

An Exercise in Nomadic Thought,

Or How to Make a New Hat

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Each season brings new modes, and with these, new methods of handling the materials; though indeed neither may be “new,” but merely a revival of some old, old fashion, both in style and workmanship, cleverly adapted to the modes of the day. [1]

There is no difference between what a book talks about and how it is made. Therefore a book also has no object. As an assemblage, a book has only itself, in connection with other assemblages and in relation to other bodies without organs . . . A book itself is a little machine. [2]

The design is the ART of the work; the composition is the technical putting together of the design, most of which can be done by the “maker;” but it takes an artist to evolve the design. The designer must understand the work of the whole. [3]

This lack in being whole is both avowed and disavowed in the unconscious and it is what sends unconscious desire along a chain of signifiers in a blind search to recapture the wholeness and to regain what is lacking—a search for that which the subject will never fully realize because the subject does not fully recognize what and that it is lacking. While the unconscious constitutes objects of desire for the subject so to recapture wholeness, it can also avow and disavow lack by displacing it onto another. [4]

Yet as we continue rethinking, redefining or even expanding terms like writing, authoring or composing it is crucial that we not limit our attention to a consideration of new media texts or to what the newest computer technologies make possible—or even make problematic—but to attend to the highly distributed, complexly mediated, multimodal dimensions of all communicative practice. [5]

To make wings or quills, bend the desired shape in wire, pin this on a piece of crape, turn a narrow margin over the wire and run it in. Bind with a roll hem of crape or silk; fine jet may be used for wings or quills of net; a big pompon of slender willow leaves mage in this way is a handsome trimming . . . Thus the scraps may be turned into beautiful trimmings, and the apprentices kept busy during the dull season. [6]

The audience must take the journey with the artist. what is truly “dangerous” about the artist is the intent to wake people from their stupor, their sleep, passivity, hypnosis, to rock their boat, and most of all, to suspend their suspension of disbelief. [7]

The more artistic
the general training of a person,

the more ready are they
to appreciate and profit
by the fine productions
of others. [8]

Despite the vague pronoun references, context tells us who is who in this case, but this slip and elision between the “him” of the Flat and the “him” of the real is telling. [9]

Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing. [10]

Anchor everything with a citation and, sometimes, a quote. Keep it focused on the actual readings. [11]

Their stories reveal that life with a Flat involves daily negotiations of absence and presence, love and resentment, patriotism and anger, and past and future, all played out upon the Flat’s laminated surface. [12]

Plateau or Plaques: These are a favorite form... [13]

Rhizomatic power in film
are uni-directional. [14]
does flow from groups like
The Zapatistas who have developed distributed abilities that

Interruption is one of the fundamental methods of all form-giving. It reaches far beyond the domain of art. It is, to mention just one of its aspects, the origin of the quotation. [15]

Monday, while I was visiting the Museum of Modern Art, quite by chance, Tilda Swinton created one of her surprise performances of "Maybe." I was surprised the next day, when I found I had been captured in the photograph that appeared in the NY Times in an article about the work. Along with my friends Charles, Tizoc and José, another chance-related encounter. [16]

There are interruptions, overlaps,

• • •

yet much useful knowledge is generated through recurring themes and difficult dialogues. [17]

To write history
thus means
to cite history.

disjunctions, and contradictions

It belongs to the concept
of citation,
however,
that the historical object
in each case is torn from

ITS CONTEXT

[18]

There's an old saying about those who forget history. I don't remember it, but it's good. [19]

In all things the worker must use forethought and common sense; the easiest way that will yield the best results is the right way. [20]

How can we have clear understandings of oppressive situations? . . . What kinds of changes are needed? [22]

As modes change, so methods change, and the quickest are always best, as much depends on these fragile webs retaining their first freshness and beauty. [23]

The more people think you have to do, the more trade they will bring you.
[26]

What forgetting will be in this context is not fully grasped. While we await the revision of thinking about bodily functioning in mourning, melancholy or trauma, it seems it is possible to say that these are coming to be seen as a matter of the "depth in time," of the present pulled to the future. Rather than being a carry over from the past, a memorializing of the past, trauma, melancholy and mourning are becoming recognized for their potential creativity out of affective excess: a dynamic opening of the body-as-organism to reorganization. [20]

crucial transformation that must be acknowledged when assessing "what counts" as scholarly activity in the academy. [24]

