

Binding and Unbinding Concepts: Control, Freedom, and Performance in the Work of Mika Tajima

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With the retrospective eye of an artist reviewing the last fifteen or so years of her career, Mika Tajima set out to describe her diverse oeuvre. Marked by a panoply of mediums and materials—from “furniture art” and carved wooden lungs to digital videos, sound performances, woven paintings, and experiments with machine learning—Tajima’s work neither bears a single style nor references a consistent set of issues. Instead, what she identified among her work was the consistent presence of three concepts: Control, Freedom, and Performance.

Why these three, and how might these multivalent terms be defined and delimited given the seemingly endless discourse about these concepts? From Hobbes and Hegel to Arendt, Foucault, and beyond, much of modern Western philosophy has been caught navigating these conceptual threads. More to the point, how might the relationships among them be understood? What is to be made of the apparent contradiction found in the joining of freedom and control? And what of performance? Between the dialectic that marks the former two, where does the latter term belong? Is it an appendage, a tangent, or integral to their joining?

Each of these terms, to be sure, belongs to a category of grammar known as abstract nouns. Unlike concrete nouns (say, “wood,” “sculpture,” “painting,” or “textile”), control, freedom, and performance convey ideas, qualities, or states separate from any specific instance or object that could be seen or immediately perceived. But as Tajima reveals, these concepts also circumscribe tangible processes. They describe our relationships with those objects and technologies that envelop or house us, that manage the spaces in which we work, or that allow us to navigate digital and physical worlds. Indeed, if Tajima’s practice is conceptual (if it operates in the abstract domain of ideas), it is also, as she says, fundamentally sculptural—that is, dimensional.

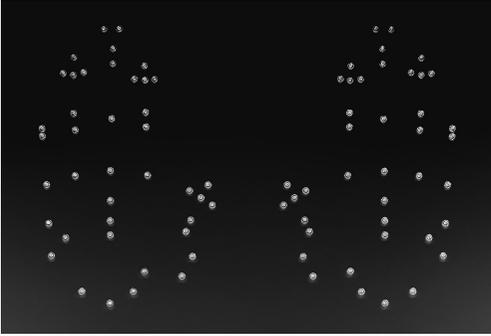


Fig. 1

Fig. 1
 FORCE TOUCH (MANU DEXTRA
 SINISTRA), 2017
 Gold chromed Jacuzzi jet
 nozzles, computer fans.
 Ishikawa Foundation,
 Okayama.

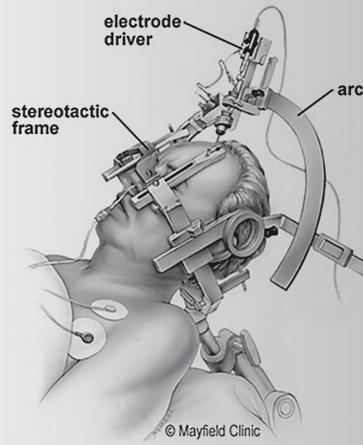


Fig. 2

Fig. 2
 Diagram illustrating
 deep brain stimulation.

Just as metaphors can leap from one thing to the other, from physical things to ideas and back again, her material output traverses the unstable connections among these terms.

A study of Tajima's work indeed provides a concrete picture of this conceptual binding. Consider for now her ongoing series of textile paintings, *NEGATIVE ENTROPY*, for which, since 2010, she has used acoustic data—initially recorded in a textile mill, a colocation data center, and other sites of production or translation—to create abstract “portraits” of those spaces and their machine-laborer couplings. After transmuting this sonic information into a digital spectrogram, Tajima hires a specialist to convert each line of the sonic-cum-visual diagram into a code to be woven on a Jacquard loom. Thus, through a sequence of divisions of labor—from the factory, through the artist's recordings, through various other actors and assistants—these spaces of production are made visible in the complex, textured pattern of the cloth. Sonic glitches and entropic noise are, in the process, at once algorithmically reduced (excess information is removed) and dilated; an unexpected burst of activity, an irregular pulse, becomes visible through the crossing of warp and weft. Control and freedom, we might say, are at once opposed and bound through their hypostatization and performance—the set of operations, repetitions, and affects that constitute relationships among various human and nonhuman machines.

