A tool can grow out of man's control, first to become his master and finally to become his executioner.

Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality, p.84.*

Ivan Illich and the Study of Everyday Life

Engin Atasay

Introduction: Illich and Everydayness

J.J. Rousseau asks; "what good is it to seek our happiness in the opinion of another if we can find it within ourselves?"[1]Do individuals have the agency to seek their own happiness? Where does our agency rest? And more importantly, how do we know when, where and how to forefront our agency? These are just a few fundamental questions about subjectivity that has troubled modern philosophy, partially revoked in Marx's critique of capitalism and the subsequent posthumanist tradition. Illich's work that examines everydayness once again revitalizes these questions within the context of industrial society. With this paper I wish to highlight Illich's insistence on individual and convivial agency that blurs the philosophical boundaries of humanist and posthumanist. I will argue that Illich offers us expansive analytical frameworks for social agency and activism that are embedded in awareness that questions our everyday tools. His creative critique of industrial society and everydayness provokes a critical imagination, which perhaps is Illich's richest legacy and greatest strength as a philosopher, activist and a convivial individual. I read his work as a deliberate attempt to appeal to the agency and the social power of convivial individuals who are intertwined in imaginative processes of agency and creative convivial communities.

Illich's insistence on invoking individual agency is rooted in a cultural project that examines everydayness, i.e. the engagement with tools that impact people's daily lives. In

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[1] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses*, edit. Roger D. Masters, trans. Roger D. and Judith R. Masters, (Boston & New York: Bedford/St.Martin's, 1964), p.64.

essence, happiness for Illich depends on the way people choose to live their everyday life practices. Everydayness and the tools we choose to live our everydayness can either become oppressive if they are not constantly contested or may also allow us to rediscover convivial alternatives. Henri Lefebvre advocates that we must "rediscover everyday life—no longer to neglect and disown it, elude and evade it—but actively to rediscover it while contributing to its transfiguration."[2] Illich is perhaps one of the few scholars who answer the call for examining everydayness. Everydayness is often unquestioned—we live through our most basic practices without giving much thought, using everyday industrial tools—and industrialism capitalizes on such uncritical tendencies by capturing our everyday practices to administer our subjectivities. Therefore, Illich's work insist on commemorating a wakefulness that questions what is seemingly ordinary and re-evaluate our individual engagements with life and the tools we use. Echoing Lefebvre's advocacy for examining everdayness through a critical awareness of the tools we use, Illich urges us to question and rediscover our positionality as subjects in the everyday world we live in and foster sensibilities that can challenge the oppressive everydayness of industrial life.

What distinguishes Illich's work from other critiques of industrial everyday life—as I shall discuss in much detail later in this paper—is that Illich offers us alternatives, tools that can influence power and offer individuals and communal settings the potential for alternative vernacular practices to emerge in culture. I will argue that the wealth of Illich's ideas stem from his insistence on de-institutionalization of social conduct and promotion of convivial tools that allow for the power of individuals to determine their own agency, grounded in an "imaginativeness"[3] that can "become an organized field of social practice" for individuals to begin to design convivial communities. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to introduce Ivan

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[2] Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World.* Trans. Sacha Robinovitch. (New Bruswick and London: Transaction Publishers,1990) p.202.
[3] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p.31.

Illich into the study of everyday life, arguing that Illich insistence of individual engagement with tools is a call for rediscovering the way we choose to live.

Illich's work and his lifetime commitment to social change receive little recognition and his ideas are often criticized as mere radical critiques of institutions and industrialism. For example, Herbert Gintis offers an extensive critique of Illich's work and criticizes him for lacking a sufficient political strategy for social action by over-relying or romanticizing the individual. Gintis further states that Illich's work corresponds to "a situation of social chaos, but probably not to a serious mass movement toward constructive social change."[4] This paper on the other hand, contrary to the critiques that seek to portray Illich as an apolitical figure, is intended to argue that there is a broader philosophy of radical humanism and philosophy of social change in Illich's work. Illich's concern with human agency rather than with mass political mobilizations does not involuntarily make him a chaos theorist. In fact, as I will argue, Illich's emphasis on the individual psyche and the connection between tools and individuals can significantly contribute to our understanding of the performativity, everyday life and political movements for new commons to emerge and challenge industrialism. A reading of Illich that remains true to his humanist philosophy is bound to see Illich as a cultural worker for democratic social change, and not as an *a*political philosopher who is solely concerned with theoretical critiques of institutionalization. Illich is rather a political activist who offers individuals tools to imagine and produce a world of creativity, communal friendship, equity and ultimately social change that flourishes outside of the confines of pre-determined political territories.