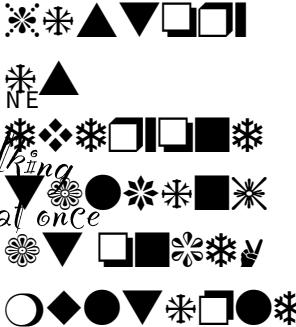
For even while I applaud the initiative of these initiatives (and I plan to support them with my voice and wallet, being a pluralist, after all), I also despair a little at the ways in which they are each, in their own way, also locked into institutional structures . . . what we need now is more (more papers, briefcases, Kindles, iPads, filing cabinets, shelves, teletype machines, Linux code, microchips, mimeographs, lithium batteries, candles, pens, javascripts, and so on) and not less of everything (we need print books as well as etexts, yellow legal pads as well as the mystic writing pads of our Evernote apps, baroquely lengthy multivolume works as well as broadsides and postit note scholarship, close and loving and even codependent editorial curatorship of others' work, and so on). We need to multiply and also invent new trade routes and modes of exchange for disseminating intellectual work—going for baroque, or broke—and we also need the courage (or foolishness) to depart to extraterritories not bathed in the harsh fluorescent lighting of the academy "proper." [25]

the wave *metaphor* **OBSCURES** *more than it*

history is everyone talking at once, multiple rhythms being played simultaneously. [27]

history *is* everyone talking
history talking at once,
multiple rhythms being played
simultaneously.

everyone HISTORY IS EVERYONE
TALKING AT ONCE talking
MULTIPLE RHYTHMS BEING PLAYED
SIMULTANEOUSLY. at once



In between the wild pulsation of her screams, I dream of stopping time and moving myself through space to another place where I am lured into existence by abstractions. I will come to find some ease in numbers, calculus algebra and geometry. [28]

Equations are the devil's sentences. [29]

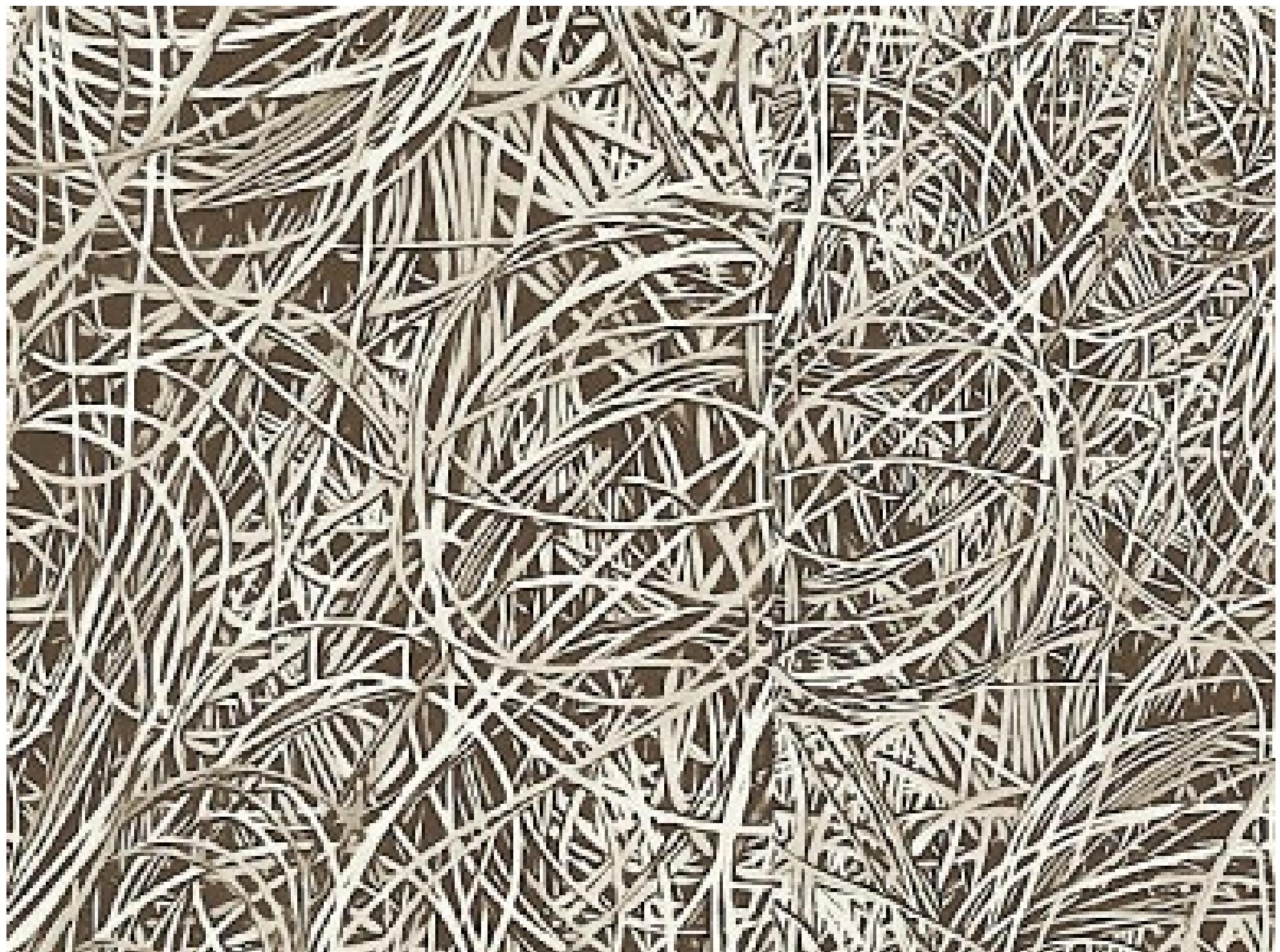
Make your calculation carefully . . . Never show an incomplete or half-finished order. [30]

