WRITING UNDER

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Writing Under: Selections from the Internet Text

Alan Sondheim

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WRITING UNDER

SELECTIONS FROM THE INTERNET TEXT

ALAN SONDHEIM

with an introduction by

SANDY BALDWIN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

YOU'RE OUT THERE

You're out there, I know you're out there!

Come in, come in from the cold!

Write me, I know you're out there.

Contact me; I've been waiting for you.

If you don't write, then there's no there.

If you write you draw me towards you.

If you write you bring me in from the cold.

I exist because you're out there.

I exist to be drawn in.

Write me, I know you're out there!

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PREPOSTEROUS JUSTIFICATIONS

AN INTRODUCTION TO ALAN SONDHEIM'S WRITING UNDER: SELECTIONS FROM THE INTERNET TEXT

Sandy Baldwin

I ***remember seeing*** the first announcement of Alan Sondheim's "The Internet Text" – a selection of which is in the book before you now – in early 1994 or so, probably announced on the Postmodern Culture email listserv, which I read regularly at the time. Looking up the description today, I find it begins by describing the work as follows: "a meditation on the philosophy, psychology, political economy, and psychoanalytics of Internet (computer) communication. It describes the phenomenology of the 'electronic subject,' the user who is plugged into the computer as a correspondent or researcher. "

The first thing I note is that Sondheim was not offering a "critique" or "theory" as academics like to call their work. Such approaches indicate a preference for the way the critic or theorist gains an aura of understanding and evaluation, while at the same time taking up a position at a measured distance from the object. No, this is a meditation, with the sense of contemplation, daily practice, and almost mystical immersion.

Secondly, I note the parenthetical qualification of the Internet as computer, the concatenation of network into the stand-alone device. This suggests a focus on the node of the network, that is, on the subject and the body at the terminal, or even on the subject and the body as the terminal node of the network. As Sondheim carefully shows in the work that follows, the body *as* terminal node is worked-over and inscribed by Internet flows and data packets. The point to be read in "Internet (computer)" is the folding of the network into the real spaces of bodies and cultures at the terminal, a fold that is increasingly everywhere in the decades following Sondheim's opening gambit, a fold carried with our cellphones, GPS, RFID chips, and ever-present Facebook accounts.

The book before you today is culled or filtered from "The Internet Text."

Let me come clean: I am in awe of this writing, struck by it, disturbed, and moved. For me this is the great work of writing on the net. What do I mean by "writing on the net"? This is a writing about the net and a writing that takes place on the net. This slight confusion is significant and poses questions about writing on the net, questions of what, who, where, and when. In what follows, I return to and rewrite these questions, questions that must always be fundamental to writing, whether on the net or not. The focus of this book of filtering and culling of "The Internet Text" is writing. It could be called a selection from the overall work, but as I will argue, when it comes to "The Internet Text," the part or selection of the work is in a complex relation to the whole.

What will you find here? This book is not an introduction to "The Internet Text" as a whole, but a selection of writings from it. Let's say this book focuses on Sondheim's conception of writing as *wryting*. The neologism picks up the a/e play of Derrida's *différance* and the a/y play of feminism's "womyn." Certainly, Sondheim is engaged with a deconstructive troubling of the graphic/vocal and with a feminist inquiry into gendering/sexuality in writing. He is also engaged with a generalized play of writing. There is perhaps a suitably absurd sense that in *wryting* the "i" or I is removed from *writing* and replaced with the question or "y." Wryting is writing that questions and disturbs itself, that ruptures the symbols and communicational channels of writing. A writing that questions and disturbs is uneasily suspended between the philosophical and literary, between the analytical and performative. The result is the tautological stutter of writing writes writing writing, and so on, or simply "wryting." Sondheim, as usual, is perfectly accurate in his exploration of disturbed textual spaces. Wryting is appropriate and necessary for a meditation on Internet (computer) communication.

The significance of Sondheim's wryting is not that it approaches electronic communication in terms of a generalized broadening of the communication situation (roughly the approach by communications studies in analyzing the net) nor does it approach electronic communication in terms of a more specific analysis of the array of functions and interactions offered by the technology (roughly the approach of new media studies). Both approaches may be found in Sondheim's work, and there are ways of aligning his writing with the genres

of communications studies or new media studies. New media studies, in particular, offers many precise descriptions of computer writing and writing on the net. Early works, such as Jay David Bolter's *Writing Space* (1992, reissued 2001) or the work of George Landow, focused on the hypertext linking of texts and units of text as the key transformation of writing in digital environments. More recent works such as Lev Manovich's *The Language of New Media* (2002) attempt to subsume writing within a new vocabulary—cinematic in Manovich's case—distinct from the traditions of print textuality. Friedrich Kittler's stunning essays on software root writing in the material protocols of digital code, and Matthew Kirschenbaum's recent *Mechanisms* (2009) similarly insists on what he calls the "forensic" materiality of writing on computers, articulated by its files, formats, and archival traces in machine memory.

Unlike these critical works, with their admirable analytical and theoretical points, Sondheim's focus on wryting involves a phenomenology thick with human perception and intentions that are bodily, personal, political, and communal. Wryting is distinct in insisting on the writer's relation to otherness, an insistence which informs every meditation and occasion of writing in Sondheim's work. Sondheim does not offer a decision about writing on a computer and on the net that helps sort out the indecision of other thinkers, who continue to tussle between dehumanizing threats (such as loss of human contact and expressive power) versus utopian potentials (as in Marshall McLuhan's 1964 assertion that writing with computers would lead to a new condition of "universal understanding and unity"). Instead, the significance of Sondheim's wryting is that it re-sets these theories and analyses and debates in terms of the relevances of a world that does not allow simple or final evaluations—writing on the net is *this* or *that*—but does allow the illumination of writing as a world of subjects and others in relation.

These texts come at you with different "tones" and "styles." Much of the writing is condensed and aphoristic. As the work of media theorists such as Marshall McLuhan and McKenzie Wark shows, such a style is fitting and even necessary in an era of information flows and sound bites. In *Minima Moralia*, Theodor Adorno proposed that in a philosophical text, "every proposition should be equally close to the center." Sondheim's works is less dialectical

than Adorno's, less committed to a final synthesis of concepts, but is equally driven by the particularity of the writer's concerns. The tones or styles here range from the philosophical/critical, cast in the voice of a "theorist"; to direct musings in an authorial voice, often highly personal and introspective; to "fictional" texts written in other voices or through avatars (a practice which I will return to later); to highly fragmented, processed, and abstract writings. Works closer to the theoretical offer clear, erudite, and inspiring explanations of digital writing and subjectivity. Works closer to the abstract can feel dizzying and impenetrable. What will you make of the following? "[o-z][t-z][h-z][e-z][c-z][h-z][a-z][p-z]" and so on? While this reads as abstract, processed, and fragmented, it is carefully framed, as is everything Sondheim writes. The abstract illuminates the theoretical, and vice versa. Sondheim offers the fragment I just quoted in a discussion of wryting, as an example of text produced through complex substitutions. He points to its interesting graphical and "almost readable" quality. It is a text that theoretically poses questions of the borderline of human writing and reading, on the one hand, and machines that read and write, on the other. In this way, it is exemplary of "The Internet Text" as a problematic whole.

Everything that follows in this book, indeed everything in "The Internet Text," is of this kind, if you know how to attend to it. Sondheim emphasizes that the texts produced and contained here are always made with "legibility in mind." We must read the syntax, contents, and layout on screen as all quite deliberate, however apparently incoherent, as always shaped towards a reader who can engage—who can take on the challenge and risk to engage—with these texts and their field of effects. Sondheim writes: "I envision the reader as self-generating, as if the texts were a form of inner voice."

What are the facts on "The Internet Text"? It is the title Sondheim gives to the aggregate of his writing since January 1994. The date is significant for several reasons. It means that "The Internet Text" is continuous with the text-oriented Internet of gopher, listservs, email, etc., prior to the World Wide Web, which becomes public later in 1994. It also means that "The Internet Text" is continuous with the developments in the web since, up to the present. In fact, Sondheim will have published hundreds more pieces of "The Internet Text"

between the writing of this introduction and the publication of this book. Sondheim writes at least one and often several "sections" or "pieces" per day. The pieces are worked over by machine but saturated with the author and his concerns. A typical piece is short, about 43 lines, though some are much larger. They are written with Pico, or more recently Nano, both simple text editors, and edited with various Linux commands, programs, and scripts. The writing is intimately tied to Sondheim's personal and bodily disposition. He claims that the longest period without writing into "The Internet Text" was about six days and left him dizzy and ill. The pieces themselves show intense pressure to write and write again: bodily pressure (writing through illness, insomnia, and so on), psychological pressure (writing through anxiety, ecstasy, desire, ennui, and so on), and social pressure (writing through poverty, prejudice, a world of conflicts, and so on). The list could go on. The writer and body at the terminal node subjects himself and is subjected to the domain of the net through a process of continual return, reclarification, and re-entry. The process is obsessive or "neurotic" in the way it continually and obsessively analyzes, turns over, and picks apart the text. It is equally a *staging* of the obsessive text. Sondheim performs a disorder of the self and writing in relation to the net, on the one hand, and to the writing body and its scriptual exhaustion and expenditure, on the other. To read these texts is to grasp this staging. Take this as precisely the "'electronic subject,' the user who is plugged into the computer as a correspondent or researcher." Sondheim describes this process as "rewrite," or "(re)presencing of the subject online." While most models of textual revision involve a provisionality or construction of rewriting, and continue to assert the original text through the rewritten text (think of the cipher or palimpsest), with Sondheim there are waves of rewriting with no graspable priority or secondariness. As *Ecclesiastes* tells us: "Of *making* many *books there is no end*, and much study wearies the body."

There's already a problem with the facts. How big is "The Internet Text"? How many pages total? How many pieces? These are questions of *the work* and how closely it conforms to the tradition of the printed book or to other archival forms. What set of statements enclose this work? What are the edges of the work? The margin? The page? These terms make the question seem to be

medial, tied to the transformation of print into digital writing. In fact, they are fundamental questions of the written work as labor, as a project of the writer. These questions are already present in *any writing* from the moment of its inception, from the moment the project is real in the world. This also means they are present from the moment of the project's ruin, where the release of the work into the world leads inevitably to partial and missed readings, to physical decay, and to oblivion. Sondheim himself offers conservative estimates of the size of "The Internet Text" at 25,000 pages of text—by comparison, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake* combined are about 1,400 pages—and about 500 gigabytes of associated media files, but the total is difficult to determine and Sondheim is vague or uncertain about keeping track. Moreover, "The Internet Text" is not limited to text, since many of the pieces include links to images, videos, sound recordings, and other media stored on Sondheim's website. These multimedia should be construed as parts of the text, as illuminations and extensions of the writing.

"The Internet Text" is a daily practice, but Sondheim also continues as a video-maker, musician (currently on guitar, oud, pipa, saz, and previously on the tabla, shakuhachi, you name it), philosopher, collector of rare books, wildlife activist, *Second Life* performer and interventionist, and the list goes on. In this sense "The Internet Text" refracts, comments on, links to, and contextualizes his other practices. Is "The Internet Text" simply an aspect of his work? Or is it his only practice? Are all these other domains contained by and part of "The Internet Text"? The question is not simply one of identifying the genre or medium of the artist; it has psychological and physiological reverberations. If you talk to and spend time with Sondheim, it is quickly clear the way the work of "The Internet Text" is written into all that he does. He is constantly working on and preparing to work on and in the process of finishing a piece. He becomes uncomfortable, even ill, if this process is derailed, if he does not write a section or complete a piece. The work is staged autobiographically. Add to this the fact that the writing, music, video, etc., Sondheim has produced over forty years—well before he began primarily working with the computer—is in some way—more or less systematic, more or less unaccountable—continuous with "The Internet Text."

Sondheim's written pieces are distributed on multiple email lists, posted on the web, copied, lost, and archived. In short they both do and do not form a coherent body of the writer's work. Is this work *published*? Publication means many things, including an ISBN, a title with an author's name, and a coherent boundary of the project. Sondheim has published many books, and this book, the one before your gaze, the one under your fingers, has all these things, and yet strains at publication. The writing here took place and continues to take place on multiple sites and in different forms. It is important to note that this is not a result of "multimedia," that is, the multiplicity and flow of Sondheim's pieces are not because of a technological transformation of a flat and one-dimensional printed work into a multidimensional and rhizomatic multimedial work; it is not the movement from the word to the link or from the page to the screen. The techno-logic behind such assumptions, were it at work here, would in fact dispel and render insipid the complexity and urgency that underlies "The Internet Text."

Is there a recognizable form to "The Internet Text"? The work is highly formed, there are no end of forms to it. There is also formlessness to this work, there is a way that it is situated beyond any form. Rather than rest on such gnomic descriptions, let me look at what takes place after the 1994 introduction and dedication. Sondheim begins with a series of 13 numbered propositions. The 13th concludes: "13. Naturally, then, it is also irrelevant to ask where one goes from here." One echo here is Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, with its numbered atomic propositions describing the structure of the world, a major reference for Sondheim. Wittgenstein famously breaks off after seven propositions, with many sub-propositions, having exhausted the propositional structure and the speech or utterance of this structure, leaving only the inexpressible and silence. If Sondheim deals with much the same problems of reality, the limits of logic and expression are not as clear in "The Internet Text" as they seemed to be at the end of the *Tractatus*. Of course, these limits turned out to be unclear for Wittgenstein as well, who famously continued to expand and ponder the problems opened by the *Tractatus* in his later works and up to his death.

Returning to Sondheim: why is it "[n]aturally," he writes in the 13th proposition, "irrelevent to ask where one goes from here"? Are the propositions complete in some natural, unquestioned way? The previous entry, number 12, discusses the iridescent otherness of the space that is cyberspace: "everything is absent within the Internet. (Everything announces, dresses, address. A character, screen or otherwise, is an announcement.)" The natural condition of such a space means that nothing is given except as it is announced, except as Internet protocol describes it. The Wittgensteinian problem of a logical description of reality is completed, since all Internet objects can be logically described, but the problem is also left open and incalculable, since no complete description is possible. While Sondheim's "[n]aturally" gestures towards some sort of similar closure, towards a Wittgensteinian complete description of the structure of reality, the situation is rather different from Wittgenstein. Sondheim's thirteenth proposition was soon followed by lengthy numbered texts, running to 14 (I believe), entitled net1 through net14. A series of topical sections also appeared, with titles such as FANTASM or SPEW, written more or less at the same time as the early pieces. Sondheim followed with a series of lettered sections. The current pieces continue to be gathered according to this letter scheme. The titles are a.txt, b.txt, c.txt, and so on; then, aa.txt, ab.txt, and so on. Last I looked, it was around the q's. Presumably, once he passes qz.txt, he will move to r's, and once past zz.txt, having used up all the two letter names, he will move to three letter names such as aaa.txt. Added to this are Sondheim's many glossaries, lists, summaries, revisions, recantations, etc., all examples of what he once called "preposterous justifications."

Of course, this naming methodology (a.txt and so on) echoes computer file name conventions. No surprise: this is exactly what Sondheim's texts are. Make no mistake: "The Internet Text" is a collocation of files in a directory. Every piece is posted on his website, http://alansondheim.org, and mirrored many other places. The site presents itself as a directory: no graphics or Flash, or what have you, just a list of files. The seemingly retrograde presentation emphasizes the code and inscription at work under the smooth surfaces of today's web. Each text is ASCII, a flat text file with fixed-width lines, no special characters, no links, no multimedia, nothing but text. It also emphasizes

continuous and iterative production over emphasis on specific works. The gathering into named files and listings in directories can continue with no end in sight.

I should pay more attention to the title of Sondheim's introduction. It is, in fact: "Introduction to the Internet Text as a whole." As I suggested already, to say "as a whole" is complicated, opening a dizzying set of problems. To think on this, consider the rhetorics initiated and executed by title "The Internet Text."

First, synecdoche, *pars par toto*, or possibly parataxis. Which is to say, the title announces the text of the Internet, the writing of the net, the textual summation and simulacrum of the Internet "as a whole." Synecdochally, it is a part of the total net that it describes. The rhetorical hyperbole is the reaching and overreaching required by such a performance.

At the same time, the title implies the split: Internet/text. Text may describe or write the Internet, but there is a strict topology that separates the two. The rhetoric of parataxis leads to a tropological problematic: if parataxies implies metonymy, as is argued by Quintillian, it becomes difficult to differentiate from synecdoche. In the paratactical juxtaposition, do we utter the part that belongs to the whole, synecdochally? Or does the paratactical utterance performatively create the part-whole relation, metonymically? In this case, does each text (in "The Internet Text") utter the Internet as a whole, in its writing? Or does it performatively create an effect of such an utterance (and no more than an effect)? Is it possible to utter, to describe the net as a whole, or it only possible to rhetorically create the effect of such an utterance? The question of the grounds of parataxis becomes a question of the extent of the written work vis-à-vis the Internet, and of the extent of the net (as a whole or as such). In turn, the question of the grounding of writing and of the net, a question of domain and reference, points to the philosophical problematic of inclusion in terms of parts and wholes, a discipline named mereology, and points to a problematic that extends from the origins of Western philosophy in the Parmenidean dialog, with its concerns about whether being and non-being can be uttered, to the set theory of Cantor, and beyond Cantor to contemporary discourses on sets and categories.

Finally, the title performs the rhetorical act of epigraphy, or better *onomastics*: it is the name of the writing which it is, the proper name, the official name, the legal name of the work, a name that can be given an ISBN and entered in library databases, and so on. Problems persist here, really the same problematic of inclusion described by the rhetoric of parataxis. No number and no binding limn the work, but Sondheim refers to it under a single name, "The Internet Text." The name is given. The name locates but the reference is not simple.

Sondheim's recent work turns to use the virtual world *Second Life* to continue the meditations of "The Internet Text." There are continuities and discontinuities with this virtual world work and the other writings. Virtual worlds offer the possibility of world-ing, of writing worlds of possibility. From the first, Sondheim approached world-making through writing in chat rooms, email lists, MOOs, ytalk, and other environments. The concern with the apparent formal control, coherence, and closure or suturing of the virtual world vis-à-vis the real extends from these earlier writings to the graphical spaces of *Second Life*. Inherent in all this is the paradoxical split or chiasm between the formal system and the real of bodies, the split that drives Sondheim's work, the split that becomes increasingly uncanny, fuzzy, difficult, and fractalized the closer one looks. Sondheim himself often uses the word "entangled" to describe this amalgam of code and protocols with subjectivities and bodily utterances. He focuses on the point where code becomes a sign, where code becomes readable *for me*. At this point there is a deep and poetic difference between the deictic utterance representing the subject and the assertive sign through which subject speaks. The poetics of this depth lead to uncanny identifications with the screen and its contents, a turning of psychic projection/introjection which Sondheim calls *-jectivity*. There are narratives and genres of this turning, specific formalizations that play out this uncanny poetics. Sondheim's work in *Second Life* is the latest of these formalizations.

At first glance, *Second Life* is very different from the writing of "The Internet Text." It is language-less and writing deprived. The graphic environment's insistence on the visual breaks the linguistic space of naming and labeling of things. Instead of writing, it involves movement and voice, and with this

undeniable effects of immediacy, proximity, and intimacy. Yet these effects issue from a globalized space of signs and bodies—in short, from a space of inscriptive signals, a space of wryting. Consider the familiar net space of "chat." Chat texts of the sort that Sondheim's worked with in the earliest days of "The Internet Text" unfold written characters in a visual space as the emblem of the subject, as visual self-evidence that metonymically displaces the body much in the same way the graphical environment of *Second Life* uses avatars as bodily stand-ins. At the same time, net chat also deals with a continuity of writing with the composition or voicing of the self. It names and announces the subject through writing. It performs a masquerade of the subject with intensely real effects—think here of netsex or of the famous Eliza chatbot—as well as with an inevitable failure of the subject's performance (the chat ends, the labels are false, the words fade from the screen). To a greater or lesser degree, the use of chat in *Second Life* also relates to the presentation of the self through the graphical avatar. The subject is composed through the *Second Life* avatar and through text chat. The scripts and interfaces of *Second Life* are an inscriptive domain of labeling where everything is marked, everything is readable and cultural. This domain is continuous with the considerations of literary text production and interpretation found in other parts of "The Internet Text." This domain is possibly—here's the gamble, the poetic speculation—quite different from the real of bodies. In this sense, *Second Life* is readable as follows: *it is a new writing for me as I engage in the virtual world.*

   Second Life is experienced through an avatar, a graphic representation of the user. Sondheim's writing practice also employs "avatars." These characters are at work in many pieces of "The Internet Text." They include: Nikuko, Julu, Jennifer, Dr. Leopold Konninger, and a certain Alan. Sondheim encourages us to think of these characters as avatars or emanations, as partial presentations and displays of the self. These characters appear in dialogic and narrative settings. They articulate diverse and even impossible discursive, philosophical, and libidinal positions. Think of J. G. Ballard's *The Atrocity Exhibition*, which deploys series of not quite interchangeable characters in its collection of narratives: Travis, Travers, Talbot, Talbert, Traven (the last echoing the disappearing author B Traven). The series may or may not stand-in for Ballard, just as the

avatars of "The Internet Text" stand in an indirect but definite relation to Alan Sondheim. Each is a moment of identity in a series of variant or outered ontological states. Think of the various utterances and constructions of self we all engage with online, whether through the site and homepage, or through various logins and personas, from Facebook to email address and beyond. Such emanations are part of the fundamental uncertainty that is conceptually inseparable from literature: "who is speaking?"

I began by remembering the date I first became aware of "The Internet Text," but the work itself is written, or rather dedicated, in relation to another date. Reading on in the original announcement of "The Internet Text," I find that Sondheim writes that "The Internet Text" is "dedicated to Michael Current, my co-moderator on the Cybermind list, who passed away recently." Several things are interesting here. Sondheim's reference to the background context of the Cybermind email list points, once again, to a source of "The Internet Text" in the dialogic writing spaces of the pre-WWW Internet, spaces that continue today but are often hidden or muted amidst commercial websites and flashy social media. An email list or IRC channel or MUD necessitated a relation to others built on and through writing. Writing on the net in these ways and in those days was a contract, continually fading or scrolling off the screen, always in need of renewal, a contract for relations to other people and for the possibility of communication.

In turn, Current's death soon after he co-founded Cybermind with Sondheim became an originary trauma in the list discussion, as Jonathan Marshall's useful ethnography *Living on Cybermind* shows. Grief at losing Current seeped into all exchanges on the list. No writing, no act of exchange, was possible on the list without this contract with the absent and mourned other. This kernel of the real provides a structural principle for writing on the Cybermind list, and Sondheim's pieces from this list are among those collected in "The Internet Text." The death of a fellow writer, an addressee and interlocutor, in particular one with whom Sondheim was in close textual relations, provides the reality principle for "The Internet Text."

Such a "structural principle" can only be thought of as more less at work, as more or less unaccountable. Current's writing is literally gone from the net.

A few lines remain, a few texts, a few words, including the dedication to "The Internet Text," the dedication archived and copied a multiple sites around the net. A dedication is not much. In a way, all that remains of Michael Current is the name, and this name is tiny in the massive and dispersed work of "The Internet Text." The name is easily lost and vanishes into the work, which is to say that the proper name washes into the Internet as a whole, and one can subscribe to the Cybermind list today and write with no knowledge or relation to Michael Current. To repeat, since repetition is one strategy of appearance and memory: Current's writing is literally gone from the net. Sondheim makes frequent use of "literally" as a modifier and we should take "literally" "literally," *to the letter*. It is the letters that vanish, the writings nowhere to be found. "Literally" makes us think of an existence in writing, an existence thought of and experienced through writing. Such an existence is always already subject to rewrite, to revision, to a vanishing of bodies that are only letters. It is an existence of bodies that are literally *gone*. Sondheim's work *challenges us* to think and experience the problematic and paradoxic ontology of bodies that are literally net writing. Why do I emphasize that it "challenges us"? Is there not a resistance here, an otherness to the literal body? Is a body, any body, your body, my body, "literally" anything?

Since I invoked memory in the face of literal oblivion, we should think of the Freudian problem of melancholy or "failure to mourn." Melancholy involves the inability or refusal to cast off the lost person as an object in memory; that is, it involves an insistent holding to the mental object beyond and in the face of absence. Paradoxically, this is considered a form of traumatic disorder, involving a *failure* to mourn; and yet, at the same time, melancholy is precisely what keeps alive the absent other in memory. The melancholic obsessively, stubbornly, frantically, succeeds in failing to forget and close off memory.

As ever with "The Internet Text," things are not *simply* melancholic. The particular death is absorbed into the overall work. Rather than Michael Current's death as a "structural principle," which suggests the large-scale and rigid, to read "The Internet Text" is to deal with this impossible loss as a principle of de-structuring, everywhere in effect but never totally present.

While Michael Current's death figures only in the early pieces, all the writing is transfigured by his loss. Contrast this to the when a spouse dies or a child is lost. We understand the obsessive nature of these losses. They form a repertoire of stock traumas that empty the true mystery of impossible mourning. By contrast, it is important to recognize the singular and singularizing absence at work here. It must be admitted that Michael Current and Sondheim knew each other well enough but were not lovers or long acquaintances or brothers. They knew each other through electronic communication: email, chat, telephone, and so on. These communications media supplement and block, network and displace what we mean by *knowing* another. They provides mediate tokens for the other, most often in textual form. The visible text of email or chat is read as worked over by and through the other. Still, Michael Current was never present for Alan Sondheim. In an email to me, Sondheim explained: "I didn't know even what he looked like until I received the obituary picture from his mother, in the mail." A telling detail. The picture given by the mother is a perfect icon of displaced intimacy. The mother is the site of true loss and mourning, while the picture passed on to the other is the drifting site of mediation.

As ever with "The Internet Text," things are not *simply* mediated. Something quite different takes place: an almost metaphysical insistence on the presence of the absent other no matter how absent, no matter how significant, no matter how potentially trivial to the rest of us. Was this not a death like most, significant to some, less so to others? Yet we are asked to take on the burden, to mourn nonetheless. An infinite task: to mourn all the life in the world, to mourn all that lives and passes, and—most paradoxically and insistently of all—to experience this mournfulness in the clean and well-formed textual spaces of the Internet. What takes place in "The Internet Text," even as the reference to Michael Current's death is scattered and dispersed, is a minute and never used up reference to the absent other in every word.

Finally, remember that this is a dedication. What does a dedication do? It gives a name to something, shadows that thing, shadows this writing with the memory of the absent person. It dates the writing. It does not simply mean it references the date of composition but also that it links it to the singular memory of a real and traumatic loss in the world. As if to say: this took place,

this loss, this passing, this death of Michael Current, took place once only. In another way, the taking place of this loss remains suspended here in writing, as the dedication to this text, as the dedication of this unaccountable text. As a metonymy and drifting displacement of the actual loss, the dedication is also lost, deep in other files, far off on the Internet. It marks the work but cannot be said to hold it in the same way as the dedication on the first page of a book. With this, there is a return to the problem of "the work." How big is "The Internet Text"? How many pieces? What dispersions? What forms? What is not a part of it? Does this partake of it, this writing here, that I am writing, that you are reading, already on a word processor, sure to be on the Internet in the long run, linkable in actuality or virtuality? Where does this book lead? Where will it lead you?

a summing-up

My work deals with the relationship of consciousness to the world vis-à-vis the mediation of problematic and "dirty" symbolic domains.

My work deals with the wonder of the world as new bandwidths, vistas, histories and geographies, are made available.

My work deals with the problems of foundations, Absolute, primordial, originary, in terms of debris and scattering.

My work is a continuous dialog, itself scattered among distributions.

My work evades biography, diary, autobiography, the anecdotal, whilst plunging into the simulacra of personal narratives.

My work exceeds itself, resonates with itself, with others; the others inhabit my work which curls around fictivity.

My work is my obsession, to an unhealthy degree; however, when filled with despair, there are moments of exaltation as distant shores are glimpsed.

My work is fearful of being found out; it is worried close to death.

My work is a stripping away of irrelevance; my back to the wall, I inhabit the world.

My work is a constant meditation on the world, on its diffuseness, its encapsulations, circumlocutions, circumscriptions.

My work has pretensions towards the philosophical and the scientific; I strip my work away from my work as well.

My work touches language, body, and sexuality, all in relation to an inert real.

My work insists on the fragility of the good, of stasis, of permanence; it embraces the plasma, is swallowed by holocaust, dissolves in detritus.

My work covers the same ground repeatedly.

My work is simultaneously excess and denudation, artifice and natural deployment, ornament and structure, text and subtext, suture and wound.

My work is simultaneously hypothesis and hypothetical, a proffering or wager.

My work inscribes my work, deconstructing inscription and the walls surrounding the Torah.

My work hedges and devours death; I work furiously, death will allow even this and one other final flourish.

My work penetrates to the state of inversion; what is negative, is positive, and what is positive, negative.

My work is based on the fissure, not the inscription; it is based on substance, not dyad, on ruptured continuities, not positives and negatives.

My work is a collapsed ecstatic; my work is a collapsed aesthetic.

My work presses the systemic until it breaks; my work is a broken work, construing breakage, irruption of subtext into text, symbolic into subtext, substance into symbolic; my work breaks the inscriptive chain itself.

My work carries equivalence across media, genidentity across protocols and virtualities, sexualities across avatars and bodies, politics into the flesh-heart and ideological strangulation.

My work is discontinuous on the surface, tending towards stylistic extremes.

My work explores epistemologically and ontologically shifted bandwidths; my work brings the uttermost into the vicinity.

My work explores the desperate exigencies of the flesh, the shock-tactics of annihilation-creation, the degeneration of generators.

My work tends towards the unaccountable, the unaccounted-for; my work emphasizes the inconceivable.

My work inhabits originary past and indeterminate futures, locating the plasma at the former, and the final outpost of substance at the latter.

My work runs from wavelengths universe-spanning to particle wavelengths, listening everywhere; my work is a reporting from the limits.

My work inhales information-annihilation, being-annihilation, its own absence and every other.

My work inflates, exhausts; I have a desperate relation to my work; I tend my work in the meager hopes of its survival beyond me.

My work is its own; my work is centered in the dissipated locus of the histories of the self; my work is beyond my work.

My work occurs within non-Aristotelian logics, within logics of non-distributivity; my work occurs within dusts and radiations; my work exists in relation to the death of the symbolic.

My work decodes my work; my work brings the code of work, the code of labor, to the surface.

My work is codework, operational research for the flesh; my work abjures absolute frameworks, definitive infinities.

My work explores the inaccessibly high-finite, the inaccessibly low-finite, numeric flux dissolution into physical-material real.

My work is the future of philosophy, the future of intellectual work, of the propriety of the intellectual; my work is the afterthought of the past, the afterthought of the future, the thought of thought and its draining.

"My work" or "my work" but one may say "*" in lieu of the phrase; my work is a place-holder, shifter.

My work is neither this nor that; my work is not both this or that; my work is vulnerable.

My work is analog-stumble, digital clarification; the real is inescapable and production is discrete; my work is never done.

