"We live in a world ruled by fictions of every kind—mass merchandising, advertising, politics conducted as a branch of advertising, the instant translation of science and technology into popular imagery, the increasing blurring and intertwining of identities within the realm of consumer goods, the preempting of any free or original imaginative response to experience by the television screen."

—J.G. Ballard, Crash (1973)

1. Alienation is a useful concept to explain why we accept our involvement in a society that is structurally unequal and unfair. Alienation not only entails being taken as interchangeable objects in a life project designed for the benefit of others, it also describes our reaction to a world in which we are self-obsessed, impasive to the needs of others and driven to satisfy consumer urges.

2. The city is modeled on the neo-liberal hegemonic order. Live in the city implies immersing yourself in an ideological system that promotes the domination of capital over all areas of existence. The fast-track to inclusion is consumption, allowing us to share with others the same "lifestyle," conceived by marketing and advertising and disseminated by television, radio, magazines, internet or newspapers.

3. Consumer society is consolidated by expanding and renewed fictional needs. Production changes as much as research and marketing consultants create new consumer niches, or targets. Advertising is complicit with these dynamics, constructing attractive worlds that offer new "sensations" to satisfy wishes through products promising "freedom," "speed," "charm," "intelligence," etc.

4. Advertising constructs an opinion of the world, of oneself, and of the commercial systems of representation conceived by marketing experts promote meanings that are evaluated as power as the correct and successful ones to live in the world. Their goal is to regulate individual freedom by subtly imposing ways of acting, thinking, and walking in the urban landscape. To continue belonging, we engage in a frenzy of production and consumption where the techniques foster anonymity, enabling and facilitating control by institutional technologies.

5. The prevalence of capital extends to all areas of life, altering and shaping social identity. Subjectivity is mutliated and confined to the forms used by consulting firms, which classify and sort us in surveys according to a series of parameters (income, place of residence, house type, ownership of car, kind of job, etc.) in order to sell us as potential customers of some "innovative," soon to be marketed, product.

6. One way of sustaining the turnover of products and services is to change the supply according to fashion trends. Fashion guards the acceleration of turnover time in production in parallel with that of exchange and consumption. This is facilitated by improved communication and information devices, streamlined distribution techniques (enabling goods to circulate at an increased speed and in ever larger quantities) and plastic money and e-banking.

7. Today's national governments only want to see citizen-consumers in the streets; they regulate traffic in public space near or away from loitering and appropriation. Fear of the outside isolates us and makes us crave the protective shelter of our home. There are easy prey for the representations and ideologies of the mass media, which disseminate and strengthen the imposition of market subjectivity.

8. The additive use of new technologies strengthens the capitalistic machine, creating loneliness, utilitarianism, a false perception of reality, and the worship of individuals. As grotesque extensions of our ego, these machines show the world our material "success" and tantalize us with a new step towards market made happiness.

9. In this tragic attempt at avoiding unwanted human contact, those who can afford its company have a faithful accomplice—the automobile. Just as the system imposes nonstop movement on an individual, the automobile takes us from one place to the other. Motorists become easy prey to bottlenecks, crashes and physical threats from other drivers, turning the "privilege" into a curse of constant fights, violence and aggression.

10. Traffic moves slowly in the city, and going from one place to the other becomes an odyssey, made worse by the great number of public and private vehicles everywhere. Cars create an enormous demand for fuel, compounding the country's energy crisis and adding to greenhouse gas emissions and global warming.

11. In spite of all the evidence, there are attempts to make poverty invisible. Most people do so by getting used to its existence ("there were always poor people"); others resort to charity; while the rich minority lock themselves up in private neighborhoods that resemble fortresses, protected from the outside by towering walls with surveillance posts and 24-hour monitoring systems operated by private security companies. When there is a hint that decaying urban centers might be restructured for residential or business use by high-income professionals, improvements to these run-down areas usually lead to the eviction of their original residents, (gentrification).