what new media offered the field of rhetoric . . . vistas beyond the print artifact and beyond the orator's podium [31]

As new media poetry attempts to move from the margins to the mainstream, from "noise" to "music" its growing community of artists and critics—its participatory culture—represent and institutionalize this new work in time-honored ways. [32]

When one searches for the cause of individual failures it may usually be traced to ignorance of the business and its needs. [33]

All of these extra voices are part of a collaborative new media poem. [34]



[35, 36, 37]

it is expectedly uneventful
carries little information
the greater the noise or disorder
or entropy
the more improbable the occurrence
of an element in a code
the more information transmitted
information is best understood
not so much
in terms of meaning or
representation of reality
but in terms
of eventfulness
a noisy complexity which invites attention
to selectivity and to the chance
of mutation the truthiness is
anyone can read the news
to you I promise to feel
the news at you
in the echoing of the other's voice
one feels the sonorous cave
the resonating drum that one becomes
that one is
when sounding
speaking
singing

books,
light switches,
light bulbs,
floor and ceiling tiles,
clocks,
watches,
water bottles,
aluminum pop-top cans,
eye glasses,
clothing,
chalk,
pens,
paper,
handwriting,
etc.
[38]

it's time for a subter-fugitive, vagabond, gypsy parahumanities, especially at a time when so many of us are barely hanging on to the university by the skin of our teeth (or hands or minds). Let's "get lost" now, taking the humanities with us like so many suitcases, portable libraries, and sacks of contraband diamonds. [39]

You will be organized, you will be an organism, you will articulate your body—otherwise you're just depraved. You will be signifier and signified, interpreter and interpreted—otherwise you're just a deviant. You will be a subject, nailed down as one, a subject of the enunciation recoiled into a subject of the statement—otherwise you're just a tramp...*nomadism as the movement* (

*keep moving, even in place,
never stop moving,
motionless voyage,*

desubjectification). [40]

The challenge, then, is not only to elicit such emotions, but to sustain and interconnect them with the feelings of people in different institutions and other far-distant places, not only places in the margins of societies and cultures but also in the more centralized nodes of high performance sociotechnical systems. [41]

since they lack their own space, they]have to get along in a network of already established forces and representations. People have to make do with what they have. . . there is a certain art of placing one's blows, a pleasure in getting around the rules of a constraining space. [42]

Most designers have some special style of chapeau in which they excel; one is more happy in her bonnets than in hats; another gives us finer designs in large hats' another seems to evolve lines of most artistic beauty in the draping of toques, etc.; etc.; rarely does one find a designer who is equally excellent in every line of headwear, and it is well that it is so. But though one may have a prolific brain, when it comes down to sifted facts we all imbibe ideas—maybe unconsciously—from old or modern paintings and drawings, and a hundred and one various inspiring visions. [43]

THE IDEA OF A WRITER: SOMEONE INTERESTED IN EVERYTHING. [44]

IN THE EXPERT, COMPETENCE IS TRANSMUTED INTO SOCIAL AUTHORITY;
IN THE PHILOSOPHER, ORDINARY QUESTIONS BECOME A SKEPTICAL PRINCIPLE IN A TECHNICAL FIELD. [45]