Tajima's artistic practice, in other words, navigates the seeming incompatibility of these conceptual threads—by separating each strand and then braiding them together. She grasps and overlaps each moment, in order to show where they diverge and entwine as a unit, how control begets freedom and vice versa in their performance. To further understand Tajima's plaited (or dialectical) method, it is important to define each concept, but also to describe the recursive ways in which she occasionally loosens and unravels these threads only to cross over and conjoin these terms again.

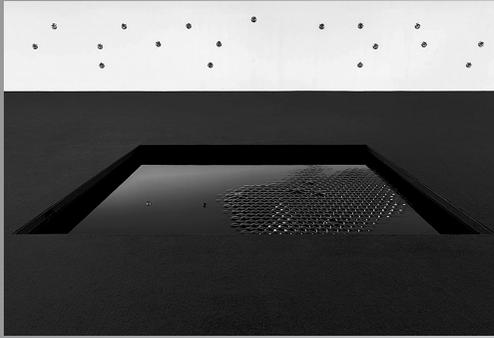


Fig. 3

Fig. 3
 NEW HUMANS, 2019,
 generative algorithm
 using machine learning
 (GAN, T-SNE) and fluid
 simulation (Navier
 Stokes), user pro-
 file data caches (DNA,
 fitness, and dating),
 ferrofluid, custom
 electromagnet matrix,
 custom PCB control
 system, computer,
 steel, wood, aluminum.
 Developed with support
 from \Art, Cornell
 Tech, and Ferrotec.

Control

According to the OED, the noun control signifies the “action or fact of holding in check or restraining”; or the “fact or power of directing and regulating the actions of people or things.” Etymologically, it derives from the thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman and Middle French word contreroulee, which referred to a “duplicate copy of a roll or other document, kept for purposes of cross-checking.” This counter-roll would become the French contrôle, a term that would later be abstracted from its material origins in order to signal a certain state or mode of constrained activity in opposition to unfettered liberty. By the twentieth century, taken up with particular attention by the philosopher Michel Foucault in his discussions of modern society, the word control was used to describe modern methods of power that are distributed among the multitude: discipline and management conducted through checks and balances, assembly lines or schools. Gilles Deleuze eventually contrasted late twentieth-century control societies to disciplinary ones, determining that as immaterial information systems increasingly organized human activities through more flexible, electronic means, control no longer relied on the molds of architecture or sites of confinement.¹ Through digital codes and computational protocols, controls could manage bodies and identities (“dividuals”) through a flexible “sieve whose mesh” allows us to continually “surf” between one and another data or market domain.²

In the work of Mika Tajima, we might say, control takes the form of a diagram or algorithm—one that provides her with a strategy through which other topics, in turn, are explored: the various ways in which humans interact with and adapt to office furniture, sportswear, social media, or “Eastern” medicine’s harnessing of “meridian lines” and breath. Indeed, Tajima collects various informational images while researching her projects, most of all because she is interested in the operations they reveal. It is significant that her use of diagrams are not just, as Deleuze notes of Foucault’s “cartographic” method in Discipline and Punish, a means of conveying information already understood.³ Citing Foucault, Deleuze notes how “‘detached from any specific use’ ... [t]he diagram is no longer an auditory or visual archive but a map, a cartography that is coextensive with the whole social field.”⁴ It is a “spatio-temporal multiplicity,” or an “abstract machine” that functionally organizes the power relations of every society.⁵ In the nineteenth century, for example, Jeremy Bentham’s model for the panopticon prison was a “mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form.”⁶ Thus, Foucault argues, it both manifested and yielded a reorganization of any and all arrangements of power within that disciplinary society—from discursive to non-discursive ones, from statements to the arrangement of bodies in space: at the school, the barracks, the factory.

