

ABSTRACT

The technology of 3-D Printing is afforded extensive coverage in the media. Discourses surrounding this technology are charged with ideas of revolutions in manufacturing, democratisation of technology, and the potential to change the face of consumption and production. This technology is being marketed to the consumer and hobbyist. The consumer-grade 3-D printer is a result of the labour of a loose-knit worldwide community of hobbyists known as the "Maker movement". This movement, a convergence of the traditional "Hacker" culture and Do It Yourself (DIY) is constructed around ideas of affective labour. That is, labour performed for the sole purpose of enjoyment of doing so, and for a sense of well-being and community. The explosion of "affordable" 3-D printing as a technology is a result of this affective labour, yet little mention is made of any forms of labour in popular media discourses surrounding this technology.

In this paper I construct a history of the Maker movement while theorising the forms of labour inherent to this movement using the Autonomist Marxism of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri as a framework. Then, working within the field of Cultural Studies, and drawing on Actor-Network Theory (ANT), I perform Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) on a small sample of texts to illustrate the occlusion and obfuscation of labour within these discourses of the consumer 3-D printer.