Screen/Writing: Time & Cinematics in an Age of Rhetorical Memory

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Abstract

This essay argues that part of memory is external to ourselves. This memory, which began with writing but has since grown to encompass digital media, the internet, and other forms of new media, faces a two-fold problem in the information age. The first is privatization, which is represented by copyright, and has heretofore received a greater share of scholarly attention. Regulation is represented through the concept of protocols, which are the rules digital media execute in order to perform functions. Protocols are a regulation of external memory, which I argue also represents a threat to deliberation, the form of rhetoric that deals with the future. In order to contend with such controls, we must look to the possibility of the unexpected, which unfolds along the thought of Gilles Deleuze, and in what are known as aleatory methods.
Dedication

The question of this project is, “How might one live?” No one has taught me to ask this question better than Liz, to whom this project is affectionately dedicated.
Acknowledgements

First of all, I wish to acknowledge Cynthia Haynes, my dissertation chair, for her patience and generosity and assiduous work as my chair. This project does not happen with her help. Also to the other members of my committee, Victor Vitanza, Todd May, and Christina Hung, each of whose signature on this essay is, I hope, obvious. I wish to acknowledge other professors from the Rhetorics, Communication and Information Design (RCID) doctoral program at Clemson who have been so influential on my life and research: Art Young, Steve Katz, Andrea Feeser, Jan Rune Holmevik, Summer Taylor-Smith, and Sean Williams. I also wish to acknowledge my colleagues in the RCID program who came before, including Amanda Booher and Justin Hodgson, for their valuable insight and advice. Also, to colleagues who are behind me: Sergio Figureido, Joshua Abboud, Randy Nichols, Alicia Hatter, Josephine Walwema, Jimmy Butts, Anthony Collamati, Nicole McFarlane, Wu Dan, and others. To my friend and greatest collaborator, Jason Helms, I give my sincerest thanks for his insight, kindness, and friendship. Lastly, I wish to thank my parents, Peter and Gayelyn, as well as my brothers and sister (Brandon, Christy, Matthew, Geoffrey, and Tim) for their enduring support. Also, I thank my wife’s parents, Mark and Theresa, and her siblings (Nathan, Tyler and Marcus) for their support and friendship.
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Prolegomenon: A Conceptual Starting Place

The entry point for this essay will be the rhizome, which, in this context, refers of course to the famous non-hierarchical model of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari who theorized the rhizome as a structure for countering the tree diagram. The arboreal diagram presents a top-down model, a hierarchical model of power in which appeals must be made to the top. Beginnings and endings, stops and starts, are all made abundantly clear. The rhizome, exemplified by different forms of life, such as the kudzu vine, has no beginning, no end, just a series of middles. Deleuze and Guattari pose this model in the spirit of urging us to form new connections, to refuse to start at the beginning and cease at the end, but rather to find new ways into a matter from any and all points. In precisely such a manner, I have elected not to start this project with a beginning, but rather offer each of three reasons as an impetus, a way into my project. Any one of these middles will work just as well as the other because each describes equally well what I am trying to do in this study. These motivations are quite interrelated and interwoven. However, they are each a separate issue that provides motivation for the entire project. My hope is that the reader will see each as they thread throughout the entire work. I will discuss each of these motivations in turn, and they will then deposit us at the doorstep of chapter one, where I will begin to delineate the problem of memory.

The problem of memory, as I articulate it, is a fundamental problem to rhetoric/composition in the digital age. Memory is an oft-neglected rhetorical canon, and for the most part, we tend to conceptualize memory along ancient lines: as a means for memorizing speeches through mnemonics, markers, etc. However, if I am correct, then there is much more to memory than what we hold in our head, but also what is external to
us in the form of writing. Moreover, that digital media represents an ever newer form of
external memory. But through various operations, but external and internal to the
technology itself, we are discouraged from making this memory into a resource for
rhetorical invention. Additionally, rhetoric/composition has inadequately conceptualized
digital media as memory itself. Films, television shows, websites, music, and much more
are all forms of external memory: memory we hold outside of ourselves. This is not a
new conception, but is at least as old as the author of the Ad Herennium. We have no
shortage of textbooks and pedagogical theories that demonstrate how to write about this
external memory, but are much shorter on theory that explores composition that works
with and through this external memory. I will show how, through operations of
technology and copyright law, memory is both regulated and privatized, both of which
are devastating opponents of deliberation. It would seem a nefariously perverse
formulation were I to tell you that you are not allowed to use your own memory to write
and to think, or that you had to pay me whenever your memory intersected with mine.
Worse still, I might tell you under what conditions your memory could be useful to you,
how it is allowed to unfold, and to regulate your intentions. Yet these are precisely the
conditions in which we find ourselves. While rhetoric/composition has looked at the
vicissitudes of copyright law, it has looked less to the forms of social control that arise in
the digital age. These two properties are interrelated, they demand our attention, and we
must begin to think through them, as rhetoricians, to help spur invention in the digital
age. This project is about memory—memory as a resource for invention. It
conceptualizes external memory, and asks what we need in order to be inventive,
deliberative beings in an age of ubiquitous computing.
The first question is always where to begin. There are at least three related issues that provide ways in to this project. The first way is to say that this project is a deliberative rhetoric for a digital age. No doubt all rhetoric is susceptible to technology. However, in an age of digital media, the question of how one deliberates becomes increasingly important because, as we shall see, digital media (in certain respects) do not encourage active deliberation on the part of its users. The second motivation for my project is a desire to update the concept of electracy to account for protocol. Electracy is Gregory Ulmer’s concept, while protocol Alexander Galloway’s; these two concepts need to be thought in light of one another. The third way in is a composition based on logics of the screen. Gunther Kress has suggested that the screen will dictate what writing looks like in the next century, but we must work out what that will be—what such a writing might look like.

**Deliberation in the Digital Age**

Descriptive terms for the role of media in our age vary widely: ubiquitous computing, the digital age, the information age, and even “secondary orality,” Walter Ong’s phrase. Certainly each of these ideas conveys that some kind of change (or kinds of changes) are afoot in the ways that we communicate, brought to bear by the advent of electronic media. These media have set in motion an age where print is less and less a dominant mode of discourse, as Gunther Kress notes: “Until the last two or three decades, the page—usually as a part of the medium of the book—was the dominant site of appearance of text” (*Literacy in the New Media Age* 48). Visual discourses, electronic discourses, and hybrids of the visual and the verbal are increasingly the dominant forms of communication (face to face talking notwithstanding, of course, but it’s early yet).
Rhetoric, and specific to my purposes here, deliberative rhetoric, is fundamentally transformed by these changes in technologies of communication. It is frequently changed by what technologies are available. Deliberative rhetoric is, of Aristotle’s three categories of rhetoric, the most dependent upon its dissemination to a broad audience. Certainly in this respect we might claim it as the most responsive to, the most affected by, available technology. Deliberative rhetoric denotes, quite simply, the form of persuasion that attempts to convince a group of people about the best course of action. Hence, deliberation likely finds itself very technology-dependent since technology can help to extend that rhetoric beyond the mouth of a principal speaker and the earshot of a group of listeners. Such a tendency is almost certainly exemplified in the relationship between deliberative democracy and the printed word.

Discussions of print and its effects have varied somewhat widely. Walter Ong and Marshall McLuhan are among the most prominent theorists claiming that print is, as a technology, hierarchical, fixed and aristocratic. However, if this is the case, then print is surely paradoxical because print and literacy—as Jürgen Habermas, in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* has noted—helped to spur democratic reforms of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. If the goal of democracy is participation, then the model for securing participation is an articulate and well-informed citizenry. Print, as a technological apparatus, enabled precisely such an informed citizenry through dissemination of reading and writing on a unprecedented scale. By gaining and understanding print, one gains literacy with the hope that through literacy, one might deliberate. Lee Morrissey, in *The Constitution of Literature*, discusses the rise of modern democracy in the 17th and 18th centuries through debate and discussion. Habermas, one of
Morrissey’s primary interlocutors, suggests that gradually, since the medieval era, a “public sphere” arises in Europe, which in turn helps to bring about what we understand today as modern or deliberative democracy. In other words, with the ability of more people to take part in discussion through journals and newsletters, a public sphere is thus able to arise. Because of this public forum, democratic reforms can also begin to take shape. Morrissey avers “Habermas is right to remind us that the development of literary criticism participates in a formative debate in political philosophy over the shape of modern democracy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries” (6). In such a historical narrative, the expansion of conversations, made possible through the technological apparatus of print, helps lead to democratic progress.

Since more citizens are, with the advent of print, able to argue their way to deliberation and to discuss the course of the future, deliberative democracy can foment. Morrissey also grants that criticism played a role in this formation. However, Morrissey, with Slavoj Žižek, contends that the discussion of democracy in the 18th century is more complex than the steady rise of the public sphere of Habermas. Habermas views the rise of democracy as progressive from the Middle Ages. Morrissey, along with Žižek, insists “democracy is the problem that political philosophy sets out to solve, repeatedly” (20). Hence, rather than a neat, progressive rise, we see an antagonistic debate, an unstable conflict, through which people seek admission to the debate. The debate regarding democracy includes not only admission to debate over a particular state of affairs, but argument over the structure of the debate: Morrissey writes that we don’t see “a single, particular type of political arrangement coalescing over the period. Rather we see a contest over what form political arrangements should take” (22). Such contestation over
the form of political arrangement is deliberative rhetoric precisely. Deliberation, as one of Aristotle’s three categories of rhetoric, is argument about the future: what will we do and why. Generally speaking, the fewer individuals that deliberate over a matter, the more oligarchic the situation. But just as important is inclusion in the structure of the debate. As Morrissey notes, “Reading will be most democratized when the most readers have the most access to the processes of the multiple levels of signification, especially the active processes of construing, constructing, and even constituting meaning” (193). If we substitute writing for Morrissey’s reading, then we have the impetus for a project on deliberative rhetoric—assisting the greatest number of writers to gain access to various levels in which one might signify. These multiple levels include various media, but also I take Morrissey to refer to the structures that might organize and administer discussion. These levels of structure must be sought as well. However, as we will see, access to the structure of discussion in the digital age does not mean what it once meant.

Friedrich Kittler has written extensively about the issue of structure where programming language, specifically code, is concerned. In simplest terms, code is the language of computers. Code dictates how and what computers run. In this sense, the language of programming is a crucial issue for any deliberative rhetoric of the digital era because if deliberation means access to the structure of the debate, then code is integrally related to that very structure, and because of the centrality of digital computing to contemporary forms of rhetoric. To write on screen, Kittler says, is entirely different than writing with pen and paper. Moreover, he claims that the act of writing on a screen fundamentally changes the very materiality of writing:
The bulk of written texts—including the paper I am actually reading to you—no longer exist in perceivable time and space, but in a computer memory’s transistor cells. And since these cells, in the last three decades of Silicon Valley’s exploits, have shrunk to spatial extensions of less than one micrometer, our writing scene may well be defined by a self-similarity of letters over some six orders of decimal magnitude. (147)

Where print and writing produced texts in time and space—material texts—the text of digital writing remains in a state of electron flow. A state, Kittler claims, that “seems to hide the very act of writing” (147), and does so by denying users access to what is happening underneath the interface.

Jay David Bolter and Diane Gromala, in *Windows and Mirrors*, distinguish two philosophies of the interface: what they calls “looking at” versus “looking through,” concepts taken up previously by Richard Lanham in *The Electronic Word*. Looking at indicates an interface that the user notices, and of which she takes account. Looking through would indicate an interface that is effectively invisible, that the user does not notice or at least ignores. In information design discourse, these have been the traditional metaphors by which interfaces have been conceived. However, Kittler notes that “…on an intentionally superficial level, perfect graphic user interfaces, since they dispense with writing itself, hide a whole machine from its users” (*Literature, Media, Information Systems* 151). The interfaces described by Kittler describe both of the kinds of interfaces Bolter and Gromala discuss. Whether looking at or through, a user only sees part of what is happening, for Kittler a relatively superficial part of the action. Kittler rightly claims that these both miss the point: “[T]hrough the use of keywords like user-interface, user-
friendliness or even data protection, the industry has damned humanity to remain human” (157). Users miss the operations of the actual machine that function underneath—the execution of codes and programming language. The increasing user-friendliness of software becomes what Kittler calls a one-way function. Whereas Morrissey claimed reading was an active process of constructing meaning (a two-way function), digital media effectively run on their own, and increasingly so (a phenomenon contributing to ubiquitous computing). Kittler notes this autonomy in “the fact that one can no longer examine the operands of many of the operations. The sum hides the addends, the product the factors, and so forth” (158). The act of hiding protects the operating system from users by denying users access to the very structure of the machine’s programming. In other words, users can’t do any real harm to the computer’s program. In so doing, programmers seek effectively to protect users from themselves.

Kittler argues further: “Programming languages have eroded the monopoly of ordinary language and grown into a new hierarchy of their own” (148). Ordinary language is a result of both the homogenizing and democratizing tendencies of print. There is an ordinary language because there is print. Ordinary language—a language a larger population (specifically a non-specialized population) can understand—is the language of civic deliberation—a deliberative democracy. On a computer, however, “We simply do not know what our writing does” (Literature, Media, Information Systems 148). The program, WordPerfect, runs a series of code of which the user remains unaware. Kittler describes the code as a kind of perfect speech act: “WP does what it says. Executable computer files encompass, by contrast not only to WordPerfect but also to big but empty Old European words such as the Mind or the Word, all the routines and
data necessary to their self-constitution” (149). Hence the needed change in deliberative rhetoric is one that recognizes where the structure of the debate takes place—at the level of code. Furthermore, because digital and new media are media that exist at the level of code, Lev Manovich can assert that “graphics, moving images, sounds, shapes, spaces and text which become computable, i.e. simply another set of computer data” (*Language* 44). Code is what constitutes new media.

Kittler has gone on to suggest that we should do discourse analysis at the level of code. As opposed to looking at or looking through (or a window/mirror) this would be what we might call “looking under.” Deliberation is participation, but if we have no access to the code, then how can we participate in the structure of debate? As a theorist of rhetoric/composition, this poses an interesting challenge. Can we and should we teach code as a form of composition? If deliberative rhetoric involves coding, it seems difficult to argue that code should not be part of a rhetorical education. The issue of code as a hidden form of language is one that rhetoric/composition must attend to, but it has yet to do so adequately. While I am open to the possibility that we might conceive of code as part of the rhetorical situation, my goal in this study is to offer rhetorics that can exist within code (as writing and as images) while still being deliberative in the sense that Morrissey and Žižek see the term.

**Orality, Literacy, Electracy**

Marshall McLuhan calls language an extension of man, as he does all other media. By this he means that language does for the intelligence what the wheel does for the feet—it extends their capacity. Language is an extension of one’s intelligence. Plato’s *Phaedrus* exemplifies McLuhan’s theory through two memorable characters, Socrates
and Phaedrus, who engage in a dialectic regarding speechmaking. As the dialogue moves forward, Socrates counters the initial speech that Phaedrus reads with a succession of ever more impressive orations. In the final pages, Socrates’ final address tells the young Phaedrus a story about the invention of writing. Theuth, a mythical Egyptian figure who was responsible for all kinds of inventions given to man, tells the Egyptian King Thamus that he has invented a potion for memory and proceeds to show him writing. Writing, Theuth claims, will solve problems of memory by externalizing it in a concrete manner. In a passage famously analyzed by Derrida, the king counters Theuth, telling him that he has not invented a potion for memory, but a poison. This new technology will cause people to lose their natural memory. If the people move to artificial memory, they will abandon internal memory for what can be simply written down. Thamus tells him, you have not created a potion for remembering, but for reminding.

The difference here is, for Plato, crucial. To remember, for Socrates, is to have something in one’s own head. Reminding requires information to be held elsewhere, available for retrieval when needed, if not held in memory. With the invention of writing, a means for storing memory was created. In one sense, Thamus is absolutely correct when he claims writing poisons memory. *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* were both traditionally orally recited poems, the creation of poets who wandered the country, relating the tales. These poets held such massive creations in memory by drawing on a set of phrases, which could be relatively easily combined in the meter of the poem: dactylic hexameter. Through this technique, they extended intelligence by extending memory. With the invention of writing—an artificial memory—it was no longer necessary to work out complex mnemonics in order to remember these poems: one needed only to write
them down and the problem of “remembering” complex poetry was solved. Writing extended the capabilities of memory, while at the same time it ended the specific kind of memory unique to an oral society.iii

Plato, of course, claims to advocate for orality, and against writing. After all, the end of the *Phaedrus* is an attack on writing as so much “brain candy.” Plato claims that writing is, more or less, something to be avoided. At the very least, those who don’t know how to use it properly should avoid it. Placing it in the hands of the masses will make them believe they have knowledge of something, when they actually have none. McLuhan suggests that the ancient Greeks understood the inherent power of this written technology, exemplified in the Cadmus myth, where letters are symbolized as having come from dragon’s teeth: “Teeth are emphatically visual in their lineal order. Letters are not only like teeth visually, but their power to put teeth into the business of empire-building is manifest in our Western history” (*Understanding Media* 86). Writing allows for analytic reason, for extensions of intelligence. Writing is *a priori* necessary in order to develop technology and science. In this sense, then, writing is the most powerful of all weapons, a fact of which the Greeks were well aware.