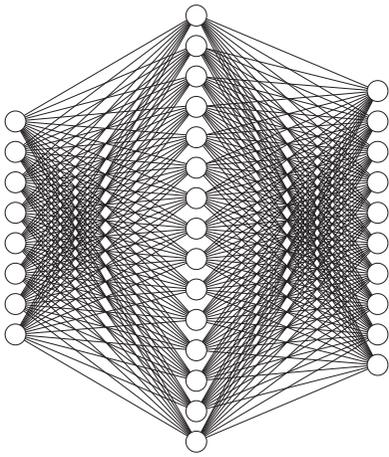


Fig. 4

Tajima’s diagrammatic method similarly examines, retraces, and unwinds the “tangle, [the] multilinear ensemble” that connects technological and social arrangements—that is, contemporary apparatuses or modes of control.⁷ Rather like Foucault, Tajima’s work in sculpture does not so much represent or put diagrams on display as trace their routes; she allows the activities they create to manifest materially. As in her 2019 iteration of *NEW HUMANS*, for which she worked with a programmer to train a Generative Adversarial Network (GAN) on data sets scraped from a dating site, an exercise app, and a consumer genomic sequencing site.⁸ This artificial intelligence machine “learns” the patterns of affinities among abstracted human profiles (their affective data), and then, once trained, it is programmed to create new or “emergent” behaviors and identities. In the installation, the GAN continuously outputs an infinite rearrangement of these affective patterns, which are made visible using ferrofluid that reacts to an electrical charge. Seen on the surface of this black, viscous material are rhythmic yet erratic waves and bubbles, organic-like agitations. What these movements visualize are the connections between the input and outer layers of the neural networks, but also, seemingly, the unpredictable activity found in the machine’s mutable “hidden layer”—a computational space that is often referred to as a black box [Fig. 4]. The apparent freedom of this “intelligent” identity—instantiated within the flux of this slippery, magnetic oil—is nevertheless constrained, we realize, by a complex net of wires and nodes, or the algorithmic parameters and protocols of the machine learning system. To what degree, we now wonder of those scraped sites, does such an arrangement work on us?

The machine-human interface may be a timely topic of investigation, especially as our desires are increasingly mediated by various kinds of artificial neural networks (ANNs), but this dynamic is not altogether new. There has always been a “relentless fight,” Giorgio Agamben tells us, an endless battle between living beings and apparatuses.⁹ Expanding Foucault’s concept, Agamben defines an apparatus (*dispositif*) more generally as “anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings”—from the pen, literature, and philosophy to “cigarettes, navigation, computers ... and—why not—language itself.”¹⁰ Thus, unlike Hobbes, for instance, who insists humans were free from control before they were managed by a government—that the “social contract” was a necessary artifact of human organization, but that it was not intrinsic to human identity in a “natural state”¹¹—Agamben insists that our relationship with apparatuses is “rooted in the very process of ‘humanization’ that made ‘humans’ out of the animals we classify under the rubric *Homo sapiens*.”¹² We are neither caught in the net of control “by chance,” nor

Fig. 3
Diagram of a GAN
(generative adversarial
network), a machine
learning model.

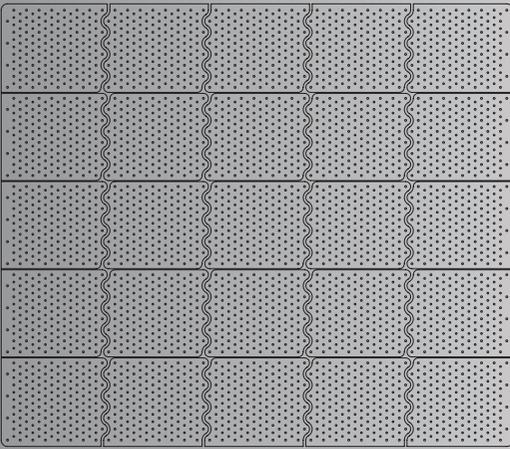


Fig. 5

Fig. 5
Diagram of magnet
panel assembly for
NEW HUMANS, 2019.
Drawing by Mathias
Wagner.

