
Philippa (Pip) Thornton

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EMPLOYMENT

- **February 2019-present** **Post-Doctoral Research Associate, University of Edinburgh**

I am currently a PDRA on Creative Informatics, attached to Edinburgh College of Art. CI is an AHRC funded project which aims to encourage data driven innovation in the creative industries in Scotland.

- **Sept 2018-2019** **Visiting Lecturer: Royal Holloway, University of London**

I taught the 'Cities' undergraduate module in Urban Geography at Royal Holloway. Topics include physical and digital surveillance and infrastructure, smart cities, cultural representations of cities, and militarism.

- **2013- Feb 2019** **PhD Researcher: Royal Holloway, University of London**

I was a member of the first cohort of students at the Centre for Doctoral Training in Cybersecurity at Royal Holloway, and was co-supervised by the Department of Geography. My PhD thesis - *Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction: A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism* - explored the linguistic, economic and political effects of the monetisation of language by Google's search and advertising platforms. The thesis also included an artistic intervention into linguistic capitalism, called {poem}.py.

- **Sept 2016-Jan 2017** **Research Assistant: Algocracy & Transhumanism project, NUI Galway, Ireland**

In order to gain experience in the academic workplace I interrupted my PhD for 5 months to take up the role of research assistant to Dr. John Danaher. The Algocracy project examined the ethics and practicalities of algorithmic decision-making in a variety of contexts. My work included providing literature reviews, contributing to the project blog and podcast content, organising workshops and representing the NUIG Technology and Governance cluster with a presentation of my work.

- **1997-2013** **Police Officer: Metropolitan Police (MPS), New Scotland Yard**

Working variously as a Branch Detective and Police Constable within Special Branch, the Counter Terrorism Command and the Serious Crime Directorate. Specialised in financial investigation, intelligence and covert surveillance.

EDUCATION

- PhD Cybersecurity & Geopolitics, Royal Holloway, University of London (2013-2019)
- MA English - King's College London, Dissertation: 'Travels in Space and Time: The Invention of Monuments and the Location of Memory in Patrick Keiller's Robinson Films' (2010-2012)
- BA Honours (English Literature), Open University (1999-2005)
- BA Honours (Arts) (History & Politics), Liverpool University (1992-1995)

PUBLICATIONS

- Thornton, P. (2019) 'Subprime Language & the Crash', in Kitchin, R., Graham, M., Mattern, S. and Shaw, J., (Eds.) *Running a City Like a Company and Other Fables*. London: Meatspace Press (in production).
- Thornton, P. (2018) 'A critique of linguistic capitalism: provocation/intervention', *GeoHumanities*, 4:2, 417-437.
- Thornton, P. (2018). 'Language Redux'. In Anderson C. U. & Cox G. (eds). *A Peer-Reviewed Journal About Research Values*, Vol 7, Issue 1.
- Thornton, P. (2017) 'Geographies of (con)text: language and structure in a digital age', *Computational Culture: A Journal of Software Studies*, Vol. Autumn 2017, No. Issue 6.
- Thornton, P. (2017) 'The Death of the Reader', *Under the Influence magazine*, Spring/Summer.
- Thornton, P. & Adey, P. (2017) 'Biometric technology', *The Critical Dictionary of International Migration* (Brasilia Press).
- Thornton, P. (2016) 'Diary of a Plastic Soldier (extracts)', *Critical Military Studies*, (2/1-2), pp.137-138.
- Thornton, P. (2015) 'The meaning of light: seeing and being on the battlefield', *Cultural Geographies*, (22/4), pp. 567-583.
- Thornton, P. 'Language in the age of algorithmic reproduction' (under revision).
- Thornton, P. & Danaher, J. 'On the wisdom of algorithmic markets: governance by algorithmic price' (under revision).

EXHIBITIONS

- {poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism, *LMAO Data as Culture exhibition*, commissioned installation, Open Data Institute, London (Oct 2017- Jan 2020)
- {poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism, *After Money symposium and exhibition*, Edinburgh Civic Arts Centre (November 2017)
- {poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism, *Inter/Sections Media Art Technology exhibition*, 6 day installation of framed poem-receipts with live printing, Mile End Arts Pavilion London (Sept 2017).

INVITED TALKS

- 'The Value of Words in an Age of Linguistic Capitalism', *DAOWO Summit UK: The 2019 Blockchain & Art Knowledge Sharing Summit*, Edinburgh University (February 2019)
- 'Researching Linguistic Capitalism', *Digital Methods workshop*, Durham University (October 2018)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Digital Cultures Research Networks seminar*, University of Nottingham (July 2018)

- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', PRAXIS 10, *Text-Sound event*, London (June 2018)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Cognitive Science Seminar Series*, Queen Mary, University of London (June 2018)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *After Money symposium*, Design Informatics at Edinburgh University (November 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Testing Turing: unsettling legacies event*, Alan Turing Institute, London (October 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Design Informatics seminar*, University of Edinburgh (September 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *London Design Festival event – Uncertainty Playground* at London College of Communication, University of the Arts, London (September 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', *Science Museum seminar series*, The Science Museum, London (May 2017)
- 'Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', *Engineering Fictions seminar series*, CONNECT, Trinity College Dublin (Feb 2017)
- 'Critique of Linguistic Capitalism and artistic intervention', *Technology and Governance seminar series*, NUI Galway (January 2017)
- 'Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction', *The Prometheus Project* inaugural event on Human/Cyber interfaces, University of Warwick (October 2015)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 'The political economy of a large-scale hypertext search engine: Linguistic capitalism and Google's advertising empire', Digital Sociology symposium, Web Science Conference, Amsterdam (May 2018)
- '{poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism', Poster session, Web Science Conference, Amsterdam (May 2018)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', KCL Digital Economy conference (May 2018)
- 'Subprime Language – the value of language in an age of digital capitalism', Transient Topographies, NUI Galway (April 2018)
- 'Subprime Language – the value of language in an age of digital capitalism', *Face Value workshop* and presentation at TRANSMEDIALE Festival Berlin (Jan-Feb 2018)
- 'Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction', *Slow Computing workshop*, Maynooth University (December 2017)
- 'Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & artistic intervention', *Communication, Art, Media: Probing Impacts and Intersections workshop* — organised by ECREA Philosophy of Communication Section in Lisbon, Portugal (October 2017)

- 'Subprime Language – the value of language in an age of digital capitalism', presented at Royal Geographic Society Annual Conference RGS-IBG in *Digital Power* session. Co-presented with John Morris (August 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & an artistic intervention', *Museum of Contemporary Commodities (MoCC)* session at Royal Geographic Society Annual Conference RGS-IBG (August 2017)
- 'Cyber security beyond the sciences: critique and creative practice', presented as part of *Of Other Cyber Securities* event at RHUL (July 2017)
- 'Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', *Other Codes* conference - International E-Literature & Digital Humanities conference at NUI Galway (May 2017)
- 'Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', *Research in Real-Time – Practice as Research* conference at NUI Galway (May 2017)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism & an artistic intervention', Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference (Boston, April 2017)
- 'Politics, Poetry & Google', Microsoft lightening talk event, Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference (April 2017)
- '{poem}.py: A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism' - *From Algorithmic States to Algorithmic Brains* workshop (NUI Galway, September 2016)
- 'A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism' - *Living with Algorithms* workshop (London, May 2016)
- 'The Production of Context and the Digital Reconstruction of Language' - *Towards a geographical software studies* panel (Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference, San Francisco (March 2016)
- 'Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction' - *Algorithmic Practices: Emergent Interoperability in the Everyday* panel (Royal Geographic Society (RGS-IBG) annual conference, Exeter University, September 2015)
- 'The Meaning of Light: Seeing and Being on the Battlefield', *Terrain* panel (Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference, Chicago, April 2015)
- 'Language in the Age of Algorithmic Reproduction' - *Thinking with Algorithms in the work of N. Katherine Hayles* workshop (Durham, February 2015)

PRESS

- PHOX POP magazine: 'What are words worth?' Issue 5, Summer 2018
- WIRED (UK): 'Orwell's 1984 is worth £58,318, according to Google AdWords', 25th January 2018
- NEW SCIENTIST: 'Data as Culture: Humour and absurdity stalk the internet', 2nd February 2018
- RTE CULTURE FILE : 'Pip Thornton's poem.py' (radio & podcast), 6th February 2018
- Wiener Zeitung: 'Stichwortgeber der Datenmaschinerie' (The Key to Data Processing), 30th March 2017

- Neue Zurcher Zeitung, 'Google und der Wert der Wörter' (Google and the Value of Words), 26th October 2017

AWARDS

- '{poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism', Web Science poster session, Amsterdam (May 2018) WINNER (500 Euro prize)
- 'Daffodils (2016): A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', Information Security Group (ISG) Open Day poster competition (RHUL, June 2016) FIRST PRIZE
- 'Daffodils (2016): A Critique of Linguistic Capitalism', Humanities and Arts Research Centre poster competition (RHUL, June 2016) FIRST PRIZE (tied)
- RHUL College Teaching Prize for Critical Security Mapping workshop (2014)

EVENTS ORGANISED

- 'Curating (in)securities: Unsettling Geographies of Cyberspace' – co-organised (with Andrew Dwyer) two paper sessions at Association of American Geographers (AAG) annual conference (Boston, USA, April 2017)
- 'Living with Algorithms' workshop – organised and co-convened (with Mike Duggan) workshop/round table with invited attendees. Funding secured from the Humanities & Arts Research Institute (HARI) and the Cybersecurity CDT (London, June 2016)
- 'BEING HUMAN//HUMAN BEING' featuring Ex Machina – curated and co-hosted (with Mike Duggan) film screening and discussion for academic film society Passengerfilms (London, March 2016)
- 'Questioning the Digital' - London Conference in Critical Thought - organised and co-convened (with Nat O'Grady) five paper sessions (UCL, June 2015)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Linguistic Geographies – personal blog detailing current research – www.linguisticgeographies.com
- Successful applicant and participant at Oxford Internet Institute (OII) Summer Doctoral Programme (SDP) (Oxford, July 2016)
- Invited attendee at 2014 Canada-UK Colloquium on The Challenges of Cyberspace (Quebec, Canada, November 2014)
- Designed and led workshop: 'Algorithms', invited to lead workshop on at *Engineering Fictions* session at CONNECT, Trinity College Dublin (Feb 2017)
- Wrote and performed provocation piece: 'Algorithmic Justice' as part of CDT contribution to 25th Hewlett-Packard Colloquium on Information Security HP Day 2014 (RHUL, Dec 2014)