

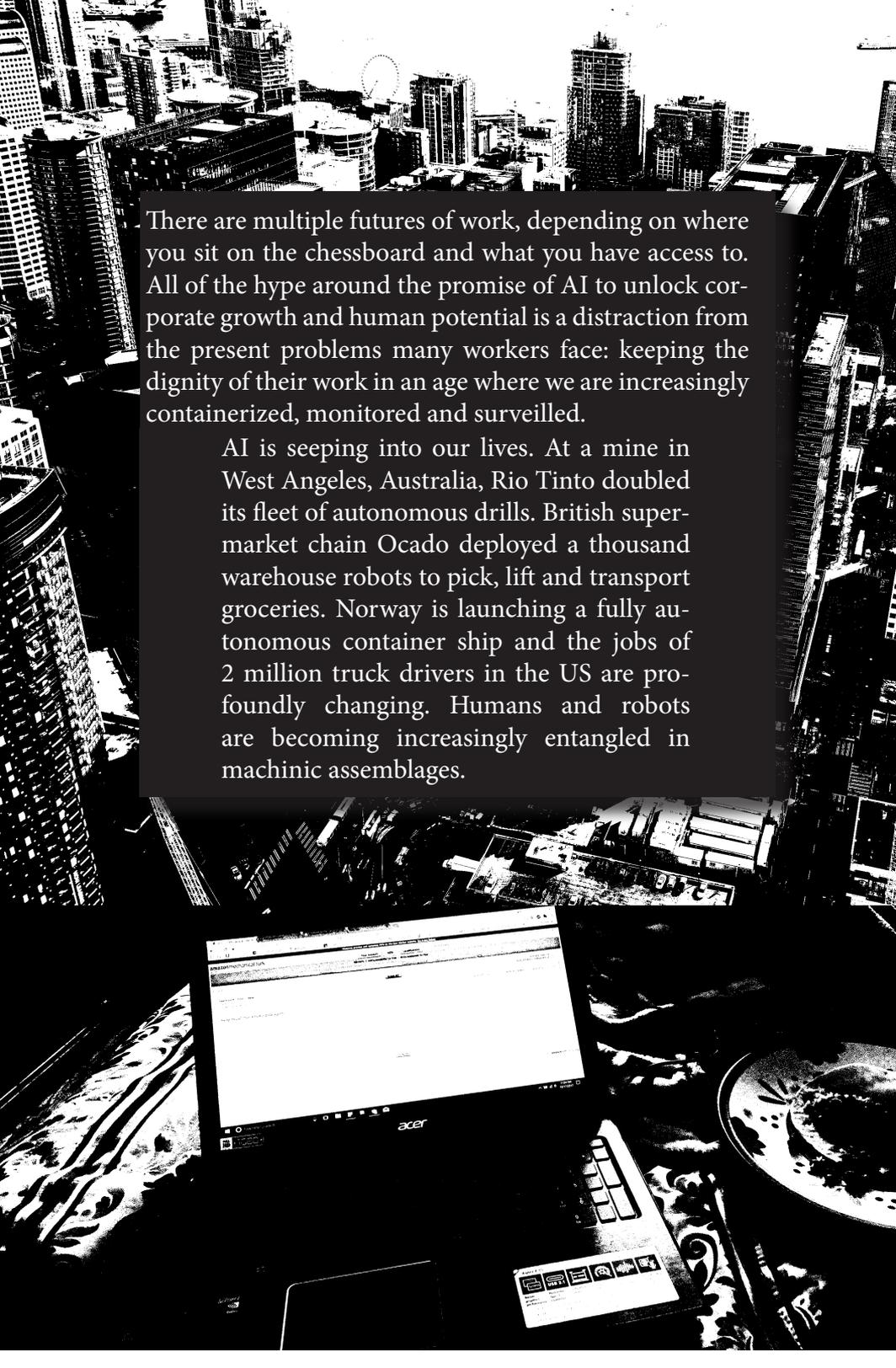


futures of work

a zine by

AMAZING INDUSTRIES



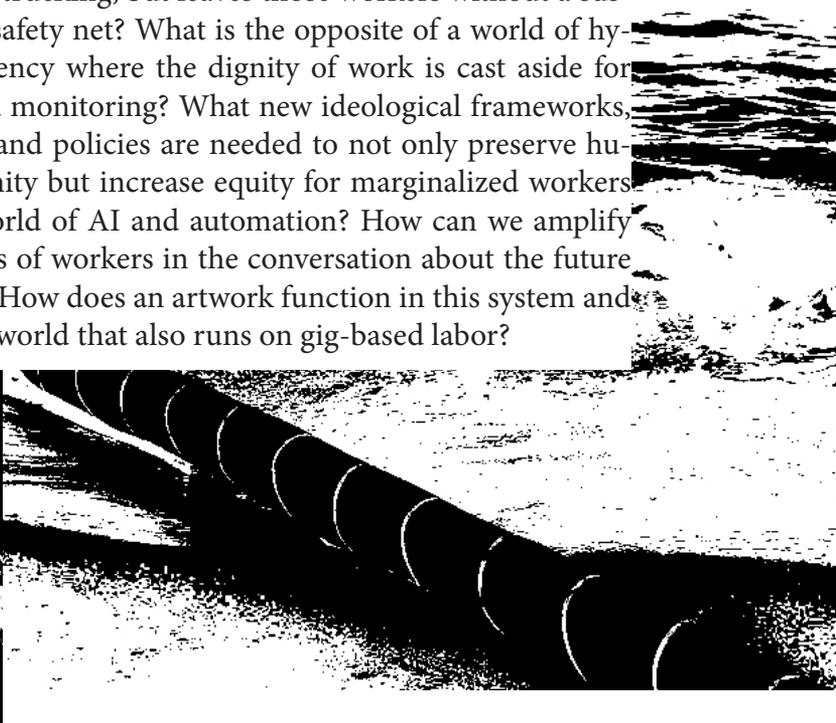
An aerial, high-angle photograph of a dense city skyline, likely New York City, featuring numerous skyscrapers and a prominent Ferris wheel in the distance. The image is in black and white. In the foreground, a laptop is open on a patterned surface, with its screen displaying a web browser interface. The laptop has the 'acer' logo visible on the bezel. The overall composition suggests a connection between urban life and technology.

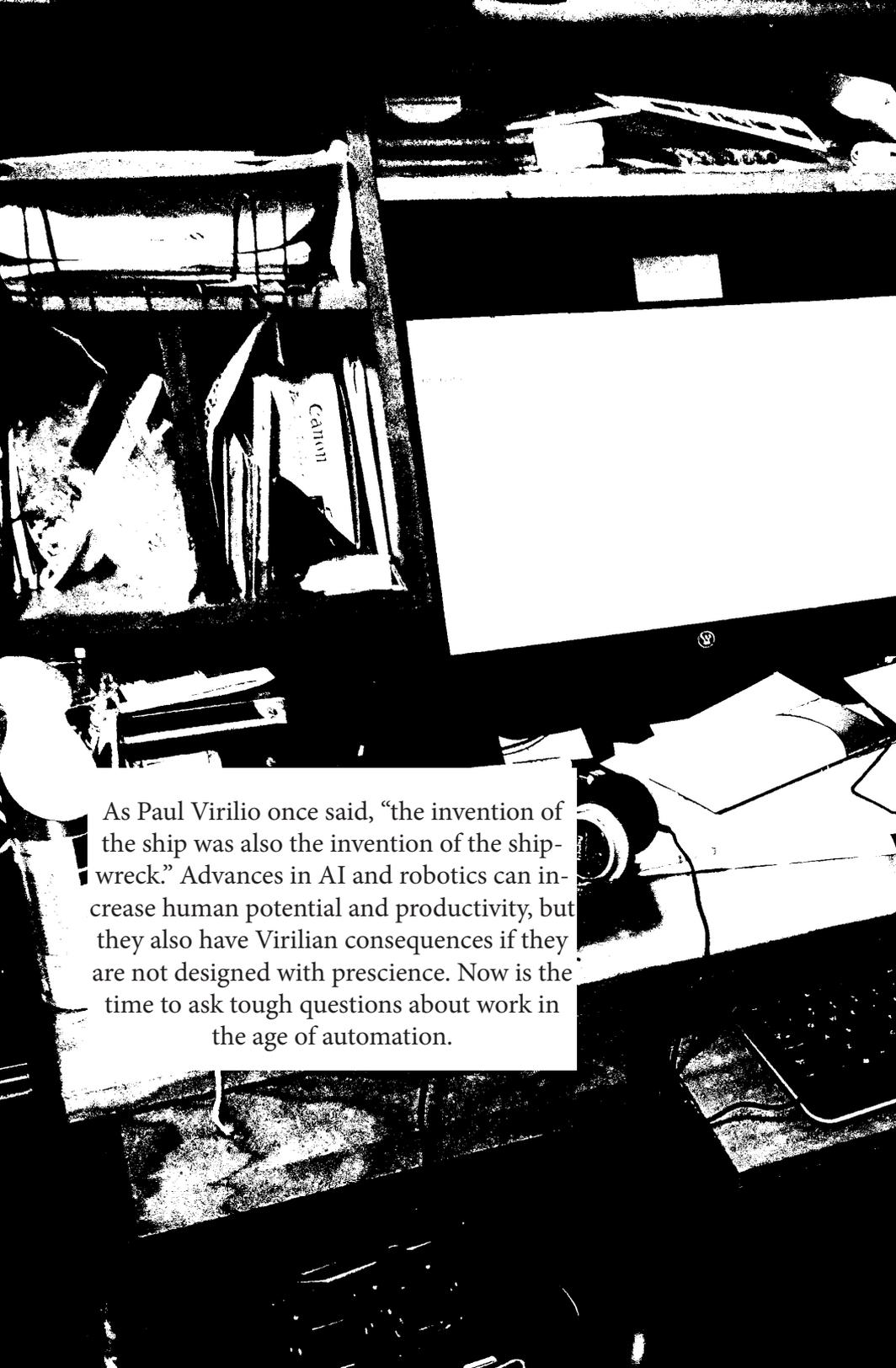
There are multiple futures of work, depending on where you sit on the chessboard and what you have access to. All of the hype around the promise of AI to unlock corporate growth and human potential is a distraction from the present problems many workers face: keeping the dignity of their work in an age where we are increasingly containerized, monitored and surveilled.