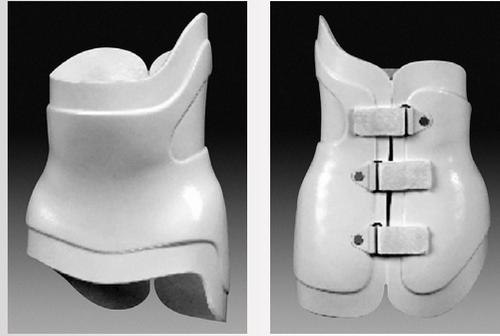


Fig. 6

Fig. 6
Back braces for
treating scoliosis.

have we ever been separate from the techniques that define us. All human subjects are, by definition, bonded.

Indeed, such is the fundamental condition of the subject's relationship to their Other, whether human or machine. As Hegel's chapter on "Lordship and Bondage" in Phenomenology of Spirit reveals, the master's position in the dialectic is only possible insofar as it both delegates its body (its labor) to the slave (or the machine) and disavows this transfer simultaneously.¹³ Which is to say that philosophy after Hegel, as Catherine Malabou and Judith Butler have suggested in a co-authored text, has a binding problem, or a problem with binding.¹⁴ As consciousness seeks to detach, to enter the abstract realm of concepts, or simply to individuate, it remains "stubbornly" attached or bound to a body, or to someone or something else.¹⁵ This binding, which is also a form of control, is therefore integral to self-consciousness. But it is also a process that, as Butler puts it, "involves splitting the psyche into two parts, a lordship and a bondage internal to a single consciousness, whereby the body is again dissimulated as an alterity, but where this alterity is now interior to the psyche itself."¹⁶ Control is thus a method by which subjects are at once formed and split. If we are "in battle" with apparatuses, we are also in battle with ourselves. Like the counter-roll, the "duplicate copy of a roll or other document, kept for purposes of cross-checking," subjects are created in the material act of doubling, of binding and splitting the self.

If Tajima's work harnesses a diagram of these concepts—or locates the ways in which they are bound in the contemporary technological landscape—she does so not simply to follow or repeat their instructions. Instead, she seeks to exploit the "split" in order to destabilize their paths—to unwind, separate, and re-plait them together. Jacuzzi jet nozzles, for instance, are alternately embedded in a giant piece of rose quartz, the walls of a gallery, or a set of



Fig. 7

Fig. 7
 MERIDIAN (GOLD), 2016,
 pressurized water vapor
 system, networked LED
 bulbs, real-time gold
 commodity indexes,
 custom analysis pro-
 gram, wood, pig-
 ment, sculpted resin.
 Commissioned
 by SculptureCenter,
 New York.

prosthetic lungs carved out of wood. The series comprises readymade metal devices coupled with inoperable materials to evoke the Ayurvedic practice of Pranayama or regulating the pattern of one's breath, the input and output, in order to modulate the state of the mind. Flexible and adaptable, this and similar methods of meditation, Deleuze would say, are perfectly tailored to the control society's gaseous metaphors: "in a control society businesses take over from factories, and a business is a soul, a gas."¹⁷ But this is also why it is incumbent upon the artist or philosopher, Deleuze argues, to write or make work in a way that is "liquid or gaseous"; the point is to "invent ... [new] laws of liquids and gases on which the earth depends" (hopefully less noxious ones) and to "see creation as tracing a path between impossibilities."¹⁸ Tajima's work thus approaches the most entropic states in MERIDIAN (GOLD) (2016), a project for the SculptureCenter, where water vapor emerges from a contained perimeter and simultaneously contains the atmosphere of the visitor. Or in an animation, HUMAN SYNTH (OKAYAMA) (2019), projected on the side of a building in Okayama, for which a machine algorithm processing social-media text data in real-time determines the movement, color and intensity of the digital smoke. As an endless duration, such works mimic the predictably unpredictable horrors we face daily in a petrochemically dependent world; at once regulated, unregulated, and feverishly unpredictable, control becomes increasingly entropic ... But also, perhaps, by refiguring sculpture as gaseous and evanescent, Tajima's work suggests, new paths may be found.