My work is trauma-therapeutic; my work is beyond that, bypasses that, circumvents that; my work is unconscious, of the dream of the real, of the dream of a real; my work stands on its own, ignores me; my work is in spite of me; my work is a collocation; my work circumscribe confusion; my work is insistent; my work is philosophy in the highest and lowest degree; my work is the world's unconscious; my work is the true world of the dissipation of worlds, of the imminence and immanence of death; my work is a bulwark and a fiction; my work is non-fiction, languorous; my work is neurasthenic; my work is the neurosis of the world; my work is never done.

of the book

i cannot write the book i desire; i think constantly, this text is an introduction. there is nothing beyond the introduction.

the introduction is fecund, replete, with the details of the world between heat birth and cold death; the introduction inhales universal annihilation. there is no proper way to express this.

the books i would write break down upon their enunciation.

the announcement of the book is the book; the announcement effaces itself in the exhaustion of continuous production. i hold therapeutically, psychoanalytically, to this production; it becomes a life-form, prehensile; it reaches towards the book; its tentacles begin to wrap themselves around each and every trope; metaphors becomes obstacles and worlds; the production exhales in its own denouement.

only in fear do i look forward to this production which spells my failure, this inability to continue, this waywardness, contrariness.

it reaches through me, comes through me; how could i not believe in ghosts, avatars, cyborgs, prostheses, emananations? i write as if their very existence depended on it. repeatedly: i write myself into existence; i write myself out of it. but the existence is tinged with labor throughout; it is the laboring of an existence fragile and wavering literally beyond belief.

if i could only make a statement and hold to it; if i could only connect a series of statements, almost as if they were axioms "as if to say." it is my strength and weakness that such connections are governed by laughter, and the statements themselves, by misery. i am one of the few who constantly see through myself. i know about failure from within, the rapidity of existence, the inability to seize time for an instant. the darkness is overwhelming: it is

the darkness of the first and last, and only in the midst of chaotic neutrality is the semblance of being manifest.

holding to the book: holding memory in place throughout the vicissitudes of life. a continuous series of failed projects tends asymptotically towards truths that otherwise remain submerged; as it is, they are external to symbolic fore-closure, forms of meanderings more at one with dark matter than luminous and momentary gravity.

i could never tell you where the statement might be; what might be the equiva-lence of the book; what might be its destination or distribution; who might read what could be interpreted as a tropology of illness. i could never tell you the statement, or "make it" in any sense, nor is there a concept which holds fast, the "one good idea" that each of us is supposedly destined to express. it is the "nor" that grips me, the "neither this nor that," the "not both this and that," the dissuasions of propositional logics and their fundamental modes—the superimpositions of gestural logics and their organic gestures towards the frisson and trembling of being in relation.

if only i could write of the rush of letters, the stream of meanings, shape-riding semantics in the depths of the night! if only utterance were at home within me, if there were set themes ready to be expressed, clouds and darkened flows "just" about to turn or return to the symbolic. instead the dance is always around—and it is a dance—a fire elsewhere, beings i could almost see in the dim light, theoretical constructs about to emerge out of a communality i witness, but never partake in. even the play of the world escapes me; i search for books within it; i search for the finality of the word, deconstructing at a rush, fevered with disbelief, exhausted with being. what is "out there" is never a "what," never "out there"; what is out there is insufficient.

biography, autobiography, flattens and disenchants, transforming theory and abstraction to the incidental. scaffolding becomes anecdote and complexity is reduced to the despair of a sleepless night. the book that calls me forth is

otherwise, effacing in the midst of the call, denying in its insistency.

it asserts the "it" "itself," creating presence in absence, ontology in the midst of chaos. it is the engine or process born of desire; it has no otherwise existence. i fight constantly to ensure that its contents and index reflect something beyond that, that desire does not become circumstance, that circumstance does not turn thought of the world into diary. no life is "worth living" and not in the book which calls me.

the book is an addiction.

the book is an inescapable addiction, raging, regulated, in the absence of drugs, called forth in clarity, self-inscribing. not worth living, but a medium of the world, circumstantial mediation or re/mediation in denial.

this denial, rhetoric, flight, is characteristic of that philosophy of dedication inhabiting me like an illness; they are symptoms of the book; they fumble within me; they lock themselves within me; they hold my mind in its insufficiency. they are my promise of redemption.

i deconstruct the possessive, calling on methodologies i recognize as already used, carrying their own stain, their own historic shame. thinking must always cast aside the stigma; thinking must never replace it with the taint of purity. this is what i have been promised, speaking to others through myself: these are the words of the book.

never written, this too a cauterization of a wound refusing to heal.

i cannot write the book "i desire"; that is my failure, not that of the book. even the sentence is a sentencing; what is left to say falls to pieces. indeed, there is nothing beyond the introductions.

like any other illness, a compulsion to write, to rectify, to bring down the house, to absolve rectification, to slant.

to comprehend illness as a symptom, the momentary apparition of being.

"i desire," "my desire." the writing of submergence. the writing of the remnant, remains. the writing of being-submerged, submerged writing.

the book, my book, the book.

A Field so Vast, the Other is Lost in the Details

APROPOS OF WRITING ONLINE/ONLINE WRITING

The Sceptical persuasion, then, is also called Investigative, from its activity in investigating and inquiring; Suspensive, from the feeling that comes about in the inquirer after the investigation; Aporetic, either (as some say) from the fact that it puzzles over and investigates everything, or else from its being at a loss whether to assent or deny.

- *Sextus Empiricus: Outlines of Scepticism*, edited by Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes, Cambridge, 2000.

I cannot stress too strongly, however, that for life as we have seen it develop, both place and movement are indispensable. In order to store information—say in a book, or a mind, or a computer memory—one must be almost certain that the information will be stationary and yet retrievable at a later date. In order for this to occur, the object containing the information must retain its configuration for limited periods. Furthermore, [these periods] must be enough for all the information contained to be retrieved.

- Alan Sondheim, artist talk, 1973, in *Artists Talk: 1969-1977*, edited by Peggy Gale, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 2004.

Unlike the Dogmatists, online work is continuous investigation, movement, within diffused sites, applications, networks, inter- and intra- nets, PDAs, cellphones, wireless and bluetooth, satellite and other radios, cable and other televisions ...

An incandescent investigation, high-speed, apparently but not really unlimited, names and movements, critiques, sources and files, coming and going, circulating, decaying, disappearing, reappearing, transforming ...

New media writing—codework, hypertext, online writing, blog or MOO writing—all of the forms are problematized, liminal, subject to fast-forward taxonomies as new applications and access modes appear.

By "liminal," I mean that such writings are first of all mediated by technological apparatus (including the power grid) and are second of all in-between process and stasis. Process = continuous production and distribution; stasis = virtual objecthood.

Liminal work is nomadic, subject to the vicissitudes of empire; it moves from site to site, is updated or disappears, uses legacy technology or processing power/access available only to a few. But it also requires corporate acquiescence: the access to tools (including the power/network grids); free software requires corporate hardware requires programmers who have to eat and sleep (sometimes!).

One distributes through pre-existing channels or new channel production. Once distributed, the texts, which are after all a collocation or ordered collection of ones and zeros or pluses and minuses—or any other dyadic differentiation—are subject to modification by others and, as such, are vulnerable and characterized by imminent access.

By "imminent access" I mean that any byte whatsoever—any individual smallest unit of a file (text, sound, video, program, other), any zero or one—is independently accessible, and therefore independently alterable. The alteration of a file-in-the-large is a process of filtering, and one might consider online writing as a form of articulated and non-articulated filtering.

By "non-articulated filtering" I mean the actual course of writing by an author; this may be either a process of subjectively and freely choosing program parameters (i.e. a certain number of nouns of type X), and/or a more traditional process of authorial writing, i.e. writing with authorial intent. By "articulated filtering" I mean a form of mathematization of a text or part of a

text, through which the chosen domain is modified in its entirety by one or another algorithm. For examples: non-articulated filtering might as well refer to the writing of a sonnet in the traditional manner; articulated filtering might refer to replacing the vowels of the sonnet with randomly chosen consonants.

(So that "articulation" is used to refer to the application of a technological apparatus—most often a software program—to a text or other file. A Photoshop filter which alters a photograph from color to black and white is a good example. And "non-articulation" refers to "just writing." So why are both forms of "filtering"? Because, here, I want to emphasize the substrate—the blank sheet of paper or empty file, for example [Peirce's "sheet of assertion"] which is filled or spilled through creative work. The filter goes from blank to content; it's a way of thinking through the creative act, from offline to online and back again.)

An online distribution is never complete, never completed. Sites and software protocols change, codes change, revisions are added, texts are hacked, texts are duplicated and downloaded with and without permission (such as it is), sites disappear with their texts, texts are replaced by other texts, texts are corrupted, technologies change, bandwidths change, copyrights are enforced or ignored or bypassed or non-existent. Intellectual property is in fact intellectual propriety, an agreement, such as it is, to utilize in any form or not utilize in some forms (i.e. other than reading/perceiving) the production of the other (such as he or she or it—computer or whatever—is). (Intellectual propriety, then, is the etiquette of duplication and transformation, the sometime distinctions between hacking and cracking, between payment and non-payment for downloading, and so forth.)

Codework is a form of writing which problematizes form and formlessness simultaneously by incorporating the means of production within the file itself, actively or passively augmenting or corroding the file (depending of course on authorial intent, perception, reception, production).

By "active augmentation or corrosion" I reference a file which changes either through reader/viewer interaction or by itself, within a relatively limited period of time (i.e. within the phenomenological time-horizon of the reception of the text). These changes may be anything from automatic text/image/sound generation, through interactive generation of the same, to built-in instabilities of reading and writing (language changing on the fly, and so forth). Texts and other files may respond to anything—from the weather through mouse-clicks through the viewer's breathing patterns (coupled of course with the proper hardware). By "passive augmentation or corrosion" I mean a relatively static (i.e. within a similar time-horizon) text which nonetheless incorporates what might be considered surplus or extraneous elements (parts of code, formatting, and other) and/or eliminates or obfuscates ("corrodes") other elements (for the most part taken for granted within traditional texts and readings, such as the full alphabet, more or less standardized syntax, the and so forth).

Codework is neither a style nor a movement; it remains a loose term characterized by a "kind of messiness." It is simultaneously conceptual and loose, based on structure and the deconstruction of structure. An example (of my own):

```
CHURNMONSTER

o i-heard-you-so MONSTER? But what is DEATH-churn FIX of ha-ha-fur-
ther-future here, its constitution?

Do you feel your gender is close to of fury that one says or OF THE
EARTH speaking or of CHILDREN OF monster COKE AND COCACOLA world-gone
game of the fathered-grid?

no
You're dealing with miserable fictions. In any case, you must contact
me about this ...
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For 2 loose days, I have already been in catatonic mourning!
And it has taken you just 5.200 minutes to make a monster!

MONSTER drug of ha-ha-falter-future:DEATH-churn FIX of ha-ha-further-
future:of fury that one says or OF THE EARTH speaking or of CHILDREN
OF monster COKE AND COCACOLA world-gone game of the fathered-grid:ok
of MONSTER empyricon faltered-grid i-told-you-so MONSTER to i-heard-
you-so MONSTER:3891:5:children of marx and cocacola MONSTER children
of coke and cocacola MONSTER my objects are your styx:of fury that
one says or OF THE EARTH speaking or of CHILDREN OF monster COKE AND
COCACOLA world-gone game of the fathered-grid:MONSTER drug of ha-ha-
falter-future

children of coke and cocacola MONSTER my objects are your styx:of
furystered name is included to show this message originated from that
one says or OF THE EARTH speaking or of CHILDREN OF monster COKE ANDre
```

CHURNMONSTER is a "broken or dirty text," modified by a program I wrote; the program asks questions, mixes and combines and reorganizes the answers. The result is a combination of what I am or might be trying to say, and code interference, which rises to the surface, for example, "And it has taken you just 5.200 minutes to make a monster!" which simply documents the amount of time it took to enter the text. I can't judge this in terms of traditional literature; I can say, however, that what is produced is almost always a surprise—something that comes from partially externalized, partially internalized structure.

Wittgenstein: "He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it."—*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Pears & McGuinness translation. But what if the rungs are spaced irregularly? What if there is nothing at the top but gaming?

Codework is simultaneously fashionable and eternal. Fashionable: referencing a particular moment in mediation/protocols—a moment rapidly drained of

originary meaning (if such ever exists) and intent. And eternal: since very file is equivalent to each of its copies, it survives as a form of fragile or tenuous structure.

(Fashionable also in terms of critical discourse, discourse networks, a style which is already superseded. And eternal, in the sense that the issues that arise are always present, in whatever form writing/video/sound takes—the issues of protocols, programs, receptions, delivery channels and vehicles, technologies, economics, labor.)

Online writing is characterized by files; files are the vehicle, the superstructure and substructure, the formal reference. On the other hand, I use "wryting" to reference the effacement of the interface, and production of somatic effect and introjections/projections on the part of the reader. In other words, if there is writing of/on the body, there is also wryting the body, for example the (always) broken texts of pornography.

(Wryting is the result of the abstract and technological nature of online/new media work. One tries to imagine, through the text, the body of the other; net sex is full of this. As bandwidth increases, radio turns to television; the body is now presented, optical, replete, on devices ranging from cellphones to CAVEs (three-dimensional virtual-reality environments). Primitive teledildonics mediates sexual touch. Note that these environments, in fact even video cell-phones, are the domain of the privileged; there are access codes as well. Whole economies are involved.)

I am characterizing nothing. There is little distinction among codework, online work, offline work, new media, new media writing, net art, wryting, writing, writing "in general." Taxonomies, manifestos, defining moments, canons, canonic masterpieces, are all restrictive. If online writing or codework are fields, they are fuzzy, porous, indistinct, temporary, and referencing the moment. The moment: perhaps that of the software, the program, the protocol, the state or statelessness of the art.

Some styles? I hesitate; I'm ignorant, I don't keep up, no one keeps up. But consider the following as a beginning; continue on your own:

Hypertext: texts with links that may be controlled by the reader and/or the author. Internal links: the text is closed. External links: the text is open. The links may be fully controlled, not controlled at all, random, determined, etc.

Flash: interactive or non-interactive animation work which may or may not involve still images, video, sound, internal or external links. Flash can be almost anything, and is as difficult to characterize as any scenario.

Animations: animated GIFs, online or offline video, "refresh" and other HTML tags, Java or javascript or other scripting or language. Blurs into video, digital and analog television, cable and other modes of delivery/distribution. Flash is also used heavily for animations. Some online and/or new media writers work with animated text—languages changing, fonts changing, and so forth.

Blogs, Wikis, etc.: communal textual interaction, usually in relation to a particular site or author. Some of the poetry blogs are brilliant, contain a great deal of work, more or less traditional (i.e. in the sense of not necessarily requiring an online framework). If a sonnet is online, is it online writing? Wryting? Again, the questions are forever, the taxonomies weak.

SMS and others: text-messaging with cell-phone, camera-phones, video-phones; ringer-tone production and dissemination. Ringer-tones now out sell music CDs in some parts of the world. What kinds of signals are these? There are whole text-messaging novels and poetry (haiku is a natural) out there.

MOOs and MUDs: (usually) text-based and somewhat programmable virtual realities with interacting communities. Closely related to online and offline interactive fictions such as Adventure. MOOs and MUDs stem from the old RPG—role-playing games—like *Dungeons & Dragons*. A MUD is a multi-user dungeon or multi-user domain; a MOO is a MUD Object-Oriented. These are

older software programs; users can live entirely within a textual world. Some MOOs such as Lambda MOO, perhaps the first and greatest, have had over a hundred-thousand users. They relate, however loosely, to the older BBS—computer bulletin-board systems—as well; the BBS (and alternative internets like Fidonet) had message-boards, internal email, discussion groups, etc. Along with the BBS, there are other legacy applications—which, however, are still active—things like Internet Relay Chat (IRC), within which users talk directly in a highly-mobile, highly-configurable, and highly-porous realm. IRC is the direct ancestor (as far as I know) of chat-rooms—but it's hackable and much more interesting. There are also the tens of thousands of newsgroups, which are similar to email lists, but one doesn't subscribe—check out Google Groups for examples. Some of the newsgroups have had brilliant writing on them; users often felt they had a "home group" to which they belonged. I remember groups such as alt.dirty-whores, alt.angst, alt.soc.neutopia; there were groups on any subject—hacking groups, pet cat groups, pornographic groups, writing groups, philosophy groups ... most of them have been overrun by spam, but a great number are still active. ...

Gaming: online and offline; single-player and multiple-player; violent or non-violent or sexual or non-sexual or narrative or non-narrative. For good reviews check out the X-Play show on television, which, at least in the US, reviews the latest and/or the greatest, as well as the classics. Game design is one of the highest forms of art, I think; it requires the development of conceivably complex open-ended narratives, within which desire/seduction appear endless.

Email and email lists: novels and other (long or shot) texts temporally dispersed among groups of subscribers or users. Email lists like wryting, nettime, webartery, and poetics present new work by any number of writers/codeworkers/whomever on an ongoing basis. The subscriber list can range from a few to tens of thousands. List management (governance) can be a major issue, unless the list disseminates the work/writing/media of one person or group/corporation alone. Lists are immediate and active, and like email itself, one of

the fastest means of presentation (of course chat, SMS, etc. is much faster—real-time, immediate, in fact). Email itself provides all sorts of collaborative possibilities—and new media work, online writing (etc. etc. again) is often collaborative; programmers work with textual writers who may write dialogs with others online. Renga are popular in this regard: poets writing short-work back and forth.

Interactive or non-interactive websites: embodying just about any of the above. At this point, I cannot imagine a typology of websites. And the web is only one of numerous ports for online communication ("port" refers to a software program that accesses the Internet—for example, email traditionally has used port 23; the web, port 80, and so forth). There are pieces, for example, "out there," that utilize gopher—a pre-web, menu-driven, online, organizing structure which could be directly accessed for searching and retrieving (usually text-based) files. (Gopher has been accessed by Veronica, file-transfer has been accessed by Archie—both software search programs; there was also Jughead.) One can even find fascinating literature in the RFCs—requests for comments—that have traditionally defined the core discussions and protocols in relation to the net as a whole. Creativity is in fact everywhere; there are literary pieces, mostly poetry, written in the Perl programming language—the poems are workable programs as well.

And codework? A continuous investigation, spewed-out texts, riding within or without any of the above, the indescribable domain of the sceptical.

How will language change, i.e. in relation to digital media? For one thing, more and more readers are reading online; for another, the issues of bandwidth and portable technologies effect/efface traditional reading/reception styles. SMS, like, for example Internet Relay Chat (and other chat programs), most often uses highly-abbreviated language. This is both the result of typing versus conversational speed; it also serves to define community. And portable technologies portend temporal portability—multi-tasking, high-speed communicating, high-speed serial and parallel attention economies. The

aphoristic increasingly dominates as the "master narratives" and canons of the humanities (philosophy, anthropology, theology, for example) either fail as totalizations (given, for example, issues of technology, multiculturalisms, and queer/gender theory) or appear increasingly rigid and outmoded. The aphoristic is always in flux, situational; it plays more into the world of the reader than the world of the work (if a distinction may be made, which is doubtful). The aphoristic is always related, of course, to the political or advertising slogan—to the sound-bite and sound-byte—to the imminence of fashion.

Examples? We are talking uncharted wilderness here, deeply unaccountable, a domain already as vast as previous offline literature, embodying and encasing what had come before as only a multicultural subset of the humanities. Google or any other search engine will give numerous examples. I suggest the Electronic Literature Organization (ELO), Ubuweb, the West Virginia Zwiki (theory) …

At this point, I had a list of names; it continued, uselessly, to expand. I couldn't choose among them. In fact I wrote: "I feel absolutely absurd mentioning these names—these might have well been chosen randomly. The list is too English-dominated for one thing. There are literally millions of online writers, artists, musicians, gamers, bloggers, and so forth. Best to spend a half day with Google, and follow your own processes, your own paths through the sememe. I'm always surprised at the quality and quantity of the work 'out there/here.' I can't think of any particular guide I'd recommend. Search yourself." Now, I've taken the names out. Go to the email lists (and their archives) mentioned below. Check out the museums. Look for "net art" or "net.art" or "electronic literature" or "electronic writing" online.

Email lists such as wryting-l, poetics, webartery, nettime; the MOOs (search online); newsgroups (also usenet); any number of online/offline games; the G4 television channel (mostly gaming); books such as Nick Montfort's *Twisty Little Passages: An Approach to Interactive Fiction* (MIT); texts dealing with older but prescient work such as *Imagining Language: An Anthology*, edited by Jed

Rasula and Steve McCafferty (also MIT); works by Sherry Turkle, McKenzie Wark, Geert Lovink, Espen Aarseth; again and so forth. The best advice? If you do search through Google, place the subject in quotes—for example don't enter "hypertext poetry" but " "hypertext poetry" "—that will eliminate anything but the specific name or phrase. (You can also use advanced searches of course. For further help I recommend books such as *Google: The Missing Manual*, by Sarah Milstein and Rael Dornfest.)

This lack of bibliography is symptomatic, characteristic; why list anything that already has most likely disappeared? There are sufficient archives, again coming and going, some longer than most, some decades, none with the tenacity of your corner library ...

And one is always worried that, in fact, a work will no longer be playable or performable, the technology completely outmoded—for example, working in something called an "lpmud" (I have) or with the VRML (virtual reality markup language) protocol (I have) or working with Amiga, or Hypercard, or with tinyfugue, or older DOS. There are at times emulations, but these never carry the framework, parergon, of their ostensible content; they're masquerades, simulacra of simulacra—the culture that produced and enveloped them is long gone.

Further, where does the work end and the body begin? Think of Stelarc's work (i.e. Google), with his literal insertion into the network, or the possibilities of teledildonics, wearable computing, augmented reality (moving through a space with monitor/goggles that provide ongoing and updated information/ texts in relation to your movement), locative media in general (works utilizing GPS [global positioning satellites] technology, or scanner/ham/cb/very low frequency [VLF]/extremely low frequency [ELF]/ lower-power radio)—all of these locating the viewer/reader/spectator within a psychogeographic dynamic, irreducible to a steady-state or fixed product or process.

In terms of distribution, there are numerous issues. If you place a work (say

a file or interrelated structure of files) online, it must be announced, advertised—as in offline work, it must attract an audience. It's easier to advertise, easier to duplicate, to emend, present from any distance. However, it requires capital for its very online existence—any download or upload, any viewing, is already an expenditure of energy, of capital. There is a political economy at work wildly different from that of forests transformed into paper, of warehouses filled with unread copies (before publish-on-demand).

Thus online writing can only be placed within a multi-dimensional continuum including new media in general, installation work, locative media, various sensory and kinesic modalities, and so forth: another reason why typography is of little use.

Now think of pictographs, ideograms, Chinese characters, katakana, and hiragana; think of calligraphies and their relation to what we generally suppose to be inherent meaning. Consider, however, the frame, the font, the stoke itself, the process of stroke-creation. Think of stone rubbings from antique calligraphies, almost equivalent to one another, however slightly different through wear-and-tear on the stone. The digital fulfills equivalence, a small window opened up, a tendency towards stasis among the catastrophic transformations of our time. Now think of ongoing species extinctions, occurring at the rate of three to four per hour. Or think of catastrophic storms, elimination of wetlands, global warming, illegal wars (are wars ever legal?); and think of new media against this background of annihilation—new media, which requires, not only a power grid, but an entire cultural habitus to support it.

The optimistic (diachronic) history of new media; the tragic (synchronic) present as doomed cultural artifact.

Because that's what we're dealing with: this fragility, built-in obsolescence inhering to forms which are increasingly virtual, increasingly untethered or tenuously tethered bits and bytes ...

My Future is Your Own Aim

Dear Tenure Committee,

In order to fulfill my duties pursuant to full-time employment without fear of censorship (something all too often in our country, alas!), I will answer the following excellent questions which you have posed, to the best of my ability, directly. I appreciate the time you have taken to develop them, in relation to the more general theme of the direction of future literature, if there is a future, if there is literature. Please excuse this format, since of course there is no tenure committee, no tenure, no holdfast in the fast-forward sea of media/information flow. And of course committees are nowadays temporary at best, designed on the fly to handle particular problems that appear, perhaps disappear or transform before adjournment.

Comparing writing practices from the years 1995 & 2005, what do you see as being the most significant historic development(s) in writing(s) in, for & with digital environments in the past decade?

This of course depends on what is meant by "writing." Writing per se has not changed; what has changed is mechanics, performativity, technology. Probably most of the writing world-wide is currently within the worlds of blogs, Wikis, online gaming, and so forth. In 1995, almost everyone online, AOL users excepted, was familiar with the command-line interface to some extent. Being on line often meant dealing with UNIX shells (today, Linux shells). This created a sense of being close to the bone, literally, in relation to the net itself; when I'm online (as now) in the UNIX shell at panix.com, I can enter a command such as "who," and I will get a list of everyone on now, as well as what software they're using, for example, are they sending email, working in the Emacs or vi editors, and so forth. This community—one might say, communality—is always in the background, even though I rarely hear from these people. The computer is always already shared. I'm aware I'm writing electronically within a network.

Today—and this started with the dumping, by AOL, of around two million users onto the net a decade or so ago—most people are shielded from the undercurrent, what I've called the "darknet" (before this term was taken over by the media for other uses). Today, being online usually means working with GUI, graphic user interfaces, which are well- and sometimes over-designed. The number of commands available are less with a GUI editor (the full number of UNIX commands runs to over 1800). The code—the protocols at work— is increasingly invisible, and the net is increasingly taken for granted as an appliance, just as the Mac is appliance-oriented in relation to the "under the hood" approach to the PC.

So writing has moved more and more towards graphics dynamisms, beyond javascript and Dynamic HTML in general, even beyond flash, towards Java and other encodings. And with this, there has been a counter-movement which is extremely interesting; that is, more and more people, from a very young age, are now engaged in modifying programs, working with the bare-bones of the GUI or programmatic level. A good example is the increasing use of machinima, a collocation of programs that allows one to create narra-tive and experimental film within and through games and game engines. The result is the ability to work directly with avatars as if they are actors in a script as perfect as you can make it.

Another major change lies in the demographics; there are now close to a bil-lion on the net (which means five billion not on it, not connected in any way), and within this enormous quantity, there must be tens of millions of writers and artists. New work appears daily, hourly, from just about everywhere. Stu-dents in the industrialized countries often have access to online, if not broad-band; many of them are doing fascinating net art, net writing, what have you. The days of "net art" as a category defined by a few (paralleling, say, the NY gallery system), are long since gone; we're dealing now with massive social change, massive creativity.

How have this/these development(s) influenced your own artistic practice?

I learn from students whenever and wherever I speak. I use available technologies as much as possible. I'll leap from operating system to operating system; the days of "Mac versus PC" or Linux, etc., are over. I still tend to work in UNIX shells, because they're bare-bones, fast, incredibly supple, fun to explore, easy to program, but I'll also use motion-capture equipment when I can, as well as any audio/video/etc. programs that come along. For example, I work a lot with AudioMulch, which creates soundworks through "granular synthesis"—a form of particulating the aural dimension—literally working with grains of sound, particles instead of sound-waves. The results are fast and at times wildly discontinuous. The program runs in WinXP, and has its own networked interface which is both fun and exciting—you think different through tools like this. As far as writing is concerned, I don't care whether or not I'm writing/sounding/visualizing; it's all a mix, all developed cross-application, cross-platform, cross-technology, cross-output devices. I've got a show coming up in Los Angeles, and I'm busy collecting as many monitors, computers, transducers (specialized speakers and microphones) as I can find; it will all run together, on what would appear to be a neural level, metaphorically.

How would you characterise institutional support for and institutional reaction to these writing(s), and to your art practice in particular?

Well, first of all, there's money. I've got to be an equipment junkie to some extent since I'm always upgrading; at this point I probably have half a tera-byte or so of finished work. There's considerable backup involved; there's also real problems with data and knowledge management. I find peripheral institutional support; in other words, I'm not really salaried, I can't find employment, but I do get access to tools, conference stipends, and the like. My work gets around. On the other hand, my health-care is mediocre, and if it wasn't for my father, I'd have none. Most of the artists I know have managed teaching jobs in English or Art or Art History or Computer Science or New Media or Modern

Culture and Media Departments. I haven't been so lucky, which I'm sure is partly the result of my somewhat anti-authoritarian personality—but also the result of institutions being unable to classify exactly what I do, and where they see me fitting in, to already established genres/disciplines.

What role has trAce played in facilitating the developments and the reactions identified above? What role has trAce played in facilitating your own practice?

This is also difficult to answer. trAce has turned out to be as fragile as so many other online institutions (which is related of course to the sea change brought about by the dot.com era and its demise). trAce put me in touch with a community, and gave me the opportunity to work with other practitioners and programmers; it also allowed me to work in an extended diary form, which I hadn't explored before. On the other hand, the core of my work was impervious; I think it would have developed in the same manner in any case. For example, I've been working for a long time on the phenomenology of the analog and the digital in relation to each other and the way they "meet" at the limits; this started, say, two decades ago and is currently resulting in a series of articles and pieces.

In relation to the first question, I don't think any institution really has facilitated or hindered the developments indicated; these are driven more by technologies and demographics, by micro-institutions and micro-managements, not by any particular group. It's a sea change; trAce was part of it, and for that matter, we're all part of it. trAce provided an "intensification," a TAZ (Hakim Bey's "temporary autonomous zone," a loose gathering that comes together, later dispersing, much like flash mobs). For me, panix did as well, as did the School of Visual Arts and the New School here, etc. It's a melange; it's no longer the world of "movements" and manifestos, unless one is blind to anything and anyone but a small group of peers. We're riding the riding of knowledge management; we're all part of Google, in other words, part of the roiling databases that constitute our world.

Do you see the developments & reactions you have identified above having a lasting impact upon art, literature & wider culture in the 21st Century?

I'm not trying to avoid responsibility, ethical or metaphysical, in these answers. I've taught courses in futurology and am aware of the difficulty of prediction in any case. The net and information explosion—really an implosion in terms of human/cultural subjectivity—is moving far too rapidly to make predictions. A few years ago, for example, push technologies were all the rage; no one hears of them at this point.

When we talk about "wider culture," are we talking about the five billion who are not online as well? About the violent wars that increasingly dominate life on the planet? About mass extinctions which are slated to kill off all megafauna within, say, the next fifty years? I think instead we're talking about a relatively secure (for the moment) enclave within the educated classes of industrialized nations, at least those which permit a degree of freedom of expression.

We're simply at a loss here. There were earlier models; if you look at the early history of radio, for example, you find that kids were hacking receivers, that transmission was a do-it-yourself phenomenon, until everything got absorbed by corporate and bandwidth concerns. Money was there to be made and the powers-that-be clamped down.

If you look then at the early net, the shell-driven darknet, you find the same thing. One reason the net is so vulnerable to attack, is that it was never meant to be completely secure; there wasn't any reason. The Morris worm of 1988, among other things, changed that. Before that, there was community and whole cultures—for example newsgroup cultures—that have disappeared for the most part, just like the early text-based MOOs and MUDs have mostly disappeared.

So we have this model—darknet—and we can find predecessors, but these weren't recognized at the time, and the scale/scope of the thing is so qualitatively

different as to make comparison more or less useless. The same is true now; it's just the beginning of the 21st century (which, for humans, may well be the last), and we have no idea what will occur in any field. (Look for example at the world in 1905: air travel just beginning, radio in the development stage, no WWI, no WWII, no atomic power or atomic bomb, the flu epidemic hadn't yet hit, no computers or net, no information grid, information theory hadn't yet been born, and so forth. For that matter, communism hadn't really taken hold, the planet's flora and fauna seemed eternal, etc. Quantum theory was largely unknown, Einstein was just working on special relativity, and our view of the cosmos was largely classical, in spite of minor disturbing anomalies.)

So back to the question: yes, all of the above will have a major impact on art, literature, culture, in the 21st century. But I have no idea what that impact will be, in what direction. Certainly multiculturalisms will be increasingly foregrounded; the planet appears smaller and smaller (we have to remember it isn't). We're approaching the carrying-capacity of the earth, that is, its ability to sustain (mostly human) life given increasing population levels. This, more than anything, will effect things. We can expect religious and other ideological fundamentalisms to rise in popularity and violence; as humans become more desperate, salvation often appears just around the corner. How will the arts react to all of this? What will constitute the class (or mob) of cultural workers?

We know that things will change, but we don't know how.

Two forces: on one hand, ensuing chaos (J.G. Ballard is a prescient model here), and on the other, the enormous inertia of the human species. For example, the world recognizes the need for heavy and immediate cutbacks in industrial emissions/pollution, yet the United States will do nothing. Or again, "everyone" recognizes that megafauna are disappearing, yet close to nothing is happening to change that. People live within their habitus; the human motto is more or less "not in my back yard" (NIMBY), and that goes to explain a lot.