Despite Plato’s objections to writing, scholars have noted that Plato’s philosophy does not support orality in the slightest. Eric Havelock suggests in both *Preface to Plato* and *The Muse Learns to Write* that Plato, whether he was aware of it or not, rejects and replaces oral culture through his rejection of the poets, his teaching of abstract reason, and his corpus of work, which is written. In his *Republic*, Plato goes so far as to ban all poets from his ideal city. Havelock notes that Plato disliked the didactic and authoritative function of the poets (*The Muse* 8). Plato’s emphasis on *episteme*, or unchanging
knowledge, is precisely the kind of knowledge only available with writing. Walter Ong reminds us: “In fact...Plato’s entire epistemology was unwittingly a programmed rejection of the old oral, mobile, warm, personally interactive lifeworld of oral culture” (Orality and Literacy 80). When events can be written down, recorded in a relatively unchanging fashion, then that knowledge is available for the kind of scrutiny Plato seeks. In other words, conditions are created for the development of analytic reasoning. Technology and science of the kind taken for granted is only possible on the basis of writing. Ong writes: “This Greek achievement in abstractly analyzing the elusive world of sound into visual equivalents (not perfectly, of course, but in effect fully) both presaged and implemented their further analytic exploits” (Orality and Literacy 90). Also, as the above quote from McLuhan notes, writing allows for extension, for abstract thought that is generally not part of a primarily oral culture. For instance, Ong records a story about the Tiv people of Nigeria, a primarily oral culture:

In recent years among the Tiv people of Nigeria the genealogies actually used orally in settling court disputes have been found to diverge considerably from the genealogies carefully recorded in writing by the British forty years earlier...The later Tiv have maintained that they were suing the same genealogies as forty years earlier and that the earlier written record was wrong. What had happened was that the later genealogies had been adjusted to the changed social relations among the Tiv: they were the same in that they functioned in the same way to regulate the real world. The integrity of the past was subordinate to the integrity of the present. (Orality and Literacy 48)
In a primarily oral culture, accurate representations are sacrificed in favor of useful ones. If the genealogies are changed, then the group is fine with that. What is important is keeping present relations intact. We often cannot imagine the level of abstraction introduced by writing and eventually by print. Its effects are far reaching. The extension of intelligence through writing is an extension of memory.

Dennis Baron reminds us in “From Pencils to Pixels,” as does McLuhan in *Understanding Media*, that writing is a technology. Ong would further have us remember that writing is a technology distinct from print. With the invention of print, the capacity for external memory extends once again as it did with the advent of writing. The amount of information available to the average individual increases dramatically. Greg Ulmer conceptualizes this external memory, now recorded in print texts, as a prosthetic: “The technology of print and all its apparatus—the archive of libraries, journalism, the entire great machine of information storage and retrieval—is a prosthesis for the living mind of the student” (*Heuretics* 211). Ong claims two exemplars of this prosthesis are the catechism and textbook. The author most associated with the latter, according to Ong, is Peter Ramus, whose role in educational history is famous. His educational method laid many of the foundations for modern education by rendering education calculable and spatial—both legacies of typography for Ong.

While print was an instrument that helped usher in an era of democracy, it contained within itself, according to McLuhan and Ong, an anti-democratic tendency. Because of the repeatability of print, typography has the ability to homogenize. McLuhan writes that print “involves a principle of extension by homogenization that is the key to understanding Western power” (*Understanding Media* 159). The iterability of print
means that educators can formulate a standard of taste that will be unchanging—specifically a canon of literature. Sharon Crowley reminds us, in *Composition in the University*, that in the 19th century the study of rhetoric is replaced with the cultivation of taste—a homogeneous concept that can only be so because of the repeatability of the texts. When a text is reproducible on the level of print, everyone can be on the same page, so to speak. Crowley writes, “[N]ineteenth-century rhetoric teachers began the business of developing taste in their students. The shift in the focus of rhetorical education—away from civic virtue and toward the bourgeois project of self-improvement—coincided with the demise of rhetoric as a field of study” (34). While print expanded deliberation through increased access to writing and reading, it leads to a fixed conception of literature, and greater homogenization through its own repeatability. Because it can be diffused to a wider audience, universal canons and rules can develop. McLuhan alleges that an aspect of print culture emphasizes “‘correct’ spelling, syntax and pronunciation” (*Understanding Media* 159). Ignorance of those “accepted” canons and rules comes to be regarded as a lack of proper taste. Education no longer seeks to create a civically minded citizen capable of engaging in deliberative discourse, but a man of taste, civilized and discriminating.

Cultivation of taste also negatively affects the teaching of deliberative rhetoric. Again, as Crowley asserts, for many literary theorists of the 19th century “rhetoric intruded into the intimate relation that ought to obtain between a literary text and its reader” (83). The emphasis on the teaching of literature immediately precipitates the downfall of the teaching of rhetoric. Rhetoric is understood as a study for children, unworthy of the pursuits of distinguished literary professionals. The goal of literary study
is nothing less than the production of genteel subjects: “The object of literary study had become the student himself, or rather, his ability to improve himself” (Crowley 82). So then, print and literacy have a sort of paradoxical relationship with democracy. While the spread of literacy enabled democratic reforms of the 18th century, in the 19th, the formation of canons and the cultivation of taste, also enabled through literacy and print, disable the abilities of individuals to be a part of the deliberative process. Johndan Johnson-Eilola and Brenton Faber report a similar situation in the professional fields as well. The struggle throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries to reclaim and renew the study of rhetoric is likely a familiar one. What is important to ask, at this point, is whether this sense of hierarchy, this aristocratic tendency is an inherent attribute of print. For that, we must look at the shifts from orality to literacy to electracy.

All media, as Marshall McLuhan once stated, work us over entirely. That is to say, changes in media involve changes in (for want of a better word) everything. We can see such changes in the shift from a primarily oral culture, where writing is scarce or non-existent, to a written culture, to a culture of print, and finally to a digital culture.

Lee Morrissey flatly rejects the readings from McLuhan and Ong that suggest absolute fixity and hierarchy on the part of print, however. Current discussions, he says, “caricature…the book as fixed, stable, and antidemocratic” (194). The heritage of print delineated by Ong and McLuhan tend to portray not print itself, but 18th century views on print. Descriptions of the book as fixed and unchanging, Morrissey says, “would have stunned seventeenth-century readers, not to mention Swift or Sterne and so many others in the eighteenth” (194). The sense of stable print, Morrissey says, is attributable to the development of 18th century criticism, among other factors. In point of fact, the supposed
“stability that the eighteenth century critics tried to bring to print through their debates over theories of reading was in response to what they often saw as the politically destabilizing effects of the technology of print itself” (195). While I am somewhat favorable to the analyses of Ong and McLuhan, I must also concede Morrissey’s point on this issue. Far too many theorists of hypertext have been too eager to lavish praise on digital media’s supposed democratizing tendencies, or increased capacity for invention, while condemning the book as fixed and aristocratic. While the book may have the potential for commodification, the development of print radically destabilized European culture in the 17th and 18th centuries, leading to major democratic reforms. This is a fact of which theorists of digital media must not lose sight. The importance of restraint with regard to the potentials of digital media and the Internet will become abundantly clear in the first chapter, when I discuss the work of Alexander Galloway.

In order to gain an informed understanding of composition in the digital age, we must not be uncritical in embracing or dismissing technology, but rather engage it with a critical eye, looking for what technology alters. While one of Deleuze’s later essays, the “Postscript on Control Societies,” was an only too brief hypothesis suggesting the ways in which societies change after electronic media, the digital age represents a break from the modern disciplinary society so artfully examined by Foucault. It represents a transformative move towards a new form of civilization and decentralized control. The pivotal theorist for such a conception of decentralization is Alexander Galloway and his work on protocol, articulated in chapter one. By beginning with the concepts of Galloway and Deleuze, I mean to avoid overly optimistic claims about the democracy inherent to networks. However, following Ulmer, there is little question that digital media trigger a
shift in the ways we use language. A shift, which, for Ulmer, is a substantial enough break to merit a new term: electracy. Ulmer’s formulations also manage to avoid both extremes that Baron articulates: “Pessimistic complaints about new literacy technologies, like those made by Plato…are balanced by inflated predictions of how technologies will change our lives for the better” (18). True to form, the digital revolution initially brought a flood of theorists insisting that the Internet is democracy incarnate, each suggesting that the internet age will lead to unparalleled freedom. Although this rhetoric has tempered somewhat in more recent years, optimism regarding the internet’s free market and democratic tendencies is not in short supply. Ulmer is excited about the possibilities of media, but also tempered by an understanding of its pitfalls. The second middle of this project involves the extension of memory and Ulmer’s concept of electracy. Specifically, I follow Greg Ulmer’s concept of electracy, and add a Deleuzian twist to it: control through protocol. By turning Ulmer’s work more closely towards Deleuze, what I am ultimately trying to accomplish is a shift towards accounting for the forms of control native to digital media, in which Ulmer has been less interested. However, the time has come, I think, to account for this notion of control in digital media, specifically as it relates to composition. Protocol is the administrative function native to electracy.

The three basic phases discussed in this second middle are orality, literacy, and electracy. Each phase has brought with it those who decried it and those who praised it. I mean neither to be overly optimistic nor pessimistic. I accept, however, that computers are not going anywhere, and moreover that we need practices for living with them, understanding them, and using them. We must neither uncritically dismiss technology as stupefying, nor uncritically embrace it as the future of democracy. We must attend to the
technology itself, and develop practices for working within that technology. Ulmer has helped to theorize such practices, while Galloway has helped articulate the dangers inherent in those practices. My study will help to weave and thread the two together. The second way in to this project is to update Ulmer’s concepts—teletheory and heuretics—to account for protocol.

As an instructor of rhetoric—and especially of digital deliberative rhetoric—I recognize the technology of print has had a tremendous impact on deliberation and one’s ability to do so. However, technology has clearly not been at a standstill in the last century. Technology greatly affected deliberative rhetoric with the rise of print, and does so still with the rise of digital media. However, the work of various researchers calls into question the use of simple print and literacy models as adequate to learning deliberative rhetoric in the digital age. Carolyn Miller and Dawn Shepherd’s article “Blogging as Social Action: A Genre Analysis of the Weblog,” says the blog calls into question various generic models applicable to literate discourse. The New London Group, in “A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies,” attests to the changing dimensions of citizenship in the digital age: “The domain of citizenship, and the power and importance of public spaces, is diminishing” (“Pedagogy”). The changing nature of civic space necessitates a change in the way we talk about deliberative rhetoric. It means, they argue, teaching more than simple discourse, it means understanding the ways in which discourse can change, and teaching recourse to more than just linguistic representation. In short, the New London Group claims that the purpose of education is “to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community, and economic life” (“Pedagogy”). Participation, if it is to be a full and not merely superficial
participation, means something different in an age of ubiquitous computing than it did in the 18th century.

**Logic(s) of the Screen**

Gunther Kress tells us in *Literacy in the New Media Age*, that in the future, “Writing will be subordinated to the logic of the screen, to the spatial logic of the image. Writing will inevitably become more image-like, and will be shaped by that logic. It then remains to understand what it will mean for writing to become image-like” (48). My project works in the wake of Kress’s formulation that writing will become increasingly image-like, following logics of the screen and the image rather than logic of the page. My goal is to formulate a manner in which writing might become image like. I pursue this goal by following cinematic studies and its application to new media. Lev Manovich extends Kress’s claim when he writes, “The printed word tradition that initially dominated the language of cultural interfaces is becoming less important, while the part played by cinematic elements is becoming progressively stronger” (78). In Manovich’s formulation, the logic of the screen is explicitly a cinematic one, which he elaborates further as a “general trend in modern society toward presenting more and more information in the form of time-based audiovisual moving image sequences” (78). Manovich’s conception provides a useful introduction to the concept of cinematics.

I define cinematics, quite simply, as a study of screens, and hence ideal for this project since our goal is to see what those logics of screens might be. The term I use comes from the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California. I have come to understand this term as one encompassing all screens, whether of television, film, computer, or video game. In this sense, it’s a separate term from film studies, which
has traditionally been dominated by semiotic discourse and Lacanian psychoanalysis, as well as ekphrasis—the relation of a visual work of art into words that describe it. I am not doing film studies, nor offering another way of writing about films in the traditional composition classroom. Works abound that discuss the use of film in the composition classroom, and that attempt to help students hone analytical skills. Given my stance on the changes afoot in digital media, this would not be a particularly helpful project.

The rhetoric that my study aims at producing is one that emerges from Deleuze and Galloway, and their conceptions of new media and network culture, but triangulates with Gregory Ulmer, and that understands digital media as a means of producing deliberative discourse. However, much as writing and language shifted in the age of print, it does so again in the digital age. Ulmer’s article, “The Object of Post-Criticism,” provides the model of this new rhetoric. The post-critical object, according to Ulmer, “is constituted precisely by the application of the devices of modernist art to critical representations” (83). Through the techniques of collage and montage, Ulmer illustrates how art can affect writing at the level of language itself. In other words, most of what we think of as criticism of the visual arts in the composition classroom has been a hermeneutic activity involving ekphrasis, the interpretation of visual images as a written discourse. The post-critical object allows the techniques of the particular form to affect/effect our language. As Ulmer says (following Roland Barthes): “The relation of the critical text to its object of study was to be conceived in terms no longer of subject-object but of subject-predicate” (“The Object” 86). In other words, with due respect to McLuhan, the medium is the method. This rhetoric, then, will be one that takes electronic media as a means of establishing such a subject-predicate relationship. My project works
out of the post-critical object of Greg Ulmer, as well as Deleuze’s ideas on the cinema: allowing Deleuze’s cinematics to become a model for using images, but also to affect writing at the level of language. This is, of course, an unusual operation, as it should be. Jacques Derrida once remarked, “What [the pedagogical] institution cannot bear, is for anyone to tamper with language” (“Living On/ Borderlines” 94) since that would be tampering with the very form in which that institution exists. Furthermore, the institution “can bear more readily the most apparently revolutionary ideological sorts of ‘content,’ if only that content does not touch the borders of language and of all the juridico-political contracts that it guarantees” (94-5). Here Derrida illuminates the relationship between pedagogy and language—pedagogy fixes the possible grounds that language can take: “say what you want, just say it in our language.” In a digital age, the post-critical object is, in my view, a means that deliberation can take. Mash-ups, collages, and reworkings of various media go much deeper than any simple sense of play, or wasting time. They take on a critical function. They can work against the constraints of language.

Deleuze’s cinematic philosophy works well with Ulmer’s post critical object. Deleuze claims that, “[c]inema itself is a new practices of images and signs, whose theory philosophy must produce as a conceptual practice” (Cinema 2 30). In order to understand Deleuze’s work on cinema, however, it will be necessary to discuss Deleuze’s other works of philosophy, out of which his cinematic study grows. The two books, Cinema I and II, according to Gregory Flaxman, should be understood in light of Deleuze’s notions about what philosophy is, “the process of constructing, creating, and inventing concepts” (3), which is precisely where my own project fits. I seek to create and invent concepts for rhetoric and composition, specifically in the multimodal dimension. Art, for Deleuze,
moves by means of percepts and affects; philosophy, by engaging art moves by means of concepts and effects. Rhetoric, I would say, moves by means of topoi and both effects and affects. By engaging with Deleuze’s philosophy, we can reinvent the topos, deploying it in new ways, and learn “to see, to feel, to sense, and finally to think differently” (Flaxman 3).

My study will use Deleuze’s work (as well has some of his crucial texts, traditionally associated with film studies) as a cinematic text. Instead of applying them only to film, I will apply them to the various screens of new media, all of which operate on a kind of cinematic logic (according to Lev Manovich vii). I will also use them, in Ulmer’s terms, as heuristics, rather than hermeneutics: towards invention rather than interpretation only. The basis for such a project, again, originates with Deleuze, who, as his commentators have noted, does not seek to develop philosophy by viewing film, nor does he want to view films in order to talk about philosophy. Deleuze is after nothing less than a cinematic philosophy. My goal is to develop this philosophy as a rhetoric of cinematics, applicable to discourses of the screen. The end goal is a writing that has become image-like.

Conclusions Towards a Beginning

At the risk of oversimplifying, the digital situation I have here outlined presents us with two basic options: reject the digital as Luddites or somehow deal with it. A recent book, The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future (Or, Don’t Trust Anyone Under 30), by Mark Bauerlein, represents the former option. In it, Bauerlein protests virtually the whole of digital culture, and joins the chorus of similar screeds that claim the digital age detracts from
individuals’ intellectual capacity. The other option is to do something to work with and through technology: not to cordon it off, nor to render it harmless, nor put it in a corner, but to see what changes are afoot, and to see what we can do with them. Rhetoric/composition has, on the whole, done well in embracing technology, although, as I will show, too often its concerns are misplaced. What I offer here is a rhetoric of new media, or cinematics. If I do my job effectively, this will not be a project limited only to those who use computers in their classroom, but will be a rhetoric usable by all teachers of composition and rhetoric. As such, I work through all five rhetorical canons, with memory first, since it is the external memory of media that functions as a resource for invention.