Freedom

Interestingly, the ideas expressed in Deleuze's 1990 article, "Postscript on Control Societies," were initially drafted for a conference presentation he gave in 1987 titled "What is the Creative Act?"¹⁹ Sandwiched between a discussion of philosophical concepts and artistic ones, or the overlap between what philosophy and art "do," Deleuze tangentially touched on what he described as the forms of power that organize life in an information age. His discussion of the creative act thus necessitated, in his mind, a gloss on a creative practice's fundamental difference from control—that is, from information that could be communicated, or from data that "orders" and controls activities and beliefs through "a set of imperatives, slogans, directions-order words" or algorithms.²⁰ Paradoxically, he determined, controls give the impression of freedom: as on a highway, "people can travel infinitely and 'freely' without being confined while being perfectly controlled."

Americans, so we've heard, think that "freedom" is something ontologically rooted in their being—that they, but not Others, have an inalienable right to it (to carry guns,

to refuse vaccines) because they were born within certain geographic borders. Freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to vote in a democratic election are written into historical document known as the Bill of Rights, or the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution,²¹ but it was not until the post-World War Two period of the Cold War that freedom became the rubric of cultural and social practice, especially as the U.S. sought to “spread freedom” around the globe as a counter to Soviet Communism.²² Art critics increasingly harnessed this concept as people like John Cage and Jackson Pollock developed new ways to “free” the process of making unencumbered by the protocols of tradition—as they created new ways of composing sound and making paintings that refocused our attention on the ground rather than the figure. Hence the art world gained a veneer of freedom, and artistic practice became, as witnessed in *Life* magazine, the perfect image of American Cold War, free-trade ideology. The concept of freedom became perfectly adapted to a system of flexible control, simultaneously managed or sanctioned by capital and the state (as “freedom to choose” and “freedom from government intervention”).

Freedom, or some version of it, thus permeated the global corporate and cultural scene like a gas. But as the Civil Rights leaders of the 1960s and the Black Lives Matter movement today have demonstrated, the “American” practice of freedom is a consequence of political systems—ones that have afforded various strata of freedom to some but not others. Yet this also suggests that the shape of freedom is malleable; it is subject to change. Alongside decolonial thinkers, like Frantz Fanon, from the mid-twentieth century, Hannah Arendt contended that freedom was not some “inner, nonpolitical experience” related to the “man’s will,” as though a defined feeling of freedom could bypass the systems of coercion that have kept people enslaved in the camps or on plantations. Rather, freedom only has potential to express itself in the agonistic site of politics: a “space of freedom”—the agora—is one in which freedom is negotiated by the public and actively performed for everyone, often adapting and changing in the process. According to Arendt, freedom is thus best understood as an exercise in “virtuosity,” whereby, as Ilya Winham explains, “virtuosity refers not to what is done, much less who does it, but rather to how an action is performed.”²³ Winham continues:

Arendt thus defines virtuosity as “an excellence we attribute to the performing arts (as distinguished from the creative arts of making), where the accomplishment lies in the performance itself and not in an end product which outlasts the activity that brought it into existence and becomes independent of it.” We find virtuoso displays in the performing arts, with the premium they place on the excellence of the performance—the dance, the play, the concert—*itself*. Virtuosity is not assessed,

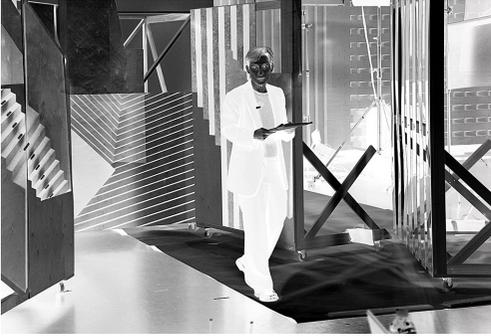


Fig. 8



Fig. 9

Arendt tells us in *Thinking*, “as an innate intention of the actor, nor by the consequences of his deeds”; rather, how an actor “appeared while” he was performing.²⁴

Performance

If to per-form is to form through, in the process of this through-formation, a productive disequilibrium, a different kind of freedom, is introduced. For Tajima, the dynamic joining of control and freedom reveals at once the conundrum and a new path.