Tools and Everyday Life

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[4] Herbert Gintis, *Toward a Political Economy of Education: A Radical Critiue of Ivan Illich's Deschooling Society*, in: Alan Gratner, Colin Greer and Frank Riessman, edits. *After Deschooling, What?* (New York, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.70.

While bringing Illich into a conversation about the study of everyday life, I predominantly rely upon Illich's valuable text, *Tools for Conviviality*.[5] It is through his work on tools Illich envisions creative individual agency to instantiate possible interstitial spaces of resistance against industrial forms of life that inhibit agency and the prospects for social democracy. Illich broadly characterizes tools as all rationally designed devices—machines, commodities, and institutions—that structure labor and social relations.

> I use the term 'tool' broadly enough to include not only simple hardware such as drills, pots, syringes, brooms, building elements, or motors, and not just large machines like cars or power stations; I also include among tools productive institutions such as factories that produce tangible commodities like corn flakes or electric current, and productive systems for intangible commodities such as those which produce 'education' 'health', 'knowledge', or 'decisions'. I use this term because it allows me to subsume into one category all rationally designed devices.[6]

Illich believes that unless tools stem from the invention and the holistic design of convivial communities, they can grow out of our control and begin to enslave society. Convivial tools ensure that tools serve communally interrelated individuals—convivial commonweals—which encourages a diversity of life styles. The design and energy designated to convivial tools are thus products of democratic relationships between community members. The resulting convivial society for Illich would be "the result of social arrangements that guarantee for each member the most ample and free access to the tools of the community and limit this freedom only in favor of another member's equal freedom."[7]

Illich argues that the potential for convivial commonweals are growing dim as industrial tools that are extensions of industrial forms of life have monopolized and disrupted the communal processes for allocating resources, energy and needs of society. Industrial tools encapsulate individual creativity in structures alien to individuals by allocating experts—

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[5] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973).
[6] Ibid, p.20
[7] Ibid.p.12.

doctors, engineers, technocrats—to dictate decisions on behalf of individuals and society; ultimately reducing social relationships into consumer choices, while creating energy and technology dependencies on which people have no control over. Considering the way we live today and our dependence on industrial forms of life, Illich's critique of industrial tools offers us a way to begin a conversation about our everydayness and how our social fabric is increasingly entangled into processes beyond our control. An Illichian approach questions how much of our everyday life is reproduced by tools, such as cell phones, cars, TVs, medicalization of illnesses and so on. Illich encourages us to re-think ways in which industrial tools dominate and perpetuate their reproduction by becoming irreplaceable through the choices we make. Illich wants to expose the everydayness of industrial tools and their connection to larger institutions to show us how industrial everydayness—in mundane and ordinary hypnotic ways—structure our social relationships, our relationship to nature, and our relationship to ourselves. In the next section, I will come back to the importance of examining everydayness and elaborate on why it needs to be studied and how Illich's work can be used to examine it. For now, I would like to give a brief account of Illich's discontent with industrial tools, which is central for understanding Illich's call for re-examining our relationship with tools.

Illich argues that the use of industrial tools have breached and extended society's limit to produce power and energy beyond its control. The inability of society to have control over industrial tools and the power they yield undermined traditions, ecological systems and individual imagination.[8] The use of industrial tools professionalized and diluted the convivial right of people to choose their own tools and the social relations associated with them. Under industrialism, tools such as transportation, hospitals and schools serve to reproduce industries and specialized monopolies that benefit from the technical economy generated by industrial

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[8] Ivan Illich, *Energy and Equity*, in: Ivan Illich, *Toward a History of Needs*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

tools. Industrial tools embody the rationality of industrial production and hence facilitate the

creation of social relationships that sustain industrialism which disrupts ecological and social

thresholds and creates destruction. Illich further elaborates:

> Most of the power tools now in use favor centralization of control. Industrial
> plants with their highly specialized tools give neither the worker nor most
> engineers a choice over what use will be made of the energy they manage. This is
> equally true, though less evident, of the high-powered consumer tools that
> dominate our society. Most of them, such as cars and air conditioners, are too
> costly to be available on equal basis outside a few superrich societies.[9]

Industrial development constantly violates diverse social and subsistence desires to

attain a convivial and equitable living space. Industrial tools restructure space—urbanization,

transportation, privatization—in order to capitalize and deplete more and more energy from

nature and society, which ultimately corrupts individual and social values and culture by

constructing their desires according to the impersonal principles of industrial mechanisms.

