answer to nature, but because all those tools serve him. He doesn't recognize in the gun and tools and cameras at hand technology having its own purposive density, its own internality. He takes for granted in his equipment the intensiveness of applied cognition which its material form objectifies. He lets himself forget he resides on objects which others have made for this purpose. The modern hunter never knows his weapon only in the external game of execution, the skilful individualism it makes possible, not in its nude-naked, its inalienated to the organized efforts of others. He knows his technology only in the disproportionate power it focuses in his trigger finger.

While utterly dependent on intensive technology from organized activity in his hunt, the modern hunter imagines himself a lone, instinctual predator. He doesn't see that his tools and weapons and camoufleurs do not only extrapolate, but also mediate his anxiety and his will.

The videoing is just the next technological step in this obscuring of the real content of the modern hunt. This high fidelity trophy only re-represents what was already present in the hunt itself, the denial of the actual industrial context on which it depends. In this regard these videos are typical of most contemporary media, which tend to render their subject matter as though with immediacy, obscuring their own mediating roles from view. Such media exacerbate, and maybe produce, the chronic North American appetite for immediacy. These same popular media, by serving events from real contexts, and up placing the real world of viable action and rationality of one harbor removes.

In exposing the hunt to the video camera, the hunter also further rarifies himself from the actual event. His desire for multiple camera angles and slow motion shots leaves the modern hunter 'on the cut' with a nature that is almost extraneous. Nature is reduced to what is transient to the camera eye. These videos recall Janis Lundstrum's description of "the aura of hyperreality" in _The Ecology of Communication_. In these videos, images supersede the event. The event of the hunt is replaced by the myriad recorded angles and speeds. External variables replace the internal context of the event, the killing and the death. The effect is comparable to the effect of the high-resolution pilot's-eye view images of dissecting machines, which come to us out of the Gulf War's version of production. With every access of visual image over lived event, these videos cross the line Lundstrum would mark between spectacle and obscenity. Obsequity begins when there is no more spectacle—when every thing becomes immediately transparent, visible, exposed in raw and inexorable light of information and communication.

The modern hunt is obscene before a camera even enter a picture. The video is pornographic because it records the prior fact of this obscene event. And it is pornographic because in producing another explicit trophy, it converts death from groove, indignity to "raw" information.

What is to say death is missing here. The video production of the hunt both immerses us in the hyperreal immediacy of the hunter's kill, and puts us at one further remove from the animal's death. With his video camera the hunter produces a reviewable trophy of his Dead Experience. His video record further confirms his hunt as an action that produces a false version from a world of imperceptible extirpacity. He ignores the fact that he himself determines nature as explicit, material surface, in order to then free himself from it.

We should be worried, living in an info-milieu which makes byte-sized, two-dimensional units of all events, even death. On the news we watch an inhabited building, videoed by the missile that destroys it. The image may fade to grey, but death withdraws from such a scene, in which it is no longer even implicit. The unconscious death of death is the trophy of the video hunter. The face of death is also, though, the implicit truth of the 'explicit immediate' media in which we are, with killing anonymity, immersed. So much killing, so little death.

The death of Edward Thompson pulls us up short. Cultural Studies has become the gossip of this and that. In Thompson's case this involved the popular dispute about Perry Anderson in the 1960s, the caustic unceasing outrage against Stuart Hall and Richard Johnson in a History Workshop conference in an old church in Oxford in the late 1970s, the absurd pomposity recorded by those who only knew him from the outside. And, of course, the labeling in the Oxford meeting he said, "I reject without reservation the identification of the Marxist tradition of historiography of which I have been taken as our representative of culturalism." This term is Richard Johnson's invention. But, of course, Thompson was all and none of that. It is impossible to think of any of these disputes without recognizing that they were not academic in the arcane sense that much cultural theory is couched, but directly political. On the other hand there was nothing that was technically 'academic' which was not equally political. Ultimately, even the very personal was political. From the death of his brother by a firing squad in Bulgaria in World War II (which he recounted in his first book) to his last book on Blake (Thompson becomes Blake), the literary, the historical, the political, the personal are one.

His legacy was to compel us to engage with human others, to think ourselves into their situation, whether they were the late eighteenth-century working class making themselves, or those, in the twentieth century, living under the terror of nuclear power, who choose to resist the ultimate death machine. If Thompson was the ultimate Luddite, it was because he was convinced that the mechanization of everyday life was not conducive to our social health.

The central feature of Edward's life and work was that it was not academic in the narrow sense of the term. He was not part of the academic production of which he was himself a critic in _The Making of the English Working Class, Whigs and Hunters, Blake_. His mind was present in his scholarship (in particular, perhaps, those collected under the title _Writing By Camelback_), his forensic intervention in the theoretical concerns of the New Left (The Poetry of Theory), and his systemic campaigns against nuclear weapons from the late 1950s to his death. Ultimately, however, his major contribution was to a complete rethinking of how history is written, involving the redefinition of people's history, and the involvement of non-academics in the research and writing of that history. More than any other thinker in the British New Left, Thompson, to use Gramsci's phrase, helped to invent Organizational Intellectuals. Anyone concerned with Cultural Studies today who forgets his legacy does so at his or her peril.

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