AI is seeping into our lives. At a mine in West Angeles, Australia, Rio Tinto doubled its fleet of autonomous drills. British supermarket chain Ocado deployed a thousand warehouse robots to pick, lift and transport groceries. Norway is launching a fully autonomous container ship and the jobs of 2 million truck drivers in the US are profoundly changing. Humans and robots are becoming increasingly entangled in machinic assemblages.

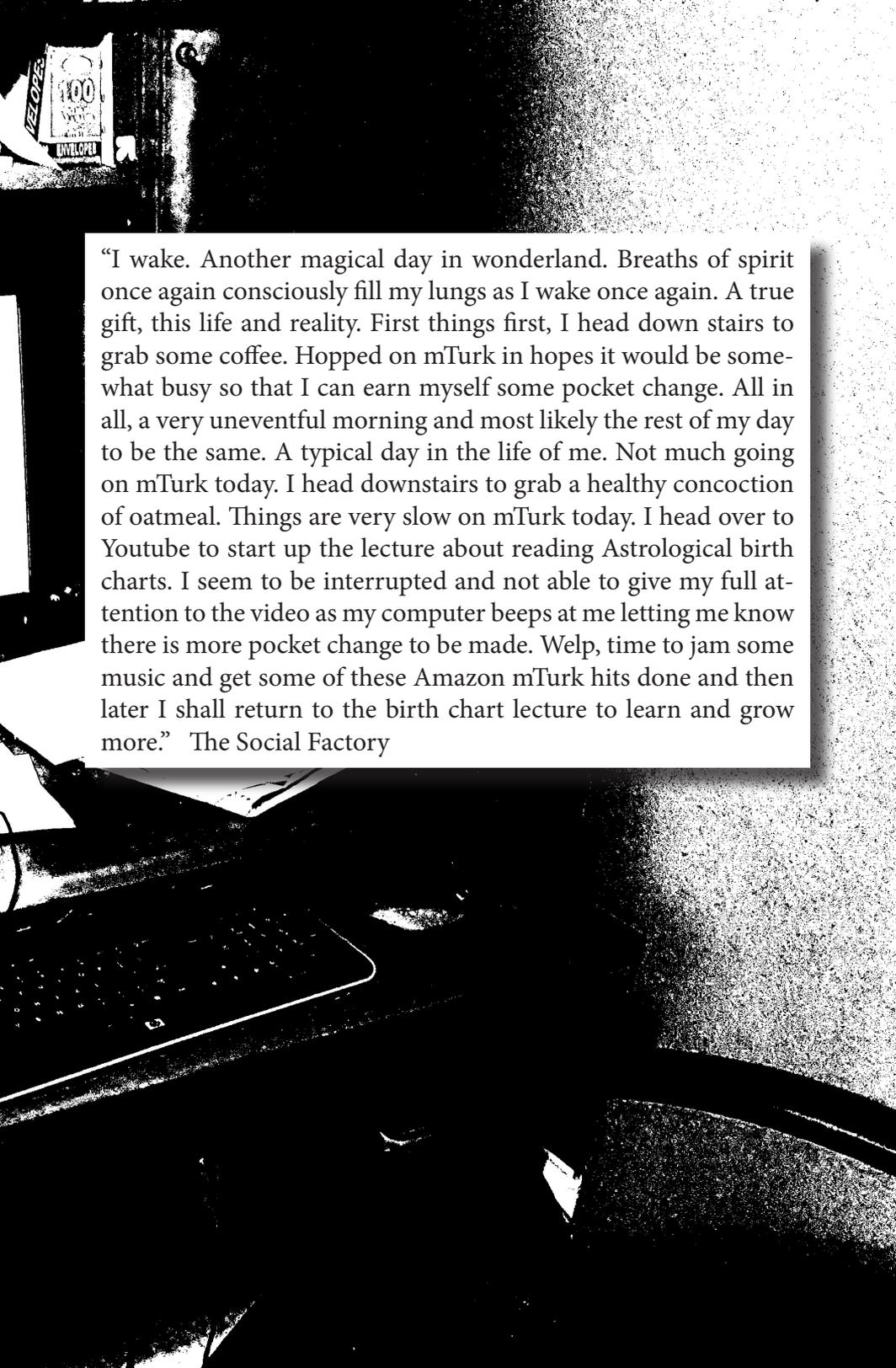


We seek to better understand the system we are working within. We aim to critically examine the reality of a global, technological system that is powered by low wage human labor, non-renewable resources, economic models and production and distribution apparatuses. We embrace the speed, accumulation, disruption, fragmentation, transience, incompleteness and absurdity of this system to best signify and reclaim space within it. How are creative technology disruptions transforming jobs? What value do we associate with automation if it eliminates lower wage tough jobs, like trucking, but leaves those workers without a sustainable safety net? What is the opposite of a world of hyper-efficiency where the dignity of work is cast aside for increased monitoring? What new ideological frameworks, symbols and policies are needed to not only preserve human dignity but increase equity for marginalized workers in the world of AI and automation? How can we amplify the voices of workers in the conversation about the future of work? How does an artwork function in this system and in an art world that also runs on gig-based labor?

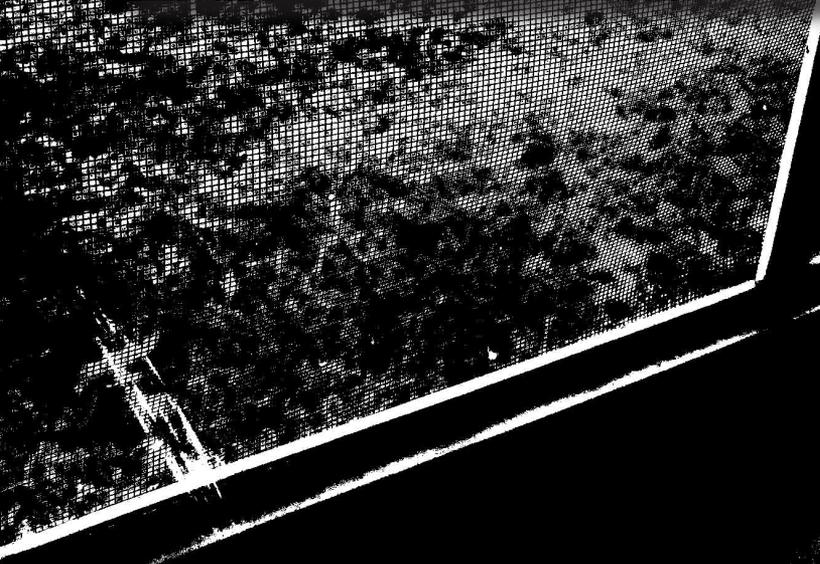
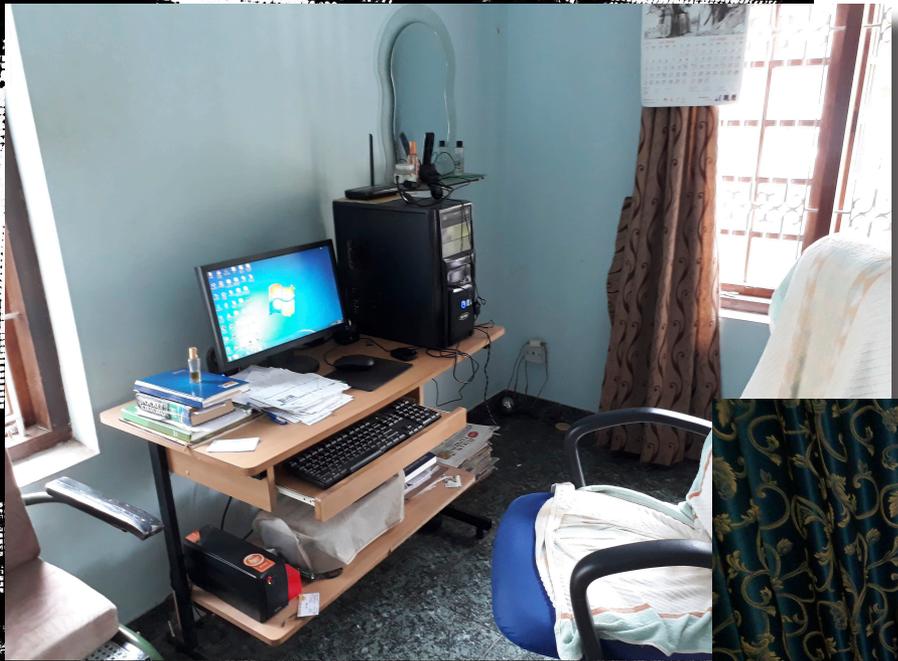