Illich draws our attention to the practical consciousness associated with industrial tools and

how industrial tools can manifest their sensibilities to dictate our personal choices and social

relationships. In other words, people begins to desire and believe in the 'common sense'[10]

associated with tools, e.g. using more science to cure disasters caused by industrial science is

often normalized and praised in developmental debates. The hegemony of private ownership,

continual unlimited growth and the desire for endless consumption shape social subjectivities

and individual action over decisions over tools and the use of resources. The menace of

industrial tools on individual subjectivity is well illustrated by Illich in his take on industrial

transportation:

> Cars create distance. Speedy vehicles of all kinds render space scarce. They drive
> wedges of highways into populated areas, and then extort tolls on the bridge over
> the remoteness between people that was manufactured for their sake. This
> monopoly over land turns space into car fodder. It destroys the environment for

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[9] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.42.
[10] Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, edited and translated by Q.Hoare and G.Nowell Smith. (London: Lawrence and Wishart,1971).

feet and bicycle. Even if planes and busses could run as nonpolluting, nondepleting public services, their inhuman velocities would degrade man's innate mobility and force him to spend more time for the sake of travel.[11]

Industrial growth without limits, without politically and communally interrelated individuals endangers social relations and the innate unbreakable bond between society and nature.[12] The ownership and use of industrial tools create social inequalities, restricts social practice to industrially determined methods of work and foster exclusionary legal and social apparatuses.

Illich calls attention to this unique form of "bondage" to industrial servitude, which he argues must be questioned separate from wage labor—often regarded by orthodox Marxism as the prime source of social alienation. Illich insists that we must challenge industrialism on grounds of industrial work done in industrial institutional sites (e.g. factory, school, hospital) as well as activities carried out in our everydayness in what he calls "shadow work:"

> It comprises most housework women do in their homes and apartments, the activities connected with shopping, most of the homework of students cramming for exams, the toil expended commuting to and from the job. It includes the stress of forced consumption, the tedious and regimented surrender to therapists, compliance with bureaucrats, the preparation for work to which one is compelled, and many of the activities usually labeled 'family life.'[13]

Illich's critique of industrialism however is not merely a theorizing or outlining a socio-economical interpretation of industrialism but it is rather an answer to an urgent call for practical consciousness in order to resist industrial everydayness. Illich states that his "purpose is to lay down criteria by which the manipulation of people for the sake of their tools can be immediately recognized, and thus to exclude those artifacts and institutions which inevitably extinguish a convivial life."[14] Illich's call for recognition of awareness for alternatives to industrialism is based on the idea of an imaginative process of conviviality.

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[11] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality,* p.52.
[12] Illich's concern for nature and society resonates and perhaps initiates a realm of study investigating the connections between ecoliteracy and social justice. For example see: Chat Bowers, Educating for Eco-Justice and Community, (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2001).
[13] Ivan Illich, *Shadow Work*, (Boston & London: Marian Boyars, 1981), p.100.
[14] Ibid, p.14.

Illich's finds his inspiration for imagining conviviality through his critical reading of industrial society and believes that individuals must strive to overcome the limitations imposed by industrial tools by examining the role the materiality of everyday consciousness and sensibility instantiated by the tools we choose to use.

At this point I'd like to stress a decisive philosophical and political attitude Illich adopts as a cultural worker. Conviviality rests immensely on the imaginative potential of the individual and the everyday use of tools rather than premised on a political mass mobilization or institutional territories of anti-industrial resistance. It is through the individual rediscovery of everyday life and tools, we begin to imagine convivial commonweal alternatives to industrialism, cultivated and vitalized as social challenges to industrial forms of life. This Illichean tendency of forefronting the vitality of individual engagement with tools will become important further in this paper as I will try to illustate the expansiveness of Illich's philosophy, which resonates (and perhaps may contribute to) many of the theoretical tools used by post-humanist philosophy. Such an interesting account is found in Mark Seem's introduction to Deleuze and Guattari's ground breaking work, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Seem points to similar pattern of thought between Illich's and Deleuze and Guattari's projects for social change that calls for radical reversal of the relationships between individuals and machines. A reversal, Seem adds, for both projects "must be governed by a collective political process, and not by professionals and experts. The ultimate answer to neurotic dependencies on professionals is *mutual self-care*"[15] that relies on the agency of a community of convivial individuals.

