hereby I mean that this idea grows in the roots of

society, from the people, and it's transformative power is therefore being instigated on local level in local communities that are linked together via the virtual sphere.

Another interesting angle, I will argue, is that of the immense diversity in open creative culture - as described in the diversifying theory section. An impression here could be that with open creative culture we are finally able to ultimately harness the value and power of global diversity.

Despite extensive differences in background, national culture, values and so on - with the inevitable conflicts and disorder that will incur (as touched upon in the 'Collaboration Disorder' part) - open creative culture brings people together across the globe and across these barriers, and could perhaps potentially - over time - pose an irreversible abolition of the class barriers that we see today? Vaidhyathan addresses this issue: "The culture and information battles that matter to most people in the world are occurring on the streets and in the bazaars, not in the courts", referring to the fact that open creative culture participants have taken things into their own hands: "There is no single gang that authorities can imprison to stifle global piracy.

There is no single technology that governments can outlaw or companies can reengineer. There is no way media companies could price their goods to compete with black markets and informal networks," when much of the world can barely afford the artificially subsidized food produce from the West that is being dumped on markets everywhere (2004: 101). "What will it take to stop global piracy and restore price stability?," he rhetorically asks - and answers: "Nothing short of global economic stabilization and equalization", which would mean that third world countries would become much wealthier and the Western hemisphere countries much poorer (Vaidhyathan 2004: 101).

With open creative culture as driving force and vehicle, labor turns towards digital mediation and can no longer be kept outside regionalization barriers such the EU or North America. Kevin Kelly, another scholar, puts it well by stating that "the open network is a global and large realization of the liquid state" (in Terranova 2004: 118). With that idea he acknowledges how open creative culture in all its chaotic glory is moving beyond the traditional state, into creating liquid, flexible states that shape around sharing, openness - and autonomy as alleged disorder (as seen through conventional glasses), yet one that in this sense is an order of its own.

Another perspective in this vein is put forward by media scholar Mitchell Stephens, and is called the 'End of the Era of Insufficient Information'. Ideally, she says, "if we could distribute information access more equitably, we could make a good attempt at fixing many many of humanity's ills" (in Vaidhyathan 2004: 125). She explains that in this thought, "information would no longer be power because power demands a difference - a maldistribution.

If some nations did not enjoy an information glut and others an information deficit, perhaps the strong nations would have a harder time dominating the weak. Perhaps leaders could distribute food and fuel better if information about needs, demands, supplies, preferences, and efficiencies flowed freely" (in Vaidhyathan 2004: 125).

However, things are different in practice than in theory. Not only is the world still struggling with the so-called digital divide - that is, that most of the world's population has no access to the Internet - as well as struggles within our own societies of issues of protection of the commons (a topic here is net neutrality - keeping our broadband lines non-commercial).

In this area there is a conspicuous contradiction for open creative culture in particular in considering that "almost all of the current so called Web 2.0 platforms have been built on a centralized control model, locking their users to be dependent on a commercial tool" (Zer-Aviv et. al. 2010: 28). It can therefore be argued that a substantial part of the open creative culture participants by their daily behavior and interaction - knowing or unknowingly - serve economic purposes in businesses that are, per se, not to be considered part of this culture.

The threat of hegemonic commercialization and surveillance of information technology has led to other interest ideas among other from radical thinker Hakim Bey, who has thought up the somewhat abstract philosophical socio-political tactic of creating temporary autonomous zones that elude formal structures of control ie. by not relying on information technology but only radical thought.

In general, as pointed out by Lovink & Munster as one of the key issues in distributed aesthetics, we must acknowledge "the myth of seamless growth and unproblematic social interaction of the virtual networks" (2005). Therefore we are probably still to experience several mutations in technology and ideology before we see transformations of such magnitude.

With the end of this discussion that has put forward a broad series of perspectives pertaining the relationship between open creative culture and its endemic disorders, I will now move into the conclusion of the thesis to present my main findings and to conclude my research process.

CONCLUSION

I have divided this concluding section into three parts. First, I will reflect upon my research process in terms of validity, and next, sum up my findings and present a nuanced answer to the problem formulation, based on my work. Third, final part, I will use to sum up on the larger perspectives as uncovered throughout the analysis and discussion.

Methodological perspectives

In setting out to establish the relationship between open creative culture and its endemic disorders, I took upon me the task to investigate an area in which no specific research had been done before.

The challenge was therefore to produce a methodology and empirical foundation that enabled me - in an academically valid fashion - to investigate this relationship via the collection of a credible empirical body of qualitative data and conducting an analysis and discussion that enabled me to derive the right conclusions.

The challenge was substantial because of the complexity of not only the empirical field (web practices are extremely varied, scattered and multimodal), but also due to the disparate nature of what I set out to investigate, namely the disorder of the open creative culture - an area not previously defined and consisting of all kinds of messes that I had to systematize through a firm definition of that disorder is, as seen in this thesis.

