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.
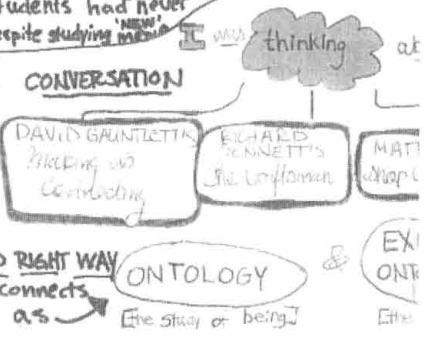
WHY teach social scientists CRITICAL MAKING? They are often taught to ANALYZE + CRITIQUE media, but not necessarily to MAKE media. Many of the students had never even edited WIKIPEDIA despite studying "NEW" media. I was thinking ab...

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 →

AT **ISSUE** the way we think ourselves and each projects, but on **PRA**well. The mushy method

DAVID GAUNTLETT Making is Connecting

RICHARD SENNETT'S The Craftsman

MATT shop c

ONTOLOGY [the study of being]

EXI ONT [the

UE are questions about ideas, process, and think and engage with each other - not just on academic

**PRACTICAL** terms as method helped students from different backgrounds

THINK TOGETHER

[in class]

[In PROCESS]

about

MATTHEW CRAWFORD'S Shop Class as Soulcraft

EXISTENTIAL ONTOLOGY from Heidegger [the politics of being]

CRAWFORD writes:

"POINT YOUR STUDENTS NOT JUST TO A LIVELIHOOD BUT TO SOME MORE COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF WHAT A **GOOD LIFE** LOOKS LIKE" (2009)

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

MAKER PRACTICES HELP US TO MAKE THE WORLD INTELLIGIBLE

JOURNALIS

(recursive "making the thing about" making shop)

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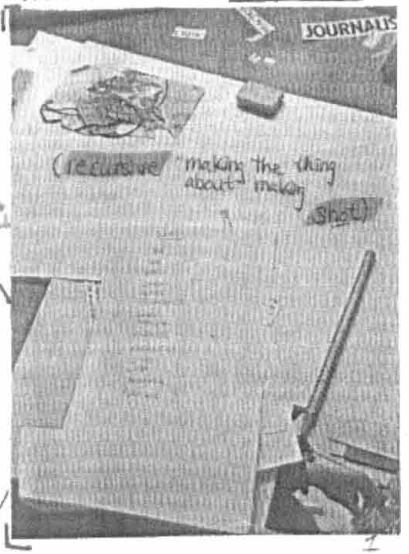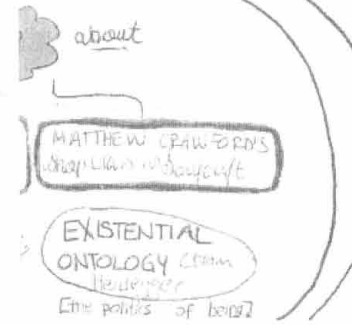
Oh! Glitter,...

The Results

Five groups of students made different constructions, including a tower topped with a brain, a sponge with one flower representing "what we search for" and another representing "what we find" ONE GROUP dropped GLITTER all over their sculpture, leading to the ire of the accounting professor and some tough questions from me. Despite the GLITTER EXPLOSION the group needed to develop a coherent story for the meaning of their project. As they aligned nervously and explained that it was we have "THE GLITTER OF POLITICS" we all realized that UN-EXPECTED THINGS HAPPEN IN RESEARCH as well as in making. We create stories to explain that MESSINESS of the WORLD. The stories are always the result of UN-EXPECTED THINGS HAPPENING

EVERYONE CAN LEARN TO MAKE MEDIA ?

In his book What is Archaeolo JUSS! PARIKKA the study of forms part of of the politic media. He de engage in ime thus RE-IMAG of MEDIA. For class was able ALTERNATIVE of Google This interesting ques the political of CRITIC
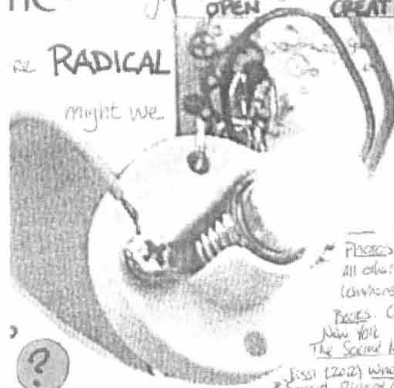
What more RA

CRITIQUE

now!

s book as Media aeology? KA argues that way of IMAGINARY MEDIA part of the investigation politics of contemporary He describes how artists in imaginary media and E-IMAGINING the POLITICS of A. For an hour our able to construct IATIVE CONCEPTIONS This raises some y questions about their impact TIC al making.
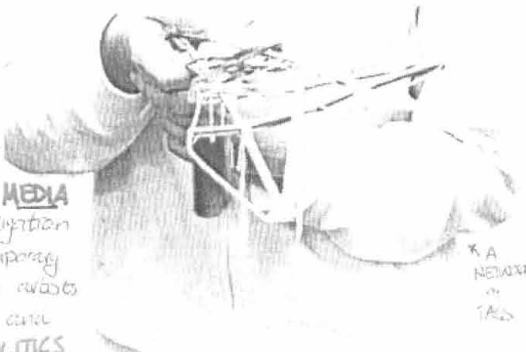
RADICAL might we

ANALYSTS REPRESENT

EMPIRICISTS EXPLORE

the WORLD

By taking my students out of their EXPECTED mode of working with ideas, I hope to INSPIRE more OPEN CREATIVE & ENGAGED PRACTICE

Turn me on.