This rhetoric is meant to engage protocol, or the means of control after decentralization, as well as privatization through copyright, on the way to a writing of screens and a digital deliberative rhetoric. It begins with a discussion of memory and its externalization. I will then move on to invention, seeking concepts for invention that can work from the regulation of memory. I move forward by working out of Deleuze’s work on expression and memory, in an attempt to formulate a theory of invention. Working towards Deleuze’s two volumes on the cinema I apply them to new media for a theory of cinematic arrangements. Arrangement, will deal with the logic of the cut, as Deleuze describes it. I situate this rhetoric in the methodologies of Greg Ulmer, especially as articulated in his two books, Teletheory and Heuretics: The Logic of Invention, to give a sense of style for this writing. Ulmer writes, “[E]veryday adult existence, organized by the demands of practicality, has suppressed all other modes of thought” (Heuretics 6). The kind of writing he advocates is one meant to recover other forms of thought. Style is
critical for my project, because as Tom Conley argues in his essay “From Multiplicities to Folds: On Form and Style in Deleuze,” Deleuze regarded style as that which “mobilizes a politics” (631). Style and form become a prime mover for a politics that regards the aleatory as a counter to the regulative aspects of media. Control is designed to close off possibility, to regulate what happens. The means of reopening closed possibilities lies in what Vitanza calls, “writing the accident,” in his essay of the same name. My work finds, in Ulmer’s methodologies, an aleatory style that opens, rather than closes, possibilities. Lastly, the final chapter is on delivery as pedagogy, where I will place my work within the context of post-pedagogy in the work of Lynn Worsham, Thomas Rickert, and Byron Hawk. I will use Todd May’s concept of poststructuralist anarchism and ethical commitment, which he calls “antirepresentationalism,” in order to formulate this pedagogy. My higher purpose is echoed by Todd May in his book on Deleuze, where he explains that the fundamental question of philosophy after Nietzsche, and the fundamental question of Deleuze’s career, was to ask, “How might one live?” My end goal is a rhetoric that helps us to explore how we might live, and how we might experiment, working out of our memory. To do so, we must explore the problem of memory, which takes us to chapter one.

Notes

1 I want to note the use of “can” rather than “does.” I’d prefer to view the rise of print as a necessary condition of the spread of democracy, but not necessarily a cause. To view it as causal is going to take us too far in the direction of a technological determinism I want to avoid. Technology is not value-neutral, but it also does not automatically take us in one direction or another. Liberty, as Foucault once noted, is a practice, and will not be ensured (or denied), ipso facto, by any technology.

2 Specifically in The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology, and the much shorter “A Leftist Plea for ‘Eurocentrism.’”

3 Derrida, of course, wholly rejects any distinction between natural and artificial memory. While one may agree or disagree with the distinction between natural and artificial, Walter Ong makes abundantly clear
that there is a distinction between memory in predominately oral cultures and predominately literate ones. The move from orality to literacy entails social, psychological, and epistemological shifts.

iv See “Universities, Corporate Universities, and the New Professionals” by Faber and Eilola.

v Among these theorists are obviously Ong and McLuhan, but also Richard A. Lanham in The Electronic Word, Johndan-Johnson Eilola, in “Reading and Writing in Hypertext,” and Jay David Bolter, in “Literature in the Electronic Writing Space,” have made claims of the fixity of print as opposed to the fluidity of hypertext.

vi Examples of this tendency are too numerous to count, but for an introduction, see Clay Shirky, Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations (New York: Penguin, 2005); The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005). Additionally, while I will be using him in this thesis, Lawrence Lessig’s work, especially in Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy (New York: Penguin, 2008) and Free Culture: The Nature and Future of Creativity (New York: Penguin, 2005) partakes of a similar idea that views technology as relatively open and democratizing before certain forms of law and government intervene to alter this state of affairs. In chapter one, I will deal more fully with this line of argument, also appropriate to arguments in composition studies. This general trajectory of reasoning is what Galloway refers to as “rhetorics of freedom.”

vii See Manovich’s The Language of New Media, where he claims throughout that new media utilize the “vocabulary” of the cinematic for design purposes, much more than the structure of pages: “Cinema, the major cultural form of the twentieth century, has found a new life as the toolbox of the computer user. Cinematic means of perception, of connecting space and time, of representing human memory, thinking, and emotion have become a way of work and a way of life for millions in the computer age. Cinema’s aesthetic strategies have become basic organizational strategies of computer software” (86).
Chapter One
Cicero’s Storehouse: Memory

As I have noted, the concept of writing as memory as external resource comes
down to us by Plato. Part of memory is external—outside of ourselves and our minds.
Such external memory also has a singular relationship with invention. [Cicero], the
author of *Ad Herennium*, called memory the “storehouse of things invented” (Book III,
Section 28)—external memory available as a resource for inventing anew. The purpose
of this chapter will be to explore the nature of such external memory in the digital age.
My general thesis maintains that memory has become increasingly difficult to work with
and to weave into new forms: a problem unique to our digital age. Never before has
control been so available and so wedded to the technology in which content is imbedded
as it is in the digital age. Memory—the storehouse of [Cicero]—finds itself in a double
bind: privatization and regulation. These are two different operations. Privatization takes
place through copyright, regulation through protocol. In order to understand the problem
of memory, we must understand both. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief
overview of certain aspects of and changes in the general movement from literacy to
electracy, which will also help bring into sharp relief the anachronistic nature of
contemporary copyright law, as Lawrence Lessig has well noted. I will also explore the
second constraint on memory: its regulation through protocol, which will require us to
look at the general shift from disciplinary society to control society, and from the
centralized institution to the network. To do so, we will need to understand the
relationship between Michel Foucault’s explorations of modernity and Gilles Deleuze’s
radical essay on control societies, as well as explications of both. Additionally, I will
show where rhetoric and composition can benefit from looking at these trends,
specifically with respect to issues of access in technology. Access has generally been assumed as one of the principal goals of composition studies and computers. However, analyses of protocol and control should certainly affect the tenor of our conversations, shifting our goals from access to computers to understanding what happens when we work with and write on computers.

**Copyrights and Wrongs**

As noted in the introduction, one of the fundamental breaks between writing and print is print’s repeatability. Alongside (and probably because of) print’s repeatability stands print’s ability to be commodified—its ability to be turned into a commodity, a good to be bought or sold. Walter Ong claims “Each individual book in a printed edition was physically the same as another an identical object, as manuscript books were not, even when they presented the same text” (*Orality and Literacy* 126). Whereas before writing was regarded as a recorded utterance, in typography, “two copies of a given work did not merely say the same thing, they were duplicates of one another as objects” (126). If print can be rendered in mass quantities as an object, then it can be sold. If it can be sold, then one can wonder who has the right to make money from it. Print makes language into an object, something that can be seen and that can be held. Moreover, the producer of a particular instance of that printed language can now sell it. Or, if someone else publishes the writing, the writer can claim the right to a certain recompense when it is bought and sold. In other words, print necessitates an entirely new function: copyright. According to Ong, the Stationers’ Company, created in 1557, gave us the first instance of a body designed to oversee the interplay of rights and claims of printers and publishers.
Ong states, “[B]y the eighteenth century modern copyright laws were shaping up over western Europe” (*Orality and Literacy* 131).

However, if one individual is entitled to remuneration from the creative work, who is this individual to be, and what constitutes the creative work? Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi are among the foremost experts on the history and theory of copyright law in the humanities. In “The Genius and the Copyright,” Woodmansee traces the conception of copyright to an 18th century Romantic ideal of the author, one exemplified, she argues, in the thought of Goethe, among others. The creative work is one “which owes its individuality solely and exclusively to” the author (“The Genius” 445). Jaszi also finds similar tendencies in William Wordsworth, one of the pioneers of the author-genius of copyright. Copyright, one of the strongest contemporary legacies of the print age, still stands today, much as it did decades and centuries ago. Its ultimate goal is to remunerate the individual responsible (the creative “author-genius” of the Romantics) for a certain instantiation of printed discourse. Such instantiations are defined, at best, hazily.

Woodmansee and Jaszi discover, in the case of Wright v. Warner Books, the judiciary playing the role of literary scholar, commenting on which sections of a book in question bore the “stamp of creativity,” and which sections covered merely “mundane details,” and hence merited no protection. Woodmansee and Jaszi argue that the distinction between mundane and creative is an arbitrary one, and does little to clear up what works of the author-genius truly merit protection. The very vagueness of the law, however, is one of its strengths.

Copyright, according to Lawrence Lessig, is a holdover from the era of print and incongruous with an era of digital technology, which tends to break with print in many
important respects. Lessig claims, the “regime of copyright” was “built for a radically different technological age” (Remix xvi). External memory, now incredibly vast (DVDs, Compact Discs and MP3 players, and especially the Internet), exponentially increase this storehouse of invented things. However, the growing privatization of such a pool of resources greatly inhibits creative ability. As Lessig argues throughout Free Culture and Remix, the future of creativity depends upon access to an increasingly communal pool of digital resources. Even the most basic computer software now sold allows users to manipulate extant media, reworking them into new forms. According to Lessig, current digital technology “allows…creations to be shared with an extraordinary number of people, practically instantaneously. This is something new in our tradition—not just that culture can be captured mechanically, and obviously not just that events are commented upon critically, but that this mix of captured images, sound, and commentary can be widely spread practically instantaneously” (Free Culture 41). This external memory connects people in new ways, and becomes increasingly communal. This connectedness has complicated the issue of copyright, however, which digital technology has rendered anachronistic. In the case of the printed text, one is allowed to use certain amounts of printed text for particular uses, such as reviews, rebuttals, criticisms and so forth. Certain amounts of texts are available for use without violating the law. Moreover, the period of time under which any creative work can be copyrighted has extended greatly since copyright’s widespread implementation in the 18th century. Lessig laments the continual extension of periods of time an author can hold copyright. However, as I will show in a moment, such freedom is not clearly extended to the material of new media. What is
needed is to rethink copyright; what we have is a disconnect that has led to some disastrous consequences.

The lawsuits filed against Napster and even against everyday users by the Recording Industry Association of America, the establishment of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, and similar actions testify to increasing privatization in favor of those with political power, which has led to the restriction, rather than the relaxation of copyright law. Lessig initially defines his goal as a “free culture,” which he later redefines as a read/write (RW) culture. RW culture “supports and protects creators and innovators” (*Free Culture* xiv), and makes allowances for more than simple consumption of media. Instead it allows for taking media—effectively taking culture—such that users can re-cut and re-cast media in new ways. Lessig notes that a model that allows users to do no more than re-ad and consume is a fairly American phenomenon. Noting that in Japan young people are often encouraged to remix media, Lessig argues, “American kids have it different [from Japanese kids]. The focus is not: ‘Here’s something, do something with it.’ The focus is instead: ‘Here’s something, buy it.’” (*Remix* 79). The opposite of RW culture, what Lessig calls “permission culture,” and later “read only (RO)” culture, establishes conditions in which memory is either very difficult or very illegal to work with. Lessig claims, “We’re building a technology that takes the magic of Kodak, mixes moving images and sound, and adds a space for commentary and an opportunity to spread that creativity everywhere. But we’re building the law to close down that technology” (*Free Culture* 47). If we are to avoid being anything other than RO culture, where one estate creates, and the other reads, then we must educate, claims Lessig, in a way that uses external memory. Furthermore, we must restructure the law such that
certain uses of copyrighted material—especially new media material—is available for use and protected.

**Spectacular Criminals**

Lessig argues that we must come to grips with an entire sector of the law, which has effectively criminalized the entire populace: “What does it mean to a society when a whole generation is raised as criminals” (Remix xvii)? The present status of copyright law renders anyone who is guilty of a certain kind of download a criminal. Moreover, John Logie asserts the vagueness of intellectual property law and its increasing conflict with digital technologies means that many, if not most, are certain to violate the law at some point in some way.iii Most peer to peer download sites, such as Kazaa or WinMX, allow for this kind of activity, and it is one that, according to some studies, most Americans have engaged in at one point or another. Moreover, Lessig argues, fewer and fewer uses of new media are unregulated. For instance, it would initially seem that use of a particular film clip, downloaded and cut into a new video, would only constitute copyright violation if the creator attempted to make the video public. If it was for private use, this would constitute no violation. Specifically, Lessig refers to a father who uses a clip of a major film in a home movie about his son. As long as it was never published, then it would constitute no legal violation.

However, what is legal and illegal remains a matter of legal precedent, settled in a litigious fashion, due in large part to the vagueness and vagary of copyright law. Litigious efforts require lawyers, or in other words, money. In this vein, Lessig, citing author J.D. Lasica, notes that even private efforts (not posted for public viewing) are not immune from such legal scrutiny. Lasica conducted an experiment in an effort to discover the
opinions of major studios on the matter of what constituted a legal use of their films. A parent requests permission to use a clip from a film in a video of his child. The video is not for public consumption, but strictly for private use. Lasica found that almost every studio but one claimed such a use would constitute copyright violation. In order to use the clip—in a private home video—they would expect the man to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars. Of course, one can always claim “fair use,” but fair use simply means that one has the right to hire an attorney and go to court in effort to defend their use. The entire business model of the content industry (film, music, etc.), and this includes their lawsuit campaign against illegal downloading, is fundamentally dependent upon people’s inability to fight back in court. If citizens were able to battle the regulation, it would render the campaign financially untenable. Worse still, the judiciary powers that oversee copyright law have gradually encroached on fair use in recent years through a series of decisions that Woodmansee and Jaszi suggest have led to an “increasingly restrictive” ("Law of Texts" 775) view of the doctrine.

Copyright was developed, of course, to regulate an individual’s right to copy the intellectual property of another. However, when copyright attempts to cover digital technologies, as Lessig notes, the situation grows more complex than in the age of print, from which copyright extends. Specifically, when one reads a book, as one would under traditional copyright, such a use is considered “unregulated.” The publisher cannot delineate how many times a person can read the book. Once purchased, it may be read indefinitely. The only location where copyright comes into play might be if I tried photocopying fifty copies of the book for all my friends and colleagues. Such a use is both regulated and in violation of copyright. However, in the digital realm, such uses can
be and are regulated. Lessig writes, “When you play a CD on your computer, the recording gets copied into memory on its way to your headphones or speakers. No matter what you do, your actions trigger the law of copyright. Every action must then be justified as either licensed or ‘fair use.’” (Remix 99). If every action is copying, then every action is subject to copyright. Everyone—not just those that illegally download—is susceptible to the law for violation of copyright. Again, Lessig argues “[Any] use is a copy” (Remix 100).

If any use is a copy, then everyone is potentially a criminal. At this point, the parallels between copyright law and potential criminality of every individual are far too striking to overlook. In Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, Foucault traces the shifts from society as it existed under a king or sovereign, to the development of more “humane” treatments of prisoners, which actually meant increasing regulation over more aspects of not only the lives of prisoners, but the lives of citizens generally. As Foucault argues, under sovereign rule, there were actions that were permissible and acts that were forbidden. As long as one remained in the permissible, one was not subject to punishment. Of course, forbidden actions often led to the most unspeakable cruelties, which Foucault explicitly documents in the graphic first few pages. Nevertheless, under discipline, “The whole indefinite domain of the non-conforming is punishable” (Discipline 179). In other words, discipline is less concerned with legality than with conformity, with the strict adherence to a certain acceptable norm.

In later centuries, however, increasingly we see calls for reform of the prison and of the treatment of prisoners. Torture is both cruel and crude, it doesn’t work, and new measures are needed to rehabilitate prisoners. It is through this mechanism, Foucault
argues, that the human sciences of psychology and psychiatry first come into play—as means of helping prisoners to reform. Key for our purposes is Foucault’s insistence that prison, and all the apparatus and reforms that it entailed, help to introduce a more litigious society, one in which “a slow continuous, imperceptible gradation that made it possible to pass naturally from disorder to offence and back from a transgression of the law to a slight departure from a rule, an average, a demand, a norm” (*Discipline* 298). In what Foucault terms, “the carceral,” prison plays a role in a whole legal apparatus whereby it becomes increasingly easy to allow disorder to become lawbreaking. Moving past the idea that crime is the violation of the specific ordinance (or rather, the body of the king), in the carceral a distant and probably impossible standard of normalcy is implemented. Since no one is completely in compliance with the detailed codes of normalcy, everyone is a potential criminal. Here Foucault’s analyses meet up with Lessig’s conception of copyright, which succeeds in furthering the carceral to the domain of creative content: everyone is subject to regulation because everyone is a criminal, or at least potentially so.

What Lessig dubs RO culture also seems to bear more than a passing resemblance to what Guy Debord once termed the “Society of the Spectacle” in the book of the same name. In the society of the spectacle, we have moved from conditions of being to conditions of having to conditions of appearing: “An earlier stage in the economy’s domination of social life entailed an obvious downgrading of *being* into *having* that left its stamp on all human endeavor. The present strategy, in which social life is completely taken over by the accumulated products of the economy, entails a generalized shift from *having* to appearing” (16). I find a parallel between Debord’s remarks here and what
Victor Burgin writes in *The Remembered Film* when he says that we “rarely own the memories we are sold” (110). Memories are simply an appearance, no longer even something we have, and certainly not something we are. In conditions of appearance, the commodity has come to dominate: “[C]ommodities are now *all* that there is to see; the world we see is the world of the commodity” (*Society* 29). Debord complains, quite simply, that all there is, is there to sell. If something exists, then someone has a right to make money from it. Lessig argues copyright law has functioned in precisely such a manner by stripping away any notion of unregulated uses. Moreover, the spectacle serves a particular political purpose. The world of the commodity serves to keep the workers separated from one another: continuously in thrall to the spectacle.