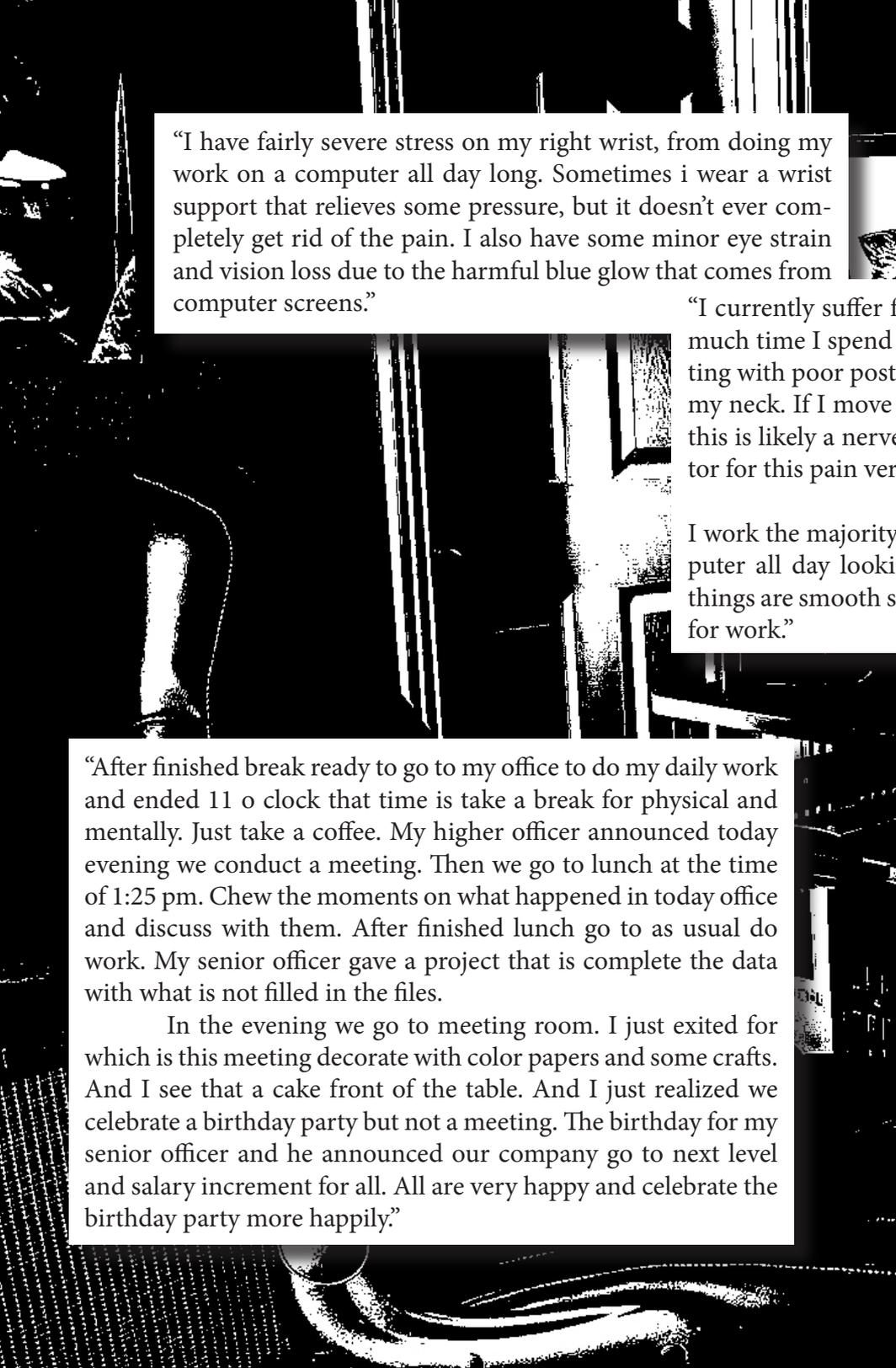
As Paul Virilio once said, “the invention of the ship was also the invention of the shipwreck.” Advances in AI and robotics can increase human potential and productivity, but they also have Virilian consequences if they are not designed with prescience. Now is the time to ask tough questions about work in the age of automation.



“I wake. Another magical day in wonderland. Breaths of spirit once again consciously fill my lungs as I wake once again. A true gift, this life and reality. First things first, I head down stairs to grab some coffee. Hopped on mTurk in hopes it would be somewhat busy so that I can earn myself some pocket change. All in all, a very uneventful morning and most likely the rest of my day to be the same. A typical day in the life of me. Not much going on mTurk today. I head downstairs to grab a healthy concoction of oatmeal. Things are very slow on mTurk today. I head over to Youtube to start up the lecture about reading Astrological birth charts. I seem to be interrupted and not able to give my full attention to the video as my computer beeps at me letting me know there is more pocket change to be made. Welp, time to jam some music and get some of these Amazon mTurk hits done and then later I shall return to the birth chart lecture to learn and grow more.” The Social Factory







“I have fairly severe stress on my right wrist, from doing my work on a computer all day long. Sometimes i wear a wrist support that relieves some pressure, but it doesn't ever completely get rid of the pain. I also have some minor eye strain and vision loss due to the harmful blue glow that comes from computer screens.”

“I currently suffer from neck pain. I spend a lot of time sitting at my desk with poor posture, which is contributing to my neck pain. If I move my neck, this is likely a nerve issue. I have a doctor for this pain very often.”

I work the majority of my time on a computer all day looking at screens. Things are smooth sailing for work.”

“After finished break ready to go to my office to do my daily work and ended 11 o clock that time is take a break for physical and mentally. Just take a coffee. My higher officer announced today evening we conduct a meeting. Then we go to lunch at the time of 1:25 pm. Chew the moments on what happened in today office and discuss with them. After finished lunch go to as usual do work. My senior officer gave a project that is complete the data with what is not filled in the files.

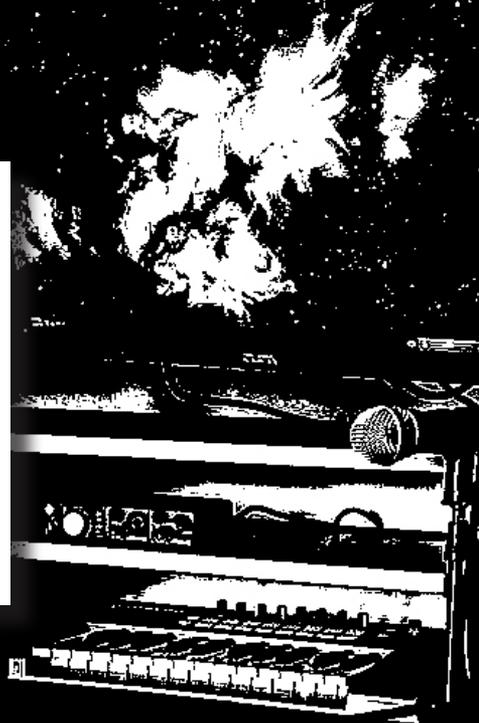
In the evening we go to meeting room. I just exited for which is this meeting decorate with color papers and some crafts. And I see that a cake front of the table. And I just realized we celebrate a birthday party but not a meeting. The birthday for my senior officer and he announced our company go to next level and salary increment for all. All are very happy and celebrate the birthday party more happily.”

The social factory

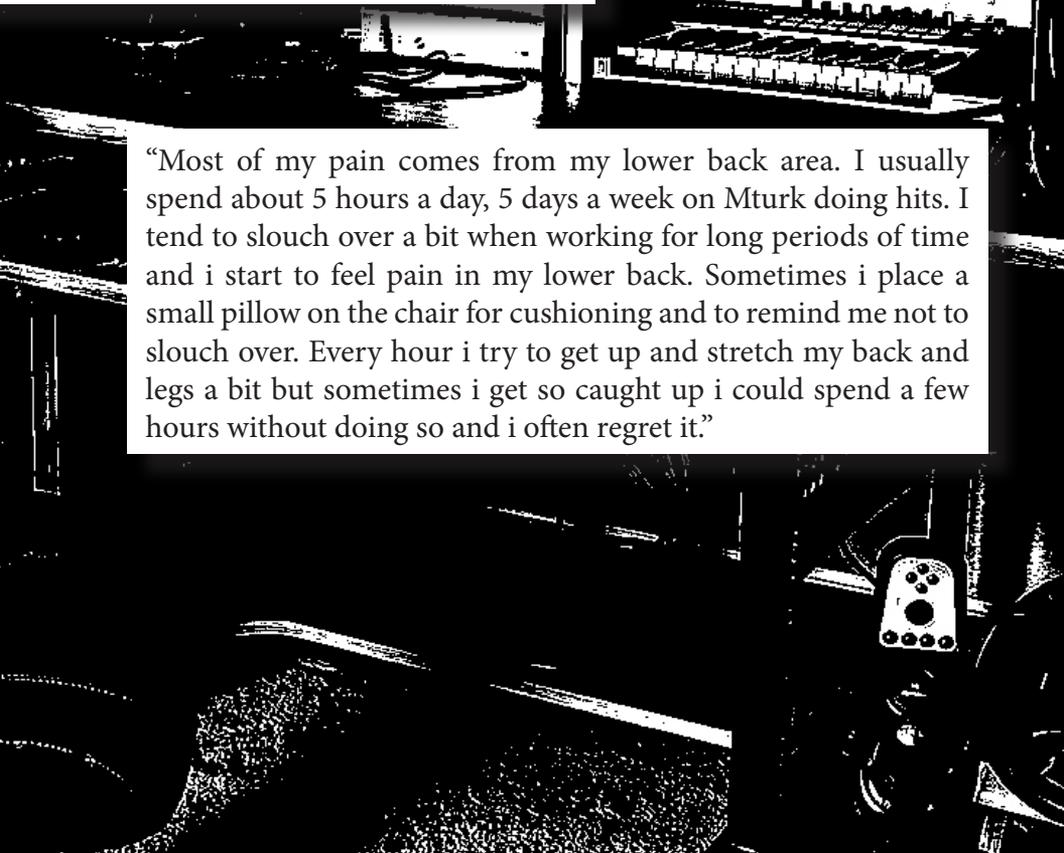


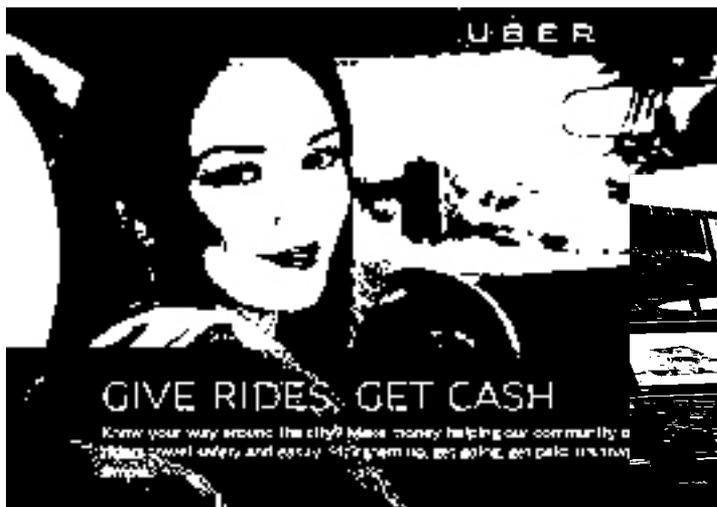
from neck pain. It is likely this is due to how working on a computer, much of it spent sitting. I have issues with the range in motion in sitting. When I sit in a certain direction I can feel some pain, like my neck is being pinched. I intend to visit a chiropractor soon.

