

# Welcome

**Name:** David Eckersley

**PhD:** Critical Theory and Cultural Studies

**Thesis Title:** Anonymity and the Art of Surface: The Politics of Opacity

## Thesis Description:

David is based in the Centre for Critical Theory, a research centre located in the department of Culture, Film and Media at the University of Nottingham. Broadly working at the intersection of politics and aesthetics, his PhD research focuses on the concept of anonymity and its critical relation to the production of subjectivity. Drawing on Critical Theory, Continental Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, Sociology, Art Theory, Literary Theory and case studies distilled from political and cultural practice, his PhD thesis brings together disparate scholarship concerning the concept of anonymity and its cognates, advancing an in-depth account of particular forms of resistance that cultivate an *aesthetic of anonymity*. Conceived to further develop new and recent discussions of contemporary subjectivity, and expand upon new theoretical and practical developments regarding resistance to late capitalism, his research seeks to conceptually develop novel expressions of the political and cultural imaginary in the digital age.



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## Supervisors and Institution(s):

Dr Andrew Goffey (University of Nottingham)

Dr Colin Wright (University of Nottingham)

## Scholarly / Public Engagement Activities:

### May 2017 – July 2017

Organised and facilitated 'The Politics of Opacity'. As part of Nottingham Contemporary's 'Study Sessions' series, I designed and programmed a series of public seminars that critically engaged with the themes found in the exhibitions of Lara Favaretto and Wu Tsang as part of the 2017 summer season. There were five sessions in total, over a period of 10 weeks. The sessions were facilitated by a combination of myself and other facilitators that were invited to Nottingham Contemporary to lead a session.

<http://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/event/study-sessions-6>

### June 2017

Nottingham Contemporary, Wednesday Walkthrough. As part of Lara Favaretto's exhibition, *Absolutely Nothing*, I led a public walkthrough of the show exploring themes related to my research such as anonymity, opacity, and the politics of masking.

<http://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/event/wednesday-walkthroughs-3>

### June 2017

*The Art of Facial Weaponisation*. Paper and presentation at the Politics of Culture Workshop, University of Nottingham, June 2017.

### November 2016 – ongoing:

Co-coordinator of the Three Ecologies Working Group. Growing out of the *End of Summer School* and *Winter Detox* events, this newly formed research group brings together academics and non-academics in order to develop locally situated collective research projects with a political-ecological focus.

### 22nd & 23rd September 2016:

Co-organiser of the two-day *End of the Summer School* event organised by the Centre for Critical Theory and the Public Programme team at Nottingham Contemporary. Building on the previous two events, this two day school, hosted at Nottingham Contemporary, encouraged participants to explore the usefulness of thinking in an expanded ecological framework in order to explore the changing textures of everyday life in Nottingham and its links to a broader set of global processes and tendencies. Sessions involved participants in developing an active experimentation with different forms of expertise, forms of analysis, and modes of research. The sessions sought to ask:

'What can we learn from other collaborative initiatives, artistic or therapeutic practices and practices of resistance? What counts as part of the ecological fabric of post-industrial urban landscape?'

#### **17th August 2016:**

Nottingham Contemporary, Wednesday Walkthrough. As part of Yelena Popova's exhibition, *After Image*, I was asked by the artist to lead a public walkthrough of her show exploring themes related to my research such as the aesthetics of anonymity, opacity, and the politics of (in)visibility.

<http://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/event/walkthrough-david-eckersley>

#### **11th August 2016:**

Organiser of the event, *This is Nottz: a Discussion with J.D Taylor*, which took place in The Space at Nottingham Contemporary. For this event, writer and researcher J.D Taylor and I discussed his 'cyclogeography' trip around the UK, and the resulting book, *Island Story: Journeys Through Unfamiliar Britain*.

An interview relating to the event and Taylor's journey and book was also published in the September issue of *Left Lion*, Nottingham's culture and entertainment magazine.

<http://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org/event/nottz>

<https://www.leftlion.co.uk/read/2016/september/jd-taylors-epic-uk-political-cyclo-safari-8548>

#### **2015**

Paper presentation and panel discussion at the CLAS PG symposium, University of Nottingham.

#### **2014**

Co-organiser of *The Politics of Memory*, Vital Theory (Vital Theory is the Centre for Critical Theory's annual symposium). This was held at Nottingham Contemporary, an M3C partner organisation. The presentation, *An Outline of Two of Tiqqun's Concepts: 'Civil War' and 'Bloom'* can be found on the 'The Critical Moment', the Centre for Critical Theory's blog.

<https://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/criticalmoment/2014/12/19/an-outline-of-two-of-tiqquns-concepts-civil-war-and-bloom/>

#### **Other Research Interests:**

Beyond academia, David has a variety of interests. He is co-founder of the experimental education project, *The Sitting Room University*, publishes an occasional journal called *Lump*, has been commissioned to create installations for festivals (including a giant camera obscura), and sometimes exhibits his photography. He is currently working on both an exhibition project and a first collection of poetry.