Not to find one's way in a city may well be uninteresting and banal. It requires ignorance—nothing more. But to lose oneself in a city—as one loses oneself in a forest—that calls for quite a different schooling. Then, signboards and street names, passers-by, roofs, kiosks, or bars must speak to the wanderer like a cracking twig under his feet in the forest, like the startling call of a bittern in the distance, like the sudden stillness of a clearing with a lily standing erect at its center. Paris taught me this art of straying. [46]

Each map creates a different line of flight, a different form of security, and a different pocket of resistance. [47]

The crowd is his element, as the air is that of birds and water of fishes. His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd. . . To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world - impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define. [48]

Thus Charlie Chaplin multiplies the possibilities of his cane: he does other things with the same thing and he goes beyond the limits that the determinants of the object set on its utilization. In the same way, the walker transforms each spatial signifier into something else. [49]

We all have the ability to change what we believe and how we act . . . True change must go beyond changing oneself. [50]

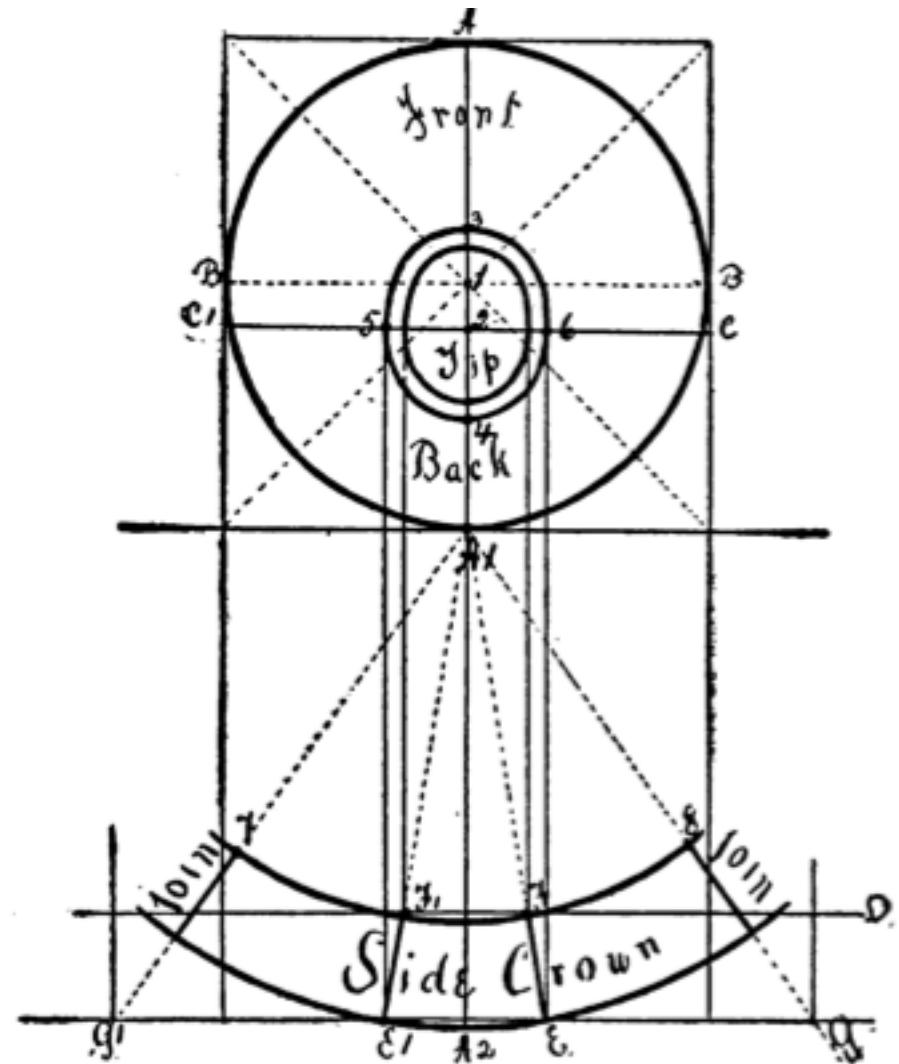
It is not enough to say “Long live the multiple”, difficult as it is to raise the cry. No typographical, lexical, or even syntactical cleverness is enough to make it heard. **The multiple must be made.** [51]



The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.

Similar to Bouvard and Pécuchet, those eternal copyists, at once sublime and comic and whose profound ridiculousness indicates precisely the truth of writing, the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings... [52]

remix the book, remix the music, remix the visuals. its time we take stock of where we are in the post reality – with the total pervasiveness of mechanisms for capturing and recapturing our every thought and idea – we have come to the ultimate fulfillment in the digital age of appropriation: remix the life. [53]



NOTES

[1] Anna Ben-Yūsuf. *The art of millinery: a complete series of practical lessons for the artiste and the amateur* (New York: Millinery Trade Pub. 1909), 5.