12. No one believes the lie of the trickledown effect any longer, or the shame that "they don't want to." We will not be forced to accept that we have to "earn our living." Earn it from whom? This should not be a competition, or a display of...
The commercial systems of representation conceived by marketing and advertising play an essential role in disseminating pleasant images of consumption and prototypes of the successful citizen-consumer, while naturalizing the competitive dynamics of capitalism while encouraging us to buy products that might set us apart from those cast aside by the system.

3 The mass media are the main channels for advertising. They seek to create surplus value by producing and disseminating a machinery of images, meanings, views of the world, and accounts of reality aimed primarily at promoting specific economic and/or political interests. Media conglomerates — including radio stations, television and cable television channels, Internet providers, etc. — homogenize the information they distribute and increasingly influence public opinion.

4 The State's hard line cracks and the anesthetic inventions of the pharmaceutical industry offer temporary relief. Psychotropic drugs (antidepressants, antianxiety medicines, tranquilizers) bring resignation, allowing us to accept our misfortunes, frustrations and woes so that we can go on without a word of complaint.

5 Image handling is one of the most powerful and effective tools used by (economic, political and cultural) power to enforce adherence to dominant modes of thinking. Advertising plays an essential role in disseminating pleasant images of consumption and prototypes of the successful citizen-consumer, while naturalizing the competitive dynamics of capitalism while encouraging us to buy products that might set us apart from those cast aside by the system.

6 In our city, public space — the place where collective experience is organized — is fenced in, threatened and commodified. Just as the clock marks the passing of hours, minutes and seconds, synchronizing our actions and subjecting us to discipline and the requirement to fulfill specific goals and targets within a given time period, the dominant order determines the correct forms of bodily presence, repressing those that alter the hegemony through the use of physical and symbolic violence.

7 Alienation not only entails being looked down on and having our sight and hearing, forcing us to pay attention to changes, disruptions, threatening vehicles, passers-by, and other obstacles, while atrophying our taste and smell with an obscene supply of superficial products. It turns us into individualistic, selfish, violent, workaholic beings, addicted to acquiring an ever increasing number of objects.

8 Urban geometry directs our bodies' use of space. It guides movement to avoid wasting time and to channel our activities into the logic of capitalist accumulation, or at least not to disrupt it. Technology reinforces control; cell phone use allows an individual to be spatially and temporally tracked.

9 We are increasingly becoming mere props in "a full life" — or what the market sells as such. We are becoming hybrid, half-human, half-machine beings, protected by objects that help us to meet our social demands. We are always available if we have a cell phone, always entertained by our i-Pod, always alienated and more preoccupied with the message we have just been texted than with our surroundings. Our contact with reality is further mediated by the technology we use to fight our existential vacuum.

10 We are part of a hegemonic order aimed at monopolizing profits for others. This means that we are living in a society that is threatened by elimination, or replacement. Forced to juggle so as to best fit in the narrow system of inclusion, our participation can only travel in one direction, pushing us into a labyrinth that is very difficult to exit.

11 Labor is another good that is bought and sold in the market. The prevailing forms of work today are marked by precariousness, as short-term contracts in various modes, informal work, and low pay. This leads to a savage increase in inequality, lowering the real incomes of the middle class and further impoverishing historically disadvantaged groups, with the subsequent emergence and consolidation of marginalization and unemployment.

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LA CIUDAD POSMODERNA

LA DISCIPLINA QUE IMPONE EL ESPACIO PÚBLICO, LA VIGILANCIA SOBRE LA SOCIEDAD Y LA ACUMULACIÓN DE GANANCIAS SON LOS CIMENTOS DEL NEOLIBERALISMO.

¿LA SEGURIDAD PRIVADA ES INSEGURIDAD GENERALIZADA?

¿POR QUÉ LAS MULTINACIONALES SE INSTALAN EN ARGENTINA?

GANANCIAS EXTRAORDINARIAS

CAPITALES ESPECULATIVOS

¿VIVIENDA PARA TODOS/AS O ESPECULACIÓN INMOBILIARIA?