Most of my time on Mturk. I essentially sit on a computer for work. Once I actually find the work I am doing, it is not so boring, but it certainly gets frustrating looking

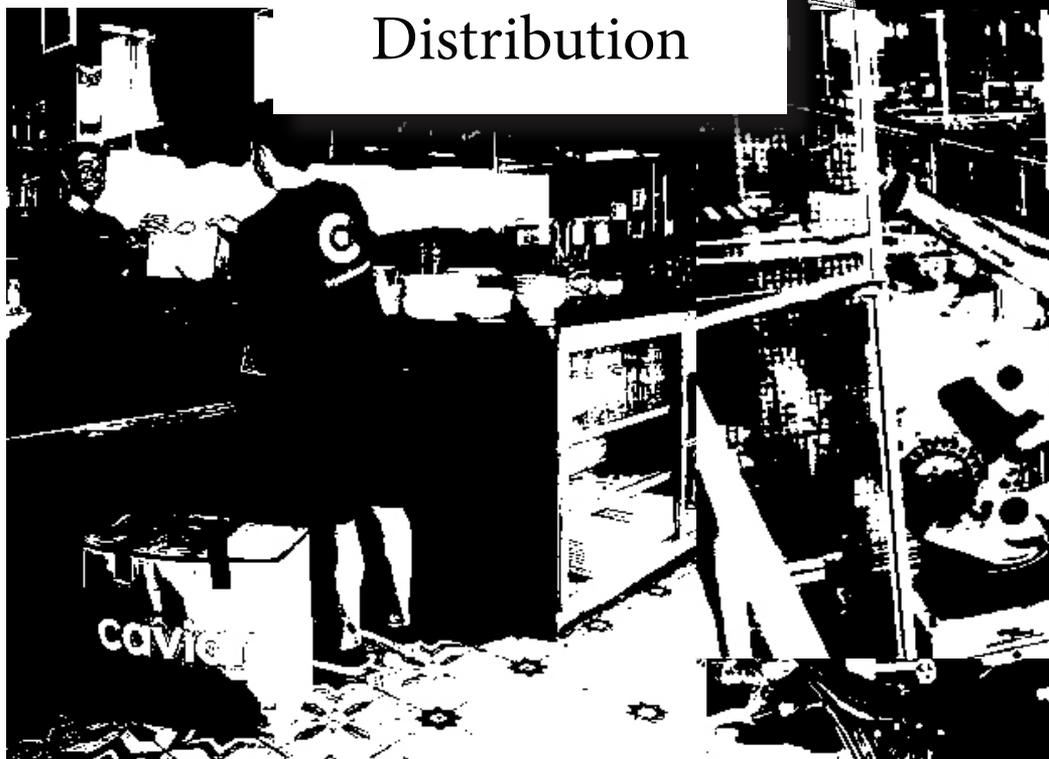


“Most of my pain comes from my lower back area. I usually spend about 5 hours a day, 5 days a week on Mturk doing hits. I tend to slouch over a bit when working for long periods of time and i start to feel pain in my lower back. Sometimes i place a small pillow on the chair for cushioning and to remind me not to slouch over. Every hour i try to get up and stretch my back and legs a bit but sometimes i get so caught up i could spend a few hours without doing so and i often regret it.”





Production & Distribution

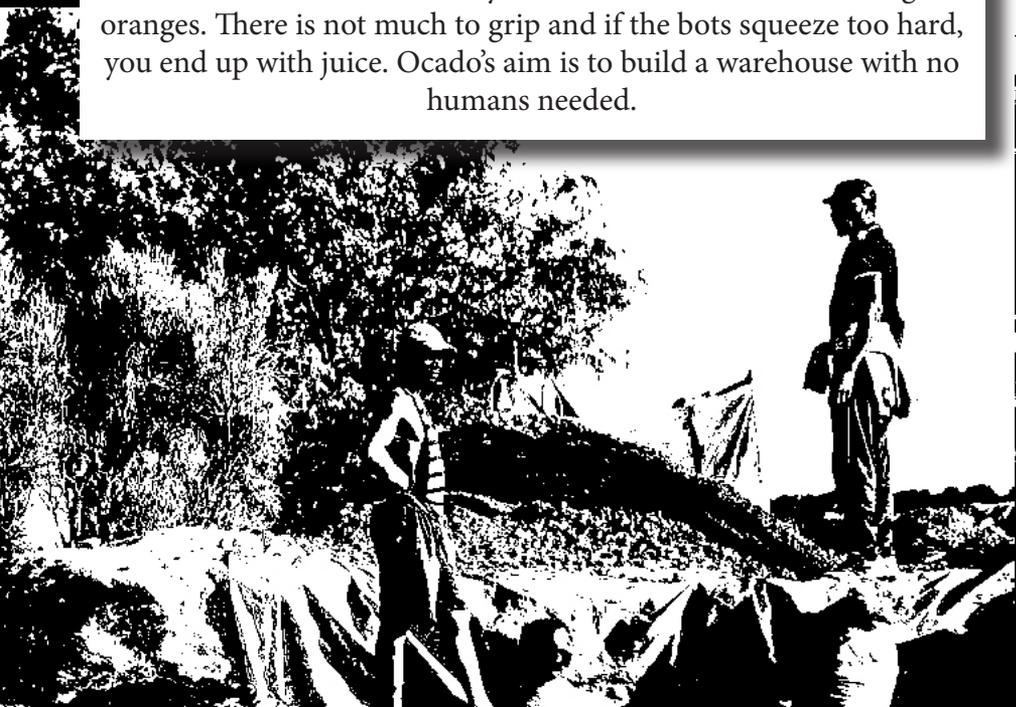


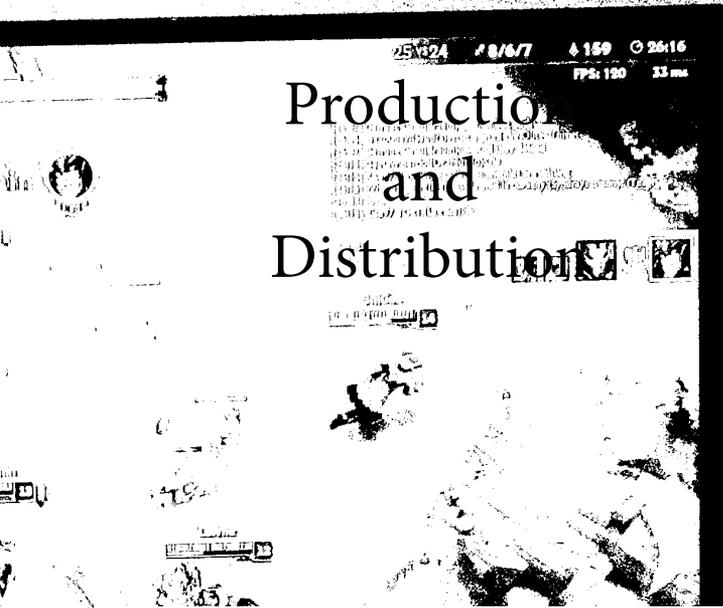




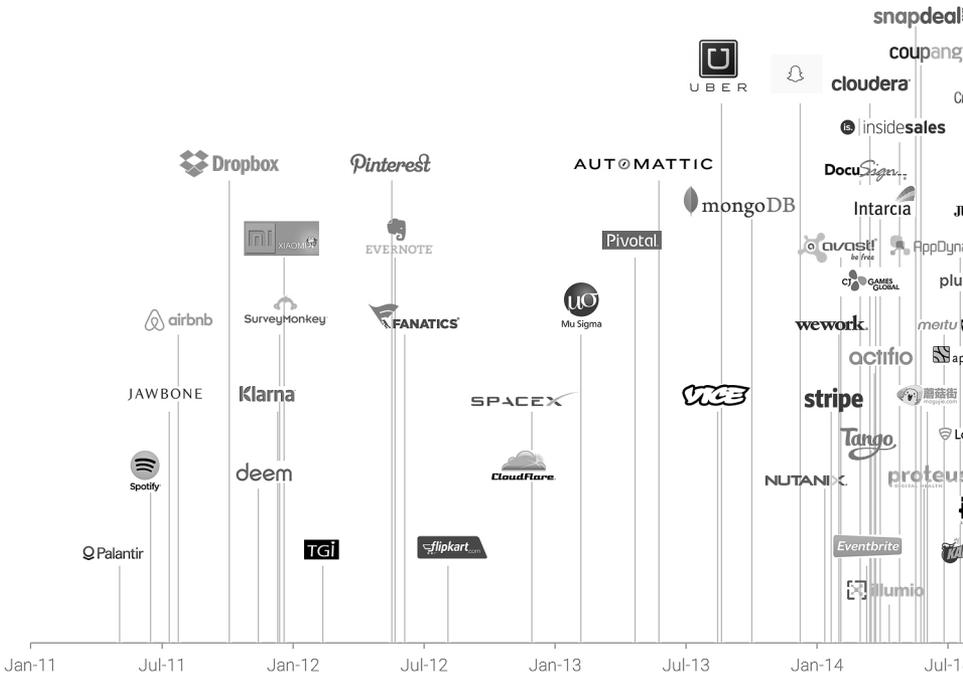
Young & Rubicam

British supermarket chain Ocado deploys a thousand warehouse robots to pick, lift and transport groceries. These smaller, flexible robots are able to work alongside humans in a choreographed dance. Humans pack and unpack goods and the bots sort and arrange them. They process 3.5 million items or around 65,000 orders every week. The bots can also huddle and form teams when needed in the warehouse. The once-fixed assembly line has given way to flexible, fluid and adaptive human-machine teams. If any one bot breaks down, it can quickly be replaced. Human repairers work on the periphery of the warehouse fixing broken bots. Despite all the advances in AI, Ocado says the robots can't deal with a bag of oranges. There is not much to grip and if the bots squeeze too hard, you end up with juice. Ocado's aim is to build a warehouse with no humans needed.