As a result my findings have also been very divergent in nature, and that was why I chose to rely on the methodology of distributed aesthetics, which, as a philosophical praxis intends to guide researchers towards uncovering the unapparent and the aesthetic, which lies behind the tangible observations and analysis perspectives. This is what I have done in the discussion: Derived interpretive generalizations - the distributed aesthetics - from the analyzed empirical data in order to uncover the unseen and the not yet codified.

I feel that I have succeeded methodologically in my research, seeing that I have deployed a cross-sectional design and adhered to the research criterias that I set firm in the methodological section.

Summary of findings

Applying the methodology of distributed aesthetics to discuss and disseminate the findings of the analysis has brought me towards a series of conclusions in the discussion section that enlighten the relationship between open creative culture and its endemic disorder. First and foremost, open creative culture comprise an empowerment of the individual in the shape of access to knowledge and the subsequent strength this impose in the shape of improvement of self-image and development of critical faculty in the participants.

As prosumers we have discovered that by moving from passive consumers to active

participants, truth has become a construction in which we can take actively part rather than leave it to the mediation of the establishment of traditional institutions (media, authorities). This conscience leads the development of open creative culture practices in the virtual sphere - practices of sharing, publishing, collaborating, commenting, blogging, tagging, interacting and so on - which, at times comprise many disorderly practices also.

An important point to make here is to emphasize that participants utilize the exact means necessary from the Internet to realize their ideas and desires - both orderly and disorderly - even if these are sometimes not rational, not democratic and not legal. As brought forward in the discussion, we are witnessing an installment of new norms that do not necessarily adhere to, for example, traditional law or conventions at all times.

These norms, as a set of not firmly defined omnipresent guidelines, are woven into the aesthetics of open creative culture and serve as a type of social protocol that is being constantly redeveloped and renegotiated.

Identity play is another seemingly disorderly practice that is common in open creative culture. Linking to among other to the idea of real virtuality, it relates to a new way of acknowledging online identities as equally valid as corporeal identities and that changing identity merely represent an ability to engage and converge in the open creative culture in more than one way and thus seems like a natural installment in the aesthetics of the culture. This also links to the social capital of reputation that is a major part of virtual sphere interaction - in which monetary compensation is most of the time not even considered.

Instead, other intrinsic motivations inhabit the aesthetic - with pro-social behavior being one of the most prevalent types of motivation. Indeed, such social bonds are the links that binds open creative culture together, rather than the technology, and this acknowledgement is one of the ideas behind distributed aesthetics theory: As Lovink & Munster points out, "the mere ability to create a link can never account for the human labor required to create the link, to maintain it or the sudden death and change of direction for a network" (2005). These social links contain endemic disorder and that is part of the dynamic that creates creativity and innovation.

Trying to understand the role of disorder in the open creative culture brings us to one of the central conclusions, namely how we must learn to look at disorder as an order in itself. Open creative culture is deliberately disassembling the view that disorder is to be seen as something negative and destructive. Rather - as the discussion highlights - we must acknowledge the success of using less orderly practices as a new type of order. In this light we are in fact dealing with a new type of order - that is based on a different modus operandi than what we have been used to so far.

I think we are starting to see, perhaps, an image of new crowd dynamics and social relations emerging in open creative culture, where we harness disorder as a strength rather than a weakness. With this disorder as order, we are less prohibited in our creativity - thoughts can wander further. Not that they always do, there are plenty of examples of failure, but when things go right, new standards are made -

within technology, benchmarks, practices, ideas and even paradigms.

Larger perspectives

As also brought forward in the discussion, open creative culture has a large transformative potential, on even societal and global scale. Kevin Kelly pointed out how already at this point we are seeing the emergence of global, liquid states, where barriers between east and west, north and south, no longer holds any purpose, because people can autonomously congregate in a virtual commons and engage in interaction, information exchange and collaboration without crossing any physical borders.

Notable is also the 'End of the Era of Insufficient Information' as brought forward by Mitchell Stevens as a suggestion that an equal balancing of information in the world could lead to a more equitable world, although that would entail the Western world to lower their living standard considerably to even things out - which seems highly improbable. Rather, I believe we will see a proliferation of autonomy and disorder as the third world (as well as China) take to the Internet to realize their hopes and dreams.

However, other more short term perspectives of similar discord need also be brought forward. As presented in the discussion, most web 2.0 portals are in fact commercial sites that commodify open creative culture practices without themselves being part of this culture (for instance Facebook, Google Buzz, Friendster etc.). Mushon Zer-Aviv et. al. suggest that this is something we need to act upon now and not let the future of open creative culture - and a future of global collaboration be mediate by centralized giants such as it is the case now. Getting out of those grips will not be easy, however. But it gives us a glimpse into one of many potentially major battlefields of the future, as open creative culture and its participants slowly finds their place in the forthcoming ideological struggles.

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