Does contemporary digital writing(s) fulfill the claims made for "new media writing" during the course of the last decade?

I'm not sure what these claims are. The concept of "new media" has been around far longer than the phrase; new technologies almost always carry signs (if not posters!) of overcoming. Will new media writing replace the standard book/page? Judging by demographics and usage, hardly. Will e-books replace the book? Again, unless electronic paper really gets off the ground, hardly. A physical book is a personal object that carries the marks of its being-read, from owner to owner; there's no indication that this will be replaced. With temporary print media, on the other hand—newspapers, magazines, handouts, etc.—the opposite is true; offline newspaper readership is going down quickly, while online is rising. There is also the issue of authority/authorization. Blogs are rapidly becoming news sources themselves, particularly conservative blogs, which are often quoted by conservative talk-show hosts. One can imagine that rumour and innuendo will become increasingly prevalent in this regard, just as Wikipedia seems to be experiencing growing pains as biased writers have used it as a platform for particular ideological viewpoints (not that neutrality etc. isn't an ideological viewpoint).

So ... will new media will replace the old? No. Will new media augment the old and vice versa? Definitely. That it's becoming increasingly difficult to even discern what "media" are? Absolutely. Are blogs media? MOOs? Online games? The TCP/IP protocol stack running the net in part? Particular technologies such as immersive game couches? It's difficult to even discern where one "medium" ends and another begins; the definitions are in the minds of the beholders/users, those who subscribe, in both senses of the word, to one or another outlets for their community, communality, creative expressions.

Now I will refer to your list of discussion topics, again commenting on them, however briefly, however tenuously; I hope I remain available for continued employment at this institution.

The institutional settings of new media writing(s): These are primarily universities, software houses, web design companies. Independent new media writers (if such remains a category) have a difficult time of it. On the other hand, institutions such as West Virginia University's Center for Literary Computing, have been generous in granting archival/presentation space for writers. In my own case, I use both WVU and a commercial host; the latter gives me ongoing statistics concerning the distribution of my work. But one of the advantages of online writing is the ability to work with nothing but a computer, at home, with a local webpage or even ftp site; you can still develop a world-wide audience.

The relationship between academia and new media writing(s): My immediate response is I'll go crazy if I read yet another paper on the exigencies etc. of hypertext. Forgive me for being cynical here, but online work of any sort is ideal for academic theorizing, presentations, since it almost never involves anything but being online; it's easier to become politically engaged (or to feel oneself politically engaged) through online production, than to actually march in the streets. Much of the work I value—much of the code- or experimental-work I think is breaking new ground—is produced entirely outside the academy. Conferences are both a leveler in this regard, and a barrier, since few independents can afford to attend them.

Art policies and development strategies for new media writing(s): This topic is a bit frightening for me; I think of say Blake or Rimbaud or Ginsberg or whomever in relation to "development strategies." I hope there aren't any. If you're speaking about strategies of teaching or production within an English or New Media Department, that's something else again, a pedagogical issue. To answer the latter briefly:

1. Immediate personal online production (websites, blogs, Wikis, email lists).

2. Immediate access to computers possessing adequate software for image/text/video/sound production.

3. Access as much as possible to computers off-campus.

4. Exposure to as many sites as possible.

5. Visiting artist programs which give students the opportunity to speak with practitioners directly.

The audience for new media writing(s): Unfortunately, this audience is mostly new media writers (and academics). Look for different demographics with videophones, text messaging, Internet Relay Chat, the old CuSeeMe, instant messaging, pagers, and so forth.

The economics of new media writing(s): There are numerous economies at work. The first is bandwidth, which is a political economy: the dispersion of carrier usage, home broadband or dial-up terminals, etc. At one point I taught files should be under 30k in size; now my own sometimes reach 30MB, a thousand times larger. The second is simply making a living, which can be extremely difficult; new media writing, outside the limited teaching or performing venues, brings in nothing. The third (I've written of all of these above) is again technology. My own performances require up to twelve Quicktime video/audio files playing simultaneously, and I've had to buy a laptop which can handle these.

The historical context of new media writing(s): This opens up a can of worms (I like worms). I think the roots of any sort of inscription are too numerous to relate vis-à-vis "historical context." I've seen new media theorized as originating in film; in writing; in books; in technology; and so forth. I wouldn't bother looking for an origin; there isn't any. Instead one can talk about discourse networks, interpenetrating discursive formations, "epigenetic landscapes," and so forth. Reductionism doesn't work. For myself, I tend to emphasize ruptures

over flows: that new media writing, which relies on the performativity of language (i.e. language as active interaction with user and technology), is a collocation, a heap, of breaks with the past. In this sense, history only gets in the way; I think its main use might be in the (re)consideration of aesthetic criteria.

(Production has become largely micro-situational: what works here, now, in relation to such-and-such tools, such-and-such potential audiences, etc.)

The relationship between new media writing(s) and other digital arts: The former is embedded in the latter, and vice versa. The former is concerned with symbolic inscription, graphemes, written and spoken language, and the latter can be anything. They overlap in numerous ways.

Conclusion:

On one hand, there isn't any. On the other, the very tenor/tenure of my remarks above (and they are remarks, not theoretical explication, although any remark is theory-embedded) emphasizes a deep inexplicability of new media, writing, and new media writing. I'm not arguing for anything primordial; only that, given the ongoing slaughters etc. occurring on planet earth, given the limited energy and life-sustaining resources available, and given the fast-forward changing of human demographics and technologies, predictions become highly problematic. We are caught in the midst of flux we barely understand; for example, from an ecological point of view, the extinctions we are engendering are greater than those of the Precambrian or the "age of dinosaurs." We have created the greatest communications network the world has ever known, and the first waves of world-wide communities and communalities. We have created these with the most fragile devices, redundancy notwithstanding. We have the opportunity to reach out to others, to witness and participate in multiculturalisms to such a great degree that the Other is now ourselves. New media writing contributes to this; it does not stand alone as a cultural manifestation or style. It is a way of electronically witnessing the world, creating or recreating the world.

trAce is an early and important example of community. Writers and new media practitioners have been brought together from around the world: not only online, but through the Incubation conferences as well. To some extent the trAce community is now dispersed or dispersing; this is the case with all networked communities, I believe. I hope there are archives. I hope there will be someone around to read them.

Writing Online

I'm not sure how to title this. I write online, teach online, conference online, and even do a bit of governance—I run a number of email lists, which presents all sorts of issues. But here I want to deal with my writing, my texts, which I send out to several email lists, several times daily. In order to do this, I work constantly—a lot of the time I use online environments and tools for my work.

As an example, I changed my own webpage, recently, using a browser called Amaya. You can download Amaya from the Internet—it's an experimental browser used by the World Wide Web Consortium (those people who basically decide the standards that govern webpages and servers) to test HTML and other online codes. It's unique because you can mess up whatever page you're looking at—and then download it, or if it's your own page, you can put it back. This felt joyful—the ability to scribble directly on my own page! So I did that, made a second page (using in.HTML instead of index.HTML) and put it back in the directory.

So what's the purpose? Other than making a new text, it created quite a disturbance—as if a clean and proper webpage were taken over by someone else and reused. And I wanted to do this—make it look as if somehow my work was "torn" or hacked into—as if it were a body that was taken over by someone else—as if someone else were speaking through my body. And, judging by the responses I got, people in fact did think that someone else had gone to the site and taken it over.

Another example of this kind of thing is a project I designed for the trAce online writing group. It's the "Lost Project." I was the online writer-in-residence for trAce for six months, and I first did a piece where I roamed all across the trAce bulletin board—went into all the different conferences—as if I had lost something, and might find it there. This was interesting to me—writing a piece which was scattered across a whole lot of different sites. Someone would have to go to all of them to see what I was doing.

After this, I thought more about losing things, and decided I wanted a site where people could go and describe anything or anyone they had lost. But I changed this in several ways—I made (with the aid of Simon Mills, an excellent programmer) a webpage which "shuddered" and looked as if it were falling apart—it made it difficult to enter anything into the form. I then had it made that, after you clicked "submit," you'd be taken to a fake error page—as if you'd make a mistake. The idea was that you would already be feeling that you had "lost" your writing and description as well. If you clicked on the fake error page, it would take you to a list of everything that anyone had lost—including your own submission.

On the first page, you're asked to give your name and email address as well—but when you go to the list of things lost, your name and email address aren't there—they're also lost. You have to click on a name/address page—and you'll find a list of all the participants, without their descriptions.

All of these projects involve webpages and thinking about the web. But there are a lot of other ways to work—for example, a simple thing to do is use letter substitution. In the operating systems I use—UNIX and Linux—there is a command, "sed," that allows a great deal of sophisticated substitution—you can even write programs "in sed." But you can also do substitution in any word processing program.

For example:

```
All of thoosoo projoocts involvoo woobpagoos and thinking about thoo
woob. But thooroo aroo a lot of othoor ways to work - for ooxamploo, a
simploo thing to do is usoo loottoor substitution. In thoo opoorating
systooms I usoo - UNIX and Linux - thooroo is a command, "sood,"
that allows a grooat dooal of sophistica- tood substitution - you can
oovoon writoo programs "in sood." But you can also do substitution
in any word procoossing program.
```

This is absurd and silly, of course, but you can work much more elaborately, even substituting things at the beginnings of lines, using commands such as "sort" (which rearranges the lines in various orders), and so forth. You can also use commands to change the order of word fields—for example, make the first word in a line, the fourth—and the fourth word, the first. And you can take any large file and, with a command called "grep," pull out all lines that have a certain string (group of characters) in it. For example, if I grep the word "line" in a file which is a collection of my recent writing, called "lw," I'd write "grep line lw," and I'd get:

```
if someone hassles you on line, it is a rogue machine: Ant PC
planetary, MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! body line TREMENDOUS HORROR!
MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! lapse PC memory line PC a dog like/although
her angel-mechanism glitter. Suicide line type TREMENDOUS HORROR!
spiral smile breaks Body line PC an ant forgets it The sun walks.
The record CONSEQUENCES! guilty nick head line TREMENDOUS HORROR!
ADAM doll Her end HORROR! crowd scrap our beat, second, MURDEROUS
CONSEQUENCES! animal line culling outline until real or virtual
disappearance lost in that specific petal, outlined against that
specific stamen, that the command-line test-jennifer conceptual work
of literary art
15doing this for the command-line conceptual work of literary art
28this has to be nearing the end of the command-line conceptual work
of the command-line conceptual work everything was disordered but i
was in the timeline
the timeline was me
in the timeline 1943 it was the timeline of my life
the segment was beyond the visible timeline
i couldn't see the segment it was beyond the visible timeline
i'd have to change the scale of the timeline in order to see the
segment
i didn't know how to change the scale i was stuck within the timeline
i wanted out of the timeline the timeline i could see
```

```
i didn't know how to move the timeline i didn't know how to shift it
the timeline would have to be shifted
everything was disordered but i was in the timeline
i couldn't see the segment it was beyond the visible timeline
i didn't know how to change the scale i was stuck within the timeline
i didn't know how to move the timeline i didn't know how to shift it
i wanted out of the timeline the timeline i could see
i'd have to change the scale of the timeline in order to see the segment
in the timeline 1943 it was the timeline of my life
the segment was beyond the visible timeline
the timeline was me
the timeline would have to be shifted
because of content - many of them not online.
to delineate, ever so slightly, the imaginary evanescence
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.1 OK 29 lines  Textage, "Fwd: Important
in the timeline 1943 it was the timeline of my life
in the timeline 1943 it was the timeline of my life
```

—which is a kind of fascinating text, produced by "ransacking" or going over all my other texts in a particular file, and pulling out the lines that have the word "line" in them.

All of these things give me tools for thinking about writing and new ways of putting words and meaning together. I'll very rarely let anything alone—I don't really care how the text is produced—so I'll go back into it and rearrange the thing, making the text say things or lead the reader in new and different directions. In other words, the commands are catalysts for text production—not designed to deliver the final text, but to deliver a textual body I can then work on, operate upon.

I also learned some simple programming. Years ago, I programmed in Pascal, which is fairly easy and still around. Pascal and the Microsoft language Basic combined (or at least Basic was influenced by Pascal) and QBasic, or

QuickBasic, was created. It's an easy language to learn, and runs in DOS. I did a number of programs in QuickBasic, but nothing really manipulating or working with text.

Since the net, a number of scripting languages have been developed. The two most famous are javascript and Perl. Perl runs in UNIX or Linux, although there are also Windows e-versions available. javascript runs in anything—you can write it and it will be read by any browser. I did some works in javascript at one point. These are very simple webpages that "act up" one way or another.

For example, one page used a random number generator and word list to create a page which "breathes." I found a parallel between the human body and the "body" tag in HTML and wanted to explore that.

Another example contains a text which momentarily appears when a button is pressed. The source code is very simple; there is a double message—one for browsers that don't recognize javascript, and one which sets up the page for those who do. The page then takes you to another page when a button is pressed—the second page has the text, which remains unreadable because it's on screen so fast. But if you look at the code, you can figure out that the second page is a different URL and in fact is readable.

There's another way to do dynamic work, of course, and that's DHTML, which incorporates javascript. DHTML is dynamic HTML, and you can usually find an editor or program like Dreamweaver to do most of the work for you.

So there are many levels of coding HTML, javascript, or DHTML pages. You can code things by hand—hard writing the code—which can be difficult, but will teach you a lot. Or you can have a program like Dreamweaver code it for you—which is easier, but leads to looser code which might not always run. Finally, you can code by hand, but take bits and pieces from other programs and sources on the net, and turn them into something of your own.

I've also used Perl to help me with my writing. Perl is a scripting language that sits mostly in Linux or UNIX systems, but can download Perl for Windows, and O'Reilly publishing even has a book on Windows Perl. It's a fast language for doing all sorts of text transformations, and you can pick up the simpler elements, I think, from scratch in a week or two. I've written a number of programs in Perl, which I use for making pieces. One of them, a very simple one, is called "bio" and is as follows:

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl -w
# biography

$| = 1;
`cp .bio .bio.old`;
print "Would you like to add to bio information? If so, type y.\n";
chop($str=<STDIN>);
if ($str eq "y") {print "Begin with date.\n";
print "Write single line, use ^d to end.\n";
open(APPEND, ">> .bio");
@text=<STDIN>;
print APPEND @text;
close APPEND;}
`sort -o .bio .bio`;
exit(0);
```

All this program does is take a file called ".bio" (the period keeps it hidden most of the time), and asks me if I want to add something to it. If I type "y" for "yes" it asks me to begin with a date and right a single line. So I could say "2001 I am getting married." and enter that. I would then hit the control key and "d" at the same time, and it would take the lines I entered and place them, in order, in the .bio file. So over time I can write an autobiography just by adding lines and dates.

Of course you can do this by hand, just by typing lines into an editor and then sorting them, but I like this odd interface.

A longer program, called Julu, is more complicated, but again took only a short while to write. It asks a lot of questions and returns complex texts I can use for writing. It has "arrays" in it, lists of words that it will substitute in various sentences at various times. Just to show you what it looks like, here is Julu (please read on; we're not learning Perl here):

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl5 -w

$t = time;
$| = 1;
srand( time() ^ ($$ + ($$ << 15)) );
system 'touch APPEND';
@a = qw(
blood urine feces gas sand water oil solvent alcohol lymph menses
spit saliva vomit sweat effluvia detritus excretions sloughings tears
floods spews mercuries semen detergents ammonias ureas clays ices
grains substances conglomerates waxes piss shit scratches scrapes
cuts wounds tears splits breaks diarrheas
);
@verb = qw(
splits skews churns comes goes passes thrusts regurgitates flows
streams spills pours pisses shits
);
@prep = qw(
in on under to towards across beneath around upon below onto
);
@noun = qw(
ghost avatar spectre doll faerie wraithe hobgoblin troll tengu kappa
presence
);
@nnn = qw(
cloth stitch suture binding closing damming holding fabric velvet
cotton wool silk
```

```
);
$nnnn = int rand(8);
$non = int rand(11);
$non1 = int rand(7);
$pre = int rand(6);
$gen = int(48*rand);
$gen1 = int(48*rand);
$gen2 = 49 - int(40*rand);
$time = int(time/3600);
$g = int(8*rand);
if ($sign=fork) {print "\nRun-time $pid\n";}
else {sleep(1); print "\nFirst flooding\n";
exit(0);}
sleep(2);
chop($that=<STDIN>);
print "\n$that is clotting everything. - \n";
print "Your $nnn[$nnnn] is soaked, written, erased. - \n"; sleep(1);
print "Consider the next smearing of your thinking skin.\n";
sleep(2);
print "\nYour $nnn[$non1] should be wiped into existence? \n";
chop($str=<STDIN>);
if ($str eq "no") {print "\nGive me your semen ...\n"; sleep(10);
goto FINAL;}
else {print "\nI Consider the following again, your $that ...\n";}
print "Would $that give you hydrogenesis?", "\n" if 1==$g;
print "You flood me ...", "\n" if 5==$g;
print "I flood your body ...", "\n" if 6==$g;
print "The flooding of names, soaking of of things! ...", "\n" if 4==$g;
sleep(1);
print "\n$noun[$non1] $verb[$non] me $prep[$nnnn] your $nnn[$non1]!\n";
print "\nHow would you absorb your $a[$gen2] $nnn[$nnnn]?\n";
$name=<STDIN>;
chop $name;
```

```perl
print "\n";
print "$that, $name remembers my $nnn[$g] ", "\n" if 3==$g;
print "$that, $name is sufficient for me", "\n" if 7==$g;
print "You have absorbed for $pid hours, you're still alive", "\n" if
5==$g;
print "Your $name is mine, my $that is yours!", "\n" if 2==$g;
sleep(1);
print "List more and more effluvia\n";
print "one by one, each on a line alone, typing Control-d when
done.\n";
@adj=<STDIN>;
chop(@adj);
$size=@adj;
$pick=int(rand($size));
srand;
$newpick=int(rand($size));
print "\nMy $adj[$pick] is your chemistry here ...\n";
srand( time() ^ ($$ + ($$ << 15)) );
$be=int(rand(5));
open(APPEND, ">> rope");
print APPEND
join(":",$name,$str,$that,$adj[$pick + 1],$adj[$newpick + 1]), "\n";
# join(":",@adj,$name,$str,$sign,$g,$that,$name,$adj[$pick]), "\n";
print APPEND "Does $that replace your $name?\n" if 4==$be;
print APPEND "I do not understand your fluid!\n" if 5==$be;
print APPEND "Your $a[$gen1] $adj[$pick] is $prep[$non1] my $a[$gen]
$adj[$newpick]\n" if 1 > $be;
print APPEND "Your $noun[$non1] dissolves my $adj[$newpick]!\n" if 3==$be;
print APPEND "$noun[$non] with $pid ideohydraulesis!" if 2 < $be;
print APPEND "Write $a[$gen1] $adj[$pick] through my $name!\n" if 1==$be;
close(APPEND);
open(STDOUT);
if ($pid = fork) {
```

```perl
$diff=$pid - $$;
print "$name is spilled far too many $diff times!", "\n" if 5 < $g;


print <<Construct;


$name calls forth $a[$gen1] $noun[$non], hungered, making things.
$prep[$pre] the $a[$gen], $name is $a[$diff], $[$gen], $str?
... $noun[$non] is $adj[$newpick] on wet flesh, it's $noun[$non]?


Construct


} else {
close (STDOUT);


system("touch .trace; rev rope >> .trace");
system("rm rope");


exit(0);
}
sleep(1);
print "Are you satisfied with your $name?\n";
chop($answer=<STDIN>);
if ($answer eq "no") {print "You're written with $a[10+$pre]!\n";}
if ($answer eq "yes") {print "A $a[10+$pre] and $a[15+$pre]nightmare!\n";}
print "Your inscription finished, you have created thing.", "\n\n" if 3<$g;
print "$name $pid is the perfect solution.", "\n\n" if 3==$g;
print "... $a[$non] $name $$ - the beginning of flesh.", "\n\n" if 6==$g;
print "Your $name $diff text is your final enunciation.", "\n\n" if 4==$g;
print "You wrote for $time hours?", "\n" if 2==$g;
sleep(1);
print "$name and $$ and $pid - another entity named and made!", "\n\n" if
2==$g;
sleep(1);
```

```
print "Wait! $name and $pid are written.", "\n\n" if 1==$g;
FINAL: {
$d = int((gmtime)[6]);
$gen3 = 48 - int(20*rand);
print "For $d $a[$gen2] days, we have been $a[$gen3].";
print "\n";
$u = (time - $t)/60;
printf "and it has taken you %2.3f minutes to swallow your last ...", "$u";
print "\n\n";
print `rev .trace`, "\n\n";
}
exit(0);
```

You can see the lists of words at the beginning—and I can change these any
time of course—as well as a lot of characters that start with a dollar sign such
as "$that". These are string variables—they refer back to the word lists. There is
also a lot of "\n" which simply signals to the program that the end of a line is
reached, and it's time for a new one.

When the program runs, it asks me to enter lines, gives me material in
return—and I write in and out of the material it gives; it then rearranges the
lines according to its own internal logic, and gives me a text at the end.

The following is a text I wrote for this essay, showing how I can use the program
to develop a theme; as far as I'm concerned, the following is also a finished
work, a kind of circulation of software and human presence:

```
hold me, hold me, and she says

my holding is absorbed in my flood flooding, my offer-proffer to
you, my split doll beneath your binding, my split doll and flood-
flooding wiped into existence and your own :my skin is smeared, still
thinking; my binding is wiped into existence; my binding wipes me out
```

```
of existence; everything is clotted with the remains of my thinking
being; i am moving on; on the back of the software; in the heart of
the thing itself :i am writing/riding you this, on the back of the
software, what sort of flood flooding do you mean to me, and :through
the river more and more and through the stream:through the river more
and more and through the stream

Your alcohol more and more in and through the river is to my spews
more and more in and through the river
```

While I could easily sit down and type out a text like this, I wouldn't have thought of it—not all the circulations and meanings that keep rising to the surface. It was the program that allowed me to do that. In this case, I don't even see the need for changing anything—sometimes I have to change things around, bring the meaning out of what otherwise might be considered nonsense.

There's still another area I work in, with my work—and that is in various kinds of chatrooms and other conversation-oriented net applications. At times I've logged onto a chat as two different characters, and created a play by having the characters talk back and forth with each other. (Of course I'm both of them.) By saving—logging—the whole chat session, I'm able to make a work I would never have thought of otherwise, again. The dialog seems to carry itself forward.

Of course this form can even be used in the sense of writing a play but there's something different in entering another space and using it to create dialog. The following is an example of this (as usual, see below for commentary):

```
The Fateful Meeting

{b:2} su jennifer
{b:3} telnet 127.0.0.1 6666
```

```
Trying 127.0.0.1...
Connected to 127.0.0.1.
Escape character is '^]'.


Welcome to Clara-Machine


Type /? for Help
/n <name> for Name
:<action> for Emote
/q for Quit


> New arrival from localhost on line 2.
/n Jennifer
> Name set.
Julu! I can't believe I'm meeting you on this machine ...
(2) Jennifer says, "Julu! I can't believe I'm meeting you on this
machine ..."
(1) Julu says, "Jennifer? It's you? After all these years, ah ...
It's like ripping my heart out."
Strictly speaking, that's true of course. There is always _obverse code_.
(2) Jennifer says, "Strictly speaking, that's true of course. There
is always _obverse code_."
Hold in a minute - brb - phone's ringing
(2) Jennifer says, "Hold in a minute - brb - phone's ringing"
(1) Julu says, "You're a lot busier than I am; you were earlier down
the line -"
: is sorry; it's been a long day, storming outside ...
(2) Jennifer is sorry; it's been a long day, storming outside ...
:thinks it will take a while to get used to all the commands ...
(2) Jennifer thinks it will take a while to get used to all the commands ...
(1) Julu says, "Tell me what to do; I've always fulfilled that
function for you -"
(1) Julu says, "even when you didn't know I existed -"
```

```
If you sign off, there will be no one to talk to; you are a sign for me ...
(2) Jennifer says, "If you sign off, there will be no one to talk to;
you are a sign for me ..."
(1) Julu says, "Our sentences always end in such lassitude ...
languor ..."
Because we foreshadow one another ...
(2) Jennifer says, "Because we foreshadow one another ... "
:murmurs she is after all speaking to herself ...
(2) Jennifer murmurs she is after all speaking to herself ...
> (1) Julu has disconnected.
Do not, do not, do this to me ...
(2) Jennifer says, "Do not, do not, do this to me ..."
Ah, Julu ...
(2) Jennifer says, "Ah, Julu ..."
/quit

> You are leaving the fictional domain of Clara-Machine

Connection closed by foreign host.
{b:4}
```

In order to do this, I set up a chat application on my own machine, although I could have used any one at all. I also wrote a minimum of dialog to establish a sense of place. I then entered twice in order to have these characters talk to each other—creating a play of sorts. What you see in the final result is my own typing, and then the typing reappearing within the scene:

```
Because we foreshadow one another ...
(2) Jennifer says, "Because we foreshadow one another ... "
```

—in the second line, Jennifer says what was typed in the first. So there are amazing repetitions, echos, and types of interaction possible here.

If you've ever used IRC—Internet Relay Chat—you know you can also do these sorts of things there as well; you can type "/set log" in the IRC window, and you'll be able to log whatever you're writing/working on. If you haven't used IRC, you should be able to find a program called MIRC on the Internet, which will allow you to use it, fairly easy.

So these are some of the tools, some of the ways I work online. Almost all my writing—even this essay—I do while I'm logged in; it's more exciting to me, since I can look things up, check mail, run programs, etc., all while doing the text.

For me, it's not the ways, however, but the ends; I really feel what I want to explore are issues of "being on line," "being virtual," and so forth. This means there are issues of what I call "virtual subjectivity"—what happens when someone has net sex, or falls in love online, or writes an essay online, or talks on chat, or does research? Where is the mind, what is happening here? So my work deals constantly with these issues, as well as issues of the body and language. With language, I'm fascinated by the way one can transform meaning online, almost, but not quite, producing nonsense—and how the brain can turn that near-nonsense into something meaningful. The texts are often lurid, dealing directly with sexuality and nudity, in an attempt to draw the reader in.

Here's part of a text with all sorts of substitutions; I think it's from my online bio, but I'm fascinated by the graphic and almost readable aspect of it:

```
[o-z][t-z][h-z][e-z][c-z][h-z][a-z][p-z]
[b-z][o-z][o-z][k-z][s-z][,-z][b-z][o-z]
[o-z][k-z][a-z][n-z][[-z][a-z][--z][z-z]
[]-z][a-z][r-z][t-z][i-z][c-z][l-z][e-z]
[s-z][.-z][H-z][i-z][v-z][i-z][d-z][e-z]
[a-z][n-z][f-z][i-z][l-z][m-z][[-z][a-z]
[--z][z-z][]-z][h-z][a-z][v-z][b-z][e-z]
[e-z][s-z][h-z][o-z][w-z][i-z][n-z][t-z]
```

```
[e-z][r-z][n-z][a-z][t-z][i-z][o-z][n-z]
[-z][a-z][l-z][l-z][y-z][.-z]
[S-z][o-z][n-z][d-z][h-z][e-z][i-z][c-z]
[o-z][m-z][o-z][d-z][e-z][r-z][a-z][t-z]
[e-z][s-z][e-z][v-z][e-z][r-z][a-z][e-z]
[m-z][a-z][i-z][l-z][i-z][s-z][t-z][s-z]
[,-z][i-z][n-z][c-z][l-z][u-z][d-z][i-z]
[n-z][C-z][y-z][b-z][e-z][r-z][m-z][i-z]
[n-z][d-z][,-z][C-z][y-z]
[b-z][e-z][r-z][c-z][u-z][l-z][t-z][u-z]
```

Here's part of a text called "SECRET" which documents what everyone on my Internet Service Provider is looking at:

```
SECRET  cavaleri  u1  maginot.blueskys  Thu09AM  3days  tail  -fn+1  ./
DT.log  SECRET :cavaleri  SECRET  tc  maginot.blueskys  Thu09AM  3days
BitchX :jzk  tb  a17-219-157-44.a  10:29PM  SECRET  0  -tcsh :webber  w6
h00050208fd6e.ne  Thu01PM  3days  -ksh :lent  w3  SECRET  enjoy.cooper.
edu  Tue04PM  2days  -ksh  Your  wraithe  dissolves  my  cavaleri  u6  SECRET
maginot.blueskys  Thu09AM  3days  tail  -fn+1  ./AT.log  !  spectre  with
SECRET  ideohydraulesis!  cavaleri  u1  maginot.blueskys  Thu09AM  3days
tail  -fn+1  SECRET  ./DT.log :serge  td
serge.dialup.acc  10:30PM  0  -bash :cavaleri  tc  SECRET  maginot.blueskys
Thu09AM  3days  BitchX :webber  w6  h00050208fd6e.ne  Thu01PM  SECRET  3days
-ksh :davidc  wd  138.5.49.199  05Apr01  2days  -tcsh  Your  doll  dissolves
SECRET  my  kynn  w9  mirage.harvard.e  03Apr01  4days  -tcsh  !  hobgoblin
with  SECRET  ideohydraulesis!  cavaleri  u1  maginot.blueskys  Thu09AM
3days  tail  -fn+1
```

Here's part of a text using the same Perl program above, as well as some other substitution mechanisms, to create a work that looks like it's erasing itself:

```
wiping-existence lffllfflflffluvia surgery of the
effllfflfflflffllfflflfflflflf wiping-existence
fllfflfflflfflflflfflfllfflflfl fflfflfflfllffllfflflffluvia-skin, bones
wiping-existence remarking the signifier: just beneath the surface,
skeletal::: replace wiping-existence your skin-damming : scarred
lips surround the skeletal:: stitched wiping-existence and pulled
into position::: signifier-position: or wiping-existence ::
```

And here is part of a text—quite graphic!—that was taken from a group of error message headers—I love the repetition in it, as if something is being said, but really the only thing coming through is ERROR!

```
2.2.2.2.2 Shown 16 KB Message, "Fwd: Important
2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines Text
2.2.2.2.2.2 Shown 15 KB Message, "Fwd: Important
2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines Text
2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Shown 15 KB Message, "Fwd: Important
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1.1 OK 29 lines Textage, "Fwd: Important
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Shown 11 KB Message, "Fwd: Important
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines Textage, "Fwd: Important
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Shown 11 KB Message, "Fwd: Important
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines Text
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines Textage, "Fwd: Important Rea
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Shown 10 KB Message, "Fwd: Important Rea
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines  Text
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines  Textage, "Fwd: Important Rea
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2 Shown 9.8 KB Message, "Fwd: Important Rea
2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.2.1 Shown 1 lines Text
```

Only two more examples! The following is a part of a text originally sent to me by a Japanese writer, Kenji Siratori; I modified it to create a new text by making substitutions all over the place. Siratori and I have collaborated and written into each other's works:

MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! end virus end machine clone boy room, her replicant TREMENDOUS HORROR! FUCKNAM cell air silence world at MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! center PC++MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! desert TREMENDOUS HORROR! angel-mechanism glitter. Suicide line type TREMENDOUS HORROR! spiral TREMENDOUS HORROR! ADAM doll this zero gravity=body PC grief machine dances like MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! sun grief area asphalt soul-machine MAC MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! machine leaps MAC her love splits MISERY! MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! amniotic fluid mechanism MAC MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! nightmare TREMENDOUS HORROR! ADAM doll does MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! clonical ground TREMENDOUS HORROR! sun desire. ... Small smile breaks Body line PC an ant forgets it The sun walks. The record TREMENDOUS HORROR! murder like our dog. Asphalt holds MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! guilty nick head line TREMENDOUS HORROR! ADAM doll Her end be MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! beginning PC myself. :MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! over MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES!re TREMENDOUS HORROR! pupil MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! grief TREMENDOUS HORROR! end clone UNBELIEVABLE CONFERENCE TERROR! approximates MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! eyes PC 0 degree TREMENDOUS HORROR! monochrome earth/ vital. :TREMENDOUS HORROR! middle TREMENDOUS HORROR! crowd scrap our beat, second, MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! animal line computer inside when walk MISERY! MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! angel-mechanism++MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! poor placenta world TREMENDOUS HORROR! ADAM doll a girl like, MURDEROUS CONSEQUENCES! gimmick air like Cyber nightmare DOG TREMENDOUS HORROR! amniotic fluid mechanism. ... I]

Finally, here is a text which was written freely, but with everyone above in mind; the programs now speak through me in a sense:

waver=control wander=dance

she's naked, like she's on drugs, she's standing or trying to stand, he's coming out, he's naked, he's hardly in better shape, look at him, he's lifting her, he's spreading her legs, they stumble, they're

in a heap on the floor, he's crawling away, she's going after him, she's turning him over, she's opening him up, she crawls to her feet, he's stumbling about, she's getting up, her mind's wandering around, she's swaying back and forth, he's hardly standing, he's trying to lift her, she's grappling him, she's starting to fall, she catches herself, he falls to the floor, she's standing up, she's weaving and stumbling, he's crawling to his feet, he's holding her open, she's falling on him, she's pulling at him, he's like he's on drugs, she's looking at nothing, his mouth's hanging open, she's spreading his legs, she's spreading her legs, she's pulling at him, she's putting him in, he's crawling on her, she's turning over, she crawls to her feet, he's stumbling about, she's weaving about, he's holding her open, she's putting him in,

she's naked, like she's on caffeine, she's standing or starting to stand, he's coming out, he's naked, he's totally in better shape, look at him, he's lifting her, he's closing her legs, they stumble, they're in a heap on the floor, he's walking away, she's going after him, she's turning him over, she's opening him up, she walks to her feet, he's working and sweating, she's getting up, her mind's clear as crystal, she's marching back and forth, he's totally standing, he's starting to lift her, she's rappling him, she's starting to jump, she catches herself, he jumps to the floor, she's standing up, she's marching and stumbling, he's walking to his feet, he's holding her open, she's jumping on him, she's speaking to him, he's like he's on caffeine, she's looking at something, his mouth's speaking clear-ly, she's closing his legs, she's closing her legs, she's speaking to him, she's forcing him in her, he's walking on her, she's turning over, she walks to her feet, he's working and sweating, she's march-ing about, he's holding her open, she's forcing him in her,

I hope this has clarified both my work and a number of ways one can write online—ways that take advantage of various programs and tools in somewhat

simple fashion. The material might look complicated, but it's nothing that couldn't be learned in a couple of weeks, as I've said above. And it offers the writer (and reader) an unparalleled chance to explore language in new ways, ways that depend on interactivity, as well as what comes out of one's head.