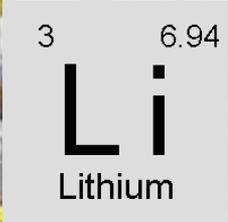


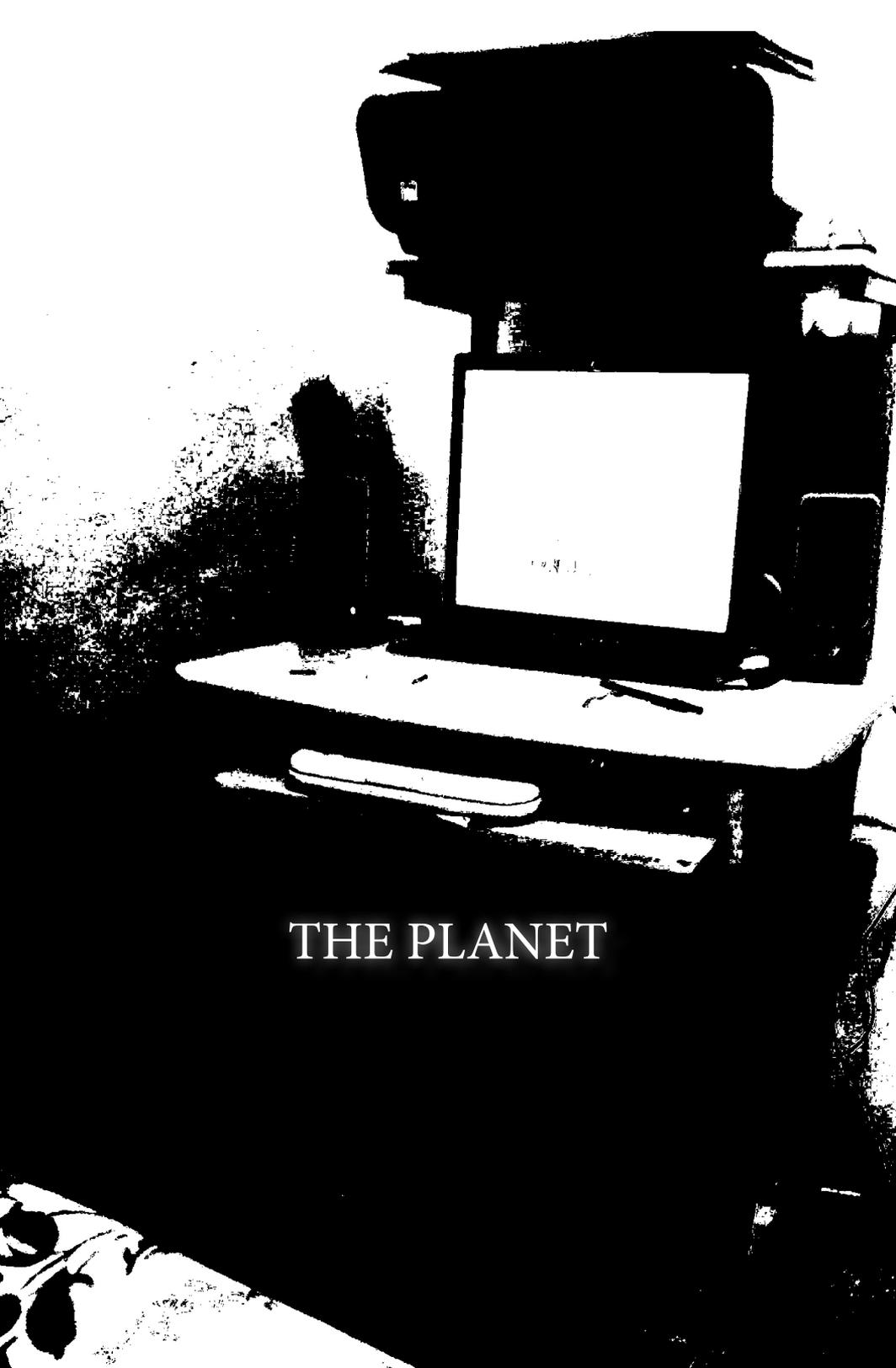


THE INCREASINGLY CROWDED UNICORN CLUB
PRIVATE UNICORNS SINCE 2011



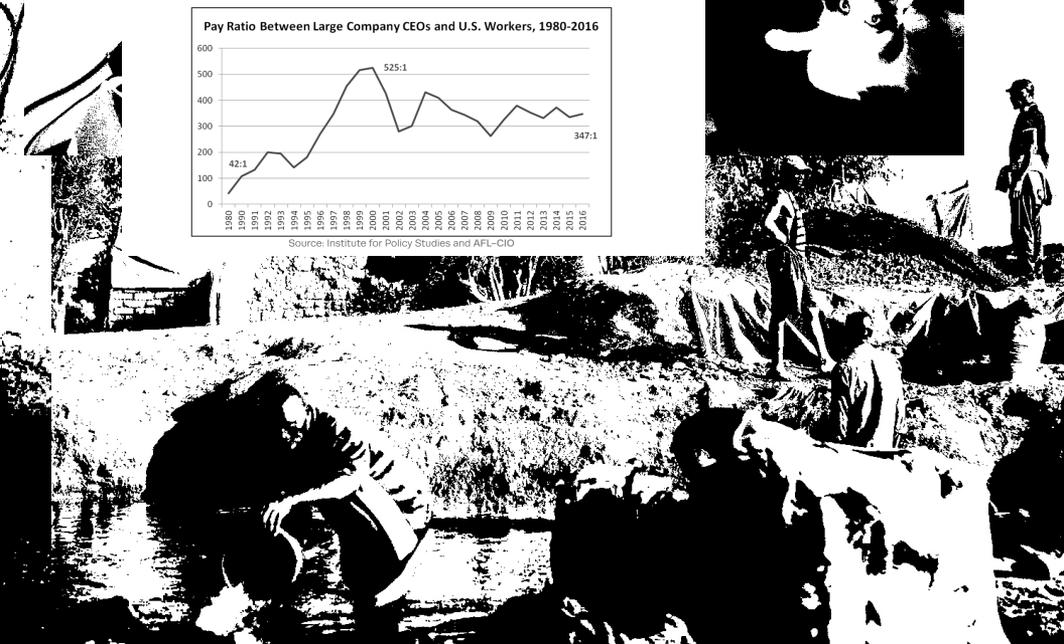
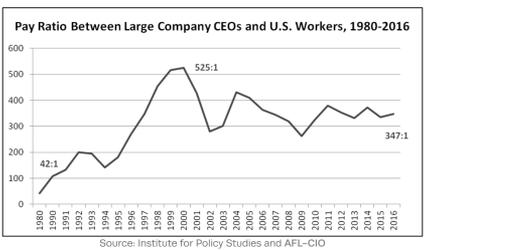
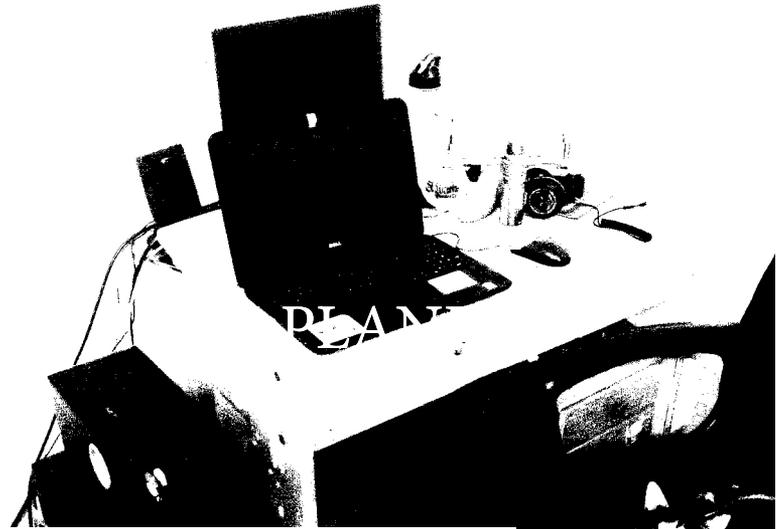




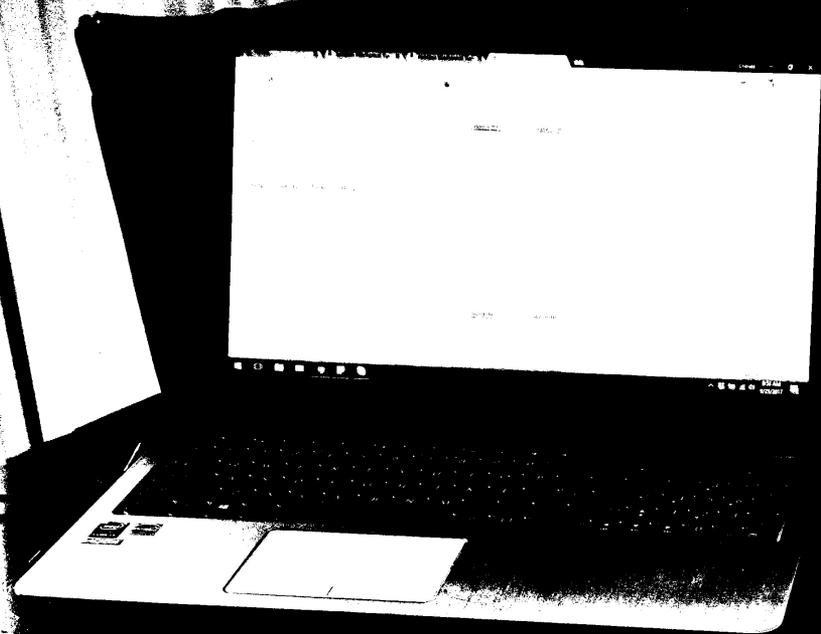


THE PLANET

At a mine in West Angeles, Australia, Rio Tinto is doubling its fleet of autonomous drills. The goal is to boost productivity of its iron ore operations in the Western Australian region. The drills are controlled remotely by operators in Perth, about 1,500 kilometers away. The company says the drills can operate more safely, accurately and consistently.