One of three edits of a performance and installation produced in 2009 by Tajima in collaboration with filmmaker Charles Atlas and others under the moniker New Humans (a group that includes musicians and dancers), *TODAY IS NOT A DRESS REHEARSAL (JUDITH BUTLER EDIT)*, presents a pastiche of moments from the three-day event at SFMOMA’s Charles Schwab gallery. As Butler gives a lecture, surrounded by a continuously morphing cast of sculptural objects, performers, and a film crew, we witness in the video the simultaneous pressures of a dynamic environment and the new relationships it opens up. Alongside the “film director as actor, viewers as performers, musicians as extras, sculptures as props, production as performance,” the prominent philosopher shares a space in which other subjects struggle to perform their identities, while the field is “constantly shifting positions, [with] no fixed role, in transition.”²⁵ The video begins with full-body and then closeup shots of Butler as she alternately studies the papers in her hand and looks up, nervously, rubbing her brow; she seems unsure of where to stand, where to fit in amongst the platforms, painted wooden sculptures, and other beings that populate the set. Cut to Butler seated, while she is told by an off-screen voice (Tajima) to “speak freely for a moment to just check the levels on the mic.” Amused, Butler cracks a nerdy joke: “Yes, it is nice to be speaking freely, and without the assumption that anyone is listening closely. Because most of the time when you’re giving a lecture you’re

Fig. 8
Mika Tajima/*New Humans*
and Charles Atlas,
featuring Judith
Butler, *TODAY IS NOT
A DRESS REHEARSAL*,
performance, San
Francisco Museum of
Modern Art, 2009.
Performance view of
Judith Butler, set
sculptures by Tajima.
Photo by Charles
Villyard.

Fig. 9
THE PEDESTRIANS, per-
formance by Charles
Atlas, Mika Tajima,
and New Humans, South
London Gallery,
London, UK, 2011.
Photo by Mark Blower.



Fig. 10

Fig. 10
 HUMAN SYNTH (OKAYAMA),
 2019
 Custom predictive
 sentiment analysis
 program, gaming engine,
 Alienware VR PC,
 Twitter API, screens,
 and projector; endless
 duration.
 Dimensions variable.
 Installation view,
 Okayama Art Summit.

trying to suppress all the ambient sound ... But now I'm becoming ambient sound. I think that's nice. It's like giving up the ego of the lecture."

Of course, as she begins her talk on Freud and the "epistemological uncertainty" that comes with "doubting love"—Butler's rhythmic lecture-voice is, for a moment, in the sonic foreground. Her ego is present. But then, a few minutes later, her edited voice begins to compete for coherency amidst a crowd of activities. She bears "interruptions" from a moving set; she adapts to the disruption and goes from being seated to standing. Meanwhile, members of the Golden Gate Toastmasters (the local chapter of Toastmaster International, a public speaking association) perform the myth of Narcissus and Echo, seemingly mirroring Butler's arguments about speech and performativity, as various modes that simultaneously constitute the subjectivities of the addresser and addressee.²⁶ As Butler turns to the topic of political speech and ethics, we get the impression that no one is fully in charge of this chaotically choreographed scene; no object or voice can occupy the spotlight for long. A sense of freedom seems to come in recognizing a certain lack of control: the lack of the will's ability to control the field; the constant pressure to adapt to controls outside the self; the fact that what performatively binds us to others simultaneously controls and sets us free. If the philosopher herself has become both subject and object (lord and bondsman) within and among others, she also, through her performance of this disjointed lecture and her experimental engagement with others, embraces the unruly dynamic of this allegorical "space of freedom." Toward the end, she invokes Arendt, just as the apparent chaos becomes its own kind of agora-like chorus: "For Arendt," Butler emphasizes, "freedom is not an attribute of individuals, but an exercise and concerted action that is performed by a 'we.' Indeed that 'we' comes together in the very exercise of the freedom, thus instituting the ground of its own claims. One can see how politics is at once performative and universalizing."