Debord goes on to trace out the effects of the spectacle, which includes art that is for art’s sake—divorced from social life and from political life:

As soon as art—which constituted that former common language of social inaction—establishes itself as independent in the modern sense, emerging from its first, religious universe to become the individual production of separate works, it becomes subject, as one instance among others, to the movement governing the history of the whole of culture as a separated realm. Art’s declaration of independence is thus the beginning of the end of art. (133)

The purpose of such an independent art, Debord claims, is to justify a society that has no justification. This newly independent modern art is actually the death of art: art moves from everyday social life to the museum. It becomes a commodity with a place where we can go to see its appearance.
However, I would note that Debord writes when few people have access to the kinds of technology that are now commonplace. Lessig writes, “But the internet and digital technologies opened these media to the masses. Using the tools of digital technology—even the simplest tools, bundled into the most innovative or modern operations systems—anyone can begin to ‘write’ using images, or music or video” (Remix 69). In the late 1960s, when Debord is writing the book, access to various visually reproductive technologies (film cameras, editing equipment, publication materials) are the domain of only a few. We might call these part of a general trend of cooling media. The term cooling derives from Marshall McLuhan’s distinction between hot and cool media. Hot media are those that he considers less participative, less involving of the viewers. Among these media he lists film and radio. Cool media, such as the television and telephone, are higher in participation. While I certainly consider McLuhan’s distinctions somewhat suspect, and would claim that even film and radio have always been highly participative, there can be little debate that film is far more accessible now than it has probably ever been. Film can be reworked and recreated in ways that would have been completely unfamiliar in the 1960s. I would argue that this increased access has two significant consequences.

The first is that instead of being in thrall to the spectacle, there is a way of recutting and remixing the spectacle. What this can allow for is Debord’s principle instrument of combating the spectacle: detournement. The word Debord uses has the general connotation of a turning or twisting. Detournement indicates the way to combat the spectacle is to twist it back upon itself and reveal it as such: in other words, to make a spectacle of the spectacle. What better way of turning the spectacle against itself than to
take given media and rework them to say things never originally intended? Lessig asks us to consider video artist Sim Sadler, creator of a video called “Hard Working George.” The video “builds exclusively from a video of George Bush in one of his 2004 debates with John Kerry. Again and again, Sadler clips places where Bush says essentially, “it’s hard work”” (72). Lessig then prints the transcript of the video where Bush tells us it’s hard work dozens of times in short span. The net effect allows viewers to see the ridiculousness of the repeated claim that he’s working hard when he is ideally in a format that will make him look good. It makes the spectacle of Bush into a spectacle.

The second effect reconnects art with daily life. Most mash-ups and remixes are, to say the least, unlikely candidates for museum display. What users are able to do by taking the art they know best and remix it is to take art from that sacred spot that meant death for art. For Debord it was the museum; for most remixers, perhaps the movie theater or television. Instead of being in thrall, users make use of these spectacular media. Neither one of these moves is automatically liberating, nor is either going to happen, but both are potential outgrowths from remix.

The Importance of RW

Elizabeth Daley, Director of the Annenberg Center for Communication at the University of Southern California, states: “From my perspective, probably the most important digital divide is not access to a box. It’s the ability to be empowered with the language that that box works in. Otherwise only a very few people can write with this language, and all the rest of us are reduced to being read-only” (Free Culture 37). The empowerment topos ought to be fairly familiar with anyone versed in rhetoric/composition scholarship, where it is made frequently enough: composition is meant to
empower students with a certain idiom of discourse. What Daley is talking about, at a certain fundamental level, is the ability to deliberate: If people cannot use the language, they cannot take part in deliberation, of which the digital is increasingly a part. The situation she describes, where very few can use a particular language, is oligarchy—the rule of the many by the few. It recalls the discussion of reworking the cinema as discussed by Burgin.

Burgin writes that “when two-thirds of global copyrights are in the hands of six corporations, the capacity to rework one’s memories into the material symbolic form of individual testament and testimony is severely constrained” (Remembered 110). The privatization of memory, and the control over this massive storehouse lent to it by copyright, results in a situation where reworking memory is impossible, and in many cases, illegal. Burgin notes the importance of such reworking citing Colin MacCabe, who says, “[I]n a world in which we are entertained from cradle to grave whether we like it or not, the ability to rework image and dialogue…may be the key to both psychic and political health” (Godard 301). One might wonder why exactly reworking culture has anything to do with political health, but as I mentioned previously, these remixes take on a deliberative function in the digital age. In Remix, Lessig references a video that features former president George W. Bush and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The tune, “My Endless Love” plays, and the editor uses speech clips from both men, edited such that it appears they are singing the song back and forth to each other. Lessig notes this remix “can’t help but make its argument, at least in our culture, far more effectively than could words” (74). Remixing culture makes viewers into participants and consumers into producers. Participation is, of course, the very essence of democracy. As changes in
the eighteenth century allowed more and more individuals to participate in public
discussion, so do changes in the digital age allow for similar increases.

However, as I have previously noted, Burgin claims we rarely own the memories
we are sold. I may purchase a DVD at the store, but in a very definite sense, I don’t own
the memory that is on it. I can’t do anything with it. I am reduced to a very clear set of
functions—playing it and watching it. To take the material and rework it into a new form
is an act of individual testament and testimony. As Burgin notes, it moves away from the
synchronization of viewing (the Spectacle) and towards individual memory—in other
words, towards owning one’s own memories by producing a unique object. Elsewhere,
Burgin claims that the cinematic is not a localized experience in front of a single screen,
but is in fact everywhere:

Posters, ‘blurbs,’ and other advertisements, such as trailers and television clips; it
may be encountered through newspaper reviews, reference work synopses and
theoretical articles (with their ‘film-strip’ assemblages of still images); through
production photographs, frame enlargements, memorabilia, and so on. Collecting
such metonymic fragments in memory, we may come to feel familiar with a film
we have not actually seen. (In/Different Spaces 22-23)

Burgin goes on to call this particular type of film a “heterogeneous psychical object,
constructed from image scraps scattered in space and time” (23). The implication, then, is
clear: if the cinematic is everywhere, and the cinematic is always someone else’s
intellectual property, then there is no act of creativity that is not piracy. Of course, Lessig
claims, this is not piracy. It has never been what constituted piracy. It is, rather, much
closer to quotation than stealing. Remix is a form of deliberation in the digital age, one
we must teach as reworking culture into something new, rather than trot out the tired old arguments about “piracy,” which actually have nothing to do with remix. Remixing is participation and learning to own one’s memories. Remixing provides access to a means of deliberation.

However, deliberation, as I have previously noted through the work of Lee Morrissey as well as Slavoj Žižek, does not merely mean access to a debate. Lessig’s notes on blogging and his take on remixing media certainly indicates that these are forms of deliberation in the digital age. Moreover, as Friedrich Kittler shows, these do not provide access to the structure of the debate. That level of debate is held at the level of code. Kittler has said code is what is happening underneath. Lessig’s conception of a RW culture provides access to the debate, but not to its structure, which is always in code. Hence, while the notion of remix is a valuable one, it clearly does not go far enough. Alexander Galloway comments that Lessig assumes a period of unbounded freedom before the Law comes to circumscribe those digital freedoms—a kind of natural state of digital liberty. In other words, Lessig takes as the initial conditions of technology freedom and equality, heavily dependent on what Galloway calls “rhetorics of freedom.” Only later do the copyright attorney’s get involved and spoil everyone’s fun. However, the code of regulation, according to Galloway, has been there from the first. Besides,

Furthermore, a society of content-producing subjects may be precisely what an alternative form of regulation requires to thrive. This operation is a decidedly different one from the privative aspects of digital media, which takes us to protocol.
Protocol

While memory is privatized on one side, it is regulated on the other. The two functions are not synonymous, but rather completely different operations. In fact, they are in many respects opposed to one another. The privatization of memory takes place at the level of the institution of copyright law; the regulation of memory takes place at the level of protocol. Protocol’s best expositor is undoubtedly Alexander Galloway, in Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentralization and The Exploit: A Theory of Networks, but is also suggested by Jeffrey Nealon in Foucault Beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications Since 1984 (although he never uses the term as such).

To understand protocol, it is best to understand three distinct types of administrative networks: the centralized, decentralized, and distributed network. The first of these, the centralized network, employs a central administrative hub (Fig. 1). Hierarchical, with various lowering branches, each branch stands subservient to the central hub. The “Panopticon” of Jeremy Bentham, described in Foucault’s Discipline and Punish, serves as an example: guards in a central tower watch (or possibly do not watch, for that matter) the prison inmates. A supervisor may or may not watch those guards. A second model, given by Galloway, is the judicial system.
Various courts exist at various levels, each level answers to the higher levels, with the Supreme Court as the central hub of the network (Protocol 31). The second type of network, “A decentralized [Fig. 2] network,” says Galloway, “is a multiplication of the centralized network…instead of one hub there are many hubs, each with its own array of dependent nodes. While several hubs exist, each with its own domain, no single zenith point exercises control over all others” (Protocol 31). A prime example, the airline system in the U.S., utilizes various cities as hubs, through which it transfers passengers. From those hubs, passengers can be grouped together, more efficiently, onto flights that will take them to their eventual destination. No singular hub for the entire airline system exists—far too inefficient. Neither would it do to have endless nonstop flights between cities—not enough passengers for each plane. Instead, certain cities function as nodal points for the entire system. Some nodal points are larger than others, but a hierarchical system is not employed.

The third system, a distributed network (Fig. 3), functions as the framework within which protocol develops. It uses no centralized hub, but rather individual autonomous nodes that communicate or maintain contact with one another. Every “entity in the distributed network is an autonomous agent” (Protocol 33). Galloway uses the rhizome of A Thousand Plateaus as a model of the distributed network: “The rhizome
links many autonomous nodes together in a manner that is neither linear nor hierarchical. Rhizomes are heterogeneous and connective” (Protocol 33).

For a material example, we can look to the Interstate Highway System, which employs no central hubs. Rather it remains entirely diffused, and entirely distributed. Any link from place to place will do. If we wanted to leave right now and drive to Los Angeles, we might choose any number of paths, and any will do. They will not all be equally fast, but they will get us there. “If one route is blocked, another will do just as well. These are the advantages of a distributed network” (Protocol 33). With these three networks in mind, we can begin to grasp the nature of protocol.

**What is Protocol?**

Protocols are, in simplest terms, conventions that manage connection and transfer between two digital or new media machines. Protocols provide the rules of syntax for the raw data that make up new media. Protocols govern what can happen, regulate transfer and regulate when things happen. “Protocol is,” according to Galloway, “a language that regulates flow, directs netspace, codes relationships, and connects life-forms” (Protocol 74). It is a model of power that has been built into the very fabric of new media—the very mechanism by which they operate. Protocol is completely decentered, requiring no major hubs in the way that discipline required institutions to be carried out. Protocol is “a
set of instructions for the compilation and interaction of objects” (*Protocol 75*). Two machines, attempting to establish contact, must have protocols to enable communication between them. The highway system can again serve as a comparison. Between two points on a highway, a driver stops at lights, obeys lines, signs, etc. The regulation of protocol is, in a sense, ironclad, which leads Galloway to postulate that digital media, especially the internet, are the most tightly controlled media ever invented. Far from being the unbounded space of freedom and democracy posited by Lessig, Galloway claims they form the model for what Gilles Deleuze termed the “Society of Control.” Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have been among the principal expositors of this concept, which they claim brings methods of control even closer to the social field than discipline. While disciplinary society, theorized by Michel Foucault, worked at the level of institutions, control society requires no institutions and even tends to eschew hierarchy altogether, but rather controls more directly at the level of individual minds and bodies and through particularly democratic processes. That is to say, it allows individuals to select the control they like best. In *Empire*, Hardt and Negri explain that control society is a society in which “mechanisms of command become ever more ‘democratic,’ ever more immanent to the social field, distributed throughout the brains and bodies of the citizens” (23) Moreover, they suggest, “The society of control might thus be characterized by an intensification and generalization of the normalizing apparatuses of disciplinarity that internally animate out common and daily practices, but in contrast to discipline, this control extends well outside the structured sites of social institutions through flexible and fluctuating networks” (23). The managerial system of such discipline was the panopticism, the system of control is protocol.
Control society differs from disciplinary society in some important respects. In disciplinary society, a subject passes from institution to institution, and these institutions form the sites of control. An individual might be passed from family to school to work, with the police and the state also having important roles to play in regulating behaviors. Again, the significant visual embodiment of the disciplinary society, as described by Foucault, is Bentham’s Panopticon. A central tower looks out at a circular prison. The inmates of the prison are constantly visible to the guards in the central tower. Eventually, whether or not the guards are actually present becomes immaterial. The purpose of the prison is to create a particular set of circumstances whereby the inmates learn to discipline themselves. Everywhere discipline worked at the level of institutions—schools, hospitals, factories, the military, etc. Power is not localized in any one person or individual, but becomes diffuse. Power is a relationship between two individuals. Although there may be beneficiaries of power, no one person wields it.

Digital media function in a diffuse and decentralized fashion, through networks. Galloway terms these networks rhizomatic. They regulate paths of flow in a diffuse manner. However, it bears repeating that any path through a decentralized network will do. Galloway notes that the purpose of protocols is to establish the “best” path to take. In so doing, protocols work to establish what is possible in advance by establishing the best path. Once the best path has become set, who wouldn’t want to take it? Robert Ray, in *The Avant-Garde Finds Andy Hardy*, suggests an example using an interesting anecdote:

“A graduate student at the University of Florida tells the story of another hypertext programmer who, in response to a question about the possibilities of happening by chance upon something unexpected in one of his works, replied,
‘That’s what I’m trying to ensure doesn’t happen’ In this model, hypertext (and, by implication, the other electronic/photographic technologies) become means of control, tools for dictating certain research paths. (200)

Surprise is precisely what digital media work against. Put another way, Walter Ong writes, “Electronic media do not tolerate a show of open antagonism. Despite their cultivated air of spontaneity, these media are totally dominated by a sense of closure which is the heritage of print: a show of hostility might break open the closure, the tight control” (Orality 137). The distributed, tightly controlled network is the network of protocol. In Deleuze’s words, “The coils of a serpent are more complex than the burrows of a molehill” (“Postscript”). In disciplinary society, the subject is allowed to move within the constraints of the institution (the molehill); in control society, a subject is continuously directed. Galloway writes, “[P]rotocol is a technique for achieving voluntary regulation within a contingent environment” (7), meaning that it is not coercive in any traditional sense, but attempts to regulate with a light touch, eliminating anything unexpected from happening. Specifically, protocols achieve such regulation through compatibility. Whereas in disciplinary society one might be in regulation only to a certain extent, in control, one is either completely compatible with a protocol or not compatible in the slightest. This incompatibility (a severe binary logic) is at the level of code, not of content. In other words, suppose we watch a scary film on DVD: while we may be surprised by the content of the picture (the villain bursts forth in a moment of tense silence), the machines are never surprised. They are always in synchronization at the protocological level, provided those protocols can communicate.
The source of protocols, like the source of disciplinary practices, isn’t exactly traceable to one person or group of people. As Alan Rea and Doug White note, there is no group that runs the Web, only a series of technical standards derived by engineering consortia: “This group is not a Web, Inc. or Big Brother; rather it is concerned with making sure all clients and helper applications conform to certain standards so that all data can be accessed and sued by everyone” (425). However, protocol differs in one interesting respect: it is not discipline on the web, but a control built into the very language in which the web functions. Galloway says “Protocol gains its authority from another place, from technology itself and how people program it” (Protocol 121). It is built-in, designed into the language by program designers seeking cooperation between machines. In this sense, the idea seems to fit well with Foucault’s famous dictum, “[P]eople know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don’t know is what they do does” (Foucault, cited in Dreyfus and Rabinow 187).

Computer designers aren’t involved in a conspiracy, but rather they engage in certain practices: designer protocols. However, those practices give rise to other practices—they have certain effects. The effect is tight control.

Protocols are open and accessible—they fundamentally value openness. ANSI, formerly known as the American Standards Association, is among the most significant bodies that govern the development of technical standards, which Galloway notes are adopted “due to broad open initiatives of free exchange and debate” (Protocol 126). ANSI is the body responsible for technical standards that become protocols. Among their listed standards, they insist that “[d]ecisions” ought to be “reached through consensus among those affected” (ansi.org, “Executive Order on Federal Regulatory
Review,” 3). The standards are issued through consensus, not through proprietary market force. Moreover, “Participation is open” and the “process is transparent.” That is to say, all the information is available to the public—we can see it. Lastly, it is a flexible process, and it “allow[s] the use of different methodologies to meet the needs of different technology and product sectors” (all available at http://ansi.org in “National Standards Strategy for the United States”). All this, of course, seems perfectly amenable to deliberative democracy, to participation, and a general benefit to society. However, as Galloway notes, “in order for protocol to enable radically distributed communications between autonomous entities, it must employ a strategy of universalization, and of homogeneity. It must be anti-diversity” (Protocol 142). For this reason Galloway later states that the web and digital media do not create a state of diversity, but UNI-versity. All things are accepted, but only at the level of protocol. In order to participate, a protocol must be followed. If the protocol is not followed, there is no participation, meaning that the object protocol takes is the possible itself. What is possible in a protocol is the very limit of possibility itself. A user can do nothing for which the protocol does not allow.