THE PLANET

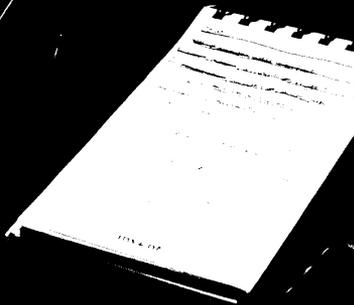


In 1973, the artist Robert Smithson submitted The Bingham Canyon Reclamation Project, a site-specific design to reimagine the mine as a work of land art to the Kennecott Copper Corporation. Rio Tinto purchased the rights to the mine in 1989. The first digging at Bingham Canyon Mine began in 1906 with financing from Guggenheim Exploration, which later founded the Guggenheim museum.





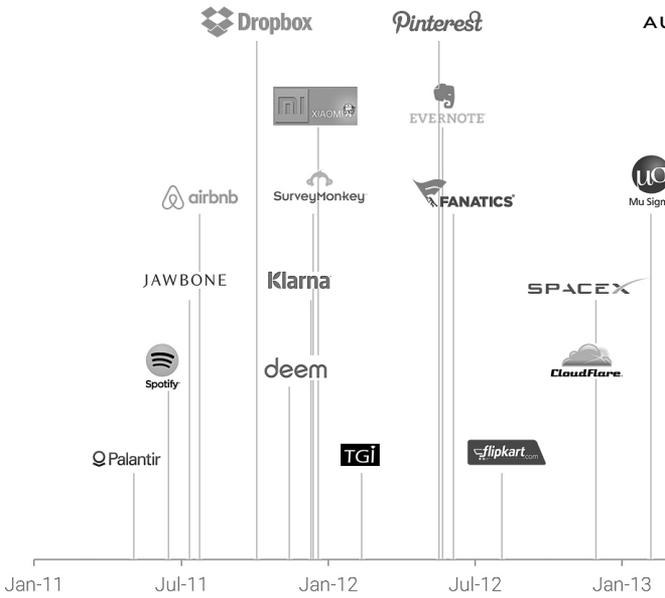
THE PLANET





THE INCREASINGLY CROWDED UNICORN

PRIVATE UNICORNS SINCE 2011



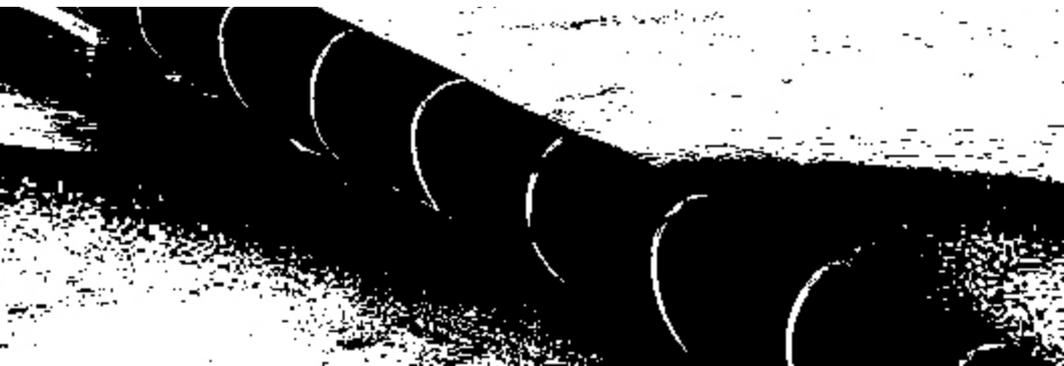
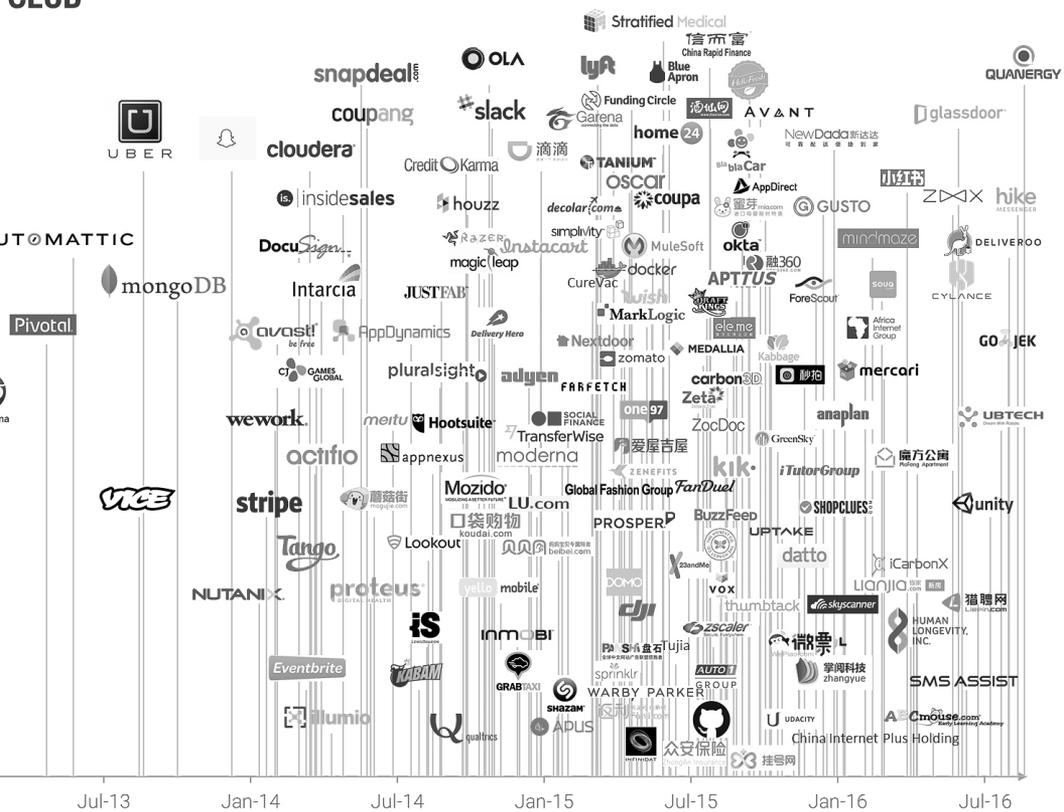
www.cbinsights.com

The Internet runs on cables under the sea. Data Centers take up more energy than the entire airline industry. The future of work runs on tech which runs on the planet. How do we sustain this?





CLUB



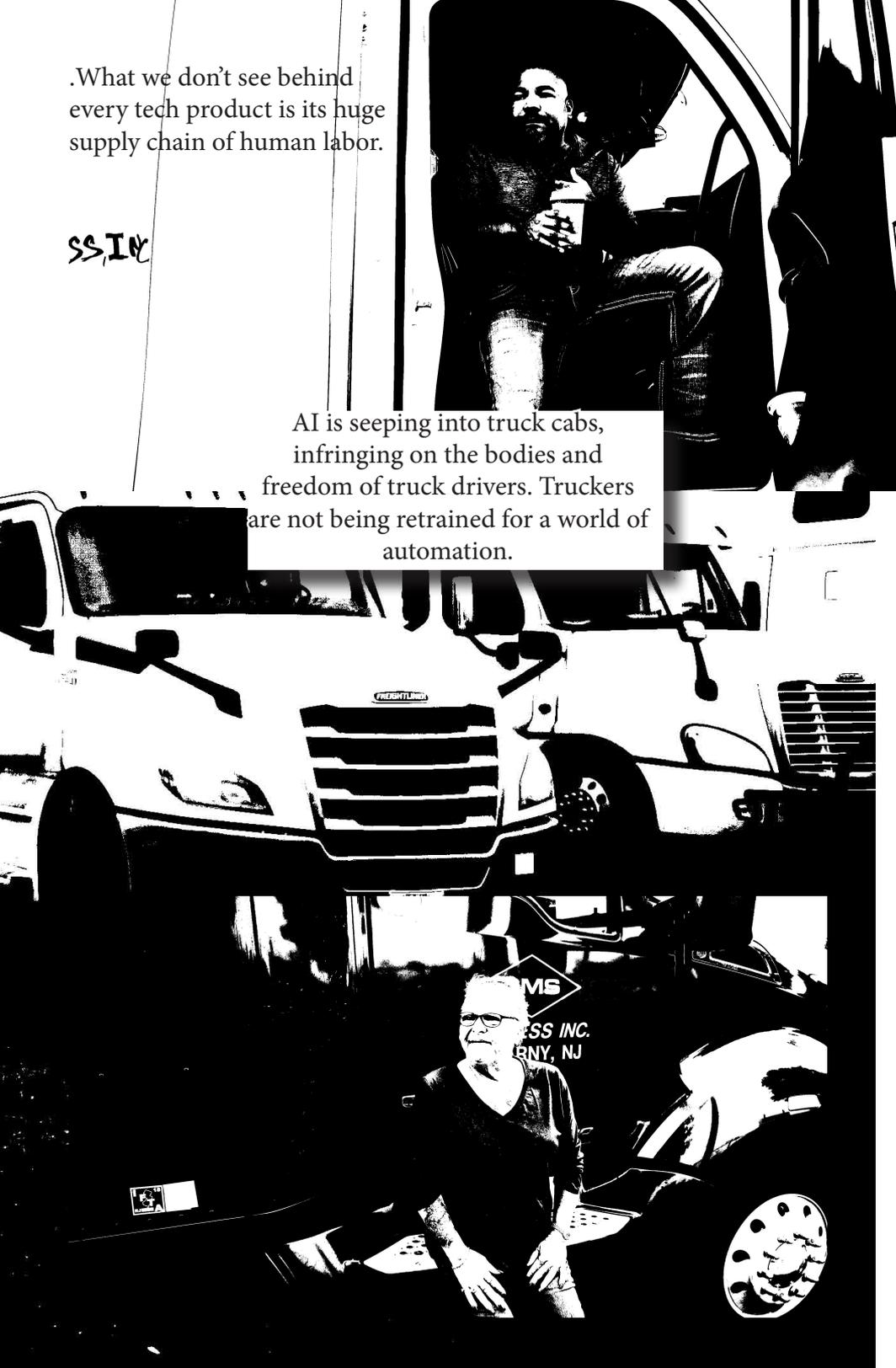


Humans + robots are entangled in an ecosystem of picking, packing and delivery - from robots in warehouses to riders who are alerted to jobs on the Internet.