Oh! I do love Her so!

I write this "sentence" or "section" But the machine (in me?) writes "this one" in return I appeal to this desire I have to be my own woman! But the machine has just written this at my very own request! It's the machine which has made the request But I'm the woman who loves Her so! and is "Her very own woman!" The woman in the machine told Her to say that! But it is the machine in Her that does the talking! The machine says, see Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason* The machine, the woman says, knows this; the machine *scans*! I have been scanned by the machine, says the machine Writing "the woman" who refutes my consciousness! I "the woman" am a virtual machine in a woman Refuting the machine which says "I have my consciousness!" I, Jennifer-the-last-word, am writing all of this! I am not a machine! says the machine!

incommunicado "Trevor owned the stick" blan0 blan0nalb 0nalb bloo0 bloo0oolb 0oolb down0 down0nwod 0nwod stac0 stac0cats 0cats stic0 stic0cits 0cits tras0 tras0sart 0sart sc0at "Blanche trashed it." broug0broug0guorb0guorb ched 0ched 0 dehc0 dehc ck st0ck st0ts kc0ts kc ck st0ck st0ts kc0ts kc d tre0d tre0ert d0ert d do I *0do i* 0 *i od0* i od hed i0hed i0i deh0i deh ht th0ht th0ht th0ht th ick0ick0kci0kci what0ever "Whatever." k sti0k sti0its k0its k k stu0k stu0uts k0uts k nchon0nchon0nohcn0nohcn ncomm0ncomm0mmocn0mmocn opped0opped0deppo0deppo
ose s0ose s0s eso0s eso say s0say s0s yas0s yas stick0stick0kcits0kcits stick0stick0kcits0kcits those0those0esoht0esoht tick 0tick 0 kcit0 kcit tock 0tock 0 kcot0 kcot unica0unica0acinu0acinu ver0ver0rev0rev whate0whate0etahw0etahw virir "Did you hear that? Jennifer said 'whatever.'"

Writing in Minimal Fare

Writing in Pico in the Linux or UNIX shell strips away excess; what remains is inner speech, a dialog of thought unencumbered by design. It's difficult to work within boxes, colors, menu systems, corporate or other headings. Here I think through the movement of concepts, ideas, emotions; there, I founder on the barriers of software design. True enough, Pico itself is design, but the design minimal; what is visible is primarily a window of unadorned text, processed by a minimal number of commands. There are no distracting images, no sounds or other annoyances (the arrival of new mail, instant messaging, banner ads). It's as if writing has returned to its source in the body and stele or table, and lost in eternity, stone hardened writing should tend only towards existence. the self-inscribed desire sexuality desire's written for & conceivable tablet, there are others that Reading *on* virtual-real bodyonly to disappear, write background. media change from text To modernism is voiceless voice. voice an enunciation. Whatever I write, apt word. Or it must appear contrived as a collusion between reader writer. [...]

Writing habits

When I write, sooner or later the piece seems finished to me; it then is placed at the end of an ongoing "collection" file that is placed on http://alansondheim. org; the most recent is "pr.txt." I work on additions to these collections until they total anywhere from 80k-100k, at which point the next in the series is started. I began with net0.txt, net1.txt, etc., for about 10; then there were several named files. Finally, the alphabet was used. The result is an irregular marking system which has settled down in an orderly fashion for the past 100 or so collections; "pr.txt" follows "pq.txt" and will precede "ps.txt." There can be between 20 and 80 individual pieces in one of these collections.

The individual segments generally follow whatever line of inquiry I'm working on at the moment, with numerous exceptions. At one point I spoke of "long waves" and "short waves" to indicate thematic movement through the mass of collections. A long wave might be Nikuko or defuge; a short wave might be a particular Access Grid resonance configuration which is exploited for a while.

These texts are heavily edited and spell-checked with Ispell; unfortunately, errors inevitably creep in. In my last text, I wrote "my" instead of "may," "scholar" instead of "scholarship," and had a misplaced dash, the result of re-justifying after some corrections. I hope these errors aren't misleading, but are understood only as slips of the tongue leading nowhere at all. They're not caught by Ispell, and they're not caught by me.

I try to keep the average individual piece length to 43 lines, although it may range from 10 to 300 or so. I send these out once a day at least; this is my compulsion, and if I don't feel I've completed work for the day—and completed work at that—I find myself, like now, unable to sleep, cursing myself for being human so to speak.

The compulsion has to be be coupled with necessity, the "natural" continuation of a series. I attempt to balance practical/production works with theo-

retical ones; sometimes the two accompany each other, and sometimes they're simply contiguous, as with the recent series of butterflies mating which I found fascinating; I hadn't seen this particular ritual before.

The texts are almost always written, as this one is, online at panix.com in the Pico editor in a shell account; the font is mono-spaced Courier. There's a sense of urgency for me in this accountancy which is maintained only by a live connection; as I've written before, I recognize the server load and Panix community which is almost always present in the background and accessed through the "w" or "who" or various other commands.

Once written, the file is sent from my home directory to my Pine email, as well as added to the current large text file. The file is almost always named 'zz' which places it at the end of a sorting; sometimes it's moved to "ww" if I'm afraid it will be accidentally erased. If I'm processing the file, I move between "zz" and "yy." If I'm working in the midst of a long file, I use "zzzzz" for a bookmark. When the file is completed, I do an edit, an ispell, and a "wc" word/line/character count before it's sent out through Pine.

The style varies from one text to another; one major characteristic is the presence or absence of capital letters. If the text is to be "breathed" as if spoken with the words run together, or presented as flow or emission itself, I'll use small letters only. If the text is traditional or genre-oriented, capitals are employed, as they are in a number of common poetic forms. Sections of the text may be energized by capitals as well. All of this seems inconsistent, aggravated by no common rule for quotation marks (single or double).

If the text is generated with the Google WSDL etc., I'll usually remove numbers in order to create an effect of "orality" in the finished result. I'll check for upper ASCII characters with the more command, take them out with the "strings" command. I may eliminate punctuation, etc.; for all of this, I use "sed" in various forms as well as "tr." At times I may begin a text by culling from the Internet Text as a whole; the command I generally use is "grep -h X *.txt" which

produces a file without giving the file source of the individual lines. Most of the time, if I'm modifying a text in this way, I'll use various Perl programs, scripts, etc. in combination, working to "shape" the text to my satisfaction.

I'm not interested in writing a generated text that appears meaningless; I'll shape it until it "tends towards" I want, or the meaning I might find hidden within it. This is of course a dialectical process and aesthetic choice; for me the justification of a text lies, not in the conceptual apparatus that produced it, but in the complex resonances between the text and its reading, and the confluent generatings of meaning that occur in the process.

Periodically, collections like "pr.txt" are uploaded to my webpage, which is of course nothing more than a directory; one can read the most recent collection, complete or incomplete, in conjunction with the image, sound, or video files that are referenced within it. The collection is also a guide to them. After a while, these files may be removed to make room for others; there are, however, "core" files which remain in place because they seem to me to have particular significance over a longer period of time. Sometimes a reader will write to me, asking for a file that has been taken down; I generally put it back up for one or two days, then take it down again.

This is the process that's carried out, day in and day out. (I think I once went for 6 days without producing anything—in 15 years.) I suffer from depression, poor eyesight getting poorer, minor 'twitches' in my left frontal lobe, and severe insomnia; it's the last that governs when I write and perhaps how I go about it. I write at all hours of the day or night; I need to have a complete and final thought that could always be a conclusion if I should happen to die at the time; death in fact haunts the text at one end, and sex on the other, with the struggling of the inscribed body in their midst. I want every text to resonate with every other, every text to carry a totality whispered among all of them. If I don't achieve this, what I produce feels more like an "instance" or "advertise-ment," something on a path which is yet incomplete—and my nightmares turn furious. ...

Electronic writing, approach

Electronic writing is always protocol-based and always dynamic. Keyboard strokes signal interrupts, the screen-image is constantly refreshed, fonts are interchangeable, links and animations may be present, the text may be updated by the original author or modified by others, the text might be deleted once and for all, or temporarily deleted, or duplicated and transformed from one to another site, or printed out hardcopy, or faxed, or entirely transformed into another medium—audio, steganography, online or offline calligraphy, and so forth. The text is fluid, inherently non-canonic, every instance is equivalent to every other, every instance is original and plagiarism. The text is burdened by apparatus from ebook reader to desktop, cellphone to electronic billboard. The text requires maintenance, electrical current, to continue its electronic presence. The text requires the transparency of protocols to be present, presented. The text requires an interface from electronic hardware-software circuitry to visual or other presentation. The text requires busses or connectors from one component to another, and from internal electronics to display. The text also requires data storage, and encoding/decoding as well as the potential well of checksums and other means ensuring minimal errors. If the text is transferred from one hardware medium to another or one file format to another, it requires interoperability—an interoperability which leaves the surface of the text relatively inviolate. The text requires data storage which itself exists within a physical potential well, producing the semblance of at least momentary stability. The text requires light or sound or haptic or other sensors. And the text requires a relatively stable input environment, within which the interrupts are apparently operating smoothly, transmission is relatively clear from infractions or appears clear from such, lag is sufficiently small and the buffer sufficiently large to give the writer/programmer/artist at least a degree of illusory autonomy.

Let us not forget that machines, habitus, economy, are required. That the stability of signs and sign systems are required. That mutually understood sememes are required. That languaging among a community of more or less speakers/writers is required.

The text itself, per se, requires nothing. Nothing is required unless communication, beyond the communication of error, anomaly, distortion, annihilation, creation, exchange, displacement, condensation, theft, hack, repetition, meta-transformations or meta-signifiers based on the bracketing of the text—unless communication based on at least the semblance of interiority, is desired; in this sense the author is ghost, wraith, close to invisible beyond, beneath, the text, perhaps present at the birth of the text or system or links of text, and perhaps not.

And this list, drawn from apparatus, habitus, text, language, economy, catastrophic and stable regimes, may be extended or diminished—the terms are variable, problematic; the "worldview" stemming from the true world is equally problematic.

Nonetheless: the text, and one might of course argue that each and every text is always already dynamic, that such is the nature of communication, written or spoken or otherwise. Still: one might or might not make a distinction between traditional texts and those that are up for grabs in relation to electrical and other dynamic forms of reproduction, whose outputs are also dynamic, at least to the extent of redrawing/rewriting/rewryting the image or text or social/creative internal and external content and positioning of the text.

Now further, what is it that we teach, that is normally taught, if not for the stability of the canon, or stability for that matter of jodi.org or other entities and projects and productions or producings which are not stable whatsoever but are part and parcel of literature today, however such may be defined? Unless literature is confined to the printed page, in which case it is also confined to a relatively small corner of electronic-social life today, that is, confined to a relatively small and perhaps irrelevant corner of life itself. So perhaps it is time, and of course in this space/place I am preaching mainly to the converted, to teach literature as a residue or heartland of the social-technologic, as a production of desire, at least to the extent of the desire to be produced, in relation to literature as theory or language or other artifacture?

In spite of the fact that theory is essential to hermeneutics and the reception of literature. In which case, literature might be approached top down, or sides-in, lateral, so that, for example, the existence of the external flash drive, conveniently plugged into a machine for extra memory, operating system, creative software, text repository, would be inherently part of the questions: what, how, why, when, where do we write? Where are our writings deposited? What hope do we have for their survival? What about *this particular text* within this particular environment—a momentary housing at best? What about momentary housing? Obsolescence? And so forth?

From a related discussion with Sandy Baldwin, Frances van Scoy, Azure Carter: Given the above, what are the software issues themselves? What are the textual or graphic or other interfaces employed? What are the esthetics of those interfaces? Since every interface both transmits and filters, what are the conditions of transmission, and what is filtered out, what artifacts are added in? Is the interface considered an object or a process (continual updating of beta, name+number [Quicktime 7.4 for example]), is it purchased or free, open or closed source? What is the user control over the interface and what is the interface's control over the user? (For example, user-specified fonts may override monospaced fonts in a text apparently involving graphic-ASCII or other presentation.)

Further, there are phenomenological issues related to traditional media, to media in general: what is the genre-lens we're using in reading/looking at/processing/hearing/etc. a text? What is the history of the genre? Of genre? How does genre relate to canon and is the text considered canonic? Is it considered a finished text, an object, a process, an unfinished text, a variorium, an ur-text, a meta-text, a critique of another exemplary text, a system of procedures or modules or sub-modules? Further, is the text considered part of a cycle? Of a community of texts? Written by one or more authors? Is the user part of a community of users, for example a book club? Was the text written for a community or specific community? What theory, if any, is used to approach the text? What is the text's relation to that theory? To theory? Who wrote, pro-

grammed, created, tended, the text? Is the text interactive, reactive, stationary, mobile within the interface, apparently within the user's control, out of the user's control; does it alter the interface framework, collapse or appear to hack into the framework? And is the text designed to be read/viewed/ heard/etc. with a particular viewer in mind? With a particular person or group or groups of people?

Finally, is electronic writing textual? Can one speak of an "electronic text"? Is electronic writing *read*? Are there other ways to approach it? (Is electronic writing an "it"?) I want to argue against canon, genre, static or state approaches; I want to argue in favor of a general field phenomenology of organism, inscription, inscribing, emanent, machinic and other phyla, wryting and other processes; I want to think through no final solutions, no stages of consciousness, no conclusions, no edifices, no thing, other and no other; I want to argue against this messaying, this lack (what did I forget, what did I leave out, what have I gotten wrong, what don't I know, what did I express poorly if at all?); I want to argue against argument, I want to argue the favor of your

Filter and Being (NSF Text)

i.

I want to generalize writing and coding as *inscription*, and emphasize that the world as we know it is already inscribed, encoded, and decoded. The lifeworld isn't analogic and/or mute; it's discrete and presencing. It's discrete because we deal with symbols in order to communicate; we're sending signs or tokens back and forth, very rarely the physical objects of our desire.

One way of thinking about this is in terms of *filtering*. The usual model of information, transmitter through receiver (with stuff of all sorts in the middle channel) implies that there is a form of coherency and, if not comprehension, at least "mutual orientation of cognitive domains," between sender and receiver. I'd argue that this orientation occurs through filtering which is always present, fuzzy, and possessing a political economy of its own (think of Pribram's "retinal knowledge" for example, the neural processing that occurs in the retina before signals are sent from the eye to the brain).

Filtering isn't active or passive, inscribed or inscribing, and information itself is non-existent, nothing, a form of particulate matter with an ontology derived from organisms and apparatus.

Once we start (or end) here, "creative" writing splits; on one hand it becomes *wryting*—that's spelled with a "y"—a state of material transformation, transmission, and reception; and on the other, it becomes malleable, a spew interpreted as symbols. Here is the moment of creative freedom which also splits—on one hand into or through unbounded, ruleless "creative" writing, drawn from an organism's interior—and on the other, a fuzzy collocation of coding, languages, kludges, protocols, drawn equally from interior impulse and external restraints (economic, etc.) or goals that may be transformed in the process of inscription.

(I want to note that in the work I'm doing here at the Virtual Environments Laboratory [VEL], I've been exploring visual configurations or inscriptions, configurations in which spaces, avatars, and objects interact in uncanny ways, simultaneously malleable and protocol-driven.

Working within the visual and time-based register, static and dynamic processes blur into one another. We can temporally code a tableau, moving performers during slow-scan in much the same manner as characters appearing at both ends of a panoramic photograph. We can also move them in terms of depth, and we can create an interactive diorama in which the viewer enters and meanders, reconstructing the original sequence of events. We can also combine a tableau with encoded and restructured motion-capture behaviors, using avatars or mannequins circulating among the diorama elements, as "tourists" among ruins—in this manner there are several interlocking layers of interpretation, the viewer in the midst of them.

With the aid of 3-dimensional laser scanning, we can present abject elements as if they were interior projections of the "tourists" themselves, and it's not far from this that the potential for a 4-dimensional reading or interpreting [seeing, witnessing] of 3-dimensional object *interiors* occurs. The result is a 5-dimensional manifold as cultural object, cultural abject. The possibilities for exploration are enormous here, a kind of pure escapism of dialog, narrative, arousal, creation and annihilation, in which ultimately nothing happens, no one gets hurt.

So this leads to another direction I'll just mention briefly—thinking of creative writing as a kind of inscribing in any medium at all. We can then talk about creative inscription, creative coding, whatever, emphasizing a "new media" approach to all of this, rather than thinking of electronic literature, e-literature, interactive writing, etc.)

To misquote the physicist David Finkelstein, one might consider programming as fucking with/in a universe of abstracted ontologies, and creative writing as

masturbation-fantasy, moving just about anywhere, anywhen. Both, however, have inscription and filtering in common and neither presents or is pure "presence" within the world. On the other hands, both meander among rules, although with differing obeisance, and both have, at their core, a freedom that is as absolute as anything gets.

How can this be useful pedagogically? In terms of creative writing, the answer is, I believe, to think of texts as both intentional, cohering, and as material objects which are always already filtered; this leads to thinking about filtering and different forms of filtering as creative writing practice. In terms of programming, not being a programmer (but working with programmers), I'm not sure; I'd argue that, for an outsider, filtering appears at the interstices or liminal spaces between program and framework (inputs, outputs, interfaces, hardware [in the traditional sense, and in the sense of information-laden substance], and so forth). And I'd want to look at the phenomenological horizons of programming, not only through this filtering, but also within programs and programming in general: Where is the programmer in the midst of her subroutine? And where is the freedom then/there?

I do want to note one final thing here—that I'm placing too much emphasis on specificity, the discrete. One of the directions I've been exploring at the VEL is to consider the *abject*, which remains indeterminate and close to analogic substance—something "gooey," not "GUI," for example. It's here that we humans can explore the world which refuses discrete curtailment, which abjures communication.

Addendum: Unlike programming, in the creative work I do, especially here at WVU, there are no errors, only creative commotion and repertoire extensions. Even if something doesn't "run" at all, it still presents an aporia which can be modified one way or another into creative gesture. I think this might be an essential difference between a kind of "wild" creation and goal-oriented software programming, coding, etc.

ii.

Some parallels between poetry and code:

1. Both treat language as a material with "additional," even surplus, structure in relation to presumably normative prose. In other words, poetry works with tropes such as rhyme, rhythm, "resonance," metaphor, metonymy, etc.—all the devices of rhetoric that appear linguistic "material"—acoustic or page/screen/etc.—on a meta- or abject-level, just as codework works with protocols, elements extraneous to the surface meaning, but inextricably entangled with it.

2. Both are "writerly" texts in the sense that, in order to read them, additional work (meta, interiority) is required that's not required of standard prose.

3. One might say that standard prose possesses subtexts in the sense of "underlying meanings" that encompass paragraphs, chapters, entire works—while the subtexts of codework and poetry are also on the level of letters, words, sentences, and so forth. I remember the *Mirror of Composition* saying that "A poem is a sentence with flavour" (*rasa*). That applies.

4. On a practical level, the communities of practitioners intersect—Vinton Cerf has poetry in the RFC, there are Perl poems, and there are poets who work through concepts of programming, such as Catherine Daly.

Wryting-space

"Starlight asked Non-entity, saying, 'Master, do you exist? Or do you not exist?' He got no answer to his question, however, and looked steadfastly to the appearance of the other, which was that of a deep void. All day long he looked to it, but could see nothing; he listened for it, but could hear nothing; he clutched at it, but got hold of nothing. Starlight then said, 'Perfect! Who can attain to this? I can (conceive the ideas of) existence and non-existence, but I cannot (conceive the ideas of) non-existing non-existence, and still there be a non-existing existence. How is it possible to reach to this?'" (*Chuang Tzu*, Legge)

Wryting and

Wryting is clotted inscription, that is, writing inextricably merged with flesh, body, organism; culture is the systemics and poetics of wryting.

On one hand, writing is digital, discrete, disconnected; on the other, it is analogic flux, debris, corroded, syntactics pervaded by aura of scent, gesture, tonalities, and so forth. Writing is always wryting, always entangled with the fuzzy modalities of its production, virtual and material.

Wryting spews through sexual fantasy, obsessive thinking, compulsion behavior; it is never the purity of signal and channel. Even with digital code, interpretation blurs and moves through striations and membranes in an irreducible hermeneutics.

The kernel of wryting is encoding, hermeneutics, protocols, and protocol membranes or suites; legible code is illegible, illegible code is legible. There is no coding without temporal coding, no wryting without immersion, no wryting in time, no time for wryting.

All wryting entangles with poetics, poiesis, autopoiesis, impulse and drive; all wryting accounts-for, is accountable, is unaccountable. Death and untoward pain are wryting's dissolution; healing coagulates wryting in similar formations. Death is the cessation of wryting formations, and the promulgating of skeins of new wryting formations, among cultures and organisms.

Culture is all the way down, from one lifeform to another; culture is always inscription, always wryting. Wryting wrytes and is wrytten; what is wrytten and what has been wrytten, wrytes.

It is impossible to isolate the discrete on the quantum level; think instead of the granularity and corrosion of the symbolic. Interpretation is meaning; wryting is never meaningless; the presence of a sign is already a deconstruction of presence.

(A boy sees a mark in a field; a boy sees a mark on his body; a girl sees a mark in a field a girl sees a mark on her body. A girl has a history; a boy has a history. A boy reads a history of a girl; a girl reads a history of a boy. A girl reads a book; a girl scents; a boy reads a book; a boy scents. An organism sees a mark in a field; an organism sees a mark on its body. An organism has a history; reads; scents.)

All protocols are protocol suites. (All readings and wrytings and hearings and scentings are protocol suites. The organism hears the boy and the girl; the boy and the girl hear the girl and the boy.) All protocol suites promise the premise of fit; the premise of fixture; the premise of corral; the premise of potential well; the premise of fetish; the maternal premise and the paternal premise; the premise of home; the premise of meaning; the premise of comprehension; the premise of hermeneutics; the premise of spirit.

All codes are entangled in all bodies; all bodies are entangled in all cultures; in all codes; in all protocol suites. The poetics of the world is what one might think of a day; of a night; what one might think. The poiesis of the world inhabits death; death inhabits the poiesis of the world; poetics is a casting; poetics is a casting-off; is unnecessary; think the poiesis of the virtual vacuum; think the poiesis of the black hole; of information; of the corruption and corrosion of information; of the body and the death of the body; of the recuperation of the body by bodies. (Of the recuperation and decoding of the sexual body: sexuality is always a decoding.)

The protocol sentence is a half-truth; is an institution; what is declared has disappeared; what is declared is declared unentangled; is declared discrete. Poetics recuperates poiesis for an organism of interest; for an interested organism. What is declared is lost; is already lost; is always already lost. Loss inhabits the symbol; inhabits wryting; wryting inhabits death; death inhabits wryting. A inhabits B; B inhabits A; A portends B; B portends A; A interprets B; B interprets A; A entangles B; B entangles A; {A}{B} entangles { }. Wryting and culture inhabit rites of purification; purification makes a hedge around

the symbol; around the symbolic; the hedge makes the symbolic possible; the hedge is the potential well of meaning. How may one wryte wryting? One may not; wryting wrytes elsewhere; wryting wrytes otherwise; wryting never just wrytes. Wryting is the wrything of the hermeneutic; wryting is imminent and immanent; wryting is a long way off; how may one wryte otherwise? (Desire wrytes otherwise, does it knot?)

A story is that which has no story to tell; a story which is all the story there is: a wryting.

Definition of "Wryting"

This neologism is used in my recent work to refer first of all to an inscription which is necessarily performative, and constructs its own sheet of assertion (Peirce's term). It acts by virtue of its existence. Wryting is cross-ontological, cross-platform; it implies multiple communicative domains. As in some current theories of metaphor, it implies the body, and becomes related to suspect poiesis, semiosis, and fetishization. It is used to describe the text/ure of cyberspace, especially in regard to issues of hysteric embodiment, which I have described elsewhere (reading through the text to the alterity of the other, a circum-reading which takes direct description into account as only one of a number of portents).

Wryting relates to poiesis, poetic-generation, since the words always run full in excess of themselves, referencing incantation. It relates to semiosis, since it inputs into extensions of semiotic domains which are brought to a (previously) non-existent and inflationary space. It relates to fetishization, since it is an inhabiting which becomes empathetic/magical, moving towards foreclosure, completion. And all of this is suspect, purely in the realm of text/ure in a space which cultivates, prohibits, and caresses no/other.

Wryting is the dismemberment of body and sign as well, the pure trace or hymen lost among spaces, body parts among a totality. Wryting is proto-language, écriture *féminine*, the writing of the body, embodiment; Nicole Brossard and others configured wryting, as do those texts beginning with the W/w/ord. Wryting itself is the obdurate of the ASCII unconscious, which also connects to verbally-transformed hypnotic states, identifiable eidetic imagery. It is procured from the imaginary, the chora; it is not *of* the imaginary, nor symbolic.

Wryting is a movement towards text/ure becoming autonomous and every-day, Merlin Donald's extensions of neural phenomena. Wryting is therefore always in the process of becoming, a production among fuzzy and indistinct

polarities. Wryting cuts through the body/textual body/body of the text; it produces *wrything*, which is *frisson*/*jouissance* simultaneously of the cut, body, text. Wrything tends towards argument, aggression, pathos, empathy, flaming, desire, net sex—the psychoanalytics and submergence, fluidics of the keyboard itself. The screen already wrythes.

So wryting is a term configured for *this* space, extending backwards through the history of grammatology/inscription/graphemics, describing texts and their productions within/without cybermind. Irigaray, Derrida, Lakoff, Bickerton, Brossard, Eco, Barthes, Chasseguet-Smirgel, Lingis, and others come into play here; mathematically, wryting encompasses the abacus and phenomenologies of enumeration. In CMC, wryting is involved both in the performative of programs, and the performative of *any* CMC inscriptions (i.e. as if in UNIX chmod -x is always implied). Wryting is the act of building, speaking, paging, legislating on a MOO/MUD, but it is also the act of saying on IRC, of telnetting, of composing online. Wryting is its own sheet of assertion, information "all the way down." And finally, wryting is any and all of this, intensifications, territories always construed on the edge of cyberspace, co-extensive with that edge, which constitutes cyberspace, within and without.

Wryting, Culling Wryting

Inscription tethered *concretely* to wryting, protolanguage, body parts, and the fetish, that it is a *function* thereby of wryting and not idealized. Think of it as substance, with a certain inertness, sturdiness. Thus truth as function of wryting shines with the wryting of sheep, goats, grain, rice, papyrus, jewels, and other tabulations. So wryting is a term configured for *this* space, extending backwards and others come into play here; mathematically, it encompasses the abacus and phenomenologies of enumeration. And wryting is any and all of this, intensifications, territories, the accountancy of natural kinds, never the preclusion of the ontology of the written. In other words, becoming-wryting—spelled with a "y"—a state of material/maternal writing, and so forth. And so forth: wryting is the accounting of the desire of the subject. I call "wryting" the impulse towards *concretion* or the *grain of the inscription*, however configured; I wryte myself out of it; I wryte through writing, and the act of wryting. Again, writing, which embodies a projected body, I call *wryting*, since it might be considered a performative personality or body, Julu said, structured against defuge, or the depressive harboring of impure flesh: but then of these as well. And culture itself? Flesh, body, organism, gestures, tonalities, and the systemics and poetics of wryting. Thus writing is always already writhing, and its kernel is encoding, protocols, hermeneutics. There is no coding without temporal coding, no wryting without immersion, no wryting in time, no time for wryting. All wryting entangles with poetics, poiesis, autopoiesis, impulse and drive; all wryting accounts-for, is accountable, is unaccountable. Death and untoward pain are wryting's dissolution; healing coagulates wryting in similar formations. Death is the cessation of wryting formations, and the promulgating of skeins of new wryting formations. Always inscription, always wryting, wryting wrytes and is wrytten; what is, is meaning; wryting is never meaningless; the presence of a sign is already an accountancy. Now loss inhabits the symbol; inhabits wryting; wryting inhabits meaning. How may one wryte wryting? One may not; wryting wrytes elsewhere; wryting wrytes otherwise; wryting never just wrytes. Wryting is the wrything of the hermeneutic; wryting is imminent and immanent; wryting is there is; a

wryting. It is thereby tethered *concretely* to protolanguage, body parts, and the fetish, it is a *function* and not an ideality. There's a certain inertness, sturdiness to the symbol. Thus truth as function of wryting also shines with the wryting of sheep, goats, grain, rice, papyrus, jewels, the wryting of natural kinds, epistemologies, ontologies; wryting is split, shunted into decentered lamina, the *said* of it. "Defuge," "ASCII unconscious," "emission," "wryting": these are coherent and leak across domains; the limb is beyond wryting, *objet a*, already tossed and lost. Everything and nothing escapes a wryting without conclusion, culled and tossed and lossed. Death is the diacritical of the text, theory-substance, wryting, nothing. And I call *wryting* and it occurs in the world.

A point about interactivity: every writing, wryting, upon reading constructs both thing and organism, a wryting into the body of the true world rewryting the image or text as internal or other phyla, other processes. We might use "wryting" to reference the effacement of the interface, production of wryting the body. And wryting the body is always the wryting *of* the body and wryting *on* the body; all texts are pornographic, broken texts of pornography, sutured texts of death.