Convivial Tools and the Negation of Empire

Social systems rely on the conduct of individuals as consumers, producers and practitioners of tools, who take part in creating discourses and the very structures of life.

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[15] Mark Seem, *Introduction* in: Deleuze G. and Guattari, F.*Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, (Penguin Books, 1977), p. xxii.

Thus, it is inconceivable to expect any hegemonic system to maintain its legitimacy on merely economic and political terms without taking part in the production of everyday life. Hegemony requires the exercise and control of power vis-à-vis its subjects, and the margins of economic and political institutional disciplinary space. For instance, Michel Foucault's work traces the liberal processes of government in connection with the development of the "modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual [which] co-determine each other's emergence."[16]The drills and rituals that become everyday have significantly become salient for examining power relations in society as we move away from a disciplinary society to a "society of government"[17]that is predominantly concerned in controlling the conduct of individuals.

Power in industrial societies is embedded in the administration of a population in which the everyday practices of its individual subjects gain importance. "This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize…It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects."[18] Perhaps in the post-humanist era we live in, an era dominated by discourses of empire aimed at capturing our subjectivity, *the significance of Illich's work for convivial society and his reliance on the imaginative potential of the individual in cultivating new commons is more vital than ever.* Today, the power of "empire" is characterized as a "form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it—every individual embraces and reactivates this power of his or her own accord. Its primary task is to administer life." [19] Our everydayness is then polluted with industrial discourses and apparatuses, colonizing our daily

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[16] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *Power: Essential Works of Michel Foucault, 1954-1984: Volume Three,* trans. Robert Hurley et al. Ed. James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 2000), p.191.
[17] Michel Foucault, *Governmentality*, in: Foucault, M., *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, Vol. 3 edit. James D. Faubion, (New York: The New Press, 1994), p.219.
[18] Foucault, Michel, *The Subject and Power*, in: Dreyfus, H.L. & Rabinow, P., *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and Hermeneutics,* 2nd. Edition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), p.212.
[19] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, (Harvard University Press, 2001), p.24.

conduct from its interior and core through "repetitive [industrial] practices"[20] it imposes upon the body of individual the desire and ideal image of empire.

Everydayness takes the form of a material and discursive space in which our submission to industrial tools to perform work and enjoy leisure[21] are economized as we carry them out without much regard for social justice and nature. Illich points to this colonizing tendency of everyday work performed:

> Yet increasingly the unpaid self-discipline of shadow work becomes more important than wage labor for further economic growth. In advanced industrial economies these unpaid contributions toward economic growth have become the social locus of the most widespread, the most unchallenged, the most depressing form of discrimination.[22]

A more vivid example Illich provides is of "an ecologist who takes a jet plane to a conference on protecting the environment from further pollution."[23]Needless to say, Ivan Illich's emphasis on replacing industrial tools with convivial tools is a call for individuals and communities who aim to challenge empire and its everydayness. Illich intends to eliminate an industrial everyday life that underpins empire by re-cognizing to re-learn our relationships with our everyday tools and ultimately re-building our commonality with society and the environment. Illich is calling individuals to question and ultimately replace the everyday industrial tools by cultivating a common that uses convivial tools; tools that stem from democratic social processes of ownership, design, decision and knowledge of tools. Conviviality emancipates individuals' imaginative potential by elevating individual experiences and individuals' communal engagement with life over prescribed mass generalization. Illich sees individual lived experiences in their everyday life as engagements

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[20] Michel Foucault, The *Political Technology of Individuals*, in: Michel Foucault, *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, Vol. 3 edit. James D. Faubion, (New York: The New Press, 1994), p.394.
[21] Henri Lefebvre, *Work and Leisure in Everyday Life*, in: Ben Highmore, edit. *The Everyday Life Reader*, (London & New York: Routledge), 2002.
[22] Ivan Illich, *Shadow Work*, pp.100-101.
[23]Ivan Illich, *Tools of Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973)p.102.

with tools. This pragmatic approach to individualism allows Illich to construct his ideas for conviviality based on the idea that individuals only establish certain engagements with industrial tools and thus have the potential to change their relationship with them.

