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FAKE NEWS POETRY  
WORKSHOPS as RADICAL  
DIGITAL MEDIA  
LITERACY: "IT'S for the  
THING WE'RE NOT YET"

Urgent Possibilities  
Writings on Feminist Poetics & Emergent Pedagogies

eohippus labs

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*I have a terrible story  
about social media  
SPIT IT OUT  
Lying is easier on the Internet  
Does your body panic?*

I have a terrible story  
about social media.

I AM WORKING WITH OTHERS

to address lying online

through a sprawling project of public intellectualism and engaged citizenship  
in a time of confusion.

Does your body panic?

*What if we  
Aboard for  
Gentle truths?  
For now.*

Fake News Poetry Workshops as Radical Digital Media Literacy:  
"It's for the thing we're not yet."  
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*Urgent Possibilities  
Writings on Feminist Poetics & Emergent Pedagogues*

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Over the 1<sup>st</sup> 100 days of the Trump administration—  
January 20, 2017 to April 29, 2017—  
I aimed for something  
much harder.

My pledge\* on February 18, 2017:

To disrupt the new President's First 100 days by posting #100truths-  
fakenews with linked actions, analyses, and organizations committed to  
digital media literacy. In so doing, I will produce a 100 point digital  
primer to counter the purposeful confusion, lack of trust, and  
disorientation of the current administration's relation to media, offering  
instead a steady, reasoned set of resources seeking clarity and justice.

Over those 100 days, I built a mighty digital media literacy primer online  
that:

- Held and developed my own thinking
- Got reflexive at around 50<sup>+</sup>
- Got dark at around 75<sup>+</sup>
- Mapped Trump's actions and 35 people's<sup>+</sup> reactions
- Was a daily writing practice

I learned many hard truths through the process:

fake news r us<sup>+</sup>; we are implicated by, produce, and circulate this crisis whenever we study, teach, or try to fix it.

virality is virility<sup>+</sup>; a potent mix of internet-fueled falsity, masculine grandiosity, and resulting real-world bellicosity undergirds fake news and our efforts to understand it.

art answers to fake questions<sup>+</sup>; departures from evidence-based, indexically-linked practices into realms of truth-telling verifiable by different logics might get us out of the rabbit-hole where we get redirected.

our internet truths trump media lies<sup>+</sup>; we must name, share, and honor our own lived experiences within social media as another form of honesty in desperate times. Let's do this first offline, together where we live, work, struggle or learn.

heed the poet's call<sup>+</sup>: poetry, a time-honored word-based form of truth-telling outside the logics of indexical mediation: might be one well-heard literacy practice well-suited to this crisis.

But this was not yet the radical digital media literacy I sought.

Something interactive and between people, in a place that was both a space and a community, about truths generated from our own experience in the world and with each other.

At Occidental College, six youth poets, members of the Los Angeles Get Lit Players performed their poems at a Fake News Poetry Multi-Media Event. From a lofty balcony.

On a huge media wall eleven screens and bright colors played out alternative versions of their poems, broken into lines moving, flitting, skirting and holding new chambers for attention...

### *Call the man of the year a liar<sup>+</sup>*

*Glady!*

*I would be first in line.*

*From the first moment of his presidency, he inflated a scraggly cloud to mammoth proportions.*

*It was the largest audience to witness an inauguration, period.*

*He is beloved, he is the prophet of all things true, period.*

*Some people are haters--sad!--but those who know best know him, period.*

*There are a lot of small things about him, but his lies are enormous like his crowds, like his supporters, like his heart, like the cool mine he's reopening right under our feet--America, how does black lung feel?*

*How does it feel being cheated by a cheery smile balanced on an emergency red tie? How did a small loan of a million dollars become the routing of billions of lives? How does it feel to be led by the lovechild of racist comments on Facebook and unimaginable power?*

*America, get your heads out of your echo chambers.*

*There is more to politics than what you want to believe. There is more to know than what they show you.*

*Do not mistake easily obtainable for true. Do not mistake your agreement for divine approval.*

*Where there is doubt, there is still hope.*

*Period.*

*(Mika Judge<sup>+</sup>)*

The literacy is in the doing and saying and listening.

The literacy is in the power of friendly faces in a room.

The radical digital media literacy is in the listening

and writing  
and reading  
together in time and space.

*I I don't care you,  
I sit with you.*

*2. Questioning  
The Structure  
Outside Of  
The Body*

*But  
About Trust  
Our Bones<sup>or</sup>*

Have conversations.

*Have  
Conversations  
or  
Protect your  
self from  
them<sup>or</sup>*

The radical digital media literacy is in our bodies.

*Hurt stress.  
Clammy  
Socialize  
Psychotic stress  
Over-heated addicted planet.  
Cellphone, phone, cellphone plug,  
Cellphone, ipod, email, iphone, cellphone,  
Phone.  
Robotic rich blurriness.  
Connections*

*Expensive failure  
Distracted attacked  
Another life.  
Brain heart eyes mind  
Stomach neck  
Above my eyes  
Brain  
Mind<sup>or</sup>*

The radical digital media literacy is a psychotechnology of care. A contrived moment.