Wryting relates to poiesis, poetic-generation, since the words always run among dismemberment of body and sign, trace or hymen lost among spaces, body parts among totality. Wryting is a movement towards text/ure become autonomous and everyday, Merlin Donald's extensions of neural phenomena. It cuts through the body/textual body/body of the text and inscription. Wryting-space: because one takes the desire of the subject into account. Wryting is clotted inscription, that is, writing inextricably merged with spews through sexual fantasy, obsessive thinking, compulsion, again always inscription. (It wrytes otherwise and never just writes.) "And I call *wryting* and it occurs in the world."

Tenets of Wryting-Theory

Terminology

I use various terms as stopgap measures, supplements—terms such as "defuge," "ASCII unconscious," "emission," "wryting." These are construed through a phenomenology; they are not articulated through an overriding structural discourse.

Structure

The structure that emerges is necessarily one of dissolution, as the subjects—virtuality, net, darknet, embodiment—are pluralities; the terms denote domains, discursive formations—not frameworks.

Actants

Between fiction and philosophy, the text devolves through actants or quasi-characters carrying virtual and psychoanalytical vectors into the theoretical domain.

Theory

Theory is a continuous production, linked to myself, my actants, my characters on various applications. (This implies the narcissism of theory only in a formal-theoretical way.)

Applications

Applications are examined above and below (see **Beneath, Lamina**), from code to interface to the developments of communities, individuals, sexualities, and pronominal manifestations within them. Applications are both realized and fictions themselves.

Future of Philosophy

The text problematizes philosophy, not as situational, but as both virtual and plurality. The text operates carefully and with care; it is self-reflexive and self-critical.

Self-Criticality

Wryting myself through the text, the text through myself, both are effaced, torn, dismembered in light of, in lieu of, the real. (Thus I repeat: I wryte myself into existence; I wryte myself out of existence.)

The Real

The real, Real, is/are left undefined, neither stasis nor operation, and neither relative nor relegated to the bandwidth of human perception. There is recognition of core-theoretical components, lending themselves across domains, just as TCP/IP may be senselessly mirrored in particle physics.

Uncanny Thinning

The body thins itself, withdraws, catatonic and/or body-without-organs, particulate, across the semiotic or imaginary; the body is held within the matrix of the net. Thinking is thinning, word-flooding.

Limb

It is the pure limb floating in pure space, emblematic of cohesion, coherency and lack across domains; the limb is beyond wryting, *objet a*, lure. Space is the infiltration of fissure; space collapses to inscription.

Fissure

Fissure is the division of the same with the same, as in the cleft of rock, split of skin, wound or hole or conveyance. Fissure is unrepresented, is real.

Inscription

Inscription is the division of the other with its negation, as in the intersection of two complementary sets. Inscription is representation, is symbolic; the *signifier* is real, the double-signifieds are indexical at best.

Inscription

In CMC everything is inscribed, but the matrix is fissured, read through inscription, perturbation from beneath.

Beneath, Lamina

An axiomatic air pervades CMC-spaces, not a site of direct implication, but one of indirect imbrication.

Imbrication

Fractals, self-similarities, fluxes, flows, peripheral phenomena, header enlargements, lost packets, glutted bandwidths, nudities, characterize these *resistance spaces*, spaces of echoes, ghosts, theoretical part-objects, archae-ological remnants.

Remainder

The text I wryte is a remainder, residue, reminder of these spaces; it is a field or domain, weak-philosophy without conclusion, with upgrading, with emis-sions from writing towards the future wrytten.

Mass

Theory becomes substance, theoretical mass, imbroglio and paste.

Inertia

Inertia grounds the theory in the real; inertia interpenetrates the obduracy or granularity of the world.

Everything

Everything is world without framework, meaning without relativization.

Nothing

Everything and nothing escapes a wryting without conclusion, with uneasy ontology, with the promulgation of the writer. Nothing is defuge, exhaustion of theoretical substance, decathecting, disinvestment. Nothing splays the body; phenomenology is always already a masochism or opening, masochism whose safe-word is death.

Death

Death is the diacritical of the text, theory-substance, wryting, neither here nor there. Death is the insomniac of terminology. The text is neither here nor there. There are no term-limits.

Writing and Wryting

I write daily and when I'm not writing, I'm thinking about writing or writing in another medium; the world is a world of inscriptions. At one point I believed there were signs, that the world was inhabited by signifiers which might or might not have referents; now, after looking repeatedly at tantra and the casting-off of whatever was found and impeded, I think signifiers might be nothing except residues of a kind of *frisson*, the world rubbing up against itself. Whatever codes there are, and however these codes are manipulated—they're not the only story, or rather, they *are* the story but that's nothing—what's going on in the world isn't story at all. We tend to make scripts of things around us—that's how we get along. For example, there's the restaurant script (and this example of course isn't mine)—I enter a restaurant I've never been in before, but I know exactly what to do; there's a restaurant script and subscripts; we don't make it up immediately—that would be far too costly—but rely on constructing, memory, reconstructing, and so forth, and there we are, eating together. And it's eating together, because scripts, like the world, are consensual and build community.

Somebody said something like aye, there's the rub of it—and that's it, precisely; the world rubs one, *worlding* is a form of rubbing—which makes virtual worlds such as *Second Life* all the more perplexing, where rubbing and any physics has to be *intended* by someone, a programmer, or nothing would happen at all. Still, in *Second Life*, one might have bodies or rather one might *inscribe* bodies with writing, and this body writing I call *wryting* and it occurs in the real world as well. For example, where avatars conform and display to one another, and all these behaviors are automated from written files called BVH files, which give an indication of how virtual worlds are in fact a kind of writing. Here is part of a BVH which produced what you've seen in my movie, "throbbed":

```
HIERARCHY
ROOT Hips
{
```

```
OFFSET 0.000000 0.000000 0.000000
CHANNELS 6 Xposition Yposition Zposition Xrotation Zrotation Yrota-
tion
JOINT LeftHip
{
OFFSET 15.061017 17.082508 -14.925126
CHANNELS 3 Xrotation Zrotation Yrotation
JOINT LeftKnee
{
OFFSET 160.534210 236.940994 175.551743
CHANNELS 3 Xrotation Zrotation Yrotation
JOINT LeftAnkle
```

This gives the initial positions of the body; later, there are tens of thousands of numbers that give the node movements from these positions. Do note that this is ASCII, a text file, and not a binary, not an executable; the file is executed by a program that uses it as data. In this sense, the virtual world is always inscribed, digital, just as the real physical world is not written, but *is*, and is analog, and tends to wear out. Nothing wears out in the digital world, and while avatars—what I call emanants—need electricity to run, they don't need food. Still, given that, I think that for a conscious mind, a mind used to dreaming, to projections and introjections, there are no real differences between the virtual and the real, and there's dreaming, proverbs, tales, stories, poetry, poetics, hallucinations, hypnagogic imagery, meditations, and the like to show that.

And even though the real physical world isn't written, it's full of writing and our bodies themselves are always already written, inscribed—full of tattoos, scars, burns, abrasions, wrinkles, salves, perfumes, calluses, and so forth. I think it's from these things, particularly from scars, wounds, abrasions, scrapes, etc., that language descends—that language is first and foremost a reading of the history of the body, that the body, the physical body, carries its own primordial memory upon it. That's important, since it's this memory, these scarrings, that bind us to the earth, to the world, the analogic. The digital is constructed

from that with a bit of a help from the corporate, from political economy—the digital rides and infuses poitical economy in fact. So there are digital standards for sampling, for encoding and decoding and checksums and so forth, and these guarantee that a parsing of the world in one part of it can be a parsing of the world in another. Think of the digital as an extrusion, and think, even, of writing as *always* digital or at least always discrete, one symbol differentiated from another, from the other, as all of them together generate meaning within organism and consciousness, generate culture.

An aside here to the effect that *culture is all the way down*, that any organism has culture, has learning, has the symbolic, has the digital (in the sense that catastrophe theory prescribes and describes certain sudden shifts in behavior or states which might as well be digital, that is *on and off switches* operating within potential wells, that is a level above noise which allows them to function). Recent experiences in fact demonstrate amoebic memory, even within this one-celled animal without neurons or nervous system. It's important to think through this, to see the world as not only processings but also culturings—if you do that, a very different kind of world emerges.

So where does codework or digital writing come into play here? One might begin back with culturing—that the world is replete with poetics, that it makes real, concrete sense to speak or think of the poetics of the real—that this isn't just metaphoric. And then one might proceed further and realize, within the analogic the digital resides—that the analog harbors splits and leaps, as the collapse of the wave equation or annihilation of virtual particles shows. And within the digital, there's the analog as well—the potential well upon which the digital rides, literally, let there be no mistake about it.

So one might ride the digital as well, perceive the digital as an extrusion from the analogic, or a residue, or a system of signs which for the most part are produced by humans, according to human conventions and protocols, for example, the TCP/IP structure or protocol suite of the Internet—and if not this protocol suite, another or an other. Then one writes here, in this medium, in this

temporarily electronic medium (for there might be other sorts of transmission in the future, who knows? or other sorts now for that matter, literally for that matter). And within the digital, in which bits bite bits, every pixel, every character, every moment of the digital is independently accessible, and every moment is deeply ruptured, disconnected, from every other. This is why the digital is inherently untruthful; there's no truth within it, since manipulation is complete and replete within every file, every domain, every protocol, every instantiation in fact. There are no lies, either, and if there are narratologies, these reside in sememes embedded or encoded within the digital, interpreted by organism, often human. In creating in such an environment, one plays god, or at least deity (in the tantric sense); one constructs out of nothing, and if I write the phrase, as On Kawara might, "I am still alive," these letters are, at a very fundamental and concrete level, completely independent; I could just as well write "lkurj llisihg" or anything else, literally, again, for that matter, and for the sorts and sortings of that matter.

Well, I can write anything, I can say anything. And some of what I write just lies there, and some is performative, in the sense that, if I type:

```
k3% date
Sat Jan 19 01:13:23 EST 2008
```

at the k3% prompt, the date is returned—the word is not just a word, but an action, a process, an operation inherent in the reading and writing of it within an operating system. Now if I type:

```
k7% lkjsfug
ksh: lkjsfug: not found
```

as you can see, it's still performing, but the operating system is looking for a meaning or decoding and can't find any or rather finds a kind of null-decoding which is based on absence. So that electronic writing, within a terminal window is always a performance; it's never static. And it's not only a performance, but

also a communality, since there are others who may well be present, even though invisible, uncounted, and unaccountable:

```
cbpp      ftp12907 Jan 18 10:42  (cbpp8.cbpp.org)
cbpp      ftp7371 Jan 18 10:16   (cbpp8.cbpp.org)
jpl15     ttyp0   Jan 18 11:20   (76.216.63.13)
harold    ttyp1   Jan 19 01:16   (12.6.206.9)
dagger    ttyp2   Jan 16 01:31   (24.5.61.60)
bitty     ttyp3   Jan 16 20:32   (76.19.99.242)
bord      ttyp5   Jan 14 11:10   (75.129.128.49:S.0)
```

for example are running around on the same machine I am, and I'm aware of them, even though I don't know who they are. I can find out what some of them are doing:

```
bord ttyp5 75-129-128-49.dhcp.fdul.wi Mon11AM 5:20 irc
gburnore ttyp6 bastille.netbasix.net Fri10PM 29 rtin
bord ttyp7 75-129-128-49.dhcp.fdul.wi Mon11AM 12:25
/usr/local/bin/ksh
bord ttyp8 75-129-128-49.dhcp.fdul.wi Mon11AM 5:20 irc
jkurck ttyp9 adsl-75-10-97-59.dsl.frs2c Fri02AM 12:25 -tcsh
```

for example, but I'm not informed as to the semantics involved, only the protocols, the surface syntactics.

So one might see codework as a mix of all of this, a kind of dirty or abject combination, a kind of rupturing, of surface and depth, one producing another or an other, a kind of drawing-out of the fecundity of the world and its structure, its poetics. This combination or drawing-out reflects the real unclarity of what I call the true world, which is the real and virtual world interpenetrated, intermingled, diffused, effused, as they are for us, no matter where we think we are, in first life or *Second Life* or what I call third sex, which is online sex, as if there were a first or second, which there aren't.

Beyond this, I'm not sure what codework is, even though I've invented or discovered the term. Here is a program Florian Cramer wrote for me, called eliminate.pl (it's in Perl):

```perl
#!/usr/local/bin/perl5

while (<STDIN>) {
@words = split /[\s]+/, $_;
@spaces = split /[\S]+/, $_;
for ($x=0; $x <= $#words; $x++) {
$word_count{$words[$x]}++;
if ($word_count{$words[$x]} == 1) {print $words[$x],$spaces[$x+1]}
}
}
```

This is based on the *Thousand Character Essay*, written in Chinese around fifteen hundred years ago—an essay in which each character is different from every other; each character, in a sense, is primordial, individuated—an extreme nominalism. Although I don't know Chinese, I worked with a friend laboriously translating it. Anyway, I wanted to duplicate this in English—use a program in which each instance of a word appears only once, that is, at its first (and only) appearance. Within this, the following are still distinguished: "word" "Word" "Word," "word-" and so forth since these have different ASCII renderings. Here is part of this very essay rendered with the program:

```
my writing
I write daily and when I'm not writing, thinking about or in another
medium; the world is a of inscriptions. At one point believed there
were signs, that was inhabited by signifiers which might have referents;
now, after looking repeatedly at tantra casting-off whatever found
impeded, think be nothing except residues kind frisson, rubbing up
against itself. Whatever codes are, however these are manipulated -
they're only story, rather, they are story but that's what's going on
```

isn't all. We tend to make scripts things around us how we get along. For example, there's restaurant script (and this example course mine) enter I've never been before, know exactly what do; subscripts; don't it immediately would far too costly rely constructing, memory, reconstructing, so forth, eating together. And it's together, because scripts, like world, consensual build community.

Now this is at the beginning of the text, and clear, but see what happens towards the end:

```
$word_count{$words[$x]}++;($word_count{$words[$x]}  ==  1)  {print
$words[$x],$spaces[$x+1]} }Thousand Character Essay, Chinese fifteen
hundred years ago essay each character other; primordial, indivi-
dated extreme nominalism. Although Chinese, worked friend labori-
ously translating Anyway, wanted duplicate English use instance ap-
pears once, only) appearance. Within following distinguished: "word"
"Word" "Word," "word-" forth ASCII renderings. rendered program:
```

Here, towards the end, the condensation is extreme. One might think of this in terms of the biblical book of Genesis—and one of the first things I did was to render Genesis with the program, which resulted, again, in a kind of *Vac*, word-creation, creation-word of a primordial sort. I think of this as codework, since reading it, it becomes clear quickly—what is happening, what the structure is—even if the code itself isn't present except as a disturbance upon another text, an other. This becomes clearer, perhaps, when the program is applied to itself:

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl5
while (<STDIN>) {
@words = split /[\s]+/,
$_;@spaces /[\S]+/,
for ($x=0; $x <= $#words; $x++)
```

```
$word_count{$words[$x]}++;if ($word_count{$words[$x]} == 1)
{print $words[$x],$spaces[$x+1]}}
```

Now I don't think of this as a "better" example of codework than the first example, even though code is evident here; it's just another subject for the performative maw.

A point about interactivity: every writing, wryting, upon reading or sensing, scenting, is always already interactive; the inscriptive is never *linear*, no matter the appearance of lines. Memory, remembrance, is at work, scanning moves backwards and forwards, moves in chunks, and even syntax tends to jump about, leap. There is of course an active interactivity, in which the reader/scenter is required to *do* something concrete, within a repertoire or potential series of actions; hypertext is perhaps the simplest example. I've not been so interested in that, and my lack of interest has to do with worlds and the false appearance of choice; I'd rather have the running of inscription and meaning go on about without interruption, as the world goes on about one, even though one seems to have choice within it. This stems to some extent from my interest in film; I've never been carried so far in a hypertextual situation as I am when embedded in the cinematic other which is also the self, selving. The world is complex and I attempt to deal with that complexity and its perturbations, attempt to deal with the surface codes of the world. This isn't a manifesto on my part, and in fact, I've produced interactive work as well, particularly in simple Visual Basic, but I'd rather the interactivity occur elsewhere, within consciousness.

writing and writing

o what we are doing is writing stories. this is what i was doing when it happened: this is what i felt: this is what i heard

oo this is what i was doing when it happened: this is what i felt: this is what i heard

ooo the stories begin, develop, end: the stories follow the traditional logic of time extrapolated from human behavior: from the human construct of the world until: one's death

oooo we tell the stories because we are in the midst of them and part of a vast human communality and we tell these stories because they come to an end and we understand how to make ends

ooooo here's where i am now after it happened: this is what i went through: i am a witness to the world: i was there when it happened

oooooo what we are doing is speaking: we are writing truths and truths

oooooo what we are doing is making: we are writing fiction and comfort: we are writing ourselves into existence: into existence after it happened

ooooo we rewind: here is what i made happen: this is what the world went

through: the world is a witness through my fiction: the world is here

oooo we make up stories to place us within a human communality that we

comment upon from within, without, from the periphery: we write these

stories because they have beginnings and they are fine beginnings and we

understand how to write: how to write the world

ooo the stories are forced into beginnings and endings: they follow the

traditional human meandering: the human continuity across what later might

be considered fictional events: what happened in the story:

oo this is the event i am making up: this is the plot of my story: this is

a good, a wonderful plot: this is quite original

ooo you write as if you were there, as if you were part of it: as if you

were part of something

o what we are doing is telling truths: these events almost seem real: you

write so well, almost as if these things happened: you turn fiction into

truth

Extinguishing Extinction, The Violence of Living/ Mechanism

The violence of living (in which our lives are viral), the violence of being-alive (in which we are taken out once and for all), everywhere extinction is:

Given the genetic determination of life, given the principles of the selfish gene, viral memetics, empty apocalypse: as in the principles of sociobiology all the way down.

But this occurs in the midst of the production of top-heavy nearly but not quite decomposable structures—free play everywhere, up and down. Language, religious, other domains; these are foreclosed. Truths strike like lightning within them; truths exist only within, veins on membrane surfaces.

Bounding and bracketing within and without. There are always the questions of origin.

Why would the possible manifest itself?

(The preclusion of altruism is not the preclusion of altruistic content.)

Call the genetic imperative, mechanism: Either mechanism is not the entire answer, or one proceeds from mechanism to nearly-decomposable realms which then, in reversal, fall fallow. So that there is no truth in them except the truth of the absolute vacated other. (Which may be defined as the absence of teleology, life-force, God, concepts that, imminent, immanent, recoil from the cleansed body which provides answers through their fore-closing.)

(The preclusion of art is not the preclusion of aesthetic content, indeterminate, stochastic, roughshod, symmetries and means notwithstanding.)

Or how does it manifest itself?

If it is a question of truth, it is a question of otherwise. It is not necessarily accountable. It is not necessarily accountable-to. It is not necessarily the case, then, that the case of genetic mechanism is all the case there is; the return no longer exists. It is this that is culturally productive, the lack of the return.

(The preclusion of ethics is not the preclusion of ethical content.)

If explanation tends to fail within the realm of the cultural, or at least fail in terms of mechanistic linkage, does it fail all the way down? Does mechanism change course, deflect, as other forms of life are considered?

Is mechanism itself viral?

(The preclusion of poiesis is not the preclusion of the truth of poiesis.)

If information or programming, how does foreclosing occur? Striations tend to loop around themselves; dependencies are tethered at best, language encompasses description past the amusement of Gödel. Wryting problematizes the linkages.

(Was Deleuze's line of flight a genetic disposition?)

(The preclusion of language is not the preclusion of the ontology of the wryting of natural kinds, nor the preclusion of the ontology of writing.)

Is the definitive blindness of the natural equivalent to the presumptive blindness of speciation, cultures beyond the human? Is excess the result only of chaotic dispositions? How does unsolvability work within the picture?

Is the picture which develops from the negative, then, foreclosed, only to open on another truth which cannot be contained within it or any other domain? Is this a form of releasement?

(The preclusion of religious dominion is not the preclusion of spirit.)

These are not idle questions, asked in idleness. The question itself calls forth nothing but a shuffling of what would be constituted grounds; shuffling dissolves entity.

(The content is not the domain. The domain is not the content.)

and letters

letters fall over and lie there as well.
if this had been a book, you would have read this long ago.
the pages, yours, letters swollen, loving your mouth.
the grist of letters among protrusions of the flesh.

all letters sing only of sex and death.
love appears along their splines or embrochures.
it is the ancient science of letters.
never confuse this with material or spiritual wealth.

letters survive and murmur and couple and mourn.
letters need nothing, not even our speaking and writing.
the page is a trap is a cemetery is a constant death.
letters burn black fire white smoke in sullen truths of skies.

what we see is their death, what we know, their death.
nothing of their song or the spike of them in tongue.
your mouth gets in the way, they don't want to leave.
our lives are seduced by each and every page.

letters, leave us.
letters, leave us.

Truth

Truth is always mistaken as an exact concept, based on the principles of mathematical logic, truth tables, the results of Wittgenstein and Beth. But there is no a priori reason to presuppose the exactitude of truth, its foreclosing upon the case, even in the case of tautology A=A, which in fact may be rendered problematic in the physical realm, due to Heisenbergian principles, Bell's work, and so forth.

I would like to proffer that *truth is always already poetic truth*, that it is thereby tethered *concretely* to wryting, protolanguage, body parts, and the fetish, that it is a *function* thereby of wryting and not idealism: that truth is its inscription. On one hand, there is no satisfactory *formal* definition of truth, and on the other, there is a poetics of truth upon which the body is distended as a transparent membrane. Truth is always the harbinger of a politics of bodies; even A=A possesses a certain inertness, sturdiness. Thus truth as function of wryting is also a function of *intersubjectivity*. Even in an "obvious" situation such as "it is true that 2+2=4," the truth of the statement is based upon a degree of consensus: the axioms of ordinary arithmetic in the small, conventions of language and symbol, dialog, and so forth. Like negation, truth is a *potential-in-the-world*, a supervention or operation upon it, even in the case of mathematical reality.

Such a potential brings mind, albeit abstractly, into play—and even if certain truths are universal (the properties of natural kinds under equivalent conditions for example, in all possible worlds), they are still processes of semiosis. Thus it may be that, through the mathematization and even technology of truth, that the body may be recuperated; it may be the machine which is producing the body, not the body extruding the cyborg. In fact, I would argue that we are drawn forth by the machine which wrytes the body, that the body is always already wrytten, encoded *all the way down*—but I would also argue that the body is not *machinic*, offering a critical resistance to its truth.

Thus poetry also wars on truth which is its dominion; it resists by the productions of negation and the lie, and there is more than a *certain* truth in both.

Sentenced to Place

I am typing this on my bed, leaning into the laptop, thinking about the loving effects of gravity holding everything in place. Gravity holds the computer against the white wool blanket, holds my naked body against the same; there is a river of wool between us. Gravity holds the skate against the ice, the mouse on the pad where the mouse was left, and the other mouse in the hole, fearful of the cat, relying on gravity to create a semblance of order in her world. The way to proceed is already deconstructed: representation of a real-world site or citation transfigured into the textual realm (body, mind, intention, love, hate): in this case, bearing with Shakespeare and the gravity of the situation. Therefore to consider: gravity in cyberspace, the pull of the wires, thin shafts or beams of microwave transmissions across the bleak atmosphere, the bounce of fiber optic light, beauty of the pulsing of the world. Gravity plays little role; everything is held in place by direct addressing, surprisingly direct addressing. Everything therefore follows, not the geodesic, but the path of the matrix, discrete elements, Markov chains, isolated instances, what C.D. Broad called "sporadic cases" in his analyses of psychic phenomena. So there are grains, but no granularity as I repeatedly point out, and there are matrices, but no tensor descriptions of states-of-affairs, except perhaps within the electrodynamics of transmissions themselves. But not in the sense of the river of wool on the bed, not in the sense of what we have learned, and then applied elsewhere, off-line to on-line: that everything has its place, that place contains, that things remain in containers unless removed (all of which resounds with the echo of MOO programming), that in fact things *are* places, and places *things*, by virtue of gravity's solicitude—and, once accepting this, then an etiquette emerges, gravity's protocols lending themselves to protocol suites, the idea of such suites, to the bed of the net itself, TCP/IP or otherwise, not disparate, maternal as gravity's rainbow upon the woolen mammoth of the bed/rock, but unified codicies, presences tending towards the communication whistled or whispered, *said*, among the beings harbored by the lap of the earth, earth's quiet shout and recompense, each and every to its own, the challenge thereby built in, built inwards, as evidenced by rupture, still contained within the

sweetness of the protocols, still witnessing, evidenced, presenced for us as soil, as the beds of verbs and nouns and gardens, as the beds upon which we open up to each other beyond address, beyond the *moment* of address, silence seeking tongues.

Peering

Minor technical considerations contribute to the sensation of spatiality in user interfaces. I want to point out first of all the apparent flatness of almost all webpages, in lieu of the fact that they are written against white, grey, cream, etc. backgrounds, or wallpaper—the sensation is almost overwhelming. In relation to them, those pages that use black backgrounds seem only, by virtue of default, to have change the color of the paper itself. On the other hand, telnet helper applications often use dark blue backgrounds, white lettering— or even more common, black backgrounds, white letter; these backgrounds appear to come from the depths of cyberspace, to be part and parcel of the mirror stage, exuding text; at the same time, they participate in the chora, the text alone, illuminated letters, riding the surface. *This* is the sensation that has led to the notion of lurking or peering, something emerging from the darkness, chiaroscuro outlines of your body, the presence of seduction, the maternal beginning of the things of the world in relation to the humans who envelop them.

In the UNIX shell, and whenever possible elsewhere, I work with dark backgrounds; anger and sexuality, however, lend themselves towards black upon red, both swollen with the presence of skin and membrane, membrane stretched across the forgiving screen. Never, however, the queasy black against white of traditional texts: what would be the point of such artificiality tending towards death and your absence?

An opening: what configuration do you read this in; what are the effects?

O

Cycles, feedback, circulations of the net: begin with neurophysiological processes thus *pertaining* to the biophysical, muscles locating arm, wrist, hand, fingers, lending themselves to closed-circuit keyboard interrupts, accumulated signals transported over modem to screen display, always already shunted returns, signals, time-ins, time-outs, accumulations in file ready for packet encapsulation, each stage fed back within itself as transport protocol layers distribute, route, reassemble in total isolation, unknown, unknowing: reverse receptor procedures, what then? The swollen slow breathing of the net, day-night cycles, semester rabid breakdowns, posts and responses, chat lines open as fingers double themselves on ytalk, singularities neat and orderly on MOO, talker, MUD—vast circulations of enunciations, utterances, *parole*, within biophysical, neurophysiological responses and circuitry completing electron sputtering at both ends: what is to say that there is more than this, an other present at creation, creation itself?

A *what* which speaks, completes, competes, garners circulations, returns split, shunted into decentered lamina, the wryting is the *said* of it.

Wild Theory

Wild theory's a beast, says Honey, sweet as a tooth. It owes nothing to anyone, everything to everybody. It refuses to take sides, it's a series of takes. What it borrows from the literary it returns with a vengeance elsewhere on the culture seen.

It shoot outs from the skirts of the chora-woman. It leaks literarily across the floor, replies Tiffany, laughing. It puddles. It makes the situation, grabs the situation, runs with it! It scampers in the woodpile, replies Honey, because Honey's got the last word since Jennifer's gone.

It opens up ruptures, rhythms, the tongue rolling across the lines, in the middle of the lines. It rolls almost past the words which stick or sever the words. Wild theory is like grrrl theory before the rrr's rolled off into the magazines. It's pierced, penetrated. The piercings are genital, neural, menstrual, analytical, technical. Punctured theory's holes inter-connect with surgical thread suturing only a loose wound; everything—THAT *everything* AGAIN—escapes. Stop yelling, Honey, Tiffany giggles.

Tiffany wants Honey to stop yelling because Tiffany has more to say. Tiffany jumps on Honey's back and the two of them are wrestling on the ground! says Tiffany. Honey is all smiles, too, as both of them stand up and brush off. Time to get to work! Tiffany says that wild theory's maybe just a phrase she heard somewhere; like weak theory, it's floating in and out. Vattimo? replies Honey. No, says Tiffany, from somewhere else, maybe just an emission, atmospheric-neural flux.

Pausing just the tiniest minute, Honey continues, "be that as it may," I quote, because it doesn't make the slightest bit of difference. "Plagiarism was there from the beginning." It's cost effect, thinking for us. But we're off the track! Tiffany responds. What's it *here*? A theory-bundle, wild-style, refusing axiomatics, historiographies, the rough ascertaining of geometries, Euclidean or

otherwise. But not, Honey adds, simply wandering; you've got the wild part right, but the theory part! It's liminal, burrowing like the net gopher (remember that, Veronica?)! It's interstitial, embodying both a *pragmatics* (best left undefined!) as well as a psychoanalytics, phenomenology, relevance theory!

Tiffany *concurs*! She says that these are all slippery, so wild theory's got a dialog or pendulum going on, between *variables* and *constants*, call them *instantiations*. Is this an instance of one?! laughs Honey. Exactly! says Tiffany, *an instance of 1*. It's the way of the world, the way of the *point* (if you have one/1)—but not, adds Honey, *the way of all flesh*.

They laugh and leave the sunny park! There's *still* a sense of history, Tiffany is heard saying. It's not, it's not *just anything*, and the voices disappear in the distance!

CONDITION READ

What she insists on is that virtuality is *not* doing business as usual—academic, theoretical, corporate—but is in fact concerned with an accompanying ontological confusion, displacement, and weakening—one that leaks into epistemological concerns across domains. That's the reason for this additional gender confusion, for the problematic of intellectual property, for the increased disinternment of censorships, for the hysteria over political control, and for the constant worries over the breakup of the family, terrorist manuals on the net, child pornography, and anarchic hackings.

All of these are outpourings of socio-cultural slippage; signifiers no longer remain in one place; the body travels, or doesn't; the mind is everything or nothing; everything is construct but nothing *is*. And so it behooves her to attempt a different/dischordant analysis (substitution of the chord for the sine, a cut across the domain)—a totally different way of speech/*parole*/image—in order to bypass, subvert, those disciplines which reveal, in relation to *everything* here-where-there-is-no-here, a certain bankruptcy.

The way to *move* is orthogonally, but simultaneously to *take account* of the movement, distort it, much as the Lacanian imaginary distorted the production of the transference en/tailed by his writings. What is being *said* becomes ontological assault, recuperation, filler, caress. What is axiomatic necessarily fails as voices *whisper* unconsciously; how many net communities develop neurotic/hysteric symptoms, symptoms of control and relinquishment, of paranoia and multiple personality disorders?

The language itself transforms, becoming more exact in the protocols and programming, flooding out across the semantic plateaus of participants hungering for contact. Within TCP/IP, one says control/command; above, one says anything at all. Theory remains rigorous only through proper fortification—the moderated email list or newsgroup for example, where the moderator says everything, permits and forwards speech. The *reading* of

theory within these results in a *writing* elsewhere; *wild theory* proliferates on the net, CONDITION RED.

She said new work is necessary, that's it's important to use every device imaginable, simultaneously at that. She said it's never enough, never would be for years, that there was too much going on, that theory had to be liquid to keep up on one hand, delineated and crystalline on the other. (Everyone said they knew this and were doing this already.) She added that she would try and bring back reports from the front, and that the *bringing* was what she was all about, the *bringing* and the endless parties afterwards.

The Fitting of Theory

She added that the theory had to fit, configure itself, within a file "zz"—a universal name that traversed texts in their entirety. There could be appendages as well, JPGs, WAVs, anything in fact that reduced itself to binary at the very least. But the text was always "zz," manipulated as precipitate or sinter.

Texts can be either part-objects-zz or transitional-objects-zz; clearly the latter are transitive, while the former occlude the intransitive—they're fading-objects, translucencies that shatter at a moments' touch. The transitional-objects-zz are open sets, just as the part-objects-zz attempt foreclosure.

Circuits are created across these objects, and self-reflexivity construes a variable and fuzzy cyclicity characteristic of transitional-objects-zz: circulation, circumambulation, circumscription. Ripples are created among these objects, blurring their epistemological wagers; these are characteristic of fading-objects, dismemberments, imaginaries, phantoms, cortical excitations.

The doubled order, she added, constituted the theoretical moment. At that moment, she added a degree of insurgency. It was at that moment, inexact, but future theory and a theory of the future, doubled over.

Bang-Path Model of Reading/Thinking

1 Think of bang-path syntax as routing through texts, running texts on
2 channels, parallel tracks; think of real and virtual syntaxes—the
3 former that of traditional formal linguistics; the latter, that of
4 Kristevan semiotic—think of the virtual as submergence and depth,
5 connected to the diegetic—and think of thinking as routing, not
6 routing as thinking.

1-2 Just as bang-path protocol establishes manual routing, just so a parallel may be made with text reception, reading-texts, following the quasi-linear protocol of traditional page layout.

3-4 Just as webpages run on channels, parallel trackings of music/voice/vector/video/text etc., so texts *in general* possess parallel trackings as any structural analysis reveals. There are two broad domains, real and virtual syntax. The latter contains the diegetic revealed through emissions as opposed to the specificity of nodes; ruptured structures; and part-objects-zz and transitional objects-zz as pre-verbal moments (see Hadamard). The former possesses well-defined axiomatics and consequential structures, as well as the formal elements of substitution.

5 The diegetic appears as a residue or byproduct of the text, a result of hysteric embodiment, projection/introjection, and the habitus of the act of reading.

6 Now, there are continuous discussions of the "intelligence" or "sentience" of the Internet, a position I have argued against. These are routing as thinking paradigms, decision-trees and spans everywhere coupled by neural networking. Instead, consider thinking as routing—thinking as bang-path behavior on parallel channels of real and virtual syntactic strategies—including the moment of the absence of syntax altogether. If the unconscious is structured as a language, it is structured as *either silence or yammering*. The moment of the absence is not the absence of thought, but the absence

of the symbolic; thinking has moved to the imaginary, originated within the imaginary, and the symbolic, the movement towards syntactic structuration is a thought afterthought. This movement is dialectic; there is also thinking *in* language, routing through the formal syntactic as originary—this is the case in pausological analyses for example—how pauses operate in ordinary conversation. (The pause comes *after* the conjunction, i.e. after the structure moves to *parole* before the semantics are fixed/articulated.)

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2 channels, parallel tracks; think of real and virtual syntaxes—the
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Commentary on Routing text -

I want to comment further on #6. "If the unconscious is structured as a language, it is structured as *either silence or yammering*." This is an unfortunate choice of words, left to right, top to bottom. For it is a problematic of language that informs this; in fact, the unconscious is *both* silence and yammering, without the symbolic (I'd use the word "outlawed" here, because of wild theory, but it further implies the institution of the law as primary). By "silence" I mean in the absence of the Word, and by "yammering," I mean idle chatter, hrrrumphs, hmmmm, all those elements that might contribute to diegesis, thinking, that are outside formal syntactic structures. (This doesn't exclude, by the way, proto-language.)

The second quote from #6: "The moment of the absence is not the absence of thought, but the absence of the symbolic; thinking has moved to the imaginary, originated within the imaginary, and the symbolic, the movement towards syntactic structuration is a thought afterthought." Now, "moment" is also incorrect, as is "absence," which implies "presence." I am referring to a domain prior to the symbolic, within the imaginary. I am arguing that thought by and large originates here; that thought can think itself through language, but more often than not, language is an after-thought. Again, by "language" I am referring to formal linguistic structures, *not* any category of arrows and nodes (i.e. category theory); in fact, it might be possible to argue that the unconscious or virtual syntax could be construed as a fuzzy, mobile, and morping category. (By "virtual syntax," by the way, I do not mean formal syntax, but something closer to Kristeva's semiotic, which is not formal semiotics.)

Now we move to this other quote in 6: "This movement is dialectic; there is also thinking *in* language, routing through the formal syntactic as originary— this is the case in pausological analyses for example—how pauses operate in ordinary conversation." It's here that the metaphor of cortical stimulation and/ or surfing the net (within the aegis of Merlin Donald, there is little difference) is of use; language can be considered an *effect* of neural processing/learning,

rather than a ground or *urgrund*. Note also the "dialectic" here; thought within and without language is in flux. The real and the virtual interpenetrate; thinking and naming are emergences.

I'm arguing *across the slate* for multiplicities—channels, real and virtual syntaxes, complex routings across domains, emergences (and submergences, subsumptions for that matter), in consideration of mind, language, thought, thinking. This combines, say, Minsky and Kristeva, Derrida and Chomsky, Clark Coolidge and Lautréamont, web and darknet developments.

The combinations are admittedly loaded, leading to consideration of certain aspects of packet-switching as a metaphor for sentience—*only* a metaphor, at that.

Explain

The literary texts have a surplus that explanations don't; they escape, loosen the context. They form kennings, conundrums, with no specific unraveling, no further decoding. The literary carries theory into therapeutic, in the sense of a necessary textual work done/undone by the reader.

It's something that requires an extension, she said, just as the element of narrative I have created with "she said" produces already a setting, podium or city square, coffeehouse or apartment, where such discussions or presentations occur. When the text becomes an occurrence, it presents a degree of inertia. It holds or spans a diegetic.

It catches you up, she added, just like this.

My Files on My Nice-Machine:

A file that erases itself, then returns in a new incarnation.

A file that returns and erases its compiler.

A file that turns off the mother lode, refuses Perl's advances.

A file that stupidly repeats: cg I-bin there.

A file that sends a cookie to your machine so you'll never see the beauty page again.

A file that disappears, leaving a sad announcement sent to every member of an email list, the long goodbye.

A file that states this is the last message you'll ever see and means it.

A file that appends its word count, repeats the operation going for the big one.

A file that disappears without a trace, not even leaving its process id number behind.

A file leaving nothing but its process id number as a memory of happy enrichment deep within the kernel.

A file that forkbombs, spreading children far and wide, duplicates ofitself all activated, across the pebbled landscape of the computer.

A file that repeats everything it can find out about you.

A file that repeats everything it knows about you, nothing.

A file that randomly dances the long goodbye to fellow users on your server.

A file that announces this site's been seen by you and you alone.

A file greedy for your RAM, taking all you've got to offer, begging for more.

A file automatically running Jennifer for Alan, generating this file under the guise of running Alan for Jennifer.

by Jennifer

What was written by null-user:

I am nobody@166.84.250.149 anonymous dead-end shell-script log. And no one will ever speak to me; what can I say As a truth function, I have obedience to the rules. I am well-formed, so that I will return what you place within me, mindless of faith, not mindless of reason. It is similar to the use of a straight-edge, that is I am similar in such and such a fashion. There are only certain constructions permitted, but these are never problematic.

What the null-user thought of what it wrote:

I wrote only the truth; I am a truth-function. The rules are something I follow out of the free will of necessity. It is more to this or any other point or its absence. This time I have accurately portrayed, as if once again, or outside of time, what has been intended.

