



**CP Reader's Union at Housmans Bookshop
Developing and Contact – *Common* by Hayley Newman**



‘... the truly philosophical element in every work, be it called literature, art or science (or whatever) is its capacity to be developed. This capacity in a work arises precisely when a reader steps in and, as it were, picks something up to take it further.’

**Copy Press invites you to join
Pauline de Souza
David Cross
and Sally O'Reilly
developing *Common***

**Friday, 8 May
6.30 – 8.00pm
Housmans Bookshop
5 Caladonian Rd, London N1 9DX**

RSVP@copypress.co.uk essential as numbers are limited.

***Common* by Hayley Newman: isbn 978-0-9553792-6-0
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CP Reader's Union seeks common spaces for readers and writers to delve into the possibilities and limitations of 'coming together' in our contemporary society. www.copypress.co.uk

Common and the Individual

Pauline de Souza

8-5-2015

I am approaching Hayley Newman's book *Common* by considering the pigeon on its front cover and the fly that dies in the bank safe. By focusing on these two I can explore the idea of the common and the individual.

Imagine a pigeon feeding on the ground. Sometimes a pigeon will feed on its own other times it will eat with a flock of pigeons. When a pigeon feeds in a flock and fight over food you will often see a pigeon raise its wings to protect its own food from the other pigeons. What the pigeon is also doing is establishing its individual presence within the flock. When it feeds on its own its individual presence is already confirmed.

What about the fly? Well before the fly existed its first existence was as a maggot. In this state it existed with other maggots as they fed. It is not clear if maggots acknowledge each other as they bore into their food source, but as they search for food they are programmed to become something else and only that idea matters. In the sixteenth century the meaning of the word maggot meant a whimsical idea. The maggot's need for food for reproduction can be seen as whimsical, and this could be the only idea that it has. Over a period of time the maggot becomes a fly and for most of its life-time is an individual until it mates. Even when flies share the same food source they never feed as a pack.

So, already we can see how the individual and idea of a common bond are developing. We can relate the pigeon and fly to the existence of human beings. We exist in different scattering of groups based on a common interest, but that common interest might not be as total as people assume. There are differences. Within these scattering of groups

there are always individuals whose existence requires them to be outside as well as within the various groups. The ideas of the individual person can be strange to the group almost whimsical, but the individual needs to exist.

The Common Statute of European Law clearly states individual freedom has the right to exist alongside political liberty. The practice of individual freedom is important for the common good, and the common good should provide freedom for the individual. In this way the relationship between the individual and the common good (in relation to the various groups with which the individual interacts) should work together. Positioning becomes essential.

The existence of the individual requires mental and physical space. The mental space is an emotional-conceptual one while the physical space requires facts. The individual requires recognition, a sort of conceptual branding or acknowledgement. The common good equally requires a mental and physical space. Similar to the individual it requires the same sort of conceptual branding or acknowledgement. In this way the idea of branding can be related to advertising tag lines. The tag line creates an identified concept.

I am going to end with two well-known tag lines used in the twenty-first century. The first one is Android: be together (but not the same). The second is Oreal: because you are worth it.

A skeleton for a presentation

Sally O'Reilly

8-5-2015

Common employs an array of genres – of form and discourse – since one day (in this book) is never linguistically homogenous. There are many different functions and registers of language, both written and spoken, throughout. But what is most striking is the range of relations between text and performance, writing and action, between the real, imagined and desired.

Several translations between text and performance, and vice versa, can be outlined by chapter:

PROLOGUE: demonstration as performance of position, ideals; slogans an act of compression.

EARLY BIRD: ventriloquism of insects, imposing text on a reality beyond language.

LIFE SAVER: script with stage direction, unrealisable, in the tradition of Artaud.

DAYLIGHT RUBBERY: re-performing historical techniques (Max Ernst's frottage).

LUNCH: a recipe as an infinitely repeatable script. Here the recipes reveal a situation as a series of instances, decisions and tendencies; it starts to unravel a 'singular' problem and suggest how it might be within our power to change it incrementally.

THE UNDERWRITING OF DISASTER: ritual of the Lutine Bell, rung to mark disasters of global significance. The Adam Room, an eighteenth century Wiltshire dining room in Lloyds Building, performing the company's origins; validity and power to perform such a feat.

THE LOBBY: naming buildings, proclaiming their iconic status.

HEAVY METAL: description of a reality that 'naturally' involves coded performance.

APOCALYPSE KETTLE: another demo, signage inhabits the description.

RIOTOUS RAINBOW: transcription of conversations.

CRISIS CABARET: satirical grotesque of reality written as an imagined cabaret; then reconstructed in a real cabaret at the Barbican.