Nomadic Power and Cultural Resistance

By the Critical Art Ensemble (CAE)

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Critical Art Ensemble (CAE)

- a collective of five tactical media practitioners of various specializations including computer graphics and web design, film/video, photography, text art, book art, and performance. (Wikipedia)
Critical Art Ensemble (CAE)

- Power Elite = primary beneficiary of network technologies
- Power Elite controls everything
- We are necessarily slaves to the will of the Power Elite
Critical Art Ensemble (CAE)

• Hacktivism = using technology to advance human rights through electronic media
Nomadic Power

- Scythians = feared nomadic group that conquered much of Asia during the Persian Wars
- Gained power
  - Never stayed in one place
  - Never seen unless on the attack
  - Mostly on the attack
- Rest of Asia lived in fear
Nomadic Power

• Corporations are like Scythians
  – Ubiquitous
  – Control us
  – Rarely on the defensive
  – If faced with resistance, conquer and/or relocate
Cultural Resistance

• “Knowing what to subvert assumes the forces of oppression are stable and can be identified and separated”  (NMR 783)

• Can we identify our sources of oppression?

• Are corporations stable?  (pretend it’s 1994)
Cultural Resistance

- Disillusionists = drop out of society
  - Baudelaire
  - 60’s and 70’s Counterculture
- Situationists = stop working
  - Labor Union hayday
Cultural Resistance

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

• Resist nomadic power in cyberspace.
• Create electronic art
• Bring panic to the bunker
What do you think?

• Has the internet given corporations more control over us?
• How would you take down a ubiquitous all-controlling entity?