CRITICAL MAKING
TEACHING & POLITICS

By Alison Powell, Media @ LSE

When the accounting class came to use the classroom at the London School of Economics this March, there was golden glitter everywhere! My MSc in Media and Communications had been working on a critique of Google that they developed by BUILDING Google. Along with @aleksk [Aleks Krotoski] I led my students in an exploration of making.

WHY teach social scientists critical making? They are often taught to analyze and deconstruct media, but not necessarily to make it. Many of the students had never even edited Wikipedia despite studying media.

I wanted to START a conversation about how IT feels to work with your hands as well as to THINK BY MAKING. Unlike a lot of work you do in school in making there is NO RIGHT WAY and FAILING IS OK. This connects with some theory such as.

ontological

PRACTICAL

think together

method helps students frame different

views on creating a good life

CRAWFORD writes.

Point your students not just to a workshop but to doing more comprehensive view of what a good life looks like. (2009)

This holds true in my opinion, for students in all trades and fields.
The Results

Five groups of students made different constructions, including a tower topped with a drain, a sponge with one flower opening "what we saw to", and another opening "what we find". One group dropped glitter all over their sculpture, leading to the issue of recency. The professor asked a tough question from me. Despite these challenges, the group decided to develop a coherent story for the meaning of their project. As they argued, they explained that if we have "the glitter of politics" we will realize that unexpected things happen in response to art, as well as in reality. We need to explore the messiness of the world as stories are always the result of unexpected things happening. Everyone can learn to make media.

In his book "What is Media Theory?" RA argues that the study of media is part of the "imaginary media" field, and engages in the question of how to re-image the field of media. RA is an open, creative, and engaged practitioner of making art and exploring the world.

Four artists present their work in the gallery. Artists are exploring and presenting a range of works, from traditional to experimental, open to interpretations and open to new ideas.