*Contrived  
Moment*

Something weird happened  
To TIME

*At The Back  
Of My Tongue*

My body is the noise of  
Everything I ever liked

*Mutating like slime  
Mould.<sup>or</sup>*

Resist how we are framed.<sup>or</sup>

*Resist how we are framed  
thoughts  
are from the mind*

*We believe no one should have to face a mental health problem*

*above  
Feel lonely as I seek truth  
truth<sup>or</sup>*

"Let me put aside for a moment the notion of 'poetry' and think instead of a broader category, what philosopher of media Bernard Stiegler has called 'psychotechnologies,' techniques and regimes through which cognitive faculties (especially attention) are formed or destroyed. According to Stiegler, the contemporary 'programming industries,' which would include social networks as well as digital advertisers, operate psychotechnologies on an industrial scale in order to control, sell, and corrupt attention. Fake news, from this perspective, is only an especially egregious symptom of a pervasive malady: even those of us who (we assure ourselves) have not been duped by viral fake news are still constantly distracted and manipulated by other arms of the programming industries. In this light, we don't simply need to solve the specific problem of fake news."<sup>5</sup>  
 (Kyle Booten<sup>5</sup>)

We need new psychotechnologies of care, aids to reclaim our capacity to pay attention in ways that are not self-destructive.

We need new psychotechnologies built on our facts:

- People want to talk and learn together about fake news
- People want to think, engage, and express differently than how we usually do online
- Process matters over product

*Technology is a weapon, a knife. A gun.  
 How do you authenticate a person? You pay them.  
 The truth is . . . comedy? I don't know.*<sup>6</sup>

The radical digital media literacy is in our communities, our courage, our desires to be powerful and free, and to be heard and seen. To be loved.

*I hold the phone in my hand. My hand is freezing. I look at the phone. I look away from the phone. There's a world there.*

*The phone says that's a lie. The world is in the phone. I face the phone and tap. I flip from phone to face. You face the phone and walk away. Phone, get in the sea. We've doing this for everyone. You're everyone else. Come on, come out. Aerobivize with me. It isn't for me, I promise. I promise I'm more than me. It's for the thing we've not yet. It's true I haven't missed you.*

*It's also true I have.*  
 (Sam Solomon<sup>7</sup>)

It's for the thing we're not yet.

#### PROJECT LINKS

- [Fakeneews-poetry.com](http://fakeneews-poetry.com)
- **Field Notes, the Operating System** (blogs by participating poets): [medium.com/the-operating-system/10-ines-130-poems-alexandra-juhász-field-notes-fake-news-poetry-workshops-68-rd1eaf-ee5408838403](http://medium.com/the-operating-system/10-ines-130-poems-alexandra-juhász-field-notes-fake-news-poetry-workshops-68-rd1eaf-ee5408838403)
- **#100hardtruths-offake news**: <http://scalar.me/100hardtruths>
- **Learning from YouTube**: [mlipress@mit.edu/authors/alexandra-juhasz](mailto:mlipress@mit.edu/authors/alexandra-juhasz)
- **Virality is virility**: [www.damemagazine.com/authors/alexandra-juhasz](http://www.damemagazine.com/authors/alexandra-juhasz)

<sup>5</sup> Collective poem built from handwritten phrases, from Fake News Poetry Workshop, Brighton England

<sup>6</sup> Fragment written on papers for Fake News Poetry Workshop, Toronto, Canada

<sup>7</sup> <http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/about>

<sup>8</sup> <http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/5-hardtruths-and-5-new-pledges-1>

<sup>9</sup> <http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/75-no-time-for-faols>

<sup>10</sup> <http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/23-100hardtruths-highlighting-the-words-of-others>

<sup>11</sup> <http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/external/11ack-http://wp.me/p5j00-1e1k&prev=http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/index>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.damemagazine.com/alexandra-juhasz>

<sup>13</sup> <http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/external/11ack=https://ajournal.wordpress.com/2017/02/26/19-experimental-escape-routes-needed-100hardtruths-fakeneews/&prev=http://scalar.usc.edu/networks/100hardtruths-fakeneews/index>

- \* <http://secliar.usc.edu/handtrails-fakenews/external?link=http://wp.me/p5f0Q-1eE&prev=http://secliar.usc.edu/handtrails-fakenews/index>
- 37 <https://ajcan.wordpress.com/2017/02/18/100-hard-trails-about-fake-news-a-primer-on-digital-media-literacy-100crisis-fakenews/>
- 38 <http://secliar.usc.edu/handtrails-fakenews/81-call-the-name-of-the-year-a-liar>
- 39 Fake News Poetry Workshop with Gret Li, a response to #100hardtrails-fakenews #81.
- 40 Two fragments by different hands, written on papers for Fake News Poetry Workshop, Toronto, Canada.
- 41 Fragment, written on papers for Fake News Poetry Workshop, Toronto, Canada
- 42 A group list poem written at a Fake News Poetry Workshop, La Guardia Community College, Queens NY, just a feeling, technology, feeling, body site.
- 43 A collective poem built from handwritten phrases, from Fake News Poetry Workshop, Brighton, England.
- 44 <http://secliar.usc.edu/handtrails-fakenews/86-resist-how-we-are-framed>
- 45 Excitable Corpse poem from Fake News Poetry Workshop at Digital Engagement Conference, NY, NY.
- 46 Kyle Botten, Fake News Poetry Workshop write-up <https://medium.com/the-operating-system/10-lines-100-poems-take-3-field-notes-psychotechnologies-of-care-algorithms-of-attention-d5486a3043d>
- 47 From Fake News Poetry Workshop, Poets of Course, Manhattan, NY.
- 48 Fake News Poetry Workshop Sussex, a response to #100hardtrails-fakenews #94 "Always Look for the Real Thing" <https://medium.com/the-operating-system/10-lines-100-poems-take-1-field-notes-psychotechnologies-of-care-algorithms-of-attention-d848f6a3043d>