The study of everyday life is not a theoretical interpretation of a concrete reality but rather a study of *lived* [24] experiences of personal and social relationships. It seeks to analyze life as a fluid and dynamic representation of life as it speaks through tools and users. The study of *lived* materiality of everyday life is where Illich's analysis offers us new ways to transform and change everyday materiality—tools—and our engagement with the industrial forms of everyday life. The idea of everyday life being lived carries in itself a sense of *ambivalence*—living the everyday is "almost the same, but not quite,"[25]—which translates over to the practical consciousness embedded in tools and out engagement with them. Therefore, the communal processes for designing and using tools can, not only create interstitial spaces (or new commons) to maneuver within industrial everydayness, but also serve as sources for alternatives vernacular forms of life and movements against industrial forms of life and knowledge.

In Illich's words, these convivial spaces allow individuals to "relearn to depend on each other rather than on energy slaves...a world in which sound and shared reasoning sets limits to everybody's power to interfere with anybody's equal power to shape the world".[26] Illich suggests that individuals must recognize the ways in which everydayness of industrial forms of life structure their expectations, desires, and daily practical consciousnesses and by doing so seek out "new tools to work with rather than tools that "work" for them. They need technology to make the most of their energy and imagination."[27]Therefore it is only through a

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[24] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1991).
[25] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (London & New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 86.
[26] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973)pp.14-15
[27] Ibid, p.10.

critical engagement with everyday life tools that we begin to recognize the form and the need for instantiating "a convivial and pluralist mode of production."[28]

Convivial Agency: Individuals and Community and Reading Illich as a Cultural Worker.

The convivial lived experience with tools that stem from the design of vernacular communities has the potential to transform action from its void mere consumption under industrialism to lively *performance*; characterized by an endless process of signification which potentially can generate new experiences and tools that can challenge the industrial forms of life. Illich argues that industrial everydayness created by industrial tools degrades the autonomy and the imagination of individuals and communities: "highways, hospital wards, classrooms, office buildings, apartments, and stores look everywhere the same. Identical tools also promote the development of the same character types".[29] However, the everyday "while it may give off a seemly appearance, never manages completely to bracket out the murky realm of the unconscious. Everyday life becomes the state where the unconscious performs…but never with its gloves off."[30] In other words, how we interact with everyday tools defines our everydayness. Illich thus advocates a convivial interaction with tools and the everydayness they generate. Tools that are part of imaginative processes "enhance eutrapelia (or graceful playfulness),"[31]which is essentially a call for imagining and re-experiencing our everyday practical consciousness based on convivial relationships. This process for Illich requires us to question the everydayness of industrial forms of life, which often goes beyond the scope of a political project but sets itself as a process of action rather than political rigidity. Illich asserts:

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[28] Ibid, p.20.
[29] Ibid, p.15.
[30] Ben Highmore, *Questioning Everyday Life*, in: Ben Highmore edit. *The Everyday Life Reader*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), p.6.
[31] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973)p. xxv.

> The cultural revolutionary believes that these habits have radically distorted our view of what human beings can have and want. He questions the reality that others take for granted, a reality that, in his view, is the artificial by-product of contemporary institutions, created and reinforced by them in pursuit of their short-term ends.[32]

Illich calls for individuals to become cultural workers and to re-evaluate and take control of their everydayness. Illich is keen on advocating that the transformative potential for an alternative to industrial everydayness is in questioning everydayness and redeeming our individual imaginative potential. "Ivan Illich's call for institutional transformation is the demand for a true cultural revolutionary. It is *revolutionary* because it demands nothing less than the total revision of society, it is *cultural* because it argues that the revolution must begin with the transformation of individual consciousness."[33]

Hence, while reading Illich, we encounter the work of a cultural worker. As Ben Highmore addresses, a cultural worker is someone who strongly emphasizes that "how we experience our bodies, and how our bodies experience the world, cannot simply be adequately described by casting a critical eye over the discourses of the establishment."[34]Industrialism is not a totality that renders individual agency absolute or possible within a political territory. Illich believes that people can acquire the convivial sensibilities and foster transformative change if they can critically assess their practical and communal connection to the everyday tools they use. Industrial tools objectify communities and individuals as commodities and consumers. Convivial tools on the other hand allow individuals to cultivate a convivial community with immanent imaginative opportunities to construct their relationships with their environments while relying on their own creative energies and desires. Illich envisions

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[32] Ivan Illich, *A Constitution for Cultural Revolution*, in: Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books), 1970, p.181.
[33] Paul Levine, *Divisions*, Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corp. 1975, in: Raymond Allen Morrow, Carlos Alberto Torres, *Social Theory and Education: a Critique of Theories of Social and Cultural Reproduction*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), p.228.
[34] Ben Highmore, *Questioning Everyday Life*, in: Ben Highmore, edit. *The Everyday Life Reader*, (London & New York: Routledge,2002), p.30.

the convivial society as a process that must be "reconstructed to enlarge the contribution of autonomous individuals"[35] Individuals who appreciate the convivial transformation of their everyday tools and begins to imagine and build convivial communities that further enlarge their creative imaginations and respect for their environment and society.

