

CONSENSUAL HACKING

Melanie Hoff



*What if we entered into each other's
personal devices simultaneously?*

Get comfortable in your settings. Settle into your surroundings and feel into your bones as gravity gently presses them into your adjacent surfaces. Begin again, a process of becoming through breathing.

While breathing, consider release

Release your day

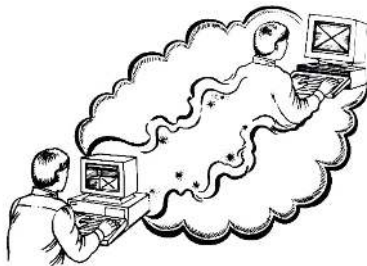
Release the journey you took to arrive here,
opening the envelope

It is past, release the past

Release your tomorrow, what
is expected of you there

Release the future

Release any particular
expectations of yourself and
of others



----- Welcome to Consensual Hacking

A temporary arrangement,

A collection of beings with agency

A learning society enmeshed in coded systems.

A specific society among all possible

Welcome to Consensual Hacking,

an expression of analog and digital insecurity.

Where we may reflect on consent as it relates to our devices

----- *A surrendering to the opacity in the
other and to the opacity in ourselves.*

and our bodies; who we choose to give access and what choices have been made for us.

What choices can be
remade,
what choices can be
unmade.

On this page I invite you
into knowing that your
choices are yours. What
would happen if you
exercised your capacity
for choice to your fullest
capacity.



Consent often coincides with giving and receiving.
I will be giving and I ask that you give too.

Consensual Hacking is just as much about opting out as it
is about opting in.

Who is here with us? What brings us here?

Activity: Turn
to someone near
you and tell the
story of how
you were born,
the conditions
of your birth.
Maybe that
looks like say-
ing how your
parents met,



and whether they decided or didn't decide to have you;
maybe it means saying how long your parent was in labor,
whether you were born vaginally or by c-section, whether
you were breastfed; maybe it means saying the story you
were told of how you were born; maybe it means finding a
totally new way to tell your origin. And also, as always, an
invitation to make it up!

The conditions of my birth are that I was born at 6:38AM
on New Year's Eve in Holy Cross Hospital in Silver
Spring, Maryland. My birth was vaginal and my milk was
formula. I was labored for six hours and my parents did
not get time off work for my birth. I am a Capricorn.

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU
CONSENTED TO BE BORN

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU
CONSENTED TO PERSONHOOD AS
DEFINED BY THE STATE

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU KNOW
EVERY PERSON WHO CREATED
YOUR PERSONAL DEVICES AND THE
CODE THAT RUNS ON THEM

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU
UNDERSTAND EVERY LINE OF CODE
THAT RUNS ON YOUR DEVICES

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU
CONSENTED TO USE YOUR DEVICES

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU USE
YOUR DEVICES

WHAT IS CONSENT?

IN RELATION TO OUR DEVICES:

DO YOU AGREE TO THE TERMS OF SERVICE?

DO YOU ACCEPT THE COOKIES?

ALLOW ACCESS TO YOUR LOCATION?

SHARE YOUR CONTACTS?

TRUST THIS NETWORK.

IN RELATION TO OUR BODIES:

PERMISSION.

DESIRE.

REFUSAL.

TOUCH.

WITHDRAWAL.

REPAIR.

By continuing, you agree.

I believe code is not only a tool for control
and neither am I.

I believe code is not only a tool for capital production
and neither am I.

I learn about things as a proxy to learn about other
things. Learn about digital coding to learn how we're
socially coded. Learn about digital consent to learn
about sexual consent. Learn about learning to learn
about living. Learn about living to learn about loving.

I believe consent is not only a tool for protecting against
what we do not want, but a set of ideas and frameworks
for creating the conditions to access what we do want—to
discover what we desire. To access different worlds where
we can be together, in a different way, worlds where we
may be both born and unborn, made and unmade, spaces
for feeling everything all at once until feeling collapses
compressing to feel the immensity of nothingness.

Feel me feeling you feeling us feeling them feeling
falling failing freeing filling.

What are we making possible together?

between you and me
a gap, of possibility
a pocket, of probability

some mistake the improbable for the impossible,
believing the cost of transformation too high

*Believing in our friends is
reproductive labor*

when we believe in our friends, we get to go with them,
to the new world we refuse to leave ourselves behind.

push pull
function break
crack repair
build collapse
swell deflate
control erupt
uplift degrade
praise punish
intimate aggress
attend ignore
agree deny
confuse amuse
accept refuse
use abandon
rupture seal
deeds words
words feelings
feelings beliefs
beliefs lies
lies truth
truth ruptures
rupture fails
failure becomes
collapse becomes
yield becomes
catalyze

■ **MELANIE HOFF:** Melanie Hoff is an artist, organizer,
and technologist working within spaces of hacking and
performance.

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