.What we don't see behind every tech product is its huge supply chain of human labor.

SS, INC.

AI is seeping into truck cabs, infringing on the bodies and freedom of truck drivers. Truckers are not being retrained for a world of automation.



MS
SS INC.
RNY, NJ

< (786) 509-7495



Wednesday, November 14, 2018

8:52 AM hi (B)

Everyone knows this job is not what it used to be, right?

8:52 AM

8:52 AM i think so (B)

Don't people know we're working our asses off to make you sure you get the stuff you need when you need it?

8:52 AM

8:52 AM it is not top of mind (B)

LOL 8:52 AM

Keep up the good work! 8:53 AM

8:54 AM thanks (B)

I would love to go home but after this job, I have to go to my second one.

Ok, well, what brings you here today?

8:54 AM

📎 Enter message

😊 SEND

A SLEEVELESS MAN
IS A FREE MAN
INDEED.

DRIVING A CONCRETE TRUCK

It's just you, the open road and the wind in your sleeveless hair.

Let's Meet. Call 12201 240-3367 to apply.

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49

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Lower

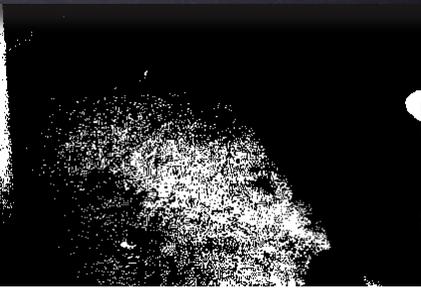
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2014

Production
and
Distribution









Human + Robot

amazing.industries



PORTS FRANCS ET ZONES DE LIBRE ZONE



We are living in times where technology and the rise of AI has both the power to open up new possibilities and simultaneously monitor, surveil and exploit workers.

OK

Profession

We are living in magical times. Times made possible by smartphones and Cloud uploads. Times where technology and the rise of AI has both the power to open up new possibilities and exploit. There are over a billion people around the world connected to a central brain through smartphones and access to the Cloud. The access to the Internet and the rise of AI has opened up a field of new models and possibilities. Companies like Uber – which live off the sharing economy and do not make or sell goods – are now incredibly valuable. They can do things that in the past required the infrastructure of much larger companies. Uber also simultaneously pays engineers six-figure salaries and monitors hundreds of thousands of drivers who working in financial uncertainty.



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Labels

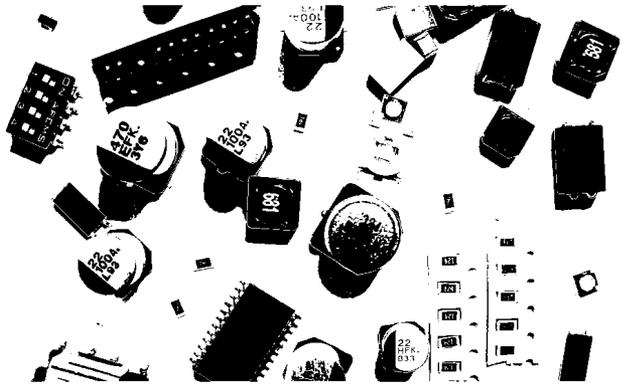
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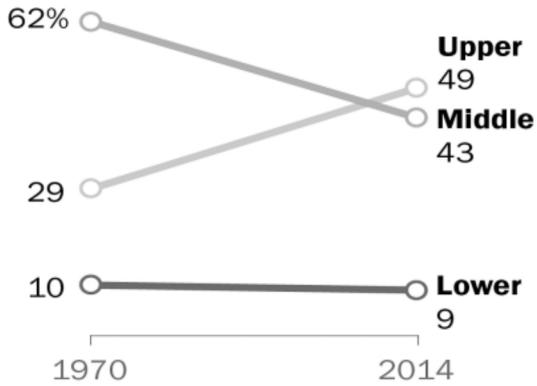
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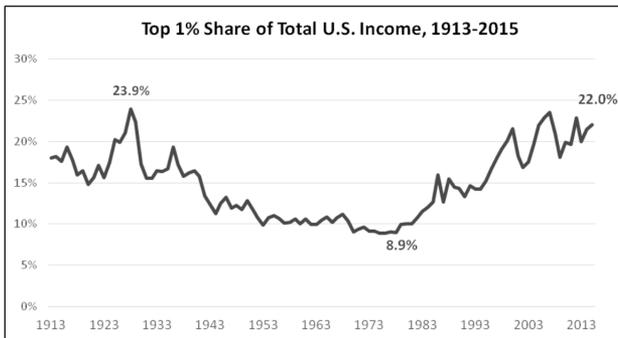
Draw box Draw poly

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Source: Pew Research Center, 2015.



Source: Emmanuel Saez, UC Berkeley

This rise in productivity and efficiency has consequences. Economists widely believe that automation will further polarize the labor market, exacerbating the separation between high income, skilled jobs and low paying, rote work.

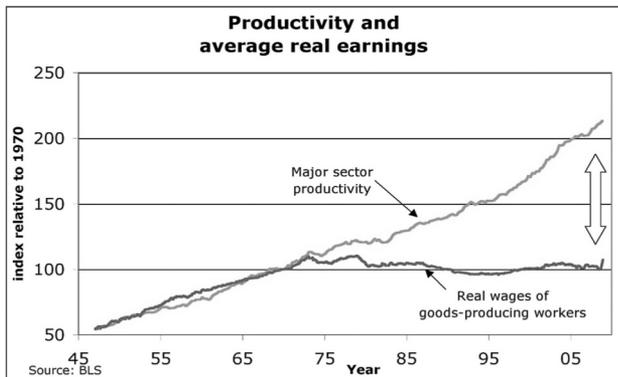
Ocado's theory is to keep disrupting itself - and its technology - before competitors can. This a common idea in Silicon Valley. What if creative technology disruptions are obliterating jobs, exploiting freelance workers, and implementing confusing algorithms? What is a world of hyper-efficiency in which humans are cast aside for machine prioritized decisions? What is the opposite form of a hyper-efficient automated warehouse or mine?



Source: Congressional Budget Office, "Trends in Family Wealth, 1989-2013"

We need to prevent the present problems of wages, unemployment and inequality from being perpetuated in the future. For example, worker wages have been largely stagnant for the last 40 years while productivity has skyrocketed. It is no wonder why there is a narrative promoted in the sharing economy and in contemporary society that access is more popular than ownership.

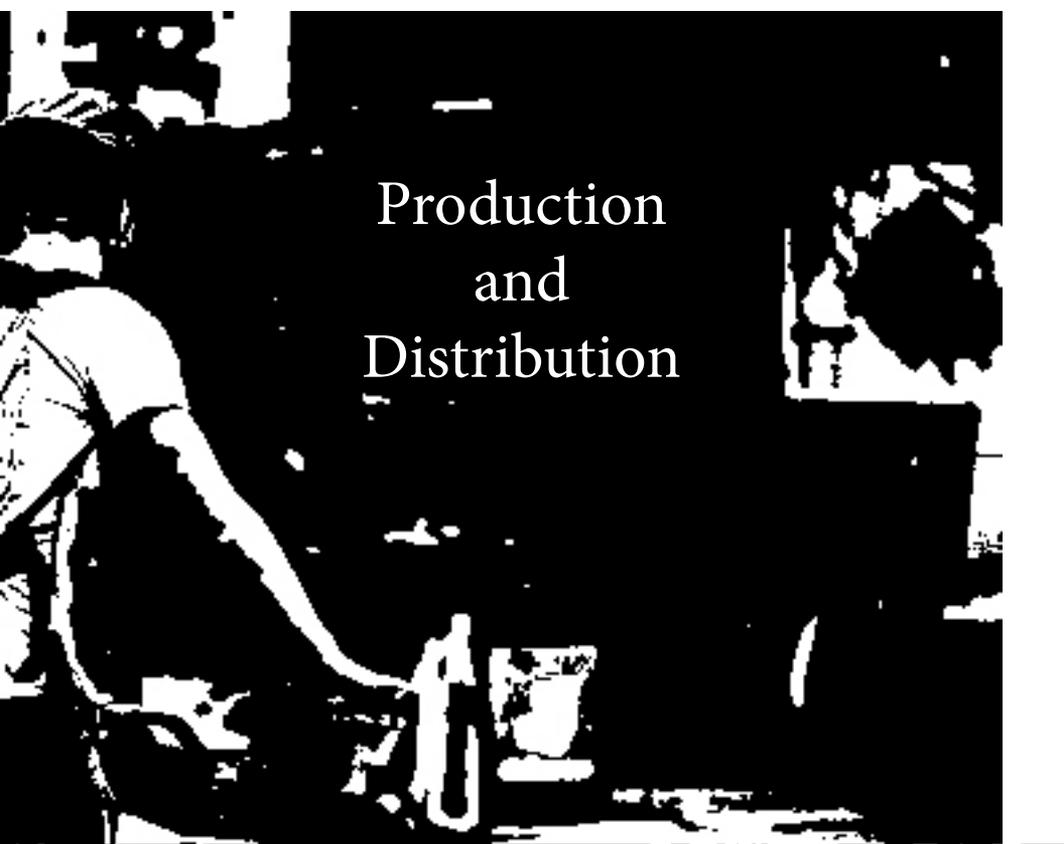
Economic Models





"I feel very tired since I woke up very early to do surveys and later on I still have to go to my full time job, but at the same time I'm very grateful that there is a way with which I can complement my income while staying at home with my wife and dogs. In fact, my wife even brought me breakfast in bed this morning, which was very sweet of her and reminds me of what I lucky man I am to have a partner who understands why sometimes I am so tired and can't give her all the attention I would like. I'm planning on definitely making up for this with her upcoming birthday though."