Illich's vision of a convivial individual who redeems agency by transforming his/her everyday tools echoes Michel de Certeau definition of everyday creativity that resides in bricolage (making-do), which utilizes "everyday rituals, re-uses and functions of the memory through the 'authorities; that make possible (or permit) everyday practices,"[36]Bricolage can provoke conviviality within industrial everydayness, where there is room for individuals to imagine new tools and forms of practice that can challenge industrial forms of life. Conviviality rests upon the idea that the politically diversified and yet interrelated individuals approach daily practice and actual lived experience with convivial bricolage—ambivalent, playful and imaginative tools—that can ultimately alter and challenge institutionalized industrial tools and the empty forms of life they create.

Ivan Illich's work on education and schooling illustrates how bricolage can be a pedagogical convivial tool against industrail schooling. Illich describes the individual who gets education under industrialism as someone who is basically schooled to adopt to the demands of the institution. In *Descholing Society*, Illich argues:

> The pupil is thereby "schooled" to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is "schooled" to accept service in place of value.[37]

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[35] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.10.
[36] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p.xviii.
[37] Ivan Illich, *Descholing Society*, (London, New York, San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), p.1.

The tool of industrail schooling encapsulated the willingness to learn into the instrumental institutional demands and desires of industrial everydayness which undermines individual agency to live creatively, while eliminating the capacity to imagine convivial forms of life. In *Deschooling Society,* Ivan Illich also argued that a convivial education systems that transcend the institutional territories of schooling, may offer students access to multiplicity of endless educational sources (sources characterized by the specific learning environment), which may help them to define and achieve their own goals. Illich argues that games can allow individuals to playfully conduct formal logical proofs. The element of bricolage found in the games offer students' engagement with content and desire for learning to be a "form of liberating education, since they heighten their awareness" and moreover they "can be organized by the players themselves."[38] In essence bricolage and conviviality captures the power of individual experience and creativity; the power of "practical consciousness" and desire of convivial relationships as opposed to the "official consciousness" of industrialism. It is in 'practical consciousness' that individuals can recapture their convivial playfulness. As Raymond Williams states:

> Practical consciousness is almost always different from official consciousness,
> and this is not only a matter of relative freedom or control. For practical
> consciousness is what is actually being lived, and not only what it is thought is
> being lived.[39]

Practical consciousness associated with convivial tools and the emphasis on the materiality of lived experiences enables individuals to realize that they have the power to enrich the environment in which they live "with the fruits of his or her vision".[40] Illich advocates that society must take back the monopoly of designing and allocating tools from industrial production and begin to reconstruct tools that bring out individuals' playful

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[38] Ibid. p.84.
[39] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*. (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.131.
[40] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.21.

convivial "structure of feeling," a experimental form of everydayness that seeks experimental solutions and tools. As Illich puts it, "imperialist mercenaries can poison or maim but never conquer a people who have chosen to set boundaries to their tools for the sake of conviviality." [41] Illich's reliance on individual agency for fostering conviviality resonates with Raymond Williams' emphasis on individual agency for democratic change. Williams argues that "no mode of production, and therefore no dominant society or order of society, and therefore no dominant culture, in reality exhausts the full range of human practice, human energy, human intention."[42] Williams adds:

> The 'autonomous' self grows within a social process which radically influences it, but the degree of gained autonomy makes possible the observed next stage, in which the individual can help to change or modify the social process that has influenced and is influencing him.[43]