The logic of performance as a principle of freedom, to be sure, pervades Arendt's thought. In a chapter from *Thinking*, the first volume of Arendt's posthumously published *The Life of the Mind*, she describes the activity or "business of thinking" by invoking the metaphor of "Penelope's web," the ancient myth in which the wife of Ulysses engages a practice of weaving and unweaving a cloth in order to avoid arriving at a concrete decision. Like this web, Arendt writes, thinking "undoes every morning what it has finished the night before ... it can never be stilled by allegedly definite insights of 'wise men'; it can be satisfied only through thinking, and the thoughts I had yesterday will satisfy this need today only to the extent that I want and am able to think them anew."²⁷ The fact that Arendt cites this ancient myth of weaving and unweaving as the quintessential figure



Fig. 11

of philosophical thought is made doubly significant in the corresponding footnote. There she goes on to differentiate herself from Plato, who mentions the same metaphor in *Phaedo*, “but in the opposite sense.” For Plato the “soul of the philosopher” is only “set free from the bondage of pleasure and pain,” through reason (*logismos*); only by not engaging “in futile toil, like Penelope unweaving the web she wove,” can the soul escape that which “‘nail[s]’ the soul to the body.”²⁸ Arendt’s point is the opposite: to avoid the control of axioms and dogma, or the “allegedly definite insights of ‘wise men’,” one must perpetually “think anew.” Freedom in thought, she would say, is predicated on this activity’s seemingly futile repetition—following its threads, re-performing the process to gain new insights, only to loosen them and retry again. As we performatively navigate the tangible world, Arendt suggests, metaphors and concepts allow us to reimagine our position within it:

The simple fact that our mind is able to find such analogies, that the world of appearances reminds us of things non-apparent, may be seen as a kind of ‘proof’ that mind and body, thinking and sense experience, the invisible and the visible, belong together, are “made” for each other, as it were ... If the rock in the sea “which endures the swift courses of whistling winds and the swelling breakers that burst against it” can become a metaphor for endurance in battle, then “it is not ... correct to say that the rock is viewed anthropomorphically, unless we add that our understanding of the rock is anthropomorphic for the same reason that we are able to look at ourselves petromorphically.” There is, finally, the fact of the irreversibility of the relationship expressed in metaphor; it indicates in its own manner the absolute primacy of the world of appearances and thus provides additional evidence of the extraordinary quality of thinking, of its being always out of order.²⁹

Freedom is not some hypostatized state, as a common

Fig. 11
Punch card for weaving
on a Jacquard loom.

- 1 Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies," in Negotiations, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 177-82.
- 2 Ibid, 179-80.
- 3 Gilles Deleuze, "A New Cartographer (Discipline and Punish)," in Foucault, trans. Seán Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 23-44. In this chapter of his book on Foucault, Deleuze focuses on what he sees as a shift in the philosopher's work from an "archaeological" to a "cartographic" method, in which idea of the diagram and the dispositif (apparatus) converge.
- 4 Ibid, 34. Deleuze is citing Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Random House, 1995), 205.
- 5 Ibid, 34-36. To sum up this point, Deleuze states: "Every society has its diagram(s)."
- 6 Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 205.
- 7 Deleuze, "What Is a Dispositif?" in Timothy J. Armstrong, ed. and trans., Michel Foucault, Philosopher: Essays Translated from the French and German (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 159-68. According to Deleuze's analysis of Foucault's concept of the dispositif significantly overlaps with his earlier discussion of the Foucault's diagrammatic method: "Untangling these lines within a social apparatus is, in each case, like drawing up a map, doing cartography, surveying unknown landscapes."
- 8 Specifically, they scraped data from OkCupid, FitBit API, 23andme.com, and Personal Genome Project.
- 9 Giorgio Agamben, "What Is an Apparatus?" in What Is an Apparatus? and Other Essays, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 1-24.
- 10 Ibid, 14.
- 11 See: Thomas Hobbes, The Leviathan, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- 12 Agamben, 16.
- 13 See: Judith Butler's chapter, "Stubborn Attachment, Bodily Subjection," in Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 31-62. According to Butler's reading of Hegel, which she mediates through the concept of "subjection" in Foucault, the master comes to believe they are a unified identity only by disavowing the fact that they have outsourced their body to the bondsman
- 14 Catherine Malabou and Judith Butler. "You Be My Body for Me: Body, Shape, and Plasticity in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit," in A Companion to Hegel, ed. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 611-40.