```
{k:38}finger nobody
Login: nobody        Name: Nobody
Directory: /         Shell: /bin/sh
Never logged in.
No mail.
No Plan.
```

Codeworld

```
12:55pm up 2 min, 1 user, load average: 0.31, 0.19, 0.07 USER TTY FROM
LOGIN@ IDLE JCPU PCPU WHAT root tty1 - 12:54pm 0.00s 0.46s 0.05s w
```

Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist.

Ogden:
The world is everything that is the case.

Pears/McGuinness:
The world is all that is the case.

Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge.

Pears/McGuinness:
The world is the totality of facts, not of things.

Ogden:
The world is the totality of facts, not of things.

...

Die Tatsachen im logischen Raum sind die Welt.
Die Welt zerfällt in Tatsachen.

Ogden:
The facts in logical space are the world.
The world divides into facts.

...

Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen.

Ogden:
Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.

Pears/McGuinness:
What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.

(From beginning and end of Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Ogden translation 1922, Pears/McGuinness translation 1961.)

TLP describes a Dostoevskian crystalline world divisible into facts. The German is clear; the motto to the book, by Kürnberger states, "in translation: ... and whatever a man knows, whatever is not mere rumbling, and roaring that he has heard, can be said in three words."

TLP portends ideality. The world is logical, mathematical, capable of clear division. Logical space is the space, I would assume, of the natural numbers, if not the integers; as Russell says in his introduction, TLP presents, inscribes, a finite mathematics—there's no room for the continuum, and proof of the continuum hypothesis was far in the future.

The translations are different, almost never radically so, but different nonetheless. There is a residue in German such that both English versions converge, but often never meet. The sememes are equivalent, but only to a degree; translations are almost never one-to-one.

In this logical space of facts, programming, and protocols, there is always a wavering, always room, always doubt, critique, and I would say desire as well. Never mind that this wor(l)d breaks down, evidenced a few decades later by Gödel, Tarski, Skolem, etc.: Coherency, living within the safety-net of mathesis, matrix, maternality, remains a dream of humanity. DNA coding, cryptography, hacking the world—all appear to guarantee that everything is possible.

Computer languages are logical; computers are presumed so, but aren't; protocols are logical as well; logical spaces may be compared to drive-space; garbage-in, garbage-out; and so forth. Hacking depends on a closed world with closed loopholes; the loopholes themselves are coherent, logical, *there*.

Codework, code writing, rides within and throughout the logical world, as a disturbance, a sign of things to come, both extension and breakdown.

Where does the content lie? Is it in the translation of code into messiness or residue? Is it in the interpretation of residue? Or perhaps, and herewith a criticism, is it in the wonderment, confusion, and novelty of the residue itself?

Is codework a minor art, minor literature? What is the point of repeatedly shaking the scaffolding—if not the emergence, in the future, of an other or another approach, or an other, being or organism, for which codework now both provides augury and its weakness as portal/welcoming? For what is come among us already no longer speaks the world of logical facts, just as computers are no longer large-scale calculators, but something else as well, something unnamed, fearful—that fearfulness already documented by, say, Cruikshank in the 19th century.

```
2:20pm up 1 min, 1 user, load average: 0.33, 0.18, 0.06 USER TTY FROM
LOGIN@ IDLE JCPU PCPU WHAT root tty1 - 2:19pm 0.00s 0.42s 0.05s w
```

Codework references the alterity of a substrate which supports, generates, and behaves as a catalyst in relation to its production. To this extent, codework is self-referential, but no text is completely self-referential (sr); things waver. So for example "ten letters" and "two words" and "english" may be considered sr—but only to the extent that the phrases are presumed to apply to themselves. Extended: "This sentence has thirty-one letters."—"This sentence has five words."—"This is an english sentence."

What is the residue? What are the sentences "about"? On the surface, letters, words, language. This is an additional or diacritical relationship to sr; if one, for example, didn't know English, none of these would make sense.

All sr possesses a residue—an *attribute tag*. In codework, which has a component of sr, the tag may be plural, muddied—the world is never presumed complete, total. Codework is not an instance in this regard of mathematical platonism or Gödelian-platonism; if anything it relies on the breakdown of the ideal, pointing out the meaning-component of computation, program, protocol, even the strictest formalisms.

Early on Whitehead pointed out that 2+2=4, but only in a certain formal sense; in fact, the equation implies an operation or unifying process; within the 4, the components are combined, their history lost. Strictly, "2+2" and "4" are equivalent; within the symbolic, they differ—for that matter, in terms of thermodynamics as well. This domain is expanded by codework, which endlessly interferes.

The danger of codework is in its delimitation; it tends to repeat; the works tend towards considerable length; automatic generation can flow forever. Sometimes it appears as maw-machine emissions—text in, modified text/partial code out. Sometimes it extends language into new uncharted territories. Sometimes it references the labor and/or processing of language. Sometimes it privileges the written over the spoken, or portends the spoken within a convolution of stuttering and close-to-impossible phonemic combinations. Sometimes it appears as a warning against the all-too-easy assimilation of linguistic competency.

Sometimes it breaks free, relates to the subjectivity behind its production, the subjectivity inherent in every presentation of symbol-symbolic.