Then 'what is to be done' to re-imagine our contemporary era and cultivate any kind of convivial common is neither a political project for critical consciousness nor a mobilizing campaign for revolution. Instead, we need new convivial tools for imagining new *lived* experiences of 'everyday life', which transcends any given prescription for social change. Ivan Illich's work on convivial tools offer us frameworks for identifying with our everyday tools through playful and immanent processes. It is an open ended process that resists essentializing or institutionalizing our needs. A convivial society is therefore not a fixed end but rather part of an immanent communal process of cultivating a common characterized by bricolage and creative imagination. Convivial tools and convivial communal relationships are not only pre-designated political strategies: conviviality is also about processes that embraces playful tactics that yield not finalized ends results but endless possibilities and imaginations for social change. Hence the notion of tactical processes are significant for conviviality to

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[41] Ibid, p.110.
[42] Raymond Williams, *Base and Superstructure*, in: John Higgins edit. *The Raymond Williams Reader*, (Blackwell Publishers,2001), p.172.
[43] Ibid, p.74.

endure and not become institutionalized into grand-narratives of political territories for the

masses to represent (which only results in reproducing institutionalized form of life). Certeau

explains tactics as:

> "A calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional
> localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality.
> The place of the tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the
> other's place, fragmentarily, without taking over in its entirety, without being able
> to keep it at a distance".[44]

It is fruitful to understand Illich's insistence on convivial tools as tactics designed to resist

disciplining dynamics of industrialism. As Illich puts it, his work is not intended to

"contribute to an engineering manual for the design of convivial institutions or tools.[45]"

Discipline is evident in institutions, in industrial tools and in everyday life; Illich's work seeks

to discover how the entire world can resist being reduced to the institutional discipline of

industrialism.

A convivial society presents an endless process of becoming: it's found in immanence

that becomes the socially necessary space to redeem individual creativity. It rests on shifting

terrains of individual bricolage; conviviality is a playful everyday loose temporal structure, an

experiement (an *experience* as well as an *experiment*) for individuals who imagine a world

free of the industrial disciplinary forms of life. Only a convivial tool and its use in everyday

practice does not necessitate a specialized compulsory audience or a rationality to socialize

into. For example, a collective art project for learning that allows for individual playfulness

and imagination to flourish, as opposed to K-12 schools with strict institutional guidelines. A

convivial tool is a floating rootless formulation—a "plane of composition"—which is the

opposite of a 'plan of organization'. The experience and experiment of conviviality requires

indeterminacy where "There are no longer any forms or developments of forms; nor are there

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[44] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p.xix.
[45] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.14.

subjects or the formation of subjects. There is no structure, any more than there is genesis."[46]

We find such fluid compositions for tools in Illich's description of the epimethean individual living in a convivial society and the feelings Illich associates with the convivial figures.

The sensibility of epimethean person can be identified through feelings and *experienments* which generate knowledge and practice that instantiates love for people; caring for the earth; sharing traits and tools that enable the fluid practices of a convivial society possible. It is a *celebration*[47] of discovery and rediscovery—an *experienment*—in which individuals join together to *live* their creative powers according to their cultural, environmental and material needs. Illich suggests:

> "We now need a name for those who value hope above expectations. We need a name for those who love people more than products, those who believe that
>
> > No people are uninteresting.
> > Their fate is like the chronicle of planets.
> >
> > Nothing in them is not particular,
> > and planet is dissimilar from planet.
>
> We need a name for those who love the earth on which each can meet the other,
>
> > And if man lived in obscurity
> > making his friends in that obscurity,
> > obscurity is not uninteresting.
>
> We need a name for those who collaborate with their Promethean brother in the lighting of the fire and the shaping of iron, but who do so to enhance their ability to tend and care and wait upon the other, knowing that
>
> > To each his world is private,
> > And in that world one excellent minute.
> > And in that world one tragic minute.
> > These are private.[48]

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[46] Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia,* trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p.266.

[47] Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p.15.

[48] The three quotations are from "People" from the book Selected Poems by Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Translated and with Introduction by Robin Milner-Gulland and Peter Levi. Published by E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1962, and re-printed with their permission, in: Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*,(Harper & Row Publishers, 1971).

