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Fingers in the outlet: a self-reflexive investigation of 'bricolage' as a method of engagement in new media arts, through domestic hacking practices

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ABSTRACT

This research report consists of two components: a written report and a practical body of work. The written component is a theoretical examination of the concept of bricolage as put forward by Claude Lévi-Strauss in the text "The Science of The concrete", as an alternate process of knowledge production in its potential as a methodology for digital arts specifically relating to hardware hacking practices. This first chapter consists of a close reading of this text in which I explore the underlying concepts that bricolage hinges upon to better understand it as a methodology and process of engagement. The second chapter concerns the relationship between digital arts and science in terms of their individual use of 'method' and how it affects their conceptualization of 'knowledge'. This is carried out by examining the philosophical underpinnings of the scientific method, in association with a 'hacking' case study looking at art practice as research. In the third chapter I briefly isolate three key characteristics of bricolage as methodology, as a starting point in understanding the movement of bricolage as a process of inquiry.

The second component of this report consists of a practical inquiry into the viability of bricolage as method of production within a hardware hacking practice. It is incorporated into my written research in the fourth chapter where I discuss the resulting body of work in relation to bricolage as a model for research based practice, and as a mode of inquiry.