The implications for protocol on rhetoric/composition and its use of technology will become clearer as we explore the relationship between the analyses of Foucault’s disciplinary society and Deleuze’s control society. Galloway, through Deleuze, contends that we have moved past discipline into the control society. Nealon suggests disciplinary power has simply intensified since Foucault’s death in 1984. We can, however, bring both theories together in a productive way. Bringing the two together will help to shed light on the problematic relationship between technology and rhetoric/composition.
Power and Control

For a philosopher who was as focused on history as Foucault, there is a potential foolhardiness in suggesting that his analysis of power should be every bit as applicable today as it was when he was writing about it in the late 70s and 80s. Not one to shy away from rethinking his ideas, Foucault’s thought changed within his own lifetime. No doubt he expected changes, always looking for new situations to arise. Nealon calls Foucault’s research agenda “peripatetic,” continuously wandering. However, if we have moved away from the model of discipline, it indeed represents a seismic cultural shift. Nealon criticizes those who have too rashly abandoned Foucault’s thinking. He writes that as of 2000, the results of the presidential election between George Bush and Al Gore seemed inconsequential to many “largely because the nation-state was yesterday’s news and corporations (with their distinctly nondisciplinary forms of domination) were bound to run the world one way or another” (Foucault Beyond Foucault 3). However, a new situation has arisen, or more accurately, a new version of a very old situation:

Since September 2001, however, we’ve seen the nation-state, and its investments in disciplinary power and panoptic surveillance, come roaring back, indeed intensifying beyond our wildest dreams (or nightmares). We live in a world where outright torture of detainees and constant government surveillance of the citizenry are no longer projects that have to be carried out in secret: they’ve become official policy, at least in the United States. The historical (re)birth of discipline and panopticism is, it seems to me, one of the primary reasons for us today to reexamine Foucault’s midcareer work on punitive power and its relations to his
late work on the ethics and aesthetics of resistant subjectivity. (*Foucault Beyond Foucault* 3)

Nealon goes on to spell out certain reasons for the abandonment of Foucault. The major reason is, in a word, difficulty. Foucault’s theories don’t present a simple narrative with a common enemy and easily commuted strategies of resistance. Instead he paints a picture of practices that arise over centuries and a concept of power/knowledge out of which there seems to be no way. The issue that is then raised (and has been, time and again, by Jürgen Habermas and others) is a fundamental question: if power constitutes the subject—that is, power creates the subject and allows for creativity just as much as it represses it—from where does resistance arise? No such place can possibly exist!

Nealon suggests that rather than abandoning Foucault, we might view power as a series of intensifications—continually intensifying or becoming both lighter and more dominant. He specifically seeks to view the intensification of discipline since 1984—obviously the year of Foucault’s very untimely death. The intensification of power means that power grows lighter and more efficient over time. Nealon declares, “As power mutates, its primary pivot point becomes increasingly ‘lighter,’ more virtual, and its effects become more efficient as power shifts its privileged point of application—from the body, to the soul, to the action” (*Foucault Beyond Foucault* 31). Discipline arose, at least in large part, out of the needs of capitalism. The capitalist state required a mechanism to get the most work out of a body with the least amount of fuss. The sovereign model was, very simply, an “inefficient” model. The spectacle of torture often lead to the crowd siding with the condemned. Far better to tailor specific punishments to specific crimes: to modulate the punishments, as it were. Torture was both cruel and
crude. Instead, the disciplinary model actually created a self-correcting individual, one that performed as if surveilled, even when it wasn’t. It was a means of extracting the best, and most efficient work from a body. Nealon sees the rise of discipline as the intensification of power. Biopower represents a further intensification of power—a replacement of discipline.

Nealon, however, errs when he suggests that biopower replaces discipline. He refers to the “intensification that morphs discipline into biopower,” and later, “[T]he disciplinary criminal is known through her transgressive deeds, while biopower’s delinquent is known through his abnormal personality” (Foucault Beyond Foucault 47). These formulations do not seem to match Foucault’s comments in The History of Sexuality, when he discusses how the

great bipolar technology—anatomic and biological, individualizing and
specifying, directed toward the performances of the body, with attention to the
processes of life—characterized a power whose highest function was perhaps no
longer to kill, but to invest life through and through. (139)

These two processes are simultaneous and ongoing. So this bipolar technology—
discipline and another power directed toward the processes of life—constitutes biopower,
which does not kill, but invests life. Discipline, then, falls under biopower.

Biopower acts upon life, based on a certain conception of life. Life conceived as
an object can be acted upon and changed. In large part, biopower acts upon life as a series of statistics. In History of Sexuality, Foucault delineates the emergence of “the problems of birthrate, longevity, public health, housing, and migration. Hence there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies
and the control of populations, making the beginning of an era of ‘biopower’” (140).

Power, in this formulation, “is applied at the level of life itself” (*History of Sexuality* 143). Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri write, “Power can achieve an effective command over the entire life of the population only when it becomes an integral, vital function that every individual embraces and reactivates of his or her own accord” (*Empire* 24).

Control, then, situates itself in the administration of life. Action, in this case, might be action upon a statistic: a particular network might act upon the birthrate of a population. In so doing, however, the administration is that of life—it takes on a vital function, as Hardt and Negri note. As an example, Galloway, citing Michael Fortun’s talk, “Care of the Data,” claims “the job of public health is increasingly to ensure that the biological bodies of the population correlate to the informatic patterns on the screen” (*The Exploit* 107).

Protocol’s function coheres with biopower, according to Galloway: “Foucault puts equal stress on ‘technologies’ and ‘knowledge’ in his definition of biopolitics. But which technologies in particular would correspond to Foucault’s biopolitical scenario?” (13). In other words, Galloway seeks to understand how technologies and biopower cohere together. He goes on to argue “that they are the distributed forms of management that characterize the contemporary computer network and within which protocol control exists” (*Protocol* 13). So then biopower, a distributed form of management, like protocol is “consistent with the functioning of protocol, for biopower is the power to interpret material objects as information, to affect objects at the statistical or informational level, not at the level of individual content” (*Protocol* 69). Like biopower, protocol acts upon digital objects (not individuals but dividuals) modulated objects that
exist only upon use. They are assembled from scratch each time and are simply a coalescing (of their own objectness). Unlike the Marxist commodity and the semiotic sign, the object is radically independent from context. Objects are inheritable, extendible, procreative. They are always already children. Objects are not archived, they are autosaved. Objects are not read, they are scanned, parsed, concatenated, and split. (*Protocol 74*)

Biopower, in Foucault’s formulation, seeks to regulate populations by means of statistical data in the administration of life itself. This functioning, then, meshes easily with protocol as Galloway describes it. Protocol, in the context of new media, is concerned with digital data, ones and zeroes. These data are simply read and put to their purpose. In fact, protocol is relatively indifferent to the notion of content altogether. In Galloway’s words, “it does little to transcode the meaning of the semantic units of value that pass in and out of its purview” (*Protocol 52*). Protocol is not an interpretive schema.

Using copyright once more as an exemplar will give us some insight into this balance between discipline and protocol. Lessig asserts that copyright law reduces cultural participants to “read-only” status: “Passive recipients of culture produced elsewhere. Couch potatoes. Consumers. This is the world of media from the twentieth century” (*Free Culture 37*). Lessig tells the story of Jesse Jordan, a student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), who created a new search engine to search within RPI’s network. After some months, Jesse was informed that the Recording Industry Association of America had filed a lawsuit against him, claiming that he had developed an instrument of piracy. Jesse had no money to combat them in court. RIAA insisted that he shut down the engine, then asked how much money he had. Jesse had saved about $12,000 from
various jobs. Oddly enough, they demanded $12,000 to end the suit. One might certainly claim that this is an isolated incident, and extrapolating too much from this one incident could be dangerous. However, this incident is by no means isolated, and while I don’t mean to extrapolate too much, it serves as a ringing endorsement of the viability of disciplinary power. While new media open up new possibilities for invention, disciplinary institutions can still step in to privatize memory. The RIAA has filed literally thousands of lawsuits, in an attempt to get these supposed pirates to recognize themselves as being watched, and to discipline themselves accordingly. Discipline still functions, but has as an adversary protocol, a different mode of power.

Woodmansee and Jaszi further Lessig’s argument when they suggest that the network is opposed to the grip of copyright. On this point, they are correct. However, they make Lessig’s argument explicit when they discuss the collaborative nature of writing on the internet, and the difficulty of tracing any given text to a single author (Wikipedia would be a prime example). Here they echo Lessig when they claim that “[f]rom our standpoint as teachers and scholars, the liberating potential of all this may lie in the networks’ freedom from the sorts of controls—legal and otherwise—tow which other information technologies such as print are subject” (“Law of Texts” 779). As Woodmansee and Jaszi point out, and Lessig demonstrates, the function of the copyright in these situations is very consistent with disciplinary society. Organizations such as the RIAA are actually enemies of protocol; holdovers from the disciplinary society. The RIAA does not wield power, but is certainly locked into power relations with the consumer, relations from which it benefits. In a sense, we have two models of power, neither of which functions well with the other. An intensified disciplinary power that
wishes to retain control over disparate elements, and a completely diffuse, decentralized protocol that will actually control even more tightly than discipline ever did. Where Woodmansee and Jaszi err is in the presupposition that networks are fundamentally liberating. While copyright may be powerless in the network (dependent as it is upon the romantic conception of “The Author”), the network represents anything but unbounded freedom. Thus we can agree with Galloway, who avers, “the Net is not simply a new, anarchical media format, using the virtues of diversity and multiplicity, but is, in fact, a highly sophisticated system or rules and regulations (protocol)” (Protocol 9). Far from being the ultimate form of technological liberty, the internet demonstrates for us the very embodiment of power reinvented in a rhizomatic, decentralized form.

So then, what is the relationship between protocol, biopower, and discipline? Protocol is a part of biopower. It is the new tool of biopower that supplants discipline, far too inefficient for a technological age. That is not to say that discipline is gone. Anyone reading Free Culture and Remix should understand the inaccuracy of this rhetoric of “disappearance.” The RIAA and various other organizations keep discipline alive—it functions well with their business model. It is a comfortable model, and it allows certain parties to be the major beneficiaries—mostly the same parties that have been the beneficiaries of disciplinary power for nearly 300 years. Copyright law arose in the same historical context as discipline.

Nealon contends that some view discipline as a mode of power on the wane, but events of the past eight years call us to rethink such a view. However, this discipline is hardly business as usual, but rather it is discipline intensified such that it takes on a new form. In Nealon’s words,
Discipline has been taken to the limit of what it can do, and in this intensive movement, discipline’s limit has become a threshold, inexorably transforming this form of power into a different mode, a lighter and even more effective style of surveillance that can only accelerate the already lightning-fast spread of that form of power/knowledge known as globalization. (68)

We will find that this sense of discipline is synonymous with control, in simplest terms. Where Galloway is willing to abandon the term discipline for control, Nealon wants to hold onto the term. Whatever term we are going to apply, I would argue Galloway and Nealon are speaking to the same phenomena. The control society is discipline that has once again intensified, this time with the advent of digital media and the Internet. Nealon favors the idea that discipline is a dated model of power. But, of course, he suggests that biopower, coming after it, is alive and well. While I agree that biopower still functions, it now functions through protocol, which realizes biopower more completely than the age of literacy. Using this idea, I think we can repair a somewhat fundamental hole in Nealon’s reading of Foucault—that biopower comes after discipline. Instead, biopower, still the umbrella term, has instituted a new model through which it carries itself out: protocol, discipline’s inheritor. I am amenable to the idea that protocol could be discipline intensified, but the question is, for how long can discipline intensify before it has become fundamentally different, or something else? The answer is, when we can identify it as protocol, which Galloway has done for us.

Nealon’s reading of Foucault helps to repair a hole in Galloway’s thinking as well. Galloway claims that, in the “Postscript,” Deleuze “begins the process of dating
Foucault” (86). That is, Foucault is no longer useful in the age of protocol, now that
discipline is in decline. He goes on to say

…it is not simply Foucault’s histories, but Foucault himself that is left behind by
the societies of control. Foucault is the rhetorical stand-in for the modern
disciplinary societies, while Deleuze claims to speak about the future. That is to
say, in this essay Deleuze seals Foucault’s fate as theorizer of the modern
and with it the potential for Foucault to adequately represent anti-anthropological, or
protocological, thought. (87)

Nealon, however, is not so quick to abandon Foucault, for he sees biopower as the
dominant mode of power, as that which comes after discipline. In this sense, he sees
Foucault as post-postmodern. I want to keep the part of Nealon that suggests the
biopower’s intensification, but I augment it by saying biopower functions through
protocol. However, I don’t want to abandon Foucault, preferring instead to keep him and
the valuable “toolbox” that Nealon employs so well. Foucault can still speak to us in an
age of protocol, while it is becoming the dominant mode of power. However, protocol
has anything but eliminated discipline as yet. If biopower is the umbrella term, and
discipline a part of biopower, then we have not left Foucault at all, but we are moving on
from disciplinary society to protocological society, but still within biopower.

Let me demonstrate, for a moment, just how well these two theorists work
together, with each one augmenting the other. Nealon writes that through intensification,
“[P]ower becomes more effective while offering less obvious potential for resistance. My
employer’s new motto, undoubtedly focus-grouped to death in order to weed out any
potentially offensive of resistant traits, tells the story: ‘Penn State. Making Life Better.’
Now who could be ‘against’ that?” (72). Nealon is precisely right, under protocol, resistance is made increasingly difficult (which is not to suggest, by any means, that it was easy under discipline) because control, as Hardt and Negri note, is more vital. However, we see Nealon’s intensification working in tandem with protocol when Galloway states,

To follow a protocol means that everything possible within that protocol is already at one’s fingertips. Not to follow means no possibility. Thus protocological analysis must focus on the possible and the impossible (the envelope of possibility), not a demystification of some inner meaning or ‘rational kernel’ within technology. *Protocol is a circuit, not a sentence. (Protocol 53)*

Who could possibly be against making life better? *That* is precisely the question! In the same manner, who would not want to operate under protocol? That’s not even part of the equation. Not to follow is not possible, in the same sense that being against making life better is not in the realm of possibility. Protocol, exemplified as much through the Penn State slogan as through new media, is more totalizing, more all-encompassing, than discipline. It does not make known any resistance. Nealon says that resistance is all over the place in disciplinary society. If there is no resistance, there is no need for discipline. Under protocol, the question becomes why would anyone possibly want to resist? Protocol shows the *best* way, why would anyone want to follow another? Protocol values openness and universality of access: all are welcome, all are brought in to make life and communication better. Indeed, who could possibly be against *that*?
Novus Ordo Seclorum

It is necessary to answer a distinct question that concerns the nature of protocol. Galloway is compelled to answer, at the end of his first book, the question of whether protocol is good or bad. The answer, he suggests, is neither. Protocol is dangerous. That’s all well and good, but there is no shortage of danger in the world, and moreover, just because protocol is a constraint on language doesn’t make it automatically good or bad. Constraints are actually quite necessary for language—they make communication possible. The problem of protocol is not protocol in itself, which can actually have as many benefits as ills. The problem is the context in which protocol appears, for this project at least.

Deliberation, as I have noted, is the species of rhetoric that, for Aristotle, deals with the future. It is the means by which goals, wants, desires, etc. are conveyed. Deliberative rhetoric has two possible ends: the good and the worthy, or the practical and advantageous. Steven Katz, in “The Ethic of Expediency,” tells us that a fundamental problem exists, at least since the time of Aristotle, with the special topics of deliberative discourse. The problem is that the aims of deliberative discourse are said to be the expedient, or that which is efficient and practically advantageous. Such expediency, however, when it is promoted to the level of a moral good, grows extraordinarily dangerous. To wit, Katz notes a technical document produced by a Nazi SS officer regarding the transportation of political prisoners to extermination camps. Katz demonstrates how the document represents all of the finest aspects of deliberative, technical communication. It achieves all of the goals of such writing, producing a document that is clear and brief, and uses the available topoi of such rhetoric. And yet,
what gets lost in the obsession with the expedient, is the moral concern with the content with which the form is concerned: it is a document written to aid in genocide. Protocol is a key enabler of such ruthless efficiency. It is the expedient, par excellence. What Katz shows us are situations in which it is better not to be expedient, but to consider disrupting expediency.

We can see, through the work of Hardt and Negri, how forms of control can be brought about democratically. We can choose the expedient form most appropriate to our liking. What Hardt and Negri call us to realize is the totality of the mechanisms of control. “The deployments,” they suggest, “of the imperial machine are defined by a whole series of new characteristics, such as the unbounded terrain of its activities, the singularization and symbolic localization of its actions, and the connection of repressive action to all the aspects of the biopolitical structure of society” (35). Control is an all-pervasive series of mechanisms, or “interventions,” extending to every aspect of life. For Hardt and Negri, we can see examples of these interventions in the recent uses of the so-called “just war,” observing a continuity from the ideas of enforcing democracy, seen in various military actions during the cold war, to the peace enforcing missions of the first and second Gulf Wars (425). Intervention, they claims is both internalized and universalized, which is precisely the model of protocol. Protocol is the administrative model of Empire. Protocol is to Empire what panopticism was to disciplinarity. Under disciplinary models, we were not constantly under surveillance, but there was the continual threat of surveillance, which leads to a certain model of subjectivity—the subject that disciplines itself as thought it were being observed. Panopticism becomes an
analogy for explaining how discipline works. We can view protocol in very much the same way.