I suggest that these hopeful brothers and sisters be called Epimethean men". [49]

It is in the *obscurity* and in the *particular* we begin to think about convivial everydayness opposing and challenging the everydayness of industrial forms of life. In the Epimethean men we find that convivial society is not a simple transcendent political progression of repression but a rhizomatic process that is always becoming and seeking endless tools and practices that may flourish and branch into convivial forms of life, i.e. an *experiment* that involves desires, ideas, feelings, relationships and the environment. The lived uncertainty of everyday life permits a convivial individual to find it unsettling and yet abundant in joyful energy to create common convivial alternatives. Raymond Williams refers to these sources when he asserts that:

> There will be areas of practice and meaning which, almost by definition from its own limited character, or in its profound deformation, the dominant culture is unable in any real terms to recognize…there are always sources of actual human practice which it neglects or excludes. [50]

There is imminent potential for imagining new convivial commonalities and convivial tools in these exclusions. Eric Fromm refers to these exclusions as possibilities in his introduction to Illich work, Celebration of Awareness. Fromm claims:

> Humanistic radicalism questions all these premises and is not afraid of arriving at ideas and solutions that may sound absurd. I see the great value in the writings of Dr. Illich precisely in the fact that they represent humanistic radicalism in its fullest and most imaginative aspect…showing entirely new possibilities; they make the reader more alive because they open the door that leads out of the prison of routinized, sterile, preconceived notions…help to stimulate energy and hope for a new beginning. [51]

Conclusion

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[49] Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, (Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), pp.115-116.
[50] Raymond Williams, *Base and Superstructure*, in: John Higgins edit. *The Raymond Williams Reader*, (Blackwell Publishers,2001). p173.
[51] See Eric Fromm's introduction to Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p.10.

Ivan Illich's work attempts to challenge industrial institutions through transforming individual micro-processes of everyday life and imagining new convivial tools people can choose to live their everyday life. Nevertheless, Illich is not concerned with a description of a political project. Illich initiates questions aimed at jump-starting our imagination for envisioning a world that is not monopolized by industrialism. His analysis of industrial everyday life urges us to re-think contemporary institutions and consider how our reality would be different if we had convivial tools. For instance, Illich urges us to ask how transportation would alter our social relationships if we refused to drive cars. How would cities look like if there were no highways? What new convivial tools will we use and new social and communal relationships will we develop? In other words, how would everyday life look like in a convivial society if we could negate our industrial everydayness?

To answer these questions would be to undermine the open-ended imaginary and playful processes associated with conviviality. However, we can advocate that a convivial society protects the power of "individuals and of communities to choose their own styles of life through effective, small-scale renewal."[52] Industrial specialization makes everyday life an estranged monopolized space, reducing individual activity and creativity to mere consumption. Addiction to progress and 'new' products; more science to treat scientific ailments, more management for better management, enslaves people in an endless destructive race. A convivial society, on the contrary, offers ways to structure its own expectations from science and knowledge, which allows a community to transform its members from "contenders for scarce resources into competitors for abundant promises."[53] In a convivial society knowledge and practices will not be distant and alien to individuals. "Fully industrialized man calls his own principally what has been made for him. He says "my

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[52] Ivan Illich, *Tools of Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.73.
[53] Ibid.p.86

education," "my transportation," "my entertainment," "my health,""[54] which one may argue

demonstrates the discourse of industry and its connection to rhetoric and rationality of

consumption. Unlike industrial societies where commodities define activities and procedures

of practice, in a convivial society all individuals may choose to use their own means and

procedures to share their convivial commonalities, procedures and tools. A convivial society

does not structure its values systems through industrial commodities, quite the contrary, a

convivial community is inherently a continual rejection of any tool/institution that operates on

the basis of principles of commodification:

> Only a cultural and institutional revolution which reestablishes man's control over
> his environment can arrest the violence by which development of institutions is
> now imposed by a few for their own interest. Maybe Marx has said it better,
> criticizing Ricardo and his school: "They want production to be limited to 'useful
> things,' but they forget that the production of too many *useful* things results in too
> many *useless* people.[55]

One final point needs to be made; Illich's call for a convivial society should not be

confused with industrial communism. Illich does not advocate for transforming ownership of

industry to new convivial titans of industry. His critique of industrial forms of life demands

that convivial societies set limits to industrial growth and seek communal forms of life that

are rooted in tradition and not dependent on industrial tools that enslave the individual into an

addiction for progress. Illich's call for conviviality is a call for people to take action for social

and environmental justice. It is neither a political project for socialism nor a communist

guideline; it is a call for a search for communal and cultural autonomy and creativity; it aims

to render our everyday life meaningful by eradicating our addiction to industrial routines and

tools that degrade our connection to everyday life. Illich urges us to re-evaluate our passive

engagement with our tools and everydayness by actively participating in the design and

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[54] ibid.p.90.
[55] Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p.189.

management of our technology and needs, which ultimately give us tools to empower cultural

innovation, prioritize communal needs and protect environmental biodiversity.

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