[2] Deleuze & Guattari, *Ten Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 4

[3] Ben-Yūsuf, 5.

[4] Patricia T. Clough, "The Affective Turn: Political Economy, Biomedia, and Bodies," *Theory Culture Society* 25, no. 1 (2008), 3.

[5] Jody Shipka, *Toward a Composition Made Whole* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 13.

[6] Ben-Yūsuf, 125.

[7] Randall Packer, "To Follow the Artist, You Must Take the Journey," Randall Packer Blog, September 24, 2010.

[8] Ben-Yūsuf, 237.

[9] Rebecca A. Adelman, "'Thank You for Our Flat Daddy': Photography, Imagination, and Citizenship as Child's Play," *Photography & Culture* 6, no. 1 (2013), 74.

[10] Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography and other writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 278.

[11] Craig Saper, email. March 5, 2013.

[12] Adelman, 66.

[13] Ben-Yūsuf, 92.

[14] Ricardo Dominguez, "Electronic Civil Disobedience: Inventing The Future Of Online Agitprop Theater," *PMLA* 124, no. 5 (2009): 1811.

[15] Walter Benjamin, *Understanding Brecht*, trans. Anna Bostock (London: Verso, 2003), 19.

[16] Randall Packer, "Tilda Swinton, Sleeping on the Job, Maybe," Randall Packer Blog, March 27, 2013.

[17] Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim, eds., *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2003), 3.

[18] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 476.

[19] Stephen Colbert, *The Colbert Report*, March 10, 2008

[20] Patricia T. Clough, "The Affective Turn: Political Economy, Biomedia, and Bodies," *Theory Culture Society* 25, no. 1 (2008), 28.

[21] Ben-Yūsuf, 62.

[22] McCann and Kim, 2.

[23] Ben-Yūsuf, 82.

[24] Helen J. Burgess and Jeanne Hamming, "New Media in the Academy: Labor and the Production of Knowledge in Scholarly Multimedia," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (2011).

[25] Eileen A. Joy, "Disturbing the Wednesday-ish Business-as-Usual of the University Studium: A Wayzgoose Manifest," *continent* 2, no. 4 (2013), 262-3.

[26] Ben-Yūsuf, 231.

[27] McCann and Kim, 11.

[28] Patricia T. Clough, "My Mother's Scream," in Marie Thompson and Ian D. Biddle, eds., *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 9.

[29] Stephen Colbert, *The Colbert Report*, February 7, 2006.

[30] Ben-Yūsuf, 231.

[31] Dene Grigar, "Why Curating? A Curatorial Statement about Electronic Literature and Works on Desktop," *rhizomes* 24 (2012).

[32] Thomas Swiss and Helen Burgess, "Collaborative New Media Poetry," in *The Participatory Cultures Handbook*, eds. Aaron Alan Delwiche and Jennifer Jacobs Henderson (New York: Routledge, 2013), 74.

[33] Ben-Yūsuf, 226.

[34] Swiss and Burgess, 74.

[35] Clough, "The Affective Turn," 18.

[36] Stephen Colbert, *The Colbert Report*, October 17, 2005.

[37] Clough, "My Mother's Scream," 2.

[38] Shipka, 20.

[39] Joy, 263.

[40] Deleuze and Guattari, 159.

[41] Jon McKenzie, "Global Feeling: (Almost) all you need is love," in *Performance Design*, eds. Dorita Hannah and Olav Harsløf (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2008), 141.

[42] Michel De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 18.

[43] Ben-Yūsuf, 236.

[44] Sontag, *Against Interpretation*, 307.

[45] De Certeau, 6-7.

[46] Walter Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Shocken, 2007), 8-9.

[47] Jill Lane and Ricardo Dominguez, "Digital Zapatistas" *Tdr* 2 (2003): 129.

[48] Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life*, trans. Jonathan Mayne (New York: Da Capo Press, 1964), 9.

[49] De Certeau, 98.

[50] Fred L. Pincus, *Understanding Diversity: An Introduction to Class, Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006), 148.

[51] Deleuze Deleuze and Guattari, 6.

[52] Roland Barthes, *Image—Music—Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 146.

[53] Randall Packer, "Remixing the Life," Randall Packer Blog, October 3, 2011.

Acknowledgments

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NOTES