- 15 In a section from “You Be My Body for Me” penned by Malabou, titled “Unbind Me,” Malabou explicates an aspect of Butler’s argument in Psychic Life of Power, stressing her use of the terms attachment and detachment, as well as the difference between binding and covering: “the ‘contract’ in which the bondsman substitutes himself for the lord is immediately ‘covered over and forgotten.’ It is in this sense that bodily substitution characterizes attachment as well as detachment.” That is, the lord becomes a unified envelope that is nevertheless striated by binding to the other. Malabou and Butler, 614.
- 16 Butler, Psychic Life of Power, 43; also cited by Malabou, 621.
- 17 Deleuze, “Postscript,” in Negotiations, 179.
- 18 Deleuze, “Mediators,” in Negotiations, 133.
- 19 Gilles Deleuze, “What Is the Creative Act?” in Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (Los Angeles and Cambridge, MA.: Semiotext(e), 2006), 312-24.
- 20 In contrast with artistic and philosophical concepts, Deleuze writes, “Information is a set of imperatives, slogans, directions-order words. When you are informed, you are told what you are supposed to believe. In other words, informing means circulating an order-word. Police declarations are appropriately called communiques. Information is communicated to us, they tell us what we are supposed to be ready to, or have to, or be held to believe. And not even believe but pretend like we believe. We are not asked to believe but to behave as if we did. That is information, communication. And outside these orders and their transmission, there is no information, no communication. This is the same thing as saying that information is exactly the system of control. It is obvious and it particularly concerns us all today.” Deleuze, “What Is the Creative Act?” 320.
- 21 Specifically, the Bill of Rights declares that “Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.” That U.S. citizens are deemed to be “free” is therefore an artifact of a legal system that has set them free—or set the parameters by which they can speak, so they believe, freely.
- 22 See: Louis Menand, The Free World: Art and Thought in the Cold War (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021).
- 23 Ilya Winham, “Rereading Hannah Arendt’s ‘What Is Freedom?’: Freedom as a Phenomenon of Political Virtuosity,” Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory, 59, no. 131 (June 2012): 84-106, 94.
- 24 Ibid. In this passage Winham is citing Hannah Arendt, “What Is Freedom?” in Between Past and Future (New York: Penguin, 1961), 143-71, 153; and Hannah Arendt, The Life

- of the Mind, Vol. 1: Thinking, ed. Mary McCarthy (New York: Harcourt, 1978), 131; Arendt's emphasis.
- 25 Mika Tajima, project notes for TODAY IS NOT A DRESS REHEARSAL, 2009.
- 26 See Judith Butler, Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative (New York and London: Routledge, 1997).
- 27 Hannah Arendt, The Life of the Mind, Vol. 1: Thinking, ed. Mary McCarthy (New York: Harcourt, 1978), 88.
- 28 Plato, Phaedo, section 84a, in Plato in Twelve Volumes, Vol. 1, trans. Harold North Fowler (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1966). For an online version of Phaedo, see the Perseus Digital Library, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collections>; accessed July 21, 2021.
- 29 Arendt, Life of the Mind, Vol. 1: Thinking, 109. Arendt is citing the philologist Bruno Snell, The Discovery of the Mind (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), 201.
- 30 See "Psychographics," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Psychographics&oldid=1029865742>; accessed August 24, 2021.
- 31 For more on the philosophy of (gendered) politics of plasticity, see the work of Catherine Malabou, in particular Changing Difference, trans. Carolyn Shread (Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity, 2011), in which she distinguishes the plastic approach of the salamander from the philosophical figures of the phoenix (Hegel) and the spider (Derrida).