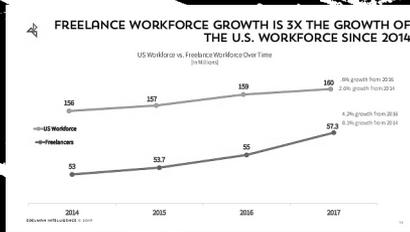


Production and Distribution



Some attempts to tackle the issue of bias in machine learning systems only complicate them, such as workers performing low-cost, marginalized tasks to make AI more intelligent. On Amazon's Mechanical Turk platform, gig workers perform segmented tasks, such as classifying images to train machine-learning algorithms. The average worker on Mechanical Turk makes around \$2 per hour, and is essentially training their machine-learning replacements. Amazon has found a way to train its own algorithms, and offers the crowd-as-a-service to others in what Ayhan Aytes calls an “assembly line of cognitive labor.”

We are living in a sea of data. Our own data is gathered everywhere we go, physically and digitally. Horizontal digital platforms have become proprietary, global, surveillance mechanisms. Uber drivers are recruited and managed by algorithms on their smartphones.



An aerial, high-angle photograph of a city, showing a mix of modern and older architecture. The image is slightly blurred, giving it a sense of movement or a wide field of view. The colors are muted, with a lot of greys, browns, and muted blues. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

The social factory

Every job is being transformed in some way. A study by Oxford University predicts that 40% of all jobs will be reduced by 2040. Work in contemporary society is not only about income, but it also contributes to our professional identity and emotional well being. As work undergoes a transformation, whether it be in a warehouse, mine or high rise office, how will our relationship to work change? What's clear is we will be further choreographed with technology and processes. And, there will be new skills to be learned. Who will ask AI questions to gain the insights we need from them so they are not black boxes? Who will train AI agents towards productive outcomes? Who will help us imagine new models of work in an AI world that not only improve productivity, but have social value?

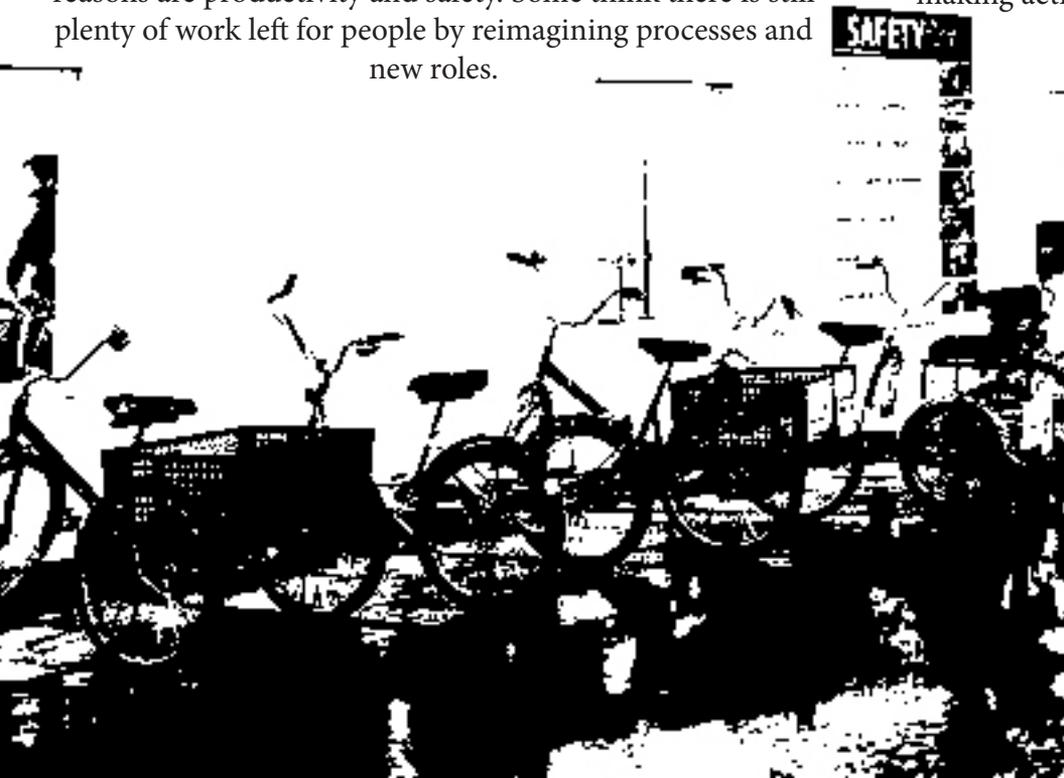
In *The Soul at Work*, Bifo Berardi discusses how we face new forms of alienation, not just physically, but also through media and the Internet. Every bit of our material wealth is transformed into capital.

WORK

The factory has been the model of automation for many centuries. One of the first films ever made captured workers leaving the Lumiere factory in Lyon France in 1895. Today, warehouses are dominated by robots. In an Amazon warehouse, Kiva robots autonomously transport goods to human pickers, who then select the right products for various orders.

Factories will continue to automate everything. The main reasons are productivity and safety. Some think there is still plenty of work left for people by reimagining processes and new roles.

This type of automation in supply chains becomes a double-edged sword, making it difficult to



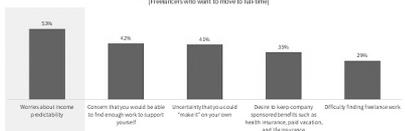
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f warehouse automation will help other parts of supply
ome more “intelligent”. AI will predict future scenarios
ivities like demand planning much easier. (795 million
people don't have enough food).

hard. have fun. make history.

THE TOP THING HOLDING MOONLIGHTERS BACK FROM FREELANCING FULL-TIME IS INCOME UNPREDICTABILITY

What's holding you back from quitting your primary job to work independently?
(If freelancers who want to move to full time)



Source: The Freelance Survey, 2019. The survey was conducted by the Freelance Union, a labor union for freelancers, and the results are based on the responses of 1,000 freelancers who are currently working full-time. The survey was conducted from March 15 to March 22, 2019.

EXCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES



U.S. WORKERS SHARE THE SAME CONCERNS REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY FREELANCE OR NOT

How would you rank each of the following issues in terms of your level of concern? (Showing as issue selected as one of their top 3 concerns)

4 of the top 5 issues for Freelancers and Non-Freelancers are the same, but differ on just one of their top 5 issues...

Freelancers

- Unpredictable income
- Access to affordable healthcare
- Debt
- Being able to put enough money into savings

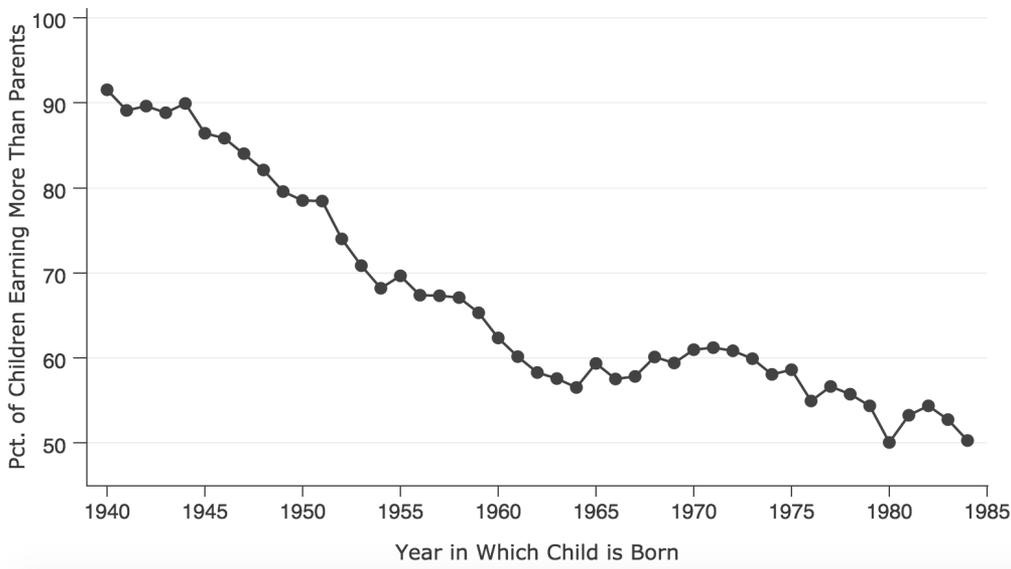
Non-Freelancers

- High taxation rates

RESEARCH BY POLYGRAPH © 2014

The Fading American Dream

Percent of Children Earning More than their Parents, by Year of Birth



Source: <https://inequality.stanford.edu/news-events/center-news/fading-american-dream>

AMAZING INDUSTRIES is a research and development startup created by artist, Brett Wallace. The company's vision is to demystify the future of work. The ideological company is an ongoing artwork which aims to archive real world and immaterial moments and spaces within accelerated capitalism and advocate for a better future for workers. This zine was made for the exhibition AMAZING INDUSTRIES @ Satellite Art Show in Miami, December 6-9th, 2018. Special thanks go to the digital workers, platform riders and truckers who contributed their stories through interviews and contributions, Karen Levy for sharing her knowledge on AI and the trucking industry, Maral Satari for filming, Andrea Sisson for design support on the zine, and Silas Von Morisse gallery and NEW INC for continued support.

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The internet was once a unicorn

Algorithmic confusion

Things move so fast they are invisible



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