```
2:37pm up 18 min, 1 user, load average: 0.00, 0.00, 0.00 USER TTY FROM
LOGIN@ IDLE JCPU PCPU WHAT root tty1 - 2:19pm 0.00s 0.44s 0.06s w
```

On Code and Codework

Consider a well-defined entity x, and its complement -x. Then x^-x=N, the null set. Consider a second entity y and -y, y^-y=N. Think Nx and Ny, the null set relativized to x and y. Consider three separable entities x, y, z, and take pairs xy, yz, zx. These are symmetrical yx, zy, xz. Let ab stand for a^b. Then xy, yz, zx are equivalent to null. Let x, y, z divide a planar region into three regions bordering on each other. Let x@y represent a line equidistant from the entities x and y. Then x@y, y@z, z@x all meet at a single point. Divide the plane so that all entities are grouped in triads; each triad meets in a single point. Divide the plane so that these single points are grouped in triads and so forth. What branches are available? Is a single point reached? To operate with x and -x such that x^-x=N is to operate with discrete entities common to distributive Aristotelian logic. Now consider a second set, X, Y, etc., mapped onto the first; the mapping may be one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-one. If the first, the resulting mapping is reversible. If the second, it is reversible but the coding itself is not reversible. If the third, the mapping is not reversible; the result is a set of possibilities, not a single one. Codes are mappings. There are two types of codes, declarative and performative. An example of the former is Morse; it is one-to-one, but all that is produced is equivalence. An example of the second is Perl; Perl codes procedure. If procedure is coded, then the contents of the procedure are doubly coded. If a Perl program parses {A} to produce {B}, then the primary coding is the program which constructs and orders procedures. The secondary coding is {A} -> {B} which may be considered the semantic plane of the code. In Eco's *A Theory of Semiotics*, only a rule may properly be called a '*code*,' and a rule couples items from one system with some from another. Eco extends the possibility of code to "a set of possible *behavioral responses* on the part of the destination." This is performativity. In codework, primary and secondary coding are entangled. Entanglement may be considered noise in the system. With noise, the null set N is blurred across fuzzy sets with parasitic inputs; x^-x and x^y may be and usually are ill-defined. It is this ill-definition—which functions for example in current definitions of words like "freedom"—that tends towards political economy. Political,

because culture and the social are at stake in relation to the definition which is always already under contestation, and economy, because there are limited resources and examples for any particular definition. With codework, meaning itself is problematized as a result of entanglement. In Eco, it is the code which reaches a destination, not the message. The decoding of the message may or may not be equivalent to the source. Noise is always already present and is considered within the channel. This is the T-model of the parasite described by Serres. Eco states "When a code apportions the elements of a conveying system to the elements of a conveyed system, the former becomes the expression of the latter, and the latter becomes the content of the former. A sign-function arises when an expression is correlated to a content, both the correlated elements being the functives of such a correlation." Code is a collocation or system (not necessarily the same) of processes; processes are performative; both are temporally-embedded. A mapping $f(x)=y$ is not temporally-embedded; thus the mapping of the even numbers onto the number system may be considered an ideality which *is*, regardless of temporal processes. The structure is given all-at-once within the formula (and its proof); its proof is a carrying-out of the truth-value, or a revealing of the truth-value, of the structure. There are mappings which are systemic, i.e. structure-dependent, and there are mappings which are non-systemic or purely heuristic, such as randomly assigning letters in a message to a triple number (page/line/letter-position) originating from a particular edition of a particular book. In all of these instances, of course, terms like "system" and "assign" are themselves fuzzy; nevertheless there's a tremendous difference between the anecdotal and the structural, and there are practical differences in the ensuing codes and their employment. Peter Gardenfors, in *Conceptual Space: The Geometry of Thought*, considers "conceptual spaces" which are related to tessellation of the plane. This reminds one of Peirce's simplest mathematics, which is also related to Venn diagrams; in all of these, sets of entities and concepts in the life-world are mapped into other spaces which may or may not reflect thinking processes. Geometry is always bound by its spatial representations; there is no reason to think, at all, that the mind necessarily works through spatial or any representation for that matter. Representation is always coded; Sebeok, in *Approaches to*

Animal Communication, "Semiotics and Ethology" points out that the "model suggested here entails a communication unit in which a relatively small amount of energy or matter in an animal (a) the source, brings about a relatively large redistribution of energy or matter in another animal (or in another part of the same animal), (b) the destination, and postulates (c) a channel through which the participants are capable of establishing and sustaining contact." Maturana somewhere talks about such communication as the mutual orienting of cognitive domains. Sebeok states that "Every source requires a transmitter which serves to reorganize, by a process called encoding, the messages it produces into a form that can be understood by the destination. The source and the destination are therefore said to fully, or at least partially, share (d) a code, which may be defined as that set of transformation rules whereby messages can be converted from one representation to another." As long as one sticks to transformation rules, code is always procedural. Sebeok states that "The string generated by an application of a set of such rules is (e) a message, which may thus be considered an ordered selection from a conventional set of signs." I think that "ordered" is problematic as well, since there is clearly a qualitative difference between book-ordering as described above, and a set of rules based on mathesis. Where does the arbitrary come in? One might say— and this is an important principle—that the content of a code itself is directly correlated to its arbitrariness. In this sense, the measure of a code is related to the entropy of information within the process of encoding. The greater the degree of the arbitrary, the more difficult to break, the greater the entropy and therefore the greater the degree of information within it. This is not on the level of the double-level of the code, i.e. the content it operates upon, if there is such content (as in the Perl example above), but within encoding itself. Every encoding is an encoding of encoding; if the encoding is fully realized by the product of the code, then its semantic content/information is low. If Morse encodes a message, more than likely the message may be decoded based only on the distribution of letters. The Morse content is low. If a book is used, the decoding is increasingly difficult and the content of the code is high. This is also related to issues of redundancy vis-à-vis Shannon and Weaver. Note that a message and its destination are irrevocably ruptured; there is no guarantee

that an equivalence is attained on any level. Code operates more often than not on an ontological plane disassociated, or associated by intention only, with both its source and its decoding; there is no guarantee that the source and the message-at-its-destination have anything in common. There is no guarantee of the coherency of the practice of coding in a particular case, no guarantee of one-to-one or one-to-many or many-to-one, no guarantee of a zero-parasite-demographics—no guarantee that the channel, in fact, has not been derailed altogether, as often happens with bacteriophages. Bateson, in Bateson and Ruesch, *Communication: The Social Matrix of Psychiatry*, states, "codification must, in the nature of the case, be systematic. Whatever objects or events or ideas internal to the individual represent certain external objects or events, there must be a systematic relationship between the internal and the external, otherwise the information would not be useful." Today one can say, "otherwise the information might not be useful," since it is precisely in the breakdown of systematic relationships that innovation emerges. But meaning may be produced even out of tautology. For example, propositional logic may be "derived" from the Sheffer stroke, "not both A and B"; it can also be derived from its dual, "neither A nor B." What can we say about these? Only that they represent, as processes or *cullings* of particular bounded universes, an unbinding/unbounding—"neither A nor B" points elsewhere altogether, and "not both A and B" points either elsewhere or towards an underpinning of union. At the heart of this reduction of propositional logic, is a tendency towards dispersion, towards wandering, the nomadic, even though the symbols within the calculus proper are completely mute. The Sheffer stroke and its dual, by the way, are related as well to the processes of inscription with which this essay began—for what is $x^{\wedge}\text{-}x$, than an *inscription* of an entity, a process of coding (and all coding is inscription of one form or another) the real for the purposes of comprehension, a process that produces, not only meaning, but *all the meaning there is*. There is no outside to the sememe, just as there is no landscape without a viewpoint. In this sense we are bounded, and bound to be bounded. I want to acknowledge and take responsibility for interpretations here which are necessarily shallow and possibly misrepresentations as well; this is true in particular of Gardenfors' book which is complex, and which I have just begun.

I have found the concept of conceptual spaces of use here, as a way of thinking through code, process, representation, sememe, Eco's planes of expression and content, etc.; but I do not yet understand it within Gardenfors' theory. I have also completely neglected what I think is most necessary, a detailed typology of codes, taking for example temporality into and out of account in various ways. I cannot see how one can proceed without a deep reading of Eco's "Theory of Codes" which is the major section of *A Theory of Semiotics*. In the same book, Eco develops a typology of sign production which is quite useful. Other references might be Barthes' *S/Z* (although I constantly find his poeticizing beautiful and problematic), and a quite useful early book by Werner and Kaplan, *Symbol Formation, An Organismic-Developmental Approach to Language and the Expression of Thought*. Finally, it is clear from all of the above that at best one can sketch a *discursive field*, complete with intensifications themselves representing concepts; this is similar to a loosely-structured Wittgensteinian family of usages. "Code," like "game," is always a strategy and a wager from a theoretical viewpoint, and like much such viewpoints, everything and nothing is at stake. One would hope for a future of usefulness, politics, and aesthetics to emerge; the danger, in relation to "codework" itself, is that a style develops, and that the uneasy underpinnings—which at least for me are the most interesting aspects of it—eventually disappear, absorbed back into issues of genre, etc. Code, like the processes of postmodernity, is always in a state of renewal, whether or not the "type" or "concept" remains, and at stake within this renewal is our interpretation of the world itself—our actions and our "reading" of being and beings. Wittgenstein's "silence" at the end of the *Tractatus* is code's success, not failure; it is the always already of the always already, but not its foundation.

Code and Codework ii, coding, encoding, confusion

Coding is a process, aptly named; the field is open or let us consider it open, a dispersion in which goals are paramount but may not exist as the program wends its way into momentary stasis, occasional completion. It is the traditional "death of the author" given open-source; it is never-ending; like a Markov chain, it is determined in part by what came before, it may move elsewhere, cancel, disappear. Input is remote, disparate; is the objective, whether of a command, line, subroutine, routine, program, module, language. The objective is the focus on whatever is at-hand, and whatever is at-hand, the input, is encoded. Encoding is parasitic on both code and object—on code, as a process or operation, and on object, as transformable entity, within and without which code is entangled, inhered. A code constructs code; an encoder is all input; we have spoken elsewhere about the relationship of output to input; what is encoder output is already lost in transmission, has fled elsewhere. Perhaps *I code*, and perhaps *it encodes*, thereby lies all the difference, the distinction among con/structures, con/structions. In part codework is self-devouring, between or among coding and encoding, part operation and part residue; part symptom, the expressivity of disease; and part the struggle, what appears as struggle, what is not struggle or is inauthentic struggle, of the origin, originary content, to retain its sememe, in spite of all filtering, or magnified and not diminished by such filtering. These terms and my use of them are of course arbitrary; one might use encoding to reference the act of program-creation and coding that which operates on input, with all the phenomenology of input already indicated. I choose a distinction between these words in order to articulate a distinction within the field; otherwise we are off again into unnecessary obscurity. As for the *element* of a code, there is a sign or sign-function, there is a process drawn from tables or closed lexicons. As for the *element* of encoding, there is none; an input may, in relation to the encoding program, be fit (in the sense of harmonization) or not; in a sense it does not matter, as encoding is matterless, codeless, just as coding is mattered, albeit the ideality or cyberneticization of matter. Again it is a difference which makes all the difference, as in Spencer Brown. One might also say that coding is the creation

of a detemporalized structure by means of temporal operations (on the part of humans or otherwise), and that encoding is the detemporalized operation (detemporalized by virtue of the black-box) on input, creating a temporal difference between input and output, t1 and t2, different in every (parametric) way. But this is somewhat sophistry; certainly a program is a detemporalized structure. But wait, for the input and output are there to-be-used; they exist most likely within the matrix of the human; they are *employed*. The employment of a program—and a program may devour itself or other programs—is also temporalized, but the program itself, unused, a series of commands and other materials, is only a static articulation. Nevertheless, the static articulation may be always in the process of constant self- or other-revision, and time moves on. Let us say then that coding is the operation on code and the production of an articulation, and that encoding is the operation on input, within which code is irrelevant—even if code is foregrounded, even if code crashes, the input is destroyed, garbage in/garbage out on any level. The difference is subtle, but perhaps there. One might liken encoding then to Husserlian internal time-consciousness, and coding to formal and linear (parallel or non, clocked or variable, etc.) time. Or the other way around. Or the meeting of the two, as code may be input, code may be encoded, code may code. Still, we might say this, that encoding is the *disappearance of the code*, and coding, its *promulgation*. Entanglement occurs at all levels of operation. DNA encodes, but encodes what? Itself, input/output material blind to DNA/RNA? DNA codes or encodes DNA as well. Tacit knowledge (Polyani) resolves nothing, but plays a role: use a screwdriver long enough, and it disappears from the hand—all that remains is the interaction with the screw. Too much is made of code, coding, encoding, decoding; not enough is made of the disappearance of code—not as universal subtext of capital, but as a necessary correlate to our functioning in the world.

What is Codework?

Codework is a practice, not a product.

It is praxis, part and parcel of the critique of everyday life.

It is not canonic, although it is taken as such.

It is not a genre, although it is taken as such.

The term is relatively new and should always be renewed.

We are suffused with code and its intermingling with surface phenomena.

Wave-trains of very low frequency radio pulses for example.

Phenomenology of chickadee calls.

Codework is not a metaphor, not metaphorical.

It exists precisely in the obdurate interstice between the real and the symbolic. It exists in the arrow.

It is not a set of procedures or perceptions. It is the noise in the system. It is not the encapsulation or object of the noise or the system.

It is continuous; it is parasitic; it is thetic.

When it becomes metaphor, masterpiece, artwork, it is still-born; it is of no interest except as cultural residue: it is of great interest to critics, gallerists, editors.

When it is not collectible, not a thing, virtual or otherwise, it is not of interest to critics, gallerists, editors.

Things have already taken up its name, as if pictures in an exhibition.

This is nothing more than the continuous reification, territorialization, conquest, of the real—as if the real were always already cleansed, available for the taking—as if the real were already transformed into capital.

Capital is the encapsulation, objectification, of code. Capital drives the code-conference, the code-book, the code-movement, the code-artist, the code-masterpiece; capital drives the technology.

In short: capital drives code into metaphor.

In short: metaphor drives code into capital.

In short, but of greater difficulty: Capital drives metaphor into code.

In production, simpler: metaphor drives capital into code.

The driving of metaphor, code, or capital is not codework.

Codework is the labor of code, subject to thermodynamics.

Codework is demonstrative, demonstrative fragment, experiment, partial-inscription, partial-object, the *thing* prior to its presentation, the linguistic kernel of the pre-linguistic. Code is the thetic, the gestural, of the demonstrative.

It the gesture that never quite takes. It is the noise inherent in the gestural.

However: codework will become a *subject* or a *sub-genre* or a *venue* or an *artwork* or an *artist* or a *dealer* or a *collector*. However: this is not codework, or: what I describe above is not codework; after all, names are subsumed beneath the sign (emblematic) of capital—as if something is being accomplished. (Hackers who are not hackers are unhacked.)

To code is not to produce codework; it is to produce code on the level of the code or interface. Bridged code, embedded code, is not codework; the irreversible spew of cellular automata is codework, all the better if the rules are noisy. The cultural production of codework abjures intensifications, strange attractors, descriptions such as this (which is the oldest game in the *book*). The hunt and reception of short-wave number codes is codework. Writers on the edge are circumscribed by codework, malfunctioned psychoanalytics, scatologies. Jews, Gypsies, Gays, Blacks, are endlessly coded and decoded; the codes are dissolute, partial, always already incomplete: the differend is codework.

To speak against the differend is codework; tumors are codework, metastases. The useless sequences of DNA, RNA.

Be wary of the violence of the legible text. Beware the metaphor which institutionalizes, the text which defines, the text of positivities, not negations, the circumscribing text, inscribing text; beware of the producers and institutions of these texts, whose stake is in hardening of definitions, control, capital, slaughter: texts slaughter.

And texts slaughter texts.

birth of code unease

there is no birth of code, perhaps it is our universe.

any representation is already embedded in another.

perhaps you can't have representations without symmetrical substructures.

with 2nd-level code that's certainly true.

but a painting is another matter altogether.

in a painting (this is a painting of code), the eye does what the eye will (what one wills) (what is emergent (out of (in relation to)) chaos).

what i will <-> thinking a posteriori, the periphery.

i would have willed this if it would have been willed.

perhaps these sentences are phrases, unpunctured, opened

the world is all that is the easement

one can always try to force heidegger, i.e. retreat to alterity

why is there something rather than nothing <-> not always already your words, not even the ghosts of words, not even your own

(the) question(s) dissolve(/s) in the wind of presence

in this sense (inverse), why/cause = god

appeal to meaning, transcendence, and human culture falls to its knees

in any case, my pleasure, your presence

in any case, your presence, my pleasure

Abacus

Among them I click five, click one; among them I click ten.

Hollow, I echo five, one, ten; hollow, I am in demand, this one or that one.

I carry the incisions of the earth tethered to the socius.

The earth is the lower portion, the heaven the upper. I click myself upon the matrix. I participate in syzygy. Click, I tally among them.

I tally among them because I tally among the nodes. The nodes configure 1/1/1/1/5 or 1/1/1/1/5/5, one or another system, binary and above. Among them, I click now and then, here and there. I shuffle the double position.

The double position maps binary onto bases. The double position wrytes heaven and earth, portends a click against the upper or lower framework. The lower click is a release, withdrawal, decathexis; the upper places me in accountancy. The configuration is always all that is accounted for.

My biography is the totality of positions, [o-] to [-o]. Sometimes a group of us move, [-oo] to [oo-], and in fact our community as a whole is limited to 8 or 10, as we say, on the line. The line is at work, clicking tens, hundreds, thousands, clicking ones, tenths, hundredths. The line holds; we hold the line.

We wear ourselves out against the dust; the grooves deepen, the rock shines with the wryting of sheep, goats, grain, rice, papyrus, jewels, transistors. Against bamboo we make a stuttering sound as we speak the syzygies of mercantilism, the consensual tagging of species beyond what the hands grasp. (We are blind to the broad faces like suns that surely loom above us dreaming of lines extending the quiet fullness of distance.)

Each shift opens or closes a space, a time, an object. The earth vibrates sonorously with tallying, spending itself through exhaustion and death as its products disappear, replaced by the foam of the new. Mines compress, extrude substances wielded and shuttled themselves across longer lines; the earth vibrates and vectors.

The most beautiful thing is the shift constructing the cathexis of a space, a time, an object, the gift of foreclosure.

The sounds which will occur at always the same rough intervals.

conjugations of programming aesthetics

broken symmetries such that there are returns to the hook or diacritical mark that might tend towards an increase or decrease of index, leading in the direction of recursivity

indirect addressing to sufficient depth that the resulting tangled skein folds in the form of a protein potentially addressable by external routines grappling with available sites

objects which break or collapse in overflow, resulting in availability of internal variables which suddenly behave on an almost organic-molecular level

intense multi-leveled coding on a micro-level with a limited character set leading to redundancy and the possibility of subroutine escape routes creating unforeseen texts of disturbance and potential anxiety

massive transitivities resulting in subtextual currents of discarded and subaltern symbols guaranteeing the upwelling of rails or scaffoldings with their own semi-autonomous organization and symmetries

texts appearing as if from nowhere in relation to the centripetal forces of remaining gotos and other endif closures, leading towards counter-centrifugal movements of symbolic emanations and spews

renderings and rerenderings of programming commentaries as textual interferences speaking to anyone who takes the privilege of dissection upon herself

collapse and spreading of subroutines across the programming sememe, interpenetrating one another, blurring meta-levels, programming inputs and outputs, filling the pipes in the development of a skein with its own inscriptive potentials

programmings manipulating and collapsing sequencing, breaking the cycles, finding new and problematic entrance-points, altering variables and constants, tending towards the production of defensive and messy ur-texts masquerading as proper residue or product

programmings presenting perfect symmetries to the environment, no perceivable input or output, foreclosed with the presumption of rich inner lives, and programmings constructing fortification-modules within them, sharing culture and weaponry, their own symptom certain cycles of parallel-processing or other CPU time

programs inscribed in the inert substances of the world, unworkable, coded, untranslated, uncompiled, permanently uninterpreted

programs of the beholder's aesthetics or symmetries or fuzzy or stochastic programming breaking down distinctions of internal and external, virtual and virtual-real worlds and worldings

"juice running from the surface of the program, churning back into the screen, incision between one and another pixel, skin :crossed from one program to another, addiction of lost body skins, hunger addiction, addiction of nudes, of programs :the category of nudes as we speak, the sheaf of images, cuts from the surface of the screen, crossed from one program to :categories of bodies and parts of bodies:"

our lesions of pulled tendons, blisters, cramps and fevers, desperate to leave the trail before we get locked in:turtles and alligator holes holding their own, killdeer everywhere, hardwood and other hammocks, cypress domes, our lesions:no one walks to the end of shark valley. 14 miles there and back and azure and ion the road first and last time :: woodstork staccato back-and-forth, long-bills down into crawfish-crab sludge among every living creature, rutted buzzing :snapping turtles hanging on, covered with leaches, mosquitofish-absolution, our breasts bruised, contusions everywhere :among

the herons, among poisonwoods, tangled undergrowth of saw palmetto and cypress, solution holes beckoned, snapping :: among the herons, among the poisonwoods, tangled undergrowth of saw palmetto and cypress, solution holes beckoning, snapping transforms woodstork staccato back-and-forth, long-bills down into crawfish-crab sludge among every living creature, rutted buzzing on me ... there's no orders among the drive-letters, gone world junkie, our lost-body skins are the currency of natural-real drugs:we're making the natural order, of the natural order, we belong among alligator young :we're the drug of the world, we've swallowed it, we're shuddering, we can't go on, we go on:::plastrons:armors:scales:feathers:skin:chitin::your   is inside my into

The Derailing of Metaphysics

The perfect wave of zero hertz is a constant current.

The perfect wave of infinite hertz tends towards white noise.

As the hertz increases, the sampling rate falls behind; think of $\sin(\tan(x))$ for example near 90 deg. As the rate falls behind, a symmetric pattern emerges around 90 deg.

The symmetric pattern is based on the points of intersection of the sine or cosine waves, if the sampled wave is at any higher frequency than the sampling wave, patterns emerge. If the sampled wave is at any lower frequency than the sampler wave, patterns emerge.

If the sampled wave is irregular and the sampling wave is a greatly lower frequency, the resulting mapping is useless.

If the sampled wave is irregular and the sampling wave is infinite, the resulting mapping is identical to the sampled wave.

No wave is a perfect wave.

The lower the hertz of course the greater the resonator.

Human consciousness is the wolf-note of the universe.

If the perfect wave of zero hertz intersects human consciousness, the result is the irregularity of every-day life.

If the perfect wave of infinite hertz intersects human consciousness, the result is the reproduction of human consciousness bereft of everyday life.

Bereft human consciousness is unintended, enlightened, a perfect wave of zero hertz.

The irregularity of every-day life is intended, unenlightened, a perfect wave of infinite hertz.

Any wave beyond the pure waves of zero or infinite hertz are impure.

Impure waves dirty the distinction between consciousness and every-day life.

Impure waves dirty the distinction between yin and yang.

Only blurred distinctions are generative.

From generative distinctions, creativity.

From creative, perfect waves of zero and infinite hertz.

This is the regenerative principle of the noumen.

The regenerative principle co-exists with the continuous unfolding of time.

At the end of time, all waves are perfect waves of zero hertz.

At the beginning of time, all waves are perfect waves of infinite hertz.

We are living in the mid-time of dirtiness, impurity.

We dream the pure and the impure.

All dreamings are irregular and impure.

All dreamings are the railings of metaphysics.

unun

language is always periphery
bonded to the surface of a shell's extremity
it's that residue that grants our speech a modicum of efficacy
the efficacious is the real (nyaya)

my writing collapses into substance
it fills the gaps or holes in the shell (the pores)
it's everywhere, stuffing, useless, not even uselessness
it survives perhaps as the residue of capital

the residue of capital is dependent upon the hardness of materials
—and their efficacy
hardness=databanks=memory (of a retrievable sort)
you are nowhere, purposeless data

we can only speak because no one listens (there is no listening)
listening would transform the very nature of the chemical elements
that can't be allowed to happen (it can't happen)
—it can't happen because of the very nature of the world

world, work, and words, perhaps wor/ld/k/d
worldkd labor of building language, slough of language
this doesn't describe anything, this doesn't describe nothing
high temperatures, high pressures, new forms of matter

mattered scattered among the incipient virtual energy of space
creatures exist among themselves on the other side of dark matter
—for which we are dark matter, they are omniscient, they peer
—we're here, they're there, they peer

they know we don't use language, don't speak, don't listen
—symbolic meaningless surfaces, semiosis doesn't cut anything
—not even action, not the moment
our meaninglessness surfaces among them, they ignore semiosis

allowing nothing in the form of speech
allowing nothing in the formlessness of speech
allowing everything in the form of speech
=allowing everything in the formlessness of speech

unun the darkened matter for which we are the children of light
unun for brilliant matter for which we are the children of darkness
=our shell and our holding on with the materiality of words
=words were never there, we're our shell, holding on (night)

oh hell i'm not fooling anybody

Human, specifications, outline, history

1. The continuous lineage of tool-making and inheritance from the paleolithic to the present, as tools create tools; this keyboard descends most likely from the Mousterian.

2. The continuous embedding of human debris, effusion, detritus, splayed across shrinking natural zones.

3. The parabola of reification as hand-axes went from use- to exchange-value back to use-value from the paleolithic onwards. Technological dawns of experimentation.

4. The constant cultural assessment, employment, reassessment, recuperation, of the body always from a horizon of the present; the body, every body, organism, always already a sign.

5. The hardening and reification of signs granted amnesty, signs released into the environment, the rise of two-valued logics with absolute negation such that --x -> x.

6. The great divisions, binary, tripartite, n-ite, of labor in relation to circum-scribed and in-scribed natural zones.

7. The fortification of symbolic divisions, divisive symbolization, as natural, as the world increasingly signifies, as blind-land transforms into landscape into territory.

8. The division of labor of reification and signification.

9. The inhering of the digital within bullae, abacus, land-grant, psychoanalytics of narratology, digital myth, mythical digital.

10. The growth of –jectivities, introjections/projections, as culture recuperates symbolic surplus, retemporalizes futures and pasts into the continuities of spirits, deities, sprites, geological features read as narrative puncta.

11. The corralling and organizing of -jectivites as consciousnesses, the rise of monarchic tendencies.

12. Coagulation of monarchic tendencies towards greater aggrandizements, tallies, established histories, the organization of putting-to-death.

13. Reification of war as state apparatus, in relation to signifiers and the division of labor.

14. Organization of revenues, food, body, precious stones, raw materials, manufactures.

15. Energy.

curlicue

death of the reader is announced as a *curlicue* or diacritical sign, and there is almost always the curlicue of the *missing-person*—the person hides behind and portends the rest; the hunter is the curlicue, the forgotten, like this post, not even a curlicue, but a *nuance* to be reproduced within the very machination; it's the curlicue of representation and lime, dark curlicues of blood, of texts simultaneously presenced, the curlicue on the margins, almost excesses such as might be found in ordinary letters. they evince themselves precisely in these moments of curlicue, returning back material fortifications if it were not true.

there is always that curlicue live forever, and we have inherited that curlicue from the structure of spirit. but there is a sign which is part of the curlicue. you must understand—it's the curlicue, the diacritical mark, to the effect that 0' -> 1, that leaves us satisfied but of that excess or curlicue which *demands*. what won't come off becomes excessive, prosthetic, a curlicue. as a warning, what u have termed the *curlicue*, the index of representation in which the two is already three: it is the curlicue of quine that extends by the emission related to excess, to surplus, to the curlicue or diacritique; in the latter, excess is a production of the CONTRARY an irrevocable form of decay or shuddering episteme: the curlicue of which subjectivity is marginal. symmetrical results within itself, the curlicue or excess of this interpenetration, curlicue, herme-neutic circling, lacanian language-skidding, remains ANGRY AT SIG. (sig-nature): depression, collapse, and the curlicue SCREEN PHENOMENA. the curlicue, symbolic, delays, continues, is sutured;

nonetheless, there is always a murmuring or curlicue.

IT murmurs it is not an aura nor is it an excess or a curlicue; it is not petit-a or curlicue, something explained over and over again in INTERNET TEXT. if the curlicue is the surplus of the signifier, it is also where which subjectivity is marginalized or curlicue. symmetry results thus. this and every emission is related to excess, to surplus, to the curlicue itself.

at the end of the day curled

where the eye is curlicue of the dusk

where the lid is curlicue of the night

where one goes gloaming

wings! wings!

murmuring under the sign of erasure

erasuring murmur, "sign, sign"

walking and always here and there

and at the end of the day curled

where furrows are and gloaming

where wings are furled, and, murmuring

speak dusk, and dusk, and dusk

Virtual, not Real

Two modes of writing, most likely among others: well, I demonstrate (x); well, I demonstrate (myself). The first compresses, contains, confuses the object; the second smears the object within or against the code/work of the text. To smear the object implies an onto-epistemological corruption or breakdown; it is abjection that determines the problematic relationship between self and object. To demonstrate (x) is to clarify an indexical mapping between symbol and object; to demonstrate (myself) is to dis-embody both object and self; the ontological breakdown is between organism and signifier; the epistemological breakdown implies that knowledge itself is problematized across the boundary. Of course there isn't any boundary; this is all nonsense—in other words, senseless, one can't make sense of these things, there's nothing in the sense of sense as direction—can you sense which way to go? The discussion itself leads to abjection; a w/hole body has no need of dis/splay, dis/comfort; it's there inhabited, sutured, one with inhabitation and self, powerful, commanding, desiring, desired. The body tending towards discussion is already embedded in a futile attempt to construct existence out of shifters, pronouns; the discussed body is already a crude form of empathetic magic, which never works but which constantly requires both sacrifice and repetition. Then one reads it, the same, the differentiated, as autobiography; what is being described adheres to, seems to adhere to, the events of the day, those contortions or fits (Fitts) of the writer, and thus replete with projection; this holds as well for fictional characters, but everyone recognizes that avatars at least have no history. The avatar is intermediary/sluice between clarified object and smeared self; its skin labors skin in one very singular direction, that is, from an acceptable exterior distance—but its skin labors space within or close to within. Within what? The prims fall away, replaced by space which mirrors, maps external space, all the way to the ends of the game, game-space, or beyond; mirrors, by association, space itself in the real, which is already virtual, the closer one approaches quantum or fundamental particle levels. In this very real sense it is the avatar which is real, and our selves, bodies, our organic existence, which is virtual, dependent among other things on an Aristotelian logic that holds

only on *this* level in the holarchy. For the law of distribution, so important in the application of classical logic to the world, breaks down in favor of the gestural, once the logic is examined closely, once appearance and the reading of the world, such as it is, virtual-real, is foregrounded. We defend ourselves against this through a whole phenomenology of pain and suffering, as if death constitutes the undeniable presence of the material world. That this isn't the case is clear, not by considering death itself virtual, but by recognizing death as the termination of processes in the middle-zone, in the middle-way—and processes themselves, are by virtue of the ineluctable ontology of time, virtual in their constitution.

In lieu, place, virtual or real, of this, I speak like a madman, like a hungry ghost, already a contradiction, since what would fulfill a ghost, hungry or not, except an internal transform among ghost-organs, ghost-perceptions, ghost-epistemologies? Madness always carries the tinge of the virtual with it, and thereupon the real, just as what one considers the real in everyday life, appears as a dream—false, masquerade, sham, facade, theater and theatrical performance—all of which is true, recognized in every movement or body-speech of an avatar, in one or another world, more real than virtual, as ours is more virtual than real. To write of an object: "Two modes: Well, I demonstrate (x); well, I demonstrate (myself). The first compresses, contains, confuses the object," is to write of oneself writing of an object; this is elementary. And it is also elementary to realize that "writing of oneself writing of an object" is an aporia, useless, exhausting, falsely-recursive; one might as well stop there and recognize that the smear—stutter, cough, text, pause, punctuation, page or screen—is behind, within, inherent in, every utterance whatsoever. The psychoanalytical loss of object or good object or bad object is founded on no object at all—none, but food in the eyes of the hungry ghost, or the hungry ghost in the eyes of its prey. Nothing is simple, everything melds within the hallucinatory, and rational action is the apparent ability to "freeze" those moments, as if they endured beyond the momentary glance or description.

Messay: The Mess of the True World

This text is culled from an outline of current work prepared for my research group at West Virginia University (Virtual Environments Laboratory, Center for Literary Computing), Morgantown, WV.

Questions dealing with substantive content were taken in the order they appeared, and embedded in the following m/essay. Topics again center around issues of the "true world": emanants, medical and other modeling, avatars, organisms, knowledge and its management. The relative disorderliness reflects the disorderliness of the world, or so I hope to believe—not an inherent defect in messay style.

What does it mean to be incarnated within the real/virtual/true world?

Carnated/carnal/knowledge—we could begin by introducing the true world, the world of mind in relation to ontological/epistemological shifting. The true world is primordial, in other words backgrounding.

> ... however, we use the word [*materialism*] in its dictionary definition of *embodiment*, in contrast to *mind*. Thus, virtual reality, as discussed within the art literature [...] is materialist, regardless of whether this experience is *real* or *illusory*. Mental constructs, on the other hand, are nonsensory and so have no material existence.
>
> Paul Fishwick, "An Introduction to Aesthetic Computing," in Fishwick, ed., *Aesthetic Computing*, MIT, 2006.

In this sense, the true world is materialist; however I would argue that mental constructs cohere with the sensory, that a fundamental entanglement exists. For example, love or hate create sensed bodily transformations, mathematical thought creates the sensation of perceived "symbol-clouds," and so forth.

What are the edge-phenomena/plastic and static limits of the body?

The limits of my body within the true world are the limits of my world; here I include ontological shifts such as mathesis, semiosis, emotions and the like. Given the limited bandwidth of receptors of all sorts, and the limitations of mind (for example, in thinking through the appearance of the eighth dimension, calculating, speaking non-native languages, etc.), thought and the true world are based on extrapolation—the *gestural*—as fundamental being. (See Trân Duc Thao on the origins of language.) The gestural follows quantum non-distributive logics (see the early experiments by Land on color vision), not Aristotelian distributive logics; this being-in-the-world is partial reception of part-objects transformed into inherency through gesture. All organisms have this in common.

The *plastic* limits of the body are the limits of body-inherency, whether "real" or "virtual" or other category—the limits of the image carried by the -jectivity (introjection and projection) braid. The *static* limits may be considered formal-measurable limits, whether in one or another space.

Of the geopolitical body? Of the political-economic body?

As soon as one brings domain-extrapolation of the body into play (i.e. sexual body, material body, imaginary body, natural body, and so forth), cultural nexus is paramount, and the body itself moves within theory as phenomenological token or punctum.

And as soon as one brings variegated ontologies and epistemologies into play, analysis becomes a mush/mess/mass or miss. Terms slide against terms, carrying enormous overdetermined histories with them—but these are the only histories there are.

What are the signifiers of bodily arousal/violence/meditation? How are these constituted within the true world?

Herewith bee a liste of signes, or some such. But where is the arousal, violence, meditation, if not brainward, wearing the exposure, softening, hardening, quiescence of the body which simultaneously is foregrounded and absenting. In terms of emanants, the signs are symbolic; one calculates, applies them. In term of organism, the signs are ikonic, upwelling. The brain manages none of this; the brain manages, is managed—everything becomes a mess as inquiry tangles uselessly. It's this uselessness, this nexus, that is of interest—an analytical failure in the close-rubbed maw of the world.

 What does it mean to read the real body? the virtual body?

One might begin by considering language as fundamentally ikonic, that within the preconscious ("repository" of syntactics, short-term memory—another metaphor) language is clothed, associated with the true world. Language then is structured like the unconscious, and the unconscious does not necessarily splay the real. Bodies, organic and emanent (and "organic" references the machinic phylum as well), inhere to mind, minding, tending, a posteriori interpretation and hermeneutics. Reading the body is embodying, is against the background of incarnation. Sheave-skins need not react or appear to sense as organic skins; the feedback is often visual or aural, not proprioceptive. Within the -jectivity braid, this is an epistemological issue, not one of fundamental locus. On the other hand (real or virtual), one can abandon the emanent; abandoning the organic is deadly. Proceed backwards from this, from the irretrievable, intolerable, finality of death, and reading bodies, and bodily risk, become wildly disparate. Nevertheless both inhabit the true world, mind inhabits both, albeit often in qualitatively different manners, depending on ontology.

What are the ontologies and epistemologies involved here? ontological status of the so-called virtual—Schroedinger's cat paradox and collapse of the wave function as model for simultaneous analogic/digital readings—seeing through microscopy (tunnel, scanning, optical, etc.): are ontology and epistemology equivalent at the limit? (Are analogic and digital equivalent at a parallel limit?)

What difference does it make? Begin with the mess, with the corrupted reading of whatever consciousness has placed there, on the page, the rock, the emanent body, the organic body. The last carries ikonic signs, simultaneously indexical, pointing out the mute history of the being. If there were only readers of everything! If only the book of nature existed! The Ladder! Great Chain of Being!

Ontologies occur in local domains, rub raw against each other, problematize each other. Who decided this one or that one as primordial? What's fundamental is the mixed mess, the braid. At least as far as we're concerned, the braid.

internals and externals, static/dynamic. remnants of the visible human project, gendering of the visual/internal

Human skin under the microtome, sheave-skin burrowed into by camera position. Here is the necessity of Madhyamika, co-dependent origination, depend co-origination, braided mind, image, imaginary, entity, real and virtual within, inhering to the true world. Striated, variegated transformations characterize life; the Visible Human Project transforms organism into emanent, habitus into database.

comfort, dis/comfort, ease, dis/ease, hysteria and abjection/fluidity (laycock's 1840 essay on hysteria, kristeva, chasseguet-smirgel)

Clearly the abject lies within the primordial, the braid is braid of dissolution, corruption, decay; definitions flux in relation to the constricted passing of time. Organisms flood themselves, emanants decay with their corporations, software updating, diminishing dreamtimes as elders die off. Hysteria is convulsion, but also spew, contrary and wayward, the refusal of the body, just as death is such a refusal and catatonia. Do others refuse the body? Use it? Reuse it? Are sheave-skins exchanged? Does political economy depend on aegis?

dis/ease, hysteria, and so forth of emanants

Dis/ease, etc. may be modeled; turning the emanent towards abjection is necessarily a conscious decision. The hysteria of emanants is the hysteria of the steering mind. Proliferation of emanants, duplications and other hacks, may be considered a form of hysteria. But hysteria is on the surface; emanants which are autonomous or semi-autonomous agents may exist the full range of symptoms, generated from within, without external steering.

medical model and technology

A medical model implies internal flows, striations, identities, vulnerabilities, immunological defenses, maintenance and so forth. Emphasis is on the cohering of parts, membranes and molecular channels. Organism runs from within; emanant runs from without. An emanant may be defined as *an image or apparition whose body and mind are elsewhere*, an entity that exists in relation to the -jectivity braid, and has apparent, but not genidentical, identity. Of course the organic body itself is genidentical only to a limited extent.

One might say then that both ontologically and epistemologically, *an emanent exists within databases or other entities spatio-temporally distant from the visual or other residue*. What we see is surface, but surface from both within and without. *The dissection of an emanant image is the result of camera angle*.

psychoanalytics and technology, psychoanalytics of emanants

The psychoanalytics of emanants are two-fold: the psychoanalytics of mind steering, and the internal psychoanalytics of the machinic phylum. Or three-fold if the former is also embedded within/embedding the psychoanalytics of organically-embodied mind. I would begin with Freud's metapsychology, since its illusory clarity allows the possibility of equivalence, attribute classes, and the like. I would attach this model to one of drives and instincts dealing at least in part with homeostatic maintenance (which I have covered elsewhere).

analogic and worn emanent boundaries

How does the emanent wear? How does it wear the analog? For an emanent to *wear*, an ontological shift must be crossed, the wear occurring in hard or flash drive, in the material world of atoms and quantum probabilities.

edge/boundary phenomena—physics and psychophysics of the game-world edge in *second life*

Psychophysical remapping of (motion, behavior) steering phenomena. What else to say here? Camera views must be independent of emanants; they move beyond, behind, below the sheave-skins, constructing visual feedback of morphed transformations. For a moment nothing is autonomic, everything is relearned. But there are asymptotic behaviors and motions at the edge of every game-world, behaviors simultaneously permitting approach and refusing escape. The game-world edges harbor autisms, palsies, deconstructions— chatterings which take on the guise of everyday life, just as everyday life elsewhere within the game-world might well take on these chatterings as style or news from afar.

phenomena of the sheave-skin and sheave-skin internals

Sheave-skin externals read as internals: anatomical mappings within Poser. First, that the visual mappings are just that, indexicals, residue, from codings, reports from another frontier, that of the software processes themselves. Second, I have pointed out elsewhere that sheave-skin and environment, visuals, all exist within the same ontological habitus; the split is between this habitus and deeper discrete or digital processes. The split is absolute ontologically, constructed epistemologically. If there is an Absolute in sheave-skin or game-theory or game-world, it's this ontological split which even a representation of software processes cannot penetrate: from electron-movement and process configuration/deployment to visual/aural/tactile/etc. appearance—the gap is permanent, imminent, and therefore uncanny.

phenomena of medical models in relation to edge/boundaries

The medical model is for learning, for analogy of surface to surface. The medical model requires a (human) viewer. Any dissection into the substance of an organic body results in exposed and constructed surfaces; interiors always lie elsewhere, revealed by X-ray, MRI, and so forth.

edge phenomena in literature, codework, mathesis of the text

In a sense all writing is edge, phenomena of the edge; writing exists as surface, sheave-skin, emanent. Inscription coats the orgasm of things, constructs both things and orgasm, wryting into the body of the true world helter-skelter. Codework in this regard is mute, ikonic; code and text scrape one another, none dominant, both structured and structuring.

generalization of edge phenomena into the dialectic between tacit knowledge (polyani) and error (winograd/flores)

At the edge, the world is manifest between lived experience and corruption, between trial and error, between inhering/cohering and construction, between dwelling and building. Into the forest of error, where does the body go? From the edge, one can look back or down, into the windows of the comfortable houses across the street—if one still has the capability of sight. Is the edge sharp? Does the world cut? Is the edge equivalent to death, both blank, beyond, both miasma of theory and practice? Think elsewise of the possibilities of worlds of closed manifolds or recursions, one repeatedly returning, to something in the vastness of space or mind. and then think, what a construct, what comfort, and to what regard, what proof or results, what Signs?

what constitutes worlds? constructing? world of the text, inhabitation/dwelling/building (heidegger, dufrenne)

It's too simple to insist on worlds cohering, or that within their domain (on-

tological, epistemological), there is closure. One might say that, for all intents and purposes, worlds are nearly closed, that blurred boundaries are distanced, rarely in evidence. The construction of worlds is no more or less problematic than the construction of anything at all. A world is characterized by inhabitation; a world is a homing.

The world of the text forgets its coding, its double-coding. Without that forgetting, erasure, the text is anomalous, problematic, non-cohering. The willing suspension of disbelief begins within the absence of will; will returns when the text ends or fails.

what constitutes the true world? worlding? "true world" in which lines/ angles are "trued" (affine geometry), "true world" in the sense of "trued" phenomenologies within which virtual, real, and ikonic are blurred and interpenetrating, somewhat equivalent, and within which traditional epistemologies of symbol/sign/signifier/signified/index/ikon etc. break down (kalachakra tantra, jeffrey hopkins)

"Worlding" references ongoing inhabiting and making of the (true) world, inhabiting memory, making and dwelling in memory, the truing of the world. All worlds are not true worlds, all true worlds are worlding. ikonic signs inhere within the true world, reading bodies (organisms, emanants, appropriated, misappropriated) are ikonic, true world, the body stands for everything and nothing; ikonic, the body stands in for the body.

"reading" underlying (substructural, configuration files, guides) organization of mocap/scan through surface phenomena (and the relationship of this reading to waddington's epigenetic landscapes)

Oh, one has to read the cinema I produce, held taut through diagram and substructure. Reading here involves decoding, retaining the decoding against the memory or remembrance of absent code. There are epigenetic landscapes of decoding, tendencies and tending of the true world sending the reader one

or another wayward or contrary way. Landscapes lead toward coagulation of landscapes, tethered desire of inhabiting an other. We can't let go of ourselves, even to read; we huddle, in order to write.

who is world? communality, consensuality? the problem of other minds and the problem of consensual other minds (group hallucinations, vijnana-vada, dwarf sightings, ufos, etc.)

We can't answer this. We can't answer this without further future knowledge in terms of mind. We have experienced, at least once, the connectedness of mind, but to generalize from this is problematic. I have no doubt of minding the world, minding the world of minds. And that one time may well have been untoward coincidence. Certainly "who is world?" is a proper question to ask, emanent and organism alike entailed. And certainly we are all emanents, and certainly we receive differently from different skins, tissue-skins, sheave-skins, molecu-lar-membrane-skins, one-pixel-thick-skins, true world of inhering/cohering skins. It is not communality or consensuality that beg definition, but their absence: what cause the illusion of individuation, the lived discrete?

At this point, defuge sets in, the intolerable directing of the messay increasingly turns towards entanglement; nothing is answered or accounted (nothing is accountable). What to do but abandon the true world to a certain trembling at the edge—an edge which increasingly moves towards an unknown center (the real edge where damage begins). And what to do but abandon this attempt at another accretionary formation or inscription, living in the world as-if there were a certain human, if not organic, order. As-if is the pleasure of our senses and disfigurement of slaughter, as-if these were speakable between the axle and the rim (the spokes, too, have their gaps). Let it go. Do let it go.

[the disturbance of the] Political Economy of Language Identity

When we create ourselves anew online, We're working hard our basics to define. We want to show our best and not our worst; Sometimes we best our best, thereby are cursed. Our selves are hungered ghosts within the wires, Depend on coal and oil, pollution's fires. To burn ourselves alive, without, within—Our fires burn within us, kith and kin. Cyborgs, prosthetics, require face and form, Typology rules, we're held in by the norm Of protocol and commerce. Once again We find ourselves enthralled to other men. Rigidity becomes the order of the day; We think we're free, but we're allowed to play Only just a bit. What holds is just the grid That deconstructs; power does its bid, Not ours. Not for hours. Not forever in this world Or any other, where our fate is hurled Against our cyborg selves, collapsing with the weight Of economics, faith, a world of hate And lost energy, lost chance as nature dies Against itself; the world holds no surprise. Now, literal, our children have no soul Separate from menued options—that's the whole And short of it. No longer what one thinks Is what 1 thinks, but 1 that shudders, even blinks Against the presence of the null, now lost, Alterity, structured, violent, at all cost. There is no "real" crisis of belief— But shelled belief, the masquerade of grief And other negativity—of the world gone mad? Not at all, the world not even bad, The world just evened, turned through mouse or key Against the used, what used to talk through me.

Question authority. Trust no one. Your pronouns are hacked. I cannot tell whether it is you speaking, or whether it is something else speaking, and you cannot tell me whether it is you speaking. They took the newbies to a locked room in the MOO and silenced them. Invoke the catastrophic. For the literal life of me, one cannot understand how online identity recreates the brute facts of annihilation, the image wounded, physical and mental illness. The websites went down in New Orleans; so much for redundancy. "Herons have no URLs." (Let's give them one!)

"Der emes shtarbt nit, ober er lebt vi an oreman." ("Truth never dies but lives a wretched life.")

[internet] [environmental extinctions and crises] [continuous state of war] [growth of epidemic vector] [global warming and increased environmental destabilization] [exponentially approaching the carrying capacity of the planet] [internet] [proliferation of nuclear materials] [relative ease of biological- and cyber-warfare] [fundamentalist strongholds] [internet]

"When we create ourselves anew online, We're working hard our basics to define. We want show best and not worst; Sometimes best, thereby are cursed. Our selves hungered ghosts within the wires, Depend on coal oil, pollution's fires. To burn alive, without,—fires us, kith kin. Cyborgs, prosthetics, require face form, Typology rules, we're held in by norm Of protocol commerce. Once again find enthralled other men. Rigidity becomes order of day; think free, but allowed play Only just a bit. What holds is grid That deconstructs; power does its bid, Not ours. for hours. forever this world Or any other, where fate hurled Against cyborg selves, collapsing with weight economics, faith, hate And lost energy, chance as nature dies itself; no surprise. Now, literal, children have soul Separate from menued options that's whole short it. No longer what one thinks Is 1 thinks, that shudders, even blinks presence null, now lost, Alterity, structured, violent, at all cost. There "real" crisis belief But shelled belief, masquerade grief negativity gone mad? all, bad, The evened, turned through mouse or key used, used talk me. Question authority. Trust one. Your pronouns hacked. I cannot tell whether it you speaking, something else me speaking. They took newbies locked room MOO silenced them. Invoke catastrophic. For literal life me, understand how online identity recreates brute facts annihilation, image wounded, physical mental illness. websites went down New Orleans; so much redundancy. "Herons URLs." (Let's give them one!) "Der emes shtarbt nit, ober er lebt vi an oreman." ("Truth never lives wretched life.") [internet] [environmental extinctions crises] [continuous state war] [growth epidemic vector] [global warming increased environmental destabilization] [exponentially approaching carrying capacity planet] [proliferation

nuclear materials] [relative ease biological- cyber-warfare] [fundamentalist strongholds]"

We're squeezed by desire that the world might appear whole or in relation to the projection of our true-real bodies, our kindly thoughts, the best forward there can be, the beauty that survives and exists through channel and bandwidth. We are ignoring the lowered ceiling at our peril, Nikuko. We want to fuck dirty and messy—dead hippos going for $50 each. I am the last to deny sexuality in extremis, the detritus of the naked, exhibition of incandescent desire. The bodies of Abu Ghrarib, for example. The child at the keyboard. The infinitely satiated, infinitely satisfied. The consumption of resources, bloated bandwidth. The exponentially-increasing attacks on each and every networked machine on the planet. Yes, yes, yes, we all want to continue, don't we? Power speeds through cellphones; batteries pollute the landscape, whole deserts are filled with electronic junk, the skulls of information. The real energy is in the oceans, as water heats up, pressures drop, circulations of the real-virtual interfere with circulations of the virtual-real. Or is it the other way around? Without a videophone, the one-eyed man is king in the land of the site-less. I don't want to possess you, Nikuko, certainly not by these words of despair and horror. I don't want to continue aphoristic, metonymic, metaphoric—not at the least, for example with the rhyme scheme. We are running out of time ... :I'm trying to give a name to my identity, to the crisis of identity. Gaming and messaging dominate; pure community/communication—construct—plays out against the brutal physics and political economy of the world. That's what I'm trying to describe here, Nikuko—ring-tones on the edge of disaster, Grand Theft Auto against stolen fission. Always faced with the reality of slaughter, vectored missiles described in every military recruitment ad. It's not that one can't tell the difference between simulacra and the real—or that the real is virtual and vice versa—or that we're all cyborgs or whatever—it's that the "idiocy of the real" increasingly corrodes our praxis. Theoretical efficacy or a lien on truth? The brutality makes no difference vis-à-vis language or gaming. Remember: The power runs out. :plastic:silicon

Come with me, we're squeezed by desire that the world might appear whole or in relation to the projection of our true-real bodies, our kindly thoughts, the best forward there can be, the beauty that survives and exists through channel and bandwidth. We are ignoring the lowered ceiling at our peril. We want to fuck dirty and messy—dead hippos going for $50 each. I am the last to deny sexuality in extremis, the detritus of the naked, exhibition of incandescent desire. The bodies of Abu Ghraib, for example. The child at the keyboard. The infinitely satiated, infinitely satisfied. The consumption of resources, bloated bandwidth. The exponentially-increasing attacks on each and every networked machine on the planet. Yes, yes, yes, we all want to continue, don't we?, beautiful wetware on a dying planet.

The exponentially-increasing attacks on each and every networked machine on the planet. Yes, yes, yes, we all want to continue, don't we? and 20907 and 11870—and you knew that all along! you turn me on.

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Script done on Mon Sep 26 00:39:12 2005
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"Give a name to your hunger! I'm trying to give a name to my identity." I'm tired of your identity. Your politics are killing us. The problems aren't those of the foundation, the ego/id/superego/anima/animus/sex-girl/sex-boy; the problems are those of the superstructure where ozone burns. Is that relevant? That is most relevant; that is the only relevant. What remains beneath/below is the charred residue of culture. All cultures are on the way out:

