



Toni Cade Bambara

“One we are at war. Two the natural response to oppression, ignorance, evil, mystification is wide-awake resistance. Three, the natural response to stress and crisis is not breakdown and capitulation but transformation and renewal.”

One, we are at war

Imagine all software is made by people who love you... reads the poster that sits above Sedyst’s desk. In the first years working collectively as *The Institute for Technology in the Public Interest*, we used to joke that Sedyst ran an advice hotline for identifying and resisting Big Tech - GAFAM --the acronym for G\$\$gle, Appl£, Faceb\$\$k (now Meta), Amaz\$n, and Micr\$s\$ft.

The poster slogan emerges from a discussion with artist Charlotte Eifler and is one of a series of slogan posters that were made at TITiPI, and designed by Cristina Cochior and Batool Desouky for NEoN on the streets of Dundee, Scotland. Downloadable here: https://titipi.org/wiki/index.php/Digital_Depletion_Posters

During those years her phone and computer would continuously ring, and she would always be jumping in and out of calls. I have many dear memories of staying at her house--waking up or falling asleep whilst overhearing her still on the hotline. Lengthy calls with lovers of friends, friends of friends, with strangers of friends all filled the time before and after her working day--all from her kitchen table, home office, bed and sofa. In *A History of My Brief Body* poet and scholar Billy-Ray Belcourt writes “Love, [...] isn’t remotely about what we might lose when it inevitably dissipates How unworkable love would be were we to subject it to a cost-benefit analysis!”

See https://titipi.org/wiki/index.php/Category:Drop-in_session

Sedyst’s hotline gave and still gives advice on challenging the computational infrastructural take over by Big Tech. The hotline gradually emerged into drop-in clinics. The advice covers protection, blocking, escaping, contestation, the addition of technical features, or evasion. Suggestions for practices that we began to articulate as cloud abolition. As part of the larger discourse and practice of revolutionary community-making practices from anti-racist, prison and border abolition traditions. As writer and recovering academic Sophie Lewis explains to “find out what loving one another in a way *free* from state and economic coercions would feel like”. Indeed, Sedyst’s infrastructural advice would nearly always be delivered together with a herbal remedy, balm, harmonium concert, breathing exercise, or invitation to her kitchen table, a small act of “communal luxury” and the de-clouding to come.

The Institute for Technology in the Public Interest (TITiPI) is a trans-practice gathering of activists, artists, engineers and theorists initiated by Miriyam Aouragh, Seda Gürses, Helen Pritchard, Jara Rocha and Femke Snelting. <https://titipi.org/>

Sedyst would also ask the hotline callers questions about what was happening, why they thought it might be happening, and take down notes on issues-- preparing a diagram of struggles



and resistance. We had all in our different ways been running hotlines. During these years, almost each day, there would be a new crisis for *TITiPI* to dig into. As Lewis writes “for everyone to feel immersed in care is an aspiration that requires us to rethink the architecture and infrastructure of everyday life”. And each evening, brought a new consultation on the hotline. Alerting us to what happens when digital transformation meets institutional racism, border violence and militarization. And to the everyday violence of what urban theorist AbdouMaliq Simone calls the “police-politics-media-race laden-computational-mining operations that capture life”. Pretty much every call to Sedyst’s hotline began with “my institution/activist group/community group/school/hospital/food supplier/university are planning to implement ____ I think it might be G\$\$gle, Appl£, Faceb\$\$k, Amaz\$n, or Micr\$\$ft... something feels off.. should I be worried about it?”

Two, wide-awake resistance

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Currently the most powerful people in the world have formed an alliance between the far right and Silicon Valley. Their intensification comes with a ruthless willingness to violently claim the land and resources (water, energy, critical minerals) they deem necessary to their own ongoing survival. What Klein and Taylor have named end times fascism. In the face of this hotline callers now rarely ask us “should I be worried”. Callers to the hotline are grieving above and below the radar, transversally. They already know the answer because, in **end-times fascism**, they know that software is not made by someone that loves us. How do we organise around this? Abolitionist Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor recently observed we might need some retraining some new tactics: “what happens when you’re trained to call people out, when you’re trained to name the thing, and your opposition embraces your hatred? When the opposition doesn’t care if they’re racist, they don’t care if they’re transphobic, don’t care if they hate women, and so you pointing that out is not a revelation. It’s not, it doesn’t have the same resonance that perhaps it did five years ago...we still have tactics from a different moment and have not shifted those tactics. And, you know, this moment is kind of unfolding in real time”. Things are heating up and we need some real time love tactics and erotics in our organising.

Three, transverse and renew

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a resistant and reparative action, conjuring a transversal, erotic practice. As Lewis writes:

“as we abolish the capitalist logic of work and of obligatory enjoyment, we can instantiate conditions of possibility for the collective turn-on. And as survivors of the old regimes of sexual violence, we can design whole cities full of erotic biotic infrastructure, whole continents, from coast to coast, adorned with spaces of thrilling safety and mushroom glades and therapy marquees and grottos and patient-led free clinics and swimming holes and mapping palaces and so on.”

These conditions are already being made all around us. By people dedicated to finding the openings and putting in the hard work to make small things happen. To resist monstrous, supremacist survivalism we need love to gather, to organise and we might also need some renewed tactics, retraining and make more flexibility in our lives to run our loving hot lines.

<https://titipi.org/>

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