

Assessment of the Master's Thesis

Author of thesis: Matthew Colodny

Title of thesis: SPECULATION AND ESTRANGEMENT:
PARALLELS IN THE METHODOLOGIES OF ART AND SCIENCE FICTION

Assessment of the primary advisor Assessment of the opponent

Author of the assessment (first name, last name, workplace):

Evaluation of the content and final form of the thesis (A/excellent – B/very good – C/good – D/good with objections – E/satisfactory – F/unsatisfactory – not recommended for defence)

Suitability of the selected objective and work approach.....	B
Relative completeness of the literature used for the selected topic.....	A
Ability to critically evaluate and use scholarly literature.....	B
Logicity of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters and theirs proportionality.....	C
Language and stylistic level of the thesis.....	A
Compliance with citation norms (should the text repeatedly contain adopted passages without citing the source, the work cannot be recommended for defence).....	C
Sufficient extent of image attachments, justifiability and suitability of attachments, graphic layout.....	C
Originality of the thesis, contribution to the development of the field of study.....	B
Overall evaluation of the thesis.....	B

Verbal evaluation of the thesis including questions that the candidate must address in his/her thesis defence:

The thesis of Matthew Colodny takes as its topic science fiction and its relation to art.

First author delimits the science fiction as field on its own and its philosophical ramifications. His take on science fiction is not just informative but immedietly generates theoretical traction (cognitive estrangement, simulacra, Quentin Meillassoux, all just in first part and intelligently introduced).

Then Colodny deals with “interactions” of science fiction that he connects with utopianism, accelerationism and in third part he relates SF to art. Although very well informed and articulated , the division between first theoretical framework (from estragement to Meillassoux) and second scrupule (the “interactions” like utopianism or accelerationsm) could have been articulated more.

Third part deals directly with artists and their deployment of some SF features (Julia Becker, Pierre Huyghe, Taryn Simon, Moon Kyungwon and Jeon Joonho, Larry Sultan and Mike Mandel.) Examples are more than interesting and intelligently introduced but what is missing is some sort of generalization, conclusion, bottom line. And one page “Conclusion” in the end of the work does not help either.

I must evaluate very clear, advanced and coherent style. The author showed extensive knowledge (the only misinformation I gathered was that Upstream Color is directed by Shane Caruth, not Terrence Mallick, p. 33) and great deal of orientation in various theoretical fields connected to SF. I must specifically note rich referential framework (although author uses APA format) and really delightful experience of reading the work.

The only real problem is the absence of conclusion or better articulation of how does the artprojects connect with the theoretical background. There are some very interesting links going far beyond stereotypical SF deployment, using some intricate theoretical constructions, but I definitely lack a sense of more general layout. (Why these examples (and not others)? Do they represent various strategies how to deal with SF or social issues? etc.)

Therefore, I recommend the thesis for defense with the evaluation B.

Questions:

Can you articulate (in terms of how they use SF issues) or compare the artistic approaches you mentioned?

Some of recent theorists formulate claim about the “loss of future” (Franco Bifo Berardi, Mark Fisher ...), can you relate your research or contemporary SF to this thesis?

Date:

Signature:.....