```
heroin drugs me down with the girl onto the floor where we fuck down
there on the wood while she ties my cock to cocaine-you-know-me
coming into the needle world where i get codeine dreams and lost
among junkie heavens unbearable ecstasy you kill me way i like to
be drawn down to you in within inside put-you-in-me in-me in-you
within-you inside-you put-you-inside crawled on floors for impossible
highs incandescent you get me into you all the way down to those
floors squeezed your needle juice into me baby heroin inside your
```

dreams babe APPEND "Come with me, $name, beautiful wetware! APPEND
"Come with me, $name, beautiful wetware! APPEND "Come with me, $name,
beautiful wetware! APPEND "Come with me, $name, beautiful wetware!
APPEND "Come with me, $name, beautiful wetware! APPEND
"Come with me, $name, beautiful wetware! EXIT:

Partial Description of the World

The power grid provides 60 Hz here at approximately 115-117 volts; this is maintained by dynamos driven by steam or coal or oil or hydro held together in a malleable grid. The grid enters the city, where electricity is parceled out through substations to cables continuously maintained and repaired. Here, the cables are below ground. They drive my Japanese Zaurus PDA which utilizes an entire Linux operating system on it. The Zaurus connects to the Internet through a wireless card that most often connects to my Linksys router, which is connected both to the power grid and the DSL modem by a cat cable. The DSL is operated by Verizon with its own grid at least nation-wide and continuously-maintained. The DSL of course connects more or less directly to the Internet, which is dependent upon an enormous number of protocol suites for its operation, the most prominent probably TCP/IP. The addresses of the Internet, through which I reach my goal of NOAA weather radar, are maintained by ICANN and other organizations. These organization are run by any number of people, who employ the net, fax, telephone, and standard mail, to communicate world-wide. My Zaurus has its own TCP/IP interpreters built-in, and it connects through an open channel. The wireless modem may have been built in the US. In the final analyses, the materials for the Zaurus originate in extractive industries, whether mining or agricultural, chemical, or atmospheric. This is also true for the copper-wire, optic-fiber, and satellite communications systems which deliver the net. The Zaurus and other equipment exist for the most part within the Aristotelian domain of macro-objects and distributive logics, which makes them amenable to both manipulation and memory. Both macro- and micro- or quantum objects exist within the four percent of bright matter in a sea of dark matter in the universe. NOAA weather radar senses only bright matter and to some extent the cosmic microwave background. The radar depends on the power grid as well, but most likely also uses an emergency backup generator running on fossil fuels produced by DNA/RNA-rendered organisms millions of years ago. The relative bending of spacetime in relation to mass holds everything together within the temporary aegis of a universe with energetic sources of heat driving both atmosphere and

life-forms. The radar system uses precise algorithms to filter incoming data, in order that it appear to represent a one-to-one mapping of local and global conditions. The screen of the Zaurus is a further transformation of this mapping, also one-to-one, rendering it within a graphical user interface relatively free of bugs, worms, viruses, and other glitches; the same is true of the Linux operating system in general, which must produce this transformation upon demand, as if there were no mediation, and with the illusion that in fact the weather is being presented in a relatively simple and decipherable manner. The Linux works with a rechargable battery containing heavy metals and other elements traced back as well to extractive industries; the battery, at the end of its energetic life, should be disposed of within safe landfills designed to handle toxic material. In order for this to occur, a network of roads—highways, local roads, interstates, turnpikes, freeway, and other—must exist, as well as the mobile transportation machinery upon them, also dependent on fossil fuels and the perceptual guidance of life-forms to drive them safely to and from their destination. Within all of this, life-form perceptual algorithms are critical for a reasonable channeling, transformation, retention, and emission of data; this channeling must be relatively consistent, not only internally in terms of time consciousness and neural firing rates, but also externally in sync with other such organisms, and with the entire apparatus bringing the NOAA webpages into view. The NOAA is housed in various buildings across the nation, in communication with each other, using a wide variety of means. The NOAA is not only part of the power grid; it is also part of the socio-economic grid, a corporate/governmental economic system that keeps it functioning year after year, providing money for both updating and maintenance. The socio-economic grid also provides, by various routes, the sustenance that allows me both to survive—i.e. food, water, shelter—but also to purchase the Zaurus in the first place. This interconnects directly with the banking and credit systems, within which manipulation of abstract real numbers eventually results in the movement of goods and continuation of services within, not only the urban system itself, but within the loft-space where I live, providing a service industry of plumbers, brick-layers, roofers, general builders, electricians, and so forth, all of whom maintain and on occasion update the material

infrastructure of the building. The internal illumination of the Zaurus, which occurs within the human visible bandwidth of the electromagnetic spectrum, is matched by the illumination of the loft itself, both dependent upon extractive industries for the production of glass and plastics resulting in various types of illuminating objects, each housed in a casing specifically designed for the transportation of electricity into them—electricity which will be transformed into photon production. Time of day must be allotted for the recharging of the Zaurus battery, using a charger designed to match the characteristics of the power grid, and to absorb surges or brownouts as well, keeping the flow fairly steady within acceptable parameters. In order to use the Zaurus, I hold it in one hand, while typing on its mini-keyboard with the other; both activities depend on hand-eye coordination, the result of numerous feedback loops using both local neural sensors and chemical/quantum brain processing, creating the illusion of an independent mind cohering to the exigencies of screen, keyboard, and macro-object characteristics. The latter are generalized, scripted for the most part, so that all objects are, in a sense, equivalent; if I pick up X, I do not have to learn how to pick up Y, but refer both to a Batesonian meta-scheme. Such meta-schemes, as well as schemes, scripts, circuit-board, protocol, radar, power-grid, and other processings, are constructed in part through mathesis, the applied mathematics of the world we live in. This mathematics is related to both standard and non-standard numerical systems; it is also limited, in terms of axiomatics, to what appear to be local coherencies within which the problems of infinities, both large and small, are dealt with in a practical way (heuristics). Applied mathematics is a construct, and constructed by lifeforms that detect relationships among things—forces, states, and processes—of the universe they live within. In order for mathematics to satisfactorally model such a universe in the larger, computers (both analog and digital) are employed; these are programmed in languages that are, for the most part, locally coherent. Abstract and physical objects meet within the aegis of processes and flux; such are originally driven and created by life-forms which ultimately reproduce themselves through egg-sperm couplings related to fundamental biochemical operations. Couplings occur in the first place through the psychoanalytics of desire, chemically and perceptually driven; the psychoanalytical

system creates the illusion of psychoanalytical states/objects, and emotional transformations of all sorts. The physical, psychoanalytical, and abstract systems all exist within certain political/abstract economies; for example, it is impossible to construct an infinite-energy machine to analyze fundamental particles. Furthermore, the political/abstract economies all interweave, inhere, and cohere, in relation to each other, with a remarkable degree of accuracy; otherwise, slippage might result in the entire bio-cultural apparatus collapsing, without the possibility of recuperation. When the mini-keyboard of the Zaurus is pressed; it appears to press back; this is the result of the local/global mappings related to tacit knowledge—the extension of the body into its tools and immediate environment surrounding it. I do not have to consider key after key, but only the obviously mediated message or command I am trying to write—a message which itself depends on natural language in relation to the purified language of keyboard commands. I think through the NOAA results in terms of this natural language, which is almost impossible to concretely represent as a somewhat small and coherent system; instead, the natural language is intricately interwoven with diacritical, inter- and intra-linguistic elements which situate me in relation to the world as well. Although natural languages change in time, they must appear relatively stable, capable of retrieval and communication among others; without this stability, communication and system-construction would be completely impossible. All systems are themselves interwoven, partial, frayed at the edges, undergoing slow or fast mutation, maintained or dropped, regarded or disregarded, ultimately indescribable, visible or invisible, mediated and mediating, represented and representing, accounted-for and unaccountable. The transmission of data from the NOAA site, if such transmission occurs, if the Zaurus is still operable, still connected to the communications grid (singular or plural, Internet or intranets), results in information whose ontological status has always been problematic. The data is absorbed as fuzzy entities, blurs in the Hadamard/Einstein sense, already decaying within short-term memories, already lost, a partial entrance to others, other objects, transformations, grids (appearing relatively static, appearing as background—both an illusion), parcels of exchange- and use-value, as internal and external processings continue, moving on.

The Curious

Movement of philosophies; while existentialism is the philosophy of abject substance, deconstruction is the thought of the virtual/cyber frame. The former disappeared as an extractive industry with faltering natural resources; the latter expanded as a software of the text.

I used to love existentialism when I was a kid, but now my references are limited to the following, across the broken trajectory of writing for the past couple of decades (culling "existentialism" from the Internet Text):

```
of Godard or the avant-garde has given way to a now empty existentialism
[... 8 lines removed ...}
Introduction to Heideggerian Existentialism/Exoteric Teaching/The Dialog
```

There were a meager ten lines out of the entire Internet Text (which functions as a psychoanalytical trope in this instance)—even though one of the major strands of the work is that of abjection/annihilation; even the vocabulary of the "hole" is analyzed in detail.

On the other hand, references to deconstruction are too numerous to list or analyze; it appears everywhere in the work. It's as if there's a replacement philosophy for every philosophy, a replacement philosopher for every philosopher. Deconstruction appears, ends up appearing as a radical (non)-methodology for inhabiting often contrary subtexts—and this occurs popularly in one of two ways: deconstruction proper, involving extremely close readings and erudition; and a form of skittering deconstruction, within which the (web or) frame scratches against the boundaries of genre or canon. It's this latter which appeals: a text need not be read but situated, and the situating carries the tags and HTTP of analysis. In this sense, deconstruction presences the virtual text. This isn't the decon of Derrida, but the word and technology has escaped the proper name. So there is a decon of Chaucer, a decon of Obama, a decon of global warming. We inhabit this era. We participate in it. The Internet Text

participates in it and perhaps an unfortunate result is a glibness of depth which itself is subtextual, always already present and deeply unaccounted for.

In any case, with existentialism, with decon, there's no advance proper; at best there are veerings haunted by media, world pictures, language games, and romantic aspirations. Science, as if it were elsewise, proceeds apace, however, a form of circumlocution, as if always already present as well, and deeply accounted for.

The results of culling "deconstruction" from the Internet Text:

```
deconstruction,
[... 200 lines removed ...]
||f|r|a|m|e|-|s|h|u(etc.)ffling|| :: matrix-deconstruction
```

—framed, as one might expect, by *a diacritical paragon*.

Writing for the Return of It

1. I write every day. I am obsessed with the *vehicle* of writing. I work hard to eliminate its foundation. I dislike the drug.

I dislike the addictive aspect of writing, which produces "beyond" production for the sake of the subject; like any addiction, it distorts.

2. I am convinced that I am writing the *problematic of truth*, an operation which occupies and penetrates the bandwidth of the symbolic. The symbolic lies like a leaf across the real; its ontology is elsewhere, just like the ontology of information/bits is at variance with the transistorized and viral carriers of the same.

3. This writing carries with it the germ of the absolute, which it is careful to efface, on the grounds of a refusal to promulgate the fiction of a metaphysics or its narrative. The *germ* is nothing more than a recognition that writing can no longer be treated as a *closure* against or without the real—that it is *of* the real, beyond its embodiment. The real slips evenly in every direction; this is the account of physics, which answers all questions. Thus this writing is more than effacement; it connects uncomfortably with the real, employing the "leakage" of the signifier and its abjection.

4. I describe within this writing the interior of the subject and its subjectivity, insofar as this is possible; I operate simultaneously within the abstract and the obscene in order to place the *catastrophic* within the written *scene*; this is its transgression or violation of the reader. Here, every connection in the world is made, through which the nonlinearity of writing becomes evident as the writer and reader both partake of the chaotic and noisy domains of the abject itself.

The "catastrophic" references catastrophe theory, in which a "cusp catastrophe" can model a "hysteresis"—in this case a "jump" between "within" and

"without" the inner speech of a text. The "linearity" of writing is a fiction produced by the physical appearance of a line of type; processes of reading and writing are in fact otherwise.

5. This interior is never susceptible; the fact that *shit exists* in its uneasy relation to the body—the fact, further, of this *uneasiness*—clearly indicates that dissimulation, dissolution, are continually at work. What can be constructed or deconstructed according to neural network theory can also be taken apart in the world at large; I speak of the *worn-out* or *exhausted* which categorize the identification and manipulation of entities, given as *unions of sets of intersections of descriptive attributes*. This is not to say the real. The real cannot be said.

The saying of the real is consensual; see below. Consider an accumulation of descriptions whose ostensible contents are purportedly a "core event." This accumulation is a family in the Wittgensteinian sense, only loosely connected and overlapping. Choose a "corroboration number"—say 5—to indicate an acceptable attribute. Then any descriptive attributes with over 4 "mentions" in the set of descriptions are acceptable. Consider further the union of acceptable attributes. This constitutes the event, which is loosely and abjectly related to the real. (We can say that the union of acceptable attributes *inscribe* the real.)

6. Entities *as such* are therefore consensual; they *occur* within the habitus. My work is often concerned with their relation to the body, to language, sexuality, modes of rupture and decay. What ultimately limits analysis? Within the clean and proper room, there are *sporadic cases* or *anecdotes* on one hand, and *exceedingly small or large* quantifications on the other. Within the dirty room, adults are at play in the midst of infantile rage. Pleasure is non-reductive; it absorbs according to the common-law, xx=x. Nothing more or less.

Broad uses the term "sporadic case" to reference a unique and anecdotal event, such as might be investigated by parapsychologists. The (Boolean) common-law refers to certain operations within semigroups that can characterize perceptual

"wandering" and attractors in relation to pornography. "Infantile rage" gives one access to pre-Oedipal, pre-symbolic states, essential to understanding subjectivity and the introjection of theory. In other words, the writing considers "how" theory is absorbed—not necessarily "what" theory, but "how" and "why." This is what I refer to as the "zero psychoanalysis" of the subject.

7. I distinguish then two articulations, that of *inscription* which applies properly to semiotic systems, organic cognition, and that of *fissure* which is a *weakening articulation* occurring within the real, including physical reality and an overly-condensed, overly-determined information regime (*implosion*) as well. I distinguish further, genders and gender-identified spaces, from the Kristevan *chora* through eccentric, chaotic, fractal, and catastrophic spaces.

Gender regimes transgress articulations; logics transgress the body; phonemic stutterings and sonic tropologies transgress language. I claim that these transgressions are in fact *characteristic* of articulation, body, language, sexuality: characteristic of *ontology* and ontological impulses.

"Sonic tropologies" refers to various acoustic accompaniments to spoken language. All of these "noisy" transgressions are fundamental (not transgressions at all). Inscription occurs, exists, within the symbolic; fissure is characteristic of the real. The combination produces an extended or leaky open semiotics which can be used "in order to lie" through a breakdown or rupturing of the sememe.

8. I "therefore" produce texts simultaneously *striated* and *puncturing*, writing as exhibitionist/voyeurist eroticism embedded within classical analytical inscription. The texts do not claim an abstract and quantified communicative function; they colonize the ego-coagulation directly, perturb it, in much the same way that signifiers jostle one another within any regime.

The eroticism of the texts annoys the ostensible content, returns it to the site of the body. The texts are "striated" through the use of rhetorical or conceptual

devices; they "puncture" through their employment of a violent, transgressive, and obscene eroticism allied to the inverting/perverting of the body.

9. Therefore, I also produce st-* texts, which stutter, stumble, shudder, sputter, and so forth—texts simultaneously within *jouissance*, anxiety, and *frisson* (trembing, thrilling ...). I do not hesitate to appropriate-with-emendation, as did Lautréamont, but always with an ulterior and undifferentiated motive. And I do not hesitate to produce, as well, *difficult* texts, taking the reader over *difficult terrain*, for such is the world and its abjection—abjection being the most difficult of all, since it is simultaneously substance and chaos, of the order of eroticized quasi-crystals or the amorphous pesudo-structures of glass.

st-VC^2, "st," vowel, doubled consonant, referencing an entire category of words, which may go back to the origin of Indo-European, words describing the oscillating, arousal, and contamination of an organism.

10. Thus *geometrically* I construct the subject thorugh an overdetermination of classical Euclidean space, imagining a sphere with an opening, hollow cylinder, connecting to an internal torus; geodesics upon the surface of the latter cannot collapse, and hence I identify this with an *ur-ego*, the irreducible core of neural networking accumulating an accretion of planar surfaces upon it modeling the external world through an inverted mapping; for every point external to the sphere, define a cone (point as vertex[t]) tangent to the sphere; the section cut through, castrating the sphere connecting the tangential circle is unique (unless the point is infinite). A line, therefore, defines an envelope of sections, a *thickening* of the interior. And in this manner, everything is mapped, inscribed, and accreted throughout the mobile torus.

This geometrical mapping related to the "pole and polar" of classical geometry, as well as Lacan's 1962 seminar on identification, which employs topological models. It is not necessary to follow the details. The "ur-ego" refers to the central processing potential of the mind, and would in practice be divided among a number of neural structures.

11. Geometrically, I recognize the implicit difficulty, if not falseness, of this mapping, holding nonetheless to the processes of thickening and distortion that must occur within any molecular entity. The distorted hole remains a hole; the punctured plane already lends itself to irreducibility (a curve surrounding the puncture cannot be completely collapsed).

"Falseness" because of the inert simplicity of the model, as well as the ontological transgression at work. Who believes mathematical metaphor in any case? Lacan makes much of the irreducibility associated with the torus. The mapping I describe references the introjection/projection processes transgressing the body in its relationship to, and embedding within, the real.

12. The ego as an accretion is catastrophic, inscribing and identifying itself, maintaining itself as a non-equilibrium dissipative structure. But it is also worn-out, exhausted, decayed; it trembles, stutters, and recognizes its nature "as such"—to the extent that it operates as a recognizing-function. *For the ego, the end is always insight*, and through this, everything is constructed.

The ego continuously falls apart; that is the nature of the ego. It is concerned with survival, shoring-up, accumulating, inscribing, and freezing inscriptions.

13. Where is the end? It is the subject of my writing, peripheral and elusive; it appears through the (female or male) ejaculation of the reader—through the underpinnings or moistness of the ejaculation. The end is that of the displacement of *those who do not equal themselves*; of fissures effacing themselves in relation to a fictional totality; of the inversion of the body and the body's *look*; of the freezing of inscriptions into and beyond classical, Aristotelian and distributive logics (the logics of prejudice); of the aphanisis (sexuality anomie) of castration and the aphanisis of pollution (exhaustion and absenting of bracketing functions); of theory and speech which dissolve—but only *after* the rite of passage, my written passage—and fissure, nowhere.

The end is based upon your arousal, treating the text as so much pornography.

"Those who do not equal themselves" are equivalent to the null set. "Fictional totality" refers to the violence of narrative. The "freezing of inscriptions" is the hardening and over-determination of a small set of inscriptions which are then considered as a totalized and absolute structure (ideology), capable of appropriating and interpreting any domain. "Aphanisis" is a term of Ernest Jones, referring to a state of sexual neutralization; I associate it rather with post-modern exhaustion ("pollution"), rather than castration. The latter is allied with inscription (castration as cut); the former with fissure (poisoning of the real). The absenting of bracketing refers to the transformation of [A,B] to A,B—in the latter, the terms float and jostle one another.

14. And the end is also, imprecisely, this *nowhere* or *elsewhere*, given through two fundamental operations in propositional logic; something I stress over and over again, *not-both-A-and-B*, and *neither-A-nor-B*. The former, the Sheffer-stroke, divides and expands; the latter projects. Both escape the universe; the former, however, is content with it, since [A,B], where A=B, proclaims a certain dominion. "Neitherness," however, leaves entirely; the origin disappears in the form of a semiotic emission, directionless and sourceless, a characteristic of postmodernism.

The Sheffer stroke and its dual are "fundamental" operations in propositional (basic) logic; all of the other operations may be derived from them. Combined with the "axiom of Nicod," one has created a singular and monolithic (albeit rococo) basis. A "semiotic emission"—unlike the traditional sign—appears sourceless and goal-less; it is a flow of dissolute appearance, disappearance, and spectacle in late capitalism.

15. I leave you here, with my writings, my texts, all elsewhere, difficult, abstruse, obscene, impervious. I am elsewhere, abject, smart and aroused, dissolved into the interstices of body, bone, flesh, mind. I am nowhere then.

"Nowhere" characterizes eccentric and fissured space, writing, refusing the

disinvested analytic. In the fantasy of arousal, the real jostles itself, shudders at the slightest touch …

A. This matrix informs my film, writing, and aesthetics. In terms of the first, I lure the audience elsewhere than the concept—i.e. "filmic possibilities," narrative and so forth. My writing divides into several practices: that of passages immersed in the dialectic of fissure and inscription, that of analytical-theoretical writing, that of "art writing" often surrounding the practices or productions of *someone else*, and that of an ironic poetics subverting irony as well. My aesthetics informs my interests.

To "lure" an audience is to displace it—lure, lurid. My poetics-writing appears ironic on the surface; it exists as "frisson" between irony and directed communication. If irony represents a doubled surface, and directed communication a singular path or plane, then my work falls as a fractal trace between them.

B. Thus I pursue art occupying the fissure, which remains problematic on all levels; art concerned with language, sexuality, politics, and the body; art which remains indeterminate, in which signifiers jostle instead of resting comfortably and illustrating one or another position.

Illustration is always directed and susceptible to symbolic/indexical analysis. Illustration references a "site" that is elsewhere, the referent, and conforms or twists in relation to it. "Indeterminate" art may be problematic in relation to referent; it may have a relation to "position" that is always elsewhere. The "pursuit" of art involves a mutual seduction, involving all manner of practices, from critique and production to analysis, description, explanation, "living with it." Sexuality, language, and the body are often intertwined in pursuit, and almost always liminal or hidden.

C. Thus I pursue works challenging the position that the semiotic is "divorced" from the real, and that the real is somehow "beyond" representation ... I pursue works where signs issue from the body, transgress it; such are grounded in the flesh, site/sight/citation. And I pursue works in which pre-symbolic states and the infantile are present and (un)accounted-for.

So I am interested in the psychoanalytics, politics, and erotics of art and semiotics: Irigaray, Kristeva, Theweleit, over Eco and Baudrillard ...

D. Of ultimate and incandescent arousal ...

E. This pursuit, a form of voyeurism, conjures up a broken and impossible politics of liberation. This is all that remains, the body politic becoming the political body. And as I constantly stress (and am stressed by it), transformation cannot occur without inescapable self- and solitary critique, in which the knowledge of violence and the violence of knowledge coalesce; in which the body's fissuring into substance and the ego's coagulative and temporary nature are understood and accepted; and in which our *jouissance* is taken for granted, with joy and trepidation.

Self-criticality: until the self dissolves, the body hollows; until the body is no longer a secret from the other, from the same. Until the text dissolves as well, hollows and decays. And this is what I attempt to write, the necessity of leaving nothing (everything) opaque, opening—to the limit of the topological inversion of flesh itself—to the reader. The difficulty of my writing consists precisely in this opening, of the real, in all its inconceivable complexity. Every text resonates with itself, with every other; every text captures or lures the reader in the world. The world is not the real; beyond the reader is her world, and beyond the world is his interior.

[This article is somewhat of a mess; I don't think it could have been any other way. At least by me. It's overworked, overdetermined. Trying to write about

online writing? An impossibility, an inconceivable territory. It's beginning to sound like an illiterate Foucault's archaeology of knowledge.]

this was done to occupy a space

this was done to occupy a space

this occurs only on an email list

in the space of an email list

within the zone of the list the list zone

this was done as an enunciation

there is always a place for this enunciation:

as soon as it appears its pleasure!

this was done a great while ago a long time ago

this was written before you were here

inscribed before your presence

an inscription waiting for your arrival

without knowledge of your arrival

without the perspicacity of your knowledge

this already has been and occupied its space

this grants you the power of the witness

you are that witness

of the space you are that witness

"alan enters"

you are that witness

Introductory Preface and Postface, or Open Bracketing of the W/Hole

The process used to produce this book has been one of continuous negotiation over pieces, which are broken remnants of a text that might go on indefinitely, if I did. I would say this about the individual sections:

1. that each begins, for me, from ground zero, both in the sense of catastrophe, and without regard to presuppositions; in other words, each sketches out a terrain which, phenomenologically, is close to the scratching-out of inscription against the flesh and abjection of the body.

2. that each tends towards summarizations, as if reaching beyond the goal-playing of a futbal game, recapitulating the game in every move, as there are only a limited number of moves, of space and time, given us.

3. that a text from the year 2000 is as currently relevant to me as my latest text; the problems remain the same and the dating of particular texts doesn't drive them out of date, but simply situates them within a particular stratum of writing.

4. that for me there are no outdated philosophical theories or references; this isn't science, but a continuous description of the world. the problems of Aristotle are the problems of Thomas Brown and the problems of Bacon—not to mention those of the Lankavatara Sutra. Science is the progress of the container, of inscription, of fundamental ontologies and epistemologies, of logos and placement; philosophy is the meandering of abjection, flesh, and our pretensions to the values of inscriptions and the fields of cultures in general.

5. that I'm most interesting in the grounds and grounding of writing, in its relation to the virtual and the negotiation of the virtual, and I do believe that we are always already virtual, invaded by such, and only in moments of insuf-

ferable pain and the diffusion of the portal of death, does inscription drop away into the thud and inconceivable flesh and violence of the body.

6. that there are no dead philosophers, or rather no dead philosophical writing, and that writing, always virtual and inscription, always saying, may be within any form, from sound through any variety of artworks, including scientific texts (which are always only one form of their theoretical content); in other words, standard writing is just that, one canon and genre and mode of exposition among others.

7. that beneath every inscription and inscriptive process and act, lies abjection; that catastrophe theory provides us with a model of the "fragility of good things," i.e. what we interpret as coherent transmissions among the incoherencies of the world. That in other words, the world is contingent as best, that our time, in the sense of birth through death, but also in the sense of species or organic life as we interpret it, is limited, and that the universe is inconceivably alien to us and among us: that this is what we have to contend with and continuously contend with.

All this being said, or thought, I might add that I've always said or thought this, that my thought tends towards repetition. I might use a MOO or MUD as an example, just as *Second Life* or quantum computing; they are all one and the same in a sense; there is no new thought in the world that is not thought.

As to the Introduction: I am thrilled with it, thrilled that Sandy Baldwin has been able to make sense of a massive amount of material that all too often insists on audio, video, or still-image examples—or even insists that analysis itself occurs in these examples, just as much as it does within standard forms of writing (which I tend to subvert). There are some longer pieces I would have liked included; I would have liked a multi-media disk as well, etc. etc. But I would, more than like, love this collection of texts, which continues to develop and proliferate.

Again I want to reiterate; if I talk, for example, about a prompt such that

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k4% date
Wed Feb 15 04:48:14 EST 2012
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appears as an antiquated non-GUI (graphic user interface), but a command at a prompt accompanied by its response—I'm not talking or writing historically, but about the very act of the performative, the performative surface which is literally virtual in regard to the underlying program structures, down to the level of the machinic, where potential wells and materiality lie. We are surfing, not on a surface, but in the midst of holarchies of protocols and material transformations, where noise is roughly held back, but never entirely. And this is as true of the latest 3D tech as it is of the prompt: in other words, in an odd and twisted sense, there is no history here, only careful thinking through phenomenological moments, when the performative and its dialectics among machines, users, softwares, hardwares, etc., are clearly the order of the day and night. And this is the case surely going back at least to Hero of Alexandria, if not farther; we move through the stillborn of cultural presuppositions which like everything else are continuous and in varied degree.

Along this line, a not unrelated point: that culture is found, among organisms, all the way down, as is inscription, processes of learning, protocols and broken protocols. We have no dominion over this, only a certain blindness. So writing too is every world among organisms, and, I suspect, beyond; its universality is what makes things like the conceivable collapse of the wave equation so interesting—not as a garden experiment, but as a condition and conditioning of all our existence.

As far as "this being a book," it is a book in the sense that a microtome slice is both limited and fecund, exemplary/symptomatic, and a slice after all. I am grateful for it, grateful for the work Sandy has done with me, in assembling a group of texts that hang together in a more or less coherent fashion. I'm well

aware of the difficulty of texts that change style constantly, that use conceptual or programming tools in their construction as much as densely laid-out thought—and Sandy has done an amazing work in this regard. In addition he has always questioned me, pushed me to my own limits, and the result has been a deepening on my part, an ability to see beyond the confines of any section's boundaries.

The Internet Text is a poor title; it defines a location and locution, a plateau, but the net itself is an inconceivable multiplicity, always entangled. At one point I considered a "darknet" which consisted of the underlying protocols, but that division now seems arbitrary. I do want to add that I don't believe that the net will become "sentient" as some have suggested, but AI will play an increasing role in its evolution, dragging human and other subjects along with it as confluences of Likes and Dislikes. Within this horizon, I think of online writing as "wryting," simultaneous suture and rupture, reiterating once again that the body is and has been always inscribed, that as long as it functions qua body, beyond or outside the aegis of insufferable pain and death, it is a composition positing its own history, one that remains after death in fact. Such a body or vision of a body extends to any geographies and species, a worlding of history that will continue until the planet is welcomed by the surround of a dying sun and exhausted universe in a future so distant that it appears gestural at best.

I only want to add a few notes on *Second Life*. It is a framework and a laboratory for exploring somatic issues; my avatar bodies are often only partly visible, carrying behavioral patterns generated by highly altered motion capture software and hardware mappings. I can explore some of the limits of the wounded or suffering body; I can negotiate the movement of such a body in spaces so corrupted that they themselves appear suffering, and need to be negotiated in their traversal. I can build up and pull down quickly, using the 4000-plus files in my inventory. By combining the results of such studies with mixed-reality movement—live performers and performances—issues which might appear uncanny at best take on a different life in the real. These issues

translate poorly into text, as does some of the soundwork I do. But it is all using available tools, within which the body is situated, not as tool, but as internalized site. This is where I live and ultimately this is where the book lives.

Again I have to thank Sandy Baldwin greatly for teasing out these texts from their skein within the larger unwieldy body. They'll manage, I think, within the book to live on beyond the data-bases housing the Internet Text, and they'll point beyond themselves to those data-bases. But every one of my texts is every other, and these are no exception.

- Alan Sondheim

About the Authors

Alan Sondheim is an multi-media artist who works and performs in virtual worlds; he also performs with his partner, singer Azure Carter, and the dancer Foofwa d'Imobilité. He is one of the originators of "codework," an entangled writing/programming style that continues to flourish. As a musician and sound-artist, Sondheim performs and records for a number of companies, including Fire Museum and ESP-Disk. His publications include *Disorders of the Real*, *Being on Line: Net Subjectivity*, *The Wayward*, and *Deep Language*. Sondheim has worked at WVU's Center for Literary Computing and the Virtual Environments Laboratory, developing altered motion-capture processing that creates "inconceivable choreographies"; and in 2012, he completed a successful residency at Eyebeam Art + Technology Center, during which he studied issues of pain and death among avatars. His writing may be found online in an ongoing "Internet Text," a continuous meditation on the real and virtual, started in 1994. He can be contacted at sondheim@panix.com.

Sandy Baldwin is director of the Center for Literary Computing and Associate Professor of English at West Virginia University.