Hardt and Negri argue that intervention in the age of Empire means much more than military intervention, but includes both moral and juridical intervention. They give the following description:

What we are calling moral intervention is practiced today by a variety of bodies, including the news media and religious organizations, but the most important may be come of the so-called non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which, precisely because they are not run directly by governments, are assumed to act on the basis of ethical or moral imperatives. (35-6)

Such intervention recapitulates the reduction of difference described by Deleuze and Guattari when they suggest that the “philosophy of communication is exhausted in the search for a universal liberal opinion as consensus, in which we find again the cynical perceptions and affections of the capitalist himself” (What is Philosophy? 146). The universality of control reduces all difference to a set of common assumptions about what is good and what is right. Under the auspices of such assumptions, those who are the bearers of what is good and right are empowered, both by moral and military might, to intercede anywhere that a need is determined to exist. Because this control is wrought democratically, it goes unquestioned and appears perfectly natural. Those who represent a threat are often those who threaten the perfect order of Empire—they break up the continuous circuits of communication. For this reason, Thomas Rickert, in “Hands Up, You’re Free: Composition in a Post-Oedipal World” can claim that “current forms of computer piracy and viruses could be understood as breaking up the logic of the
communicative circuit, which is increasingly tied to production as corporations continue unabated their Internet feeding frenzy in much the same way that factory slowdowns, sabotage, and strikes were the disruptive forms of the modernist age” (308). Those who break up circuits of communication, Hardt and Negri argue, are labeled with the “crude conceptual and terminological reduction” known as “terrorist” (37).

An analogous, although perhaps somewhat dated, procedure exists in composition as well. Linda Flower and John R. Hayes’ model of cognitive writing process is an exemplar of a biopolitical procedure. The model, as I’ve suggested, has perhaps lost some of its currency as process models are less the topics of conversation. If anything, post-process pedagogies seem to be closer to the trajectory the field is taking. Nevertheless, the cognitive process involves the reduction of writing processes to a series of thinking choices, hierarchically arranged, such that the component processes can be taught individually, systematically, and purpose-driven. If this all sounds like writing as flowchart, it should. Flower and Hayes actually provide flowcharts suggesting a series of “if-then” procedures. The product, in Flower and Hayes’ model, is important only inasmuch as it is a result of a certain correct process. The process is derived by mapping the cognitive processes that “writers” experience when composing a text. If the correct procedures can be identified, mapped, and abstracted, then they can be understood and, more importantly, taught. It becomes a method for the most expedient, least resistive approach to writing. Writing is posited as a series of protocols to be executed. What is important is less the product (which will be the result of the correct processes), but the identification of and remaining in the guidelines of those processes. As such, cognitive processes represent a method of protocol, of control. Like Hardt and Negri’s conception,
it is both universal and democratic. There exists a writing process, and it is discovered by seeing what we actually do. Responses to the cognitive process models are diverse and sundry, but James Berlin’s approach is distinctive for its criticism of cognitivism on the basis of its being apolitical. We will return to Berlin and his social-epistemic response in chapter five when we deal with critical pedagogy.

Deliberation, under conditions of control, means little more than maintaining the efficiency of protocol and executing its codes. Like the mapping of cognitive processes, we exist always within the protocological context. Control does not allow for the transformation that concepts, in the Deleuzian sense, can bring about. We only ever add to the network—it is robust. If deliberation is to mean anything other than what is most efficient, then it calls for other forms of thinking of the sort that concepts provide. As Claire Colebrook insists, concepts do not “add another word to a language” but rather transform “the whole shape of a language” (17). Considering the alternate ends of deliberation, the good and worthy, might lead us to consider that Deleuze considered the best philosophy to be that which was interesting, remarkable, something that changes the way in which we think. Such a concept, I would argue, is a critical aspect missing from discourse surrounding the Web, which seeks to flatten deliberation. The internet, in this formulation, is a means for doing away with deliberative rhetoric altogether. We can govern through democracy, developing absolute standards that anyone can choose. However, once those standards are in place, they are completely rigid, and must be followed perfectly or they cannot be followed at all. Foucault’s disciplinary subject was brought into being by certain relations of power. Under certain conditions, these relations labeled him/her a deviant, a delinquent, one with a criminal biography. It was under these
conditions that Foucault was most concerned for the practice of freedom. However, even under those conditions, there was some leeway. Everyone is expected to strive for perfection in discipline—the soldier’s movements, the factory worker’s production, the inmate’s behavior. However, conditions of control are more immanent to the social field. They control directly, allowing for the perfection to be not only attained, but also rigidly enforced. I am concerned for control in the context of deliberation. What I’m after is a sense of deliberation that might be disruptive, that might reintroduce a pause, an interval of indeterminacy such that other paths might be pursued. Control asks that we pursue efficiency as the highest end. Efficiency can be regulated. We can all agree on standards and then enforce them perfectly. I want to pursue ends that would lead to less homogenizing, less rigid forms of thought.

Such thinking would parallel the virtual, which is a living memory. It is not a distinction between interior and exterior memory, but between virtual and actual memory.

The Will-to-Access

Access is a central theme of Lessig’s work. In Remix, he speaks of building an internet library, much larger and more voluminous than even the Library of Congress: “[T]he job of this library will be to assure access” (106). “Access,” he claims, “is the mantra of the YouTube generation. Not necessarily free access. Access” (46). The expansion of digital technology in the twentieth and twenty first centuries is an expansion of, and in response to a demand for, access. Access, it seems, is important.

Similarly, a familiar topos in the field of rhetoric/composition is the issue of access. Access is consistently a topic of argument in our scholarship, as it is in Chris
Anson’s “Distant Voices: Teaching and Writing in a Culture of Technology.” Anson focuses on a student referred to as “Jennifer.” Jennifer goes throughout her day, studying and working on homework, while technology is present at almost every level. Anson states, “Because Jennifer is a privileged, upper-middle-class student who has a paid subscription to an online service, her own high-end computer system and modem, and the money to buy whatever software she needs for her studies, she can continue her schoolwork at home” (52). Similarly, Cynthia Selfe’s “Technology and Literacy: A Story about the Perils of Not Paying Attention” represents the “access” topos quite well. In the article, Selfe argues that rhetoric/composition needs to pay attention to, and not merely use, technology. The reason is—as she also argues in “Politics of the Interface: Power and its Exercise in Electronic Contact Zones” with Richard Selfe, as well as “Rhetoric of Technology and the Electronic Writing Class”—computer networks, while certainly exciting and pregnant with the promise of new possibilities, often tend to reproduce the same old bias, the same privilege, the same inequities—in this case, lack of access, among other things.

While I am inclined to agree with some of the conclusions in all three of these articles, the arguments often center on a series of ‘god’ and ‘devil’ terms, namely access as opposed to lack of access, student-centered opposing teacher-centered, and hierarchy as opposed to openness. The general trend of thought has been to suggest that the opposite of each of the devil terms must be a positive trend in pedagogy. If there is more access, then more people are participating and collaborating, thus making classrooms increasingly centered on students as opposed to teachers, and hence more open, less hierarchical, more democratic. Although these scholars question the extent to which
technology is making positive changes, none of them questions whether any of these changes would be positive. Such a will-to-access seems to parallel similar changes in literacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Increases in access to literacy helped to foment democratic changes. Hence it makes sense that access is what we want: student centered, open, democratic classrooms.

So where Hawisher and Selfe argue that networked classrooms are increasingly panoptical, they are correct. Where they err is in assuming that a less hierarchical classroom would be more democratic. The network does allow for increased surveillance, but this is a tighter system of control, working not through discipline, but through modulation. Where they say that the networked classroom fails to be less hierarchical and more open, maintaining “rigid authority structures,” they miss the fact that the networked classroom is more open. The notion of openness is a common one, as John M. Slatin suggests in “Reading Hypertext: Order and Coherence in a New Medium,” hypertext is not a “closed system, like a book; it is rather an open and dynamic system” (877). The network is assumed to be more open, because less hierarchical and thoroughly diffuse—the problem is rhetoric/composition usually assumes these to be good things. However, Galloway and Thacker powerfully remind us that “the monikers of ‘open’ and ‘closed’ simply further confuse the issue. Instead we would like to speak in terms of alternatives of control whereby the controlling logic of both ‘open’ and ‘closed’ systems is brought out into the light of day” (The Exploit 126). The rhetoric of open and closed misses the point: protocol values open and free communication. Protocol suggests that because we have a non-hierarchical, non-aristocratic network, there is nothing whatsoever to resist against. The same problem persists for the issue of access. As we increase access, we
increase the scope of the distributed network. I mean not to suggest that we shouldn’t focus on increasing electracy and access in poor communities, only that to do so without understanding the nature and the consequences of protocol is to fail to understand what we are doing. “[D]ouble the communication” claim Galloway and Thacker, “leads to double the control” (The Exploit 124). Recalling Foucault: we know what we’re doing and why we’re doing it, but we don’t understand what we are doing does.

If Galloway is correct, then rhetoric/composition has failed to focus on an important aspect (if not the most important aspect) of digital media—its protocological nature. Research in rhetoric/composition has studied writing and community online, it has focused on methods for importing the computer into writing instruction and vice versa, and it has focused on pedagogy and design in multiple modes. However, focusing on issues of access or the ways in which digital media perpetuate or correlate with print media elides the question of what digital media change, as well as issues of what new problems arise when access is gained. The problem is that the code in which any writing programs are produced are just that—at the level of code. However, to the extent that we are focused on issues of content, to which protocol is indifferent, we miss the matter of form, which is always everywhere the same. Galloway and Thacker make the point most forcefully when they write, “Data has no technique for creating meaning, only techniques for interfacing and parsing” (145). Remember that protocols are not hermeneutics, meaning that “‘Web content’ is, in actual reality, the point where standard character sets rub up against the hypertext transfer protocol [this would include users on the web]. There is no content; there is only data and other data” (145). Keeping with
Morrissey and Žižek’s formulation that deliberation means access to the argument and the structure of the argument, we are only at one level.

The focus of rhetoric/composition on subject position in networks shows a failure to grasp this second level. Selfe and Selfe use a Foucauldian analysis of space and power to show how power is still exercised, even in online and networked spaces, and to suggest that these new digital spaces are no different, and still recapitulate the same functions as disciplinary society. This use comes as relatively little surprise, since Bruce Herzberg suggested, in “Michel Foucault’s Rhetorical Theory” that “Composition scholars have cited Foucault dutifully as a powerful influence on modern epistemological skepticism” (80), but goes on to argue that Foucault has had less actual classroom influence. If scholars can increase that influence, however, it would be a benefit since Foucault has so much to say about subjectivity and discourse, which ideally helps students to recognize their position in the academy, and help them produce more open inquiry. We see similar goals reflected in a host of composition scholarship where the goal is to determine the ways in which subjects are or are not altered by working in digital environments.xiii

The problem of this analysis is that it doesn’t reveal nearly enough. Looking at disciplinary practice and discourse on the ground, especially the way in which they were deployed by institutions, fails to grasp the modulation of networks. Control societies, which are distributed networks, do not work at the level of institutions, but rather provide continuous control. Deleuze writes “control mechanisms are inseparable variations, forming a system of variable geometry the language of which is numerical (which doesn't necessarily mean binary). Enclosures [disciplinary institutions] are molds, distinct castings, but controls are a modulation, like a self-deforming cast that will continuously
change from one moment to the other, or like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point” (“Postscript” par. 4). Foucault moved toward these ideas of control and modulation in the later works through the twin concepts of biopower and biopolitics. Herzberg’s article claims that Foucault allows us to analyze subject position, which precisely misses the point, says Galloway: “Network control is unbothered by individuated subjects (subjected subjects). In fact, individuated subjects are the very producers and facilitators of networked control. Express yourself! Output some data! It is how distributed control functions best” (The Exploit 41). By centering on individual student subjects, and how best to make them liberated subjects with critical consciousness, they only move ever further into the protocological. The notion of subject position seems to fit just fine, as the subject, or the individual, is the traditional subject of deliberative democracy and of deliberative discourse. A chorus of voices coming together represents the will of the people. In Galloway’s words: “Subjects as individual people, then, are particular modes of individuation to which sets of values are ascribed: agency, autonomy, self-consciousness, reason, emotion, rights, and so on” (The Exploit 38). However, in the context of distributed networks, it becomes increasingly difficult to speak of traditional political subjects. Again, Galloway argues, “Although ‘individuation’ is a well-worn philosophical concept, in the context of the control societies, individuation is assumed to be continually modulated, precisely because it is informatic, statistical, and probabilistic” (The Exploit 38). The dividual of the control society is an informatic subject—a set of statistical data that can be modulated.

Because we are dealing with a set of data, rather than fleshly bodies, Foucault can claim that in the set of phenomena known as biopolitics (working in tandem with
biopower), control is less applied to a group of people and more applied to “populations,” as modulated data sets. It is less the attempt at establishing docile bodies, and more creation of a set of data we call a population. Galloway writes, “the population is a flexible articulation of individualizing and collectivizing tendencies: many individual nodes, clustered together” (The Exploit 72). Rather than continually focusing on what is the same, we need a renewed focus on what is different about the digital age. We should not assume that what has changed is positive. Galloway and Eugene Thacker note, “Our choice should not simply be ‘everything is different’ or ‘nothing has changed’; instead, one should use this dilemma as a problematic through which to explore many of the shifts in society and control over the last several decades” (The Exploit 5). I suggest much does shift in an era of digital media, and those shifts may make pedagogical relations much less hierarchical. However, such a suggestion should not be misconstrued as naïve optimism. I am not suggesting that problems do not persist. I am certainly not suggesting that we have found a new democratic network that will carry us into an era of unbounded freedom. Neither am I claiming, after the manner of Francis Fukuyama, that we have reached the end of history, and we are simply working out the details. Problems persist, but new ones arise. If we don’t attend specifically to what is happening in digital media, we will “miss the boat.” That is to say, we will miss what takes place in practices specific to digital media, which I claim, after Galloway, are different practices. The same analytics will not work. Galloway and Thacker say it most succinctly: “It is foolish to fall back on the tired mantra of modern political movements, that distributed networks are liberating and centralized networks are oppressive. This truism of the Left may have been accurate in previous decades but must today be reconsidered” (The Exploit 13)
Important, too, is the protocological nature of pedagogy itself, which will be discussed in the final chapter, where I show how pedagogy sets up constraints on possibility, or takes the possible as its object.

The Problem of Memory

To recap what I have covered so far, my premises are as follows:

• Part of memory, in a procedure that began with writing, has moved outside of ourselves.

  ▪ That memory is increasingly communal
  ▪ That communal memory is increasingly privatized
  ▪ That communal memory is intensively regulated

The problem of protocol is similar to the problem of copyright: both have specific, detrimental effects on memory. Memory under copyright and protocol becomes expanded, ever greater. There is memory upon memory, but without invention. We, as citizens, are either not at liberty to work with our memories because it violates copyright, or that memory is inaccessible at the technological level. Worse still, the possibility of memory is regulated at the protocological level. Both copyright and protocol take memory as an object. They attempt to dictate to individuals what they can and cannot do with memory. They close down the possibility of invention through the extension of memory. Under both copyright and protocol, there is more and more and more memory, but no invention. Take a glance at any standard DVD or CD collection. Generally and for the most part, we do not create with those memories. At the very least, the format of the technology discourages us from doing so. Digital technologies have a rather nasty tendency to make reworking them very difficult and very often illegal. The only
possibility recognized by a system of protocols is precisely what lies in the protocol: “not to follow means no possibility” (Protocol 53).

Because of protocol, and because protocol is replacing discipline as the predominant means of control, I argue that the time has come to attend more greatly to Deleuze, especially within rhetoric and composition, which has historically been far more attentive to Foucault’s disciplinary analysis of institutions. This isn’t necessarily bad. Foucault analyzed institutions, the university is an institution: makes sense. However, as we move away from institutions to the continuous control of protocol, institutional analyses become progressively more dated. If memory is regulated, then invention from out of memory is also regulated, which limits the usefulness of the concept of remix as a remixing of content. What is needed, then, is a bridge. Ways of bridging memory and invention—methods for inventing from artificial memory. Invention in the 18th century helped to bring about democratic changes. It also helped to establish the circumstances to work against those changes, which is why we see, as Rickert notes, a boom in information technology but no “concomitant resurgence of liberatory practices” (Acts of Enjoyment 162). Protocol, as Galloway sets up the issue, is a Deleuzian problem that necessitates a Deleuzian solution. Protocol is a means of limiting the virtual (explored in chapter two), to which the domain of memory belongs. D.N. Rodowick suggests that this virtual is “a site where choice has yet to be determined, a reservoir of unthought yet immanent possibilities and modes of existence” (Time Machine 204). The sense of unthought—the refusal to determine in advance—cut against the control of networks. We need to ask, following Robert Ray: “[H]ow can we establish links that will produce information, redefined as a function of surprise?” The function of surprise will open up
the site where choice remains undetermined, and where possibility is boundless.

Fortunately, Deleuze left his work to help us think along these lines. Galloway has fleshed out some of the key concepts, and I will continue to attend to his work, while expanding it to rhetoric/composition. If we are to deliberate in a digital age, it means understanding the nature of memory as the memory of something more than an individual subject—the traditional subject of liberalism. Moreover, it means understanding Deleuze’s concept of expression as an act of rhetorical invention. With an understanding of protocol in place, I can now begin to explain how to work within it. This means turning to Deleuze.

Notes

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i The author is so designated in order to differentiate him from the “real” Cicero, author of *De Oratore* and *De Inventione*, whom most classicists no longer believe wrote the *Ad Herennium*. Nevertheless, he is often designated as [Cicero] for convenient reference.

ii Intriguingly, Jaszi also traces this tendency back to British Romantic poet William Wordsworth (1770-1850), who at one point argues for perpetual copyright.

iii See John Logie’s “Champing at the Bits: Computers, Copyright, and the Composition Classroom” for the extended discussion.

iv The entire conception of fair use, as John Logie has noted, extends from a court decision (Folsom v. Marsh) in which a biographer failed to get permission from the estate of George Washington to use private letters. The standard, set by Justice Storey of the Supreme Court, suggested that fair use is any use that will not infringe on the copyright holder’s ability to profit from a work. The 1976 Copyright Act, however, greatly complicated what constitutes fair use, presenting us with the current dilemma.

v See *Understanding Media*, 36-44.

vi In *Remix*, Lessig acknowledges, much more so than in *Free Culture*, the regulative nature of digital technology, saying that this new “technology could enable almost any form of control the copyright owner could imagine” (98), and again, “Technological changes dramatically increased, and the scope of control that the law gave copyright owners over the use of creative work increased dramatically” (99). Although he is still ardent about the possibilities of freedom in digital technology, this seems to represent a shift in his thinking in that he acknowledges the control aspects imbedded in the technology.

vii Although I have drawn the diagrams myself, I modeled them on the network diagrams in *Protocol* by Galloway (see pages 31-5).

viii These standards are formulated through documents known as Requests for Comments (RFCs), which are the technical documents that give guidelines on designing protocols for internet use. These documents are available to the public and can be viewed by anyone with the inclination to do so. See Stephen Crocker, “How the Internet Got Its Rules.”

ix This can be seen in the more recent claims that hackers are merely internet terrorists. (see the Justice Department’s “Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001,” which was included in the USA Patriot Act; a similar resolution was passed in Great Britain as well)
Given that this article is now ten years old, long before the advent of the iPod, the MP3 player, and various other devices now considered standard equipment for college students, we can assume the situation has progressed much further.

There is, of course, an extensive discourse on this subject. However, certain other pieces might include Computers and Composition 16, on coding and the classroom, as well as “Coding with Power: Toward a Rhetoric of Computer Coding and Composition,” and especially Charles Moran’s “The A-Word: Access and Technology Studies.”

Nowhere is this more obvious than in rhetoric/composition’s continued insistence on the use of the term “literacy.” For more on the historical baggage carried by the overuse of this term, see especially Anne Wysocki and Johndan Johnson-Eilola’s “Blinded by the Letter: Why Are We Using Literacy as a Metaphor for Everything Else?” in Passions, Pedagogies, and 21st Century Technologies. Although it is beyond the strictest scope of this chapter, it is worth noting that whether using global literacy, multiliteracy, visual literacy, electronic literacy, computer literacy—we have allowed ourselves to be deluded into thinking that everything continues much as it has throughout the age of literacy. Because I want to break with literacy, I will quite consciously use Greg Ulmer’s term “electracy” as my term of choice for the duration of this study. “Electracy,” Ulmer has said, “is to the digital image apparatus what literacy is to alphabetic print” (Electronic Monuments xii). If Galloway is correct, rhetoric/composition can ill afford to pretend that digital media simply represent another form of literacy. At the level of code and at the level of protocol, what is taking place is a substantively different process than what happens in traditional literacy. When digital media run, they are executing codes, which are governed by protocols. Reading text is not a perfectly executable language, as code is, no matter how much discipline would like for it to be.

A short list of this scholarship would include, but hardly be limited to, Todd Taylor’s “The Persistence of Difference in Networked Classrooms,” Jonathan Alexander’s “Out of the Closet and into the Network.” For instance, Paul Kei Matsuda’s “Identity and Power in a Japanese Online Discourse Community,” and Alison Regan’s “Type Normal Like the Rest of Us.”

There is no shortage of material on this ideal, from the analyses of John Locke and Thomas Jefferson through John Rawls or Jurgen Habermas in the present age. However, for a contemporary example of this line of thought, see Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics, eds. James Bohman and William Rehg. It is worth noting that there is hardly a reference to technology in the entire book, to say nothing of its effects on deliberative discourse.
Chapter 2
Vir(tual) Bonum Dicendi: Invention

Memory, our great storehouse, is the source of invention. In this chapter, I will explore the relation between the two. With the twofold problem of memory in mind, it is particularly necessary at this point to look to a theory of memory, one that can provide a means of inventing from out of memory, in an effort to express memory. The problem of memory, as posited by Galloway, is a peculiarly Deleuzian issue. The work of protocol seeks to flatten memory, to regulate it, and to reduce the virtuality out of which that memory might unfold. The concepts of memory formulated by Deleuze can help give us a firm handle on the nature of how memory unfolds through expression. To do this, the principle texts will be Bergsonism and Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza. However, I should note that like most of his concepts, these two are connected to the rest of Deleuze’s thought, so branching out will be both beneficial and necessary. The theory of invention here will be an expressive one, but in rhetoric/composition this term often seems to be at best a conflicted term, and at its worst an obscenity. The term is, of course, most closely associated with the “school” of expressivist rhetoric, commonly linked to the same ideological stance that gave rise to the author-genius explored in the last chapter. It will be valuable here to discuss some of the traditional traits of expressivism, so that we can see, as the theory emerges, how Deleuze’s concept of expression differs from the school of thought familiar to most of my readers. I will end this chapter by revisiting Galloway and Thacker, and discussing some of what they consider to be counter-protocological practices in order to glean possibilities for rhetorical invention.
Expression in Composition

Generally speaking, when compositionists hear the word “expressivism,” they think of expressivist rhetoric, developed by the work of theorists such as Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, and Ken Macrorie. The general school of thought—as documented by James Berlin—arose in the twentieth century as a response to current-traditional rhetoric, a point echoed by Christopher Burnham (21-2). Current-traditional rhetoric—a school of thought that suggests grammar and formal technique are constitutive of good writing—is thought to have been the dominant rhetoric of writing teachers in the first half of the twentieth century. Macrorie defines current-traditional rhetoric most succinctly as the training most English instructors have had (at least in the 1960s when he is writing):

“Most English teachers have been trained to correct students’ writing, not to read it; so they put down those bloody correction marks in the margins” (*Telling Writing* 11). If drilling in grammar and learning the “rules” of good English are the hallmarks of good writing, then it stands to reason that simple corrective procedures and marks ought to get the job done. Such was the basic modus operandi of current-traditionalism. Student writing was viewed as a matter of drilling in technique as well as writing, which was corrected until technically perfect. Methods of invention were generally eschewed in favor of formal technique, which left invention aside as a neglected process. Macrorie was among an early generation of compositionists who sought an alternative means of teaching writing. Macrorie’s key issue is, of course, that while current-traditional methodologies may produce technically perfect prose, it also produces aesthetically stunted, turgid, and practically unreadable prose. Expressionism grows from a desire to aid students in using their own experiences in order to write in a more natural voice. Such
writing, it was thought, can get at “deeper truths” than simple instruction in orthography. When students tried overly hard to produce what they thought was intellectual-sounding prose, they were generally successful only in generating a certain stilted rhetoric: what Macrorie famously calls “Engfish.” Such unnatural prose, Macrorie claims, sounds precisely the way students think teachers want them to sound.

Rather than encouraging students to write inharmonious if grammatically correct prose, the general project of expressionism connects classroom writing with personal discourse. Personal discourse was connected to much more than the personal, however, for theorists like Macrorie: to help students write well is to develop the ability tell the truth, to write with a degree of honesty. Here Macrorie’s stance marks itself even further apart from current-traditional rhetoric: when teachers goad students into producing what the teacher supposedly wants to hear, the result is not merely off-putting and awkward sounding, it is inauthentic. What makes personal prose exceptionally authentic is the discovery of selfhood that discourse makes possible: selfhood through self-expression. James L. Kinneavy helps to define the ideals of expressive discourse in his influential *A Theory of Discourse*, where he writes, “This carrying out of a project is the essence of the act of expression. Expression is therefore the structuring of a field of reality in order to realize a project, and this realization gives self-hood to the For-Itself” (401). Expressive discourse helps the writer to realize selfhood, to reach out into the world and give it a kind of structure through writing. The claims, then, for certain strands of expressivism were quite bold: our task as writing teachers is nothing less than the discovery of the authentic self, realized in words. Although his claims might be a bit more modest, expressivism has known probably no better expositor than Peter Elbow.
Probably Elbow’s two most significant contributions to expressivism come through two major books for which he is best known. *Writing without Teachers* and *Writing with Power* give undoubtedly the most familiar accounts of expressive discourse for most compositionists (although Elbow has himself stated that he eschews the term ‘expressivist’). In my reading, we can delineate at least two major commitments in Elbow’s career project (there are no doubt more, but these are certainly key points): to help students to write with a distinctive and personal voice, and to empower them with language. These commitments are no doubt interrelated at every level. To write distinctively is to be empowered with language, and to understand and have means of wielding language powerfully is to establish authority and voice. Nevertheless, these remain identifiable commitments. The commitment to voice emphasizes the personal and the distinctive. When writing is distinct, it is unusual, it takes on a singular character. The writer takes on a kind of identity, one which can be located and named. Elbow finds this sort of writing superior, as would probably most instructors of writing (whether expressivism as such is popular or not). Moreover, when the writing is personal, it is connected to something that is outside the strict confines of the classroom: the everyday lifeworld of the student. For Elbow, voice is the distinctive aspect of the writing. Through voice, Elbow seeks to connect writing with a number of pursuits in life, not simply those confined to a classroom. One way of attaining such connection, articulated in *Writing without Teachers*, is the teacherless writing class: a group of people who come together to share and responds to one another’s writing. The value of such a class is the connection the writer makes with other like-minded individuals: “Writing is a string you send out to connect yourself with other consciousnesses” (*Writing without Teachers* 77).
Through the teacherless writing class, writers can understand what sorts of connections their writing has with other people. Additionally, such writing is connected with everyday life (not only the classroom life) of the student. If Engfish is writing that sounds “teacherly,” then surely one way of avoiding such stilted prose is to avoid writing for a teacher. By eliminating the hierarchy and judgment of the writing classroom, the goal is to set writing more in line with the goals of writers, as opposed to teachers.

As mentioned previously, writing with voice is intimately linked to writing with power. To have voice is to have command and control over the language. Speaking of writers of particular skill, Elbow avers, “What made these writers skilled was their superior control: their ability to produce just the effect they wanted upon readers” (*Writing with Power* 285). He maintains that strong writers are “less helpless, both personally and politically,” suggesting also a strong tie between one’s ability to produce expressive and deliberative discourse. Persuasion is, in part, a function of voice, which should come as no surprise. Ethos, which has a strong correlation with the concept of voice, is one of the three artistic proofs of Aristotle. Ethos, of course, relates to character, to the perception of who one is, or to the portrayal of the self one represents in discourse. Ethos, for Aristotle, represents the “controlling factor in persuasion” (Kennedy 38). At least in *Writing with Power*, Elbow seems to suggest that voice indicates a kind of correspondence between what is said and who the writer really is. The power of writing comes from words that “[fit] the writer” and words that fit “what they are about” (*Writing with Power* 280). Elbow characterizes the connection between the two most succinctly when he writes, “If I want power, I’ve got to use my voice” (*Embracing Contraries* 202). Writing, then, is an act of expressing and/or discovering a prior self. A self must find the
words that correspond to it, and correspond to what it wants to say. These selves are more capable of getting what they want, of winning friends, and of influencing people. To find voice is to find power. These principles, it seems, represent the basic commitments of Elbow’s work, albeit briefly.

Of course, Elbow and the expressivist school have never been without their critics. Among the most prominent is James Berlin, who in “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class,” ties the lineage of expressionism to elitist 19th century rhetoric. Later, he traces this lineage further. Expressionism, he claims, locates its emphasis in the individual subject, a Cartesian cogito, *par excellence*. Elsewhere, Berlin traces the lineage of expressionistic rhetoric clear back to Plato, for its emphasis on subjectively ascertained truth: knowable but not communicable. Berlin’s point of critique, as it was with most things, was expressivism’s inability to lead to effective resistance and questioning of dominant ideologies. Castigating expressivism on the basis of it’s tendency toward appropriation, he writes, “[I]deology provides the language to define the subject (the self), other subjects, the material world, and the relation of all of these to each other” (“Rhetoric and Ideology” 479). As such, ideology is always imbricated with the practices of teaching writing. Hence, the ideology of expressivism suggests that “the existent is located within the individual subject” (484). In the case of expressivism, the isolation of the individual subject also represents its downfall. Berlin suggests that because expressivism focuses on an individual subject, the possibilities for such a rhetoric fostering solidarity and resistance are minimal. The dominant institutions can easily co-opt a group of selves, isolated from one another, and can make the ends of expressivism subservient to its own goals. In the end, expressivism “can be used to
reinforce the entrepreneurial virtues capitalism most values: individualism, private initiative, the confidence for risk taking, the right to be contentious with authority (especially the state)” (“Rhetoric and Ideology” 487). All these are values likely to be espoused by the ruling elites anyways. Hence there is very little hope for expressivism to express any genuine political shifts, neither to express a more empowered student.

By contrast, Berlin favors a social-epistemic rhetoric, one that demonstrates the transactional quality of language, truth, and the real. Rather than locate truth in the objective world (current-traditional) or in subjectivity (expressionism), Berlin prefers to views truth as a transaction in discourse between hearer and speaker in a specifically social situation. For Berlin, the goal of writing pedagogy ought to be one that demonstrates this transactional nature of truth. A social-epistemic rhetoric may then be deployed in the service of students who critique local institutions in an effort to change their local situation. “Writing courses,” he argues in Rhetoric and Reality, “prepare students for citizenship in a democracy, for assuming their political responsibilities, whether as leaders of simply as active participants” (189). In order to produce active participants, students must begin by questioning their own social situation, and then questioning the situations around them. In so doing, students begin to attain a kind of critical consciousness: no longer passive recipients of a given social situation, but active participants in constructing that situation anew. Berlin’s line of reasoning here resembles in many respects the goals of the critical pedagogues, who follow after the Brazilian educational theorist Paolo Freire and among whose principal American proponents are Henry Giroux, Ira Shor, Peter McLaren and others. I will give critical pedagogy full shrift in the final chapter. For now, I wish only to introduce this concept of critical
consciousness as Berlin views it. For Berlin, such consciousness sees the constructedness of its situation, and the constructedness of consciousness itself, rather than accepting these as givens. For Berlin, the stable subject of expressive rhetoric is precisely such a fixed (hence untenable) *a priori*.

However, Elbow questions the extent to which what he calls voice represents subjectivity at all. In terms of reading texts, Elbow flatly rejects equating voice with subject position. In his introduction to *Landmark Essays on Voice and Writing*, he delineates several models of voice, insisting, “I have claimed that none of these senses of voice imply or require any particular theory of identity or self. We can have whatever ideological position we want and still agree with others in using the term *voice*” (“Introduction” xlii). Moreover, he establishes that there are a myriad of voices that “feel” (Elbow’s term) like something “I” would say. Nevertheless, situations arise when “we experience our writing or speaking or thinking somehow not like us—somehow artificial or pretended or distanced or stilted” (xlii). He then goes on to discuss two positions on voice that most writers negotiate: the “sentimental” position and the “sophisticated voice.” In the former we find a “true voice” that “will conquer all difficulties” (xliv). This is the voice of authority, the voice that reveals the self underneath. In the latter, we find what he calls “sophisticated voice,” or the voice that says there is no true “person” underneath all the smoke and mirrors: “Your sense of ‘you’ is just an illusion of late Romantic, bourgeois, capitalism. Forget it. You have no self. There is no such thing. You are nothing but roles” (xliv). Elbow indicates that writers negotiate between these positions, rarely (if ever) choosing only one in practice. I like here Elbow’s emphasis on the flexibility of voice, but it seems to fly in the face of
comments made in Writing with Power when he suggests that words fit the writer (which is not to suggest that Elbow doesn’t have the right to change his mind). If they are to fit the writer, then they must have some kind of relationship (logical, natural or otherwise) to the self with which they correspond. Despite this fact, where I want to focus as I draw out Deleuzian inventive tactics is the possibility of more fluidity and instability in voice: a voice of becoming. The purpose of using Deleuze is to help answer Victor J. Vitanza’s question in the second of his “Three Countertheses”: who speaks when something is spoken? For Elbow, Macrorie, and others, human beings speak. In speaking, they express themselves through an authentic voice. Writing instructors can help them to find such a voice. However, Vitanza urges rhetoric/composition to wonder whether anything else speaks or expresses itself, besides only the human. In an effort to think through this question alongside Vitanza, let us start with Deleuze’s concept of expression.

Expression in Philosophy

The concept of expression is primary in the thought of Gilles Deleuze. His major treatise on expression remains the first book on Spinoza—one of his first published studies. In it, he formulates expression not as the discovery of a pre-existent and true self, nor of a pre-existing substance, but as a fundamental and univocal aspect of being: “To be is to express oneself, to express something else, or to be expressed” (Expressionism in Philosophy 253). Already we should see how this concept of expression pulls away from expressivist rhetoric. Something other than humans expresses itself. Humans can express something else besides themselves (and not in the stilted, awkward manner that Macrorie indicates). For Deleuze, in his study of Spinoza, everything expresses itself: expression is becoming. The question we must come to ask is the manner of this expression. If an idea
is not mine, originally, what then does it mean to express an idea? How does an idea become? In Gregg Lambert’s words, “The problem of expression in Spinoza’s philosophy concerns, first of all, the interplay between the internal thought and external bodies, and how ideas come to express this relation between inside and outside as being internal to the power of thought” (31). Ideas, then, are part of the force of thought. The problem is understanding what the relation between them is, and then knowing in what ways the concepts might be deployed. For our purposes here, I want to set out a notion of Deleuzian expressivism as opposed to traditional expressive discourse—one that can help us to work with the problem of memory, connecting it to a theory of invention. The purpose of the experiment, an expressive experiment, is to expand the field of inventive possibility. What makes this project expressive is that each experiment is unique to an individual’s memory. My focus remains on the concept of voice. However, by working out of Deleuze, we locate expression not in a transcendent self, but in the virtual field of memory. The goal is not to reveal or to discover a true self, but to see what emerges, what might be trying to express itself. The point is to experiment, to see what might happen.

To express oneself is only one aspect of expression—one is just as much expressed, and one can express something else altogether. Ideas are an example of a “something else.” Deleuze puts forth a means of understanding what it means to express an idea. For him, expression, like everything, is immanent and univocal. As Todd May reminds us, Deleuze wants to get away, entirely, from concepts of transcendence. In expressivist rhetoric, the voice, the self, the subject position is transcendent. If we can agree with Berlin and tie expressivist rhetoric to Plato, then surely the truth of what the
writer is getting at can also be considered transcendent. The writing, the aesthetics deployed, is secondary to the truth or the voice expressed. These are precisely the terms Deleuze shies away from by gleaning from Spinoza what he calls the univocity of being—that is, a concept of the world without transcendence. Traditionally, philosophy tends to divide existence into two or more substances (mind and body, matter and spirit, etc.). When this happens, one substance will always be superior to the other: we will say that it transcends the lesser substance. Deleuze finds in Spinoza the concept of univocity, which suggests that all substance is of a single kind, but that substance expresses itself in different attributes (for our purposes, mental and physical or “thought” and “extension”). These attributes then express themselves in various modes (such as this or that thought, this or that body). A particular body or thought is a modulation of an attribute, which is an expression of substance. As Deleuze remarks, “we conceive [an attribute] as attributing its essence to something that remains identical for all attributes, that is, to necessarily existing substance” (Expressionism in Philosophy 45). Attributes are an expression of something else. Todd May expounds upon Deleuze’s point when he says, “Attributes attribute, or express, an essence. Substance expresses itself through its attributes” (Gilles Deleuze 37). Throughout the process of expression, however, no transcendent substance (spirit, forms, mind, subject) is giving pride of place in that it stands outside of existence. The expression of attributes is immanent and univocal. What is expressed remains a part of that which expresses it. It is opposed to what is typically a hallmark of philosophy, which is a thought of transcendence. The trouble with transcendence is that it always proposes two substances, and one is usually conceptualized as superior to the other. vii In Deleuze’s thought, there is one substance,
and its expression. Therefore all being is univocal, but this substance expresses itself in different ways. Attributes express a substance, but there is no substance without its expression. We cannot separate substance from its expression, so this substance is immanent to its expression.

Expression takes place through the folding and refolding of substance. Deleuze’s notion of expression obviously differs in starting points from traditional expressive rhetoric, but it further differs in terms of the nature of that expression. Expression does not connote “a correspondence between an object and the idea that represents it, but rather refers to the power of the idea to ‘explicate’ fully the essence of something” (Lambert 32). When an idea is expressed, the adequacy of the expressed term does not depend upon an ideal correspondence where the idea correlates with a thing, but rather it lies in the power of the idea. Deleuze tells us “only adequate ideas, as expressive, give us knowledge through causes, or through a thing’s essence” (Expressionism 134).

Expressivist rhetoric indicates an expressing subject, and words that coincide with said subject and possibly also with the world. Deleuze generally in his philosophy tries to remove his focus from individuals, or particular subjectivities. He claims “the traditional distinction between the sense expressed and the object designated (and expressing itself in this sense) thus finds in Spinozism direct application” (Expressionism 105). In other words, this expressionism is not based on the traditional western distinctions between subject and object. What is expressed is always immanent to its expression. Substance is expressed—it does not pre-exist, and then express itself. In Lambert’s words, “The expressed does not exist outside its expression” (33). The concept is no doubt unusual given rhetoric/composition’s traditional emphasis on expressing what one thinks. Here,
instead of transcendent expression of preexistent ideas, Deleuze gives us the expression of explication and implication.

Key for Deleuze’s thought are the favored terms explication and implication. Deleuze argues, “Expression is on the one hand an explication, and unfolding of what expresses itself, the One manifesting itself in the Many (substance manifesting itself in its attributes, and these attributes manifesting themselves in their modes)” (Expressionism 16). So the substance, which is univocal, expresses itself in attributes, and attributes express in modes. However, expression does not imply a sense of hierarchy or transcendence. Rather, we must understand “multiple expression…involves Unity. The One remains involved in what expresses it, imprinted in what unfolds it, immanent in whatever manifests it: expression is in this respect an involvement” (Expressionism 16). Substance then explicates by evolving, but remains immanent, rather than transcendent, by implication and involvement. For this reason, Byron Hawk, in A Counter-History of Composition, can rightly claim that “expression is not of a subjective mind but of a whole social, textual, and material field” (200). Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari write in A Thousand Plateaus, “There is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation” (79). We are clearly very far afield from the idea that an individual expresses itself in the world. For many, this raises several key questions: “How can someone say I don’t express myself? If there’s no self to express, then what are we saying when we express something?” Such questions are common. However, if we stay with Deleuze, we will see how this line of thinking works. More than humans express themselves: the virtual expresses itself, and can do so through us. To explain, let us move on to discuss the virtual and the actual.
Virtual/Actual

Deleuze’s conception of virtual and actual differs starkly from common uses of the term, specifically more recent developments in “virtual reality” and similar technologies. Deleuze gives his fullest account of the virtual in his study of French philosopher Henri Bergson, *Bergsonism*, where Deleuze explains that the virtual is, in a word, difference. Difference, for Deleuze, remains primary to everything: “Difference is behind everything, but behind difference there is nothing” (*Difference and Repetition* 57). One would normally think of difference as the “what-it-is” that comes between two identities. In looking at the “difference” between a car and a computer, I might identify any number of things that are *different* between them. These would be the differences between identities, the identities being “car” and “computer.” However, Deleuze asks us to consider things in another way. He asks us to consider a difference *not* in the interstices between things that are, but a primary difference, prior to anything coming to be. From difference, all things that become unfold. We might say that the things which come to be might come to be in any number of ways, with no necessary reason for them to come to be in one way and not in another. If the difference were “different” enough, we might even be able to say that there are literally *infinite* ways that difference might be able to actualize itself.

Deleuze posits such a difference as a field—a virtual field. The virtual is a field (or a realm) of pure difference. We might say it is composed of “elements,” but not elements in the sense that they are identical to themselves as elements. The virtual has no identity, but is a set of virtual differences. In point of fact, when we speak of the virtual, we aren’t representing it in any way. May uses the term “palpating” (*Gilles Deleuze* 20).
Traditionally a medical term, palpating refers to the act of pressing down on the skin to detect a subsurface injury. Rather than cutting open the skin to find something (doing more harm than good), a doctor palpates an injury, sensing the epidermis to determine the damage underneath. The terms “difference” and “virtual” work in a similar way. Since difference has no identity, we can’t identify it or represent it through words, but we can palpate it.

Deleuze seeks to liberate the idea of difference from its having been historically shackled to identity. In this way, we cannot claim that the identity of difference is difference. Deleuze rather claims that difference differs with itself. Rather than attempting to manage difference by reducing it to that which is between identities and specific concepts, he situates difference among the central concepts of his philosophy. Virtual fields of difference are those from which things come to be: that is, differentiated. The process is one by which the virtual differentiates itself along certain lines. In other words, it is expressed. In keeping with his logic of expression, Deleuze says that difference cannot be separated from its development in differentiation. The actualizations of virtual difference, moreover, are not stable entities. The virtual unfolds and then refolds itself continually. Hence, there are always processes of becoming: being is never stable, but is always becoming. With this view, Deleuze calls us to abandon the search for a stable subject from which expression arises without a stable being who (or even what) does the expressing, who or what they express, and what seeks expression. In expressing itself through unfolding, the virtual becomes actual: it is expressed. May gives an analogy from biology that might aid understanding:
Think of genetic information. Our genes store information about us. They contribute that information in the process of our growth. But the information itself is not in the genes in any actual way. One cannot look at someone’s genes under a microscope and find it lying there on the slide, available to vision. As the genes unfold, the information becomes apparent in the actual world; the person becomes what the information formatted that person to become. But the information itself, even though it exists, does not exist in actuality. It exists virtually in the structure of the genes.

(Gilles Deleuze 48)

Likewise, the virtual is different in kind from the actual, but it is very real. The virtual is immanent to the actual, as all of Deleuze’s thinking is a thought of immanence. Deleuze uses Marcel Proust, who writes of this concept of the virtual in his famous *Recherche du Temps Perdu*, as “real without being actual, ideal without being abstract” (*Time Regained* 264).

While it may sound as though the virtual is another rehashing of Plato’s forms, the distinction is quite crucial. Deleuze tells us that the virtual is Platonic in inspiration (*Bergsonism* 44), but it differs with Plato’s description of the forms. For Plato, the things are more real depending upon the degree to which they participate in the forms, more true to the extent that they participate in the forms. We might say a chair is more real to the degree that it participates in the form of chairness. Chairness here serving as a form transcendent to the chair, above it or outside of it. Philosophy has traditionally been seen as a search for this transcendence. The virtual does not transcend the actual nor the phenomena of experience. For Deleuze, the virtual is just as real as the actual and always
present (remember being is univocal). That is, the virtual is an immanent, not a transcendent field. As such, the virtual is very much immanent to the actual. Throughout Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza, Deleuze lays out his thought of immanence, an “expressive immanence [which] cannot be sustained unless it is accompanied by a thoroughgoing conception of univocity…of univocal Being” (34). The virtual field is not above somewhere, but here immanent to the things themselves—a ‘One’ both implicated and explicated in phenomena.

I should also make a necessary distinction between the virtual and the possible, because the two can be easily conflated, but the difference is important. For Deleuze, the possible is not associated with the actual but with the real. Deleuze posits differences of degree versus differences of kind. The difference between the virtual and actual is one of kind. The possible, however, is not different in kind from the real, but rather looks just like the real, lacking only “realization.” The virtual does not resemble the actual in the same way. In Deleuze’s words, “While the real is in the image and likeness of the possible that it realizes, the actual, on the other hand does not resemble the virtuality that it embodies” (Bergsonism 97). So then the possible differs only in degree with the real, while the virtual is different from the actual in kind.

For example, only one difference exists between the world in which I stand up and walk out of my room versus the world in which I stay to finish this chapter: my actually standing up and leaving. These two possible worlds are not different in kind, only in degree: we might say the degree to which I am present or not. These are one and the same world. Deleuze has in mind something very different in speaking of the virtual: two realms different in kind. By maintaining a distinction between the virtual and the
possible, Deleuze keeps open the question of what can be thought, and what can be done. If we consider only what is possible, we remain forever in the realm of what is thought: the actual. However, to consider a virtual field of difference, different in kind from the actual, opens up thinking to new places and possibilities. There are thoughts that we might think that *thought has not thought yet*. Thought, in Deleuze’s work, has a mode of expression all its own. It is a radical means of keeping open the question of how we might live and how we might think. The purpose of Deleuze’s project is to ever push on thought itself, and to try to open thinking to what it has not yet thought of: *unthought*. One way to do that is by focusing on the virtual field of memory.

**Memory: Psychological and Ontological**

Memory, the past—a virtual field—is always with us. Not a transcendent ideal in which our memory participates, such as a Platonic form, Deleuze terms the virtual field of the past “ontological memory” (after Bergson). At the virtual level, each of our pasts contain the entire past. There is no “your past,” “my past,” “her past,” “it’s past”—there is only the past. The recollection of memory (which Deleuze, after Bergson, calls the “recollection-image”) involves a leap into ontological memory. From the virtual field of the past, of ontological memory, a recollection-image is differentiated into an actual psychological memory. When recalling a psychological memory, unfolded from ontological memory, a recollection-image occurs. Psychological memory is then always actual, while ontological memory, from which the psychological unfolds, is always virtual. Recollection precedes perception. We move from a recollection—actualized into a recollection-image from out of the virtual field of memory—to a perception. Memory is the virtual field from which recollections unfold. The point to remember here is that
when anything is remembered, and expressed, it is always far more than just “I” who expresses or remembers. Something expresses itself through me. The authoritative “I,” Deleuze considers an insidious and limiting concept. So much is expressing itself, yet we try ever harder to limit the excess of expression by imposing the form of the self in order to limit expression. I will show, shortly, how the use of the coherent self has taken on a new political dimension, and how backing away from an authorial/authoritative “I” can be used advantageously. Nevertheless, we can find not only unique voice, but endless voices, because the virtual can actualize in endless ways.

Recall that to be means I express, I am expressed, or something expresses itself through me. Expression, then, is an experimentation with selves, and an experimentation with voice. For Deleuze, expression is not the expression of a prior self, nor of a transcendent consciousness, but rather a “self” is expressed as substance unfold through it. Moreover, it is involved in what it expresses, immanent to it. In chapter one we dealt with the issue of artificial or external memory. Here, we must explore the relationship that memory has with ontological and psychological memory.

The actual is differentiated difference, always with a discrete identity. Hence, at this level the memory of new media exists: not virtually, but actually—not as difference, but as discrete identities. As Lev Manovich reminds us: “New media is analog media converted to a digital representation. In contrast to analog media which is continuous, digitally encoded media is discrete.” (Language 67). Therefore, when we speak of digital media, we are not talking about the virtual field of memory, from which consciousness arises, but an external, already differentiated field of new media memory. This memory is always already differentiated because it exists at the level of code. Because it is coded, it
is already predetermined—code is as code does, to borrow Galloway’s formulation. Whatever is stored as a digital encoding can only unfold in one particular way. This limitation on becoming is more drastic than one might initially think. What keeps open the opportunity to expand what might be thought is the differentiation of a virtual field. It can express itself endlessly in new ways. New media do not undergo such an operation. As Galloway tells us, “The limits of a protocological system and the limits of possibility within that system are synonymous” (Protocol 52). Moreover, he writes, “To follow a protocol means that everything possible within that protocol is already at one’s fingertips. Not to follow means no possibility” (53). Lawrence Lessig illustrates my point for me in Remix. Steve Jobs, the head of Apple Computers, is famously one of the most significant individuals who helped usher in the contemporary age of music. As the major record labels attacked all forms of musical downloading as piracy, it was principally Jobs who informed the labels that, as Lessig writes, “the only nature of digital technology is that it conforms to how it is coded” (40). In other words, file sharing is not the actual passing back and forth of material objects. File sharing programs aren’t sending compact discs or records by internet. If digital media is nothing more than the product of code, then changing the nature of musical content is as simple as changing the code. From this simple formulation, Jobs went on to create iTunes, with the blessing of the record labels, all of which have gone on to make billions from selling MP3s instead of traditional music formats like compact discs and vinyl. The moral of the story, Lessig reminds us, is that digital technologies are nothing more than the aggregates of their coding. If the labels wanted control over the music they sold, they simply needed to program it in.
If digital memory were not already differentiated, it could not be protocological. Protocols ensure the passage of discrete packets of information by preventing confusion and systematizing coordination between machines, as we have already seen. In order for two machines that span the physical globe to communicate, there must be universals of communication. Such a communication must be always everywhere the same, whether one is sitting in an internet café in New York City, or connected to a satellite in Afghanistan. Protocol can accomplish this operation only by being “anti-diversity” (Protocol 142) and completely homogenizing. Protocol homogenizes, as I have previously shown through Kittler, at the level of code, an utterly unique linguistic system. Code’s exclusivity as a language lies in its unique nature. “It lies not in the fact that code is sublinguistic, but rather in the fact that it is hyperlinguistic. Code is a language, but a very special kind of language. Code is the only language that is executable” (Protocol 165). Devotees of J. L. Austin and speech act theory may protest at this point, suggesting that normal language can be materially effective. It can be, but it isn’t necessarily. Walking into a crowded theater and shouting “fire” may or may not have a material effect, depending upon the response of the crowd to my actions. Deliberation is dependent upon a relatively unpredictable response from the audience. Code is automatically executed. There is no deliberation. It is necessary to understand the difference between the two by undertaking a discussion of sense.

**Making Sense of Protocol**

Sense, for Deleuze, is a non-representational concept that refers to the interaction of a proposition with the material world. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze posits three different dimensions of representational language: denotation, manifestation, and
signification. Denotation, Deleuze says, “has as its element and its criterion the true and false” (362). In other words, the denotative element of a proposition is the extent to which it can be proved true or false (and whether or not that is an issue for the proposition). A simple statement such as “The cat sat on the mat” is denotative, its criteria truth or falsehood. If what we commonly think of as a cat is engaged in an activity we can agree to call sitting, and if that sitting is performed on an object we think of as a mat, then this statement might be safely judged true. If any of those criteria are not met, then it is likely false.

In the second element, manifestation, “a displacement of logical values occurs which is represented by the Cogito: no longer the true and the false, but veracity and deception” (14). In other words, whereas with simple denotation the concern was truth and falsity, now the concern is veracity and deception. While having similar connotations, veracity and deception differ from truth and falsity. With veracity and deception, Deleuze brings in the concepts of desire and belief: “Desire is the internal causality of an image with respect to the existence of the object or the corresponding state of affairs” (13). At the same time, “belief is the anticipation of the object or state of affairs insofar as its existence must be produced by an external causality” (13). What we see in these twin concepts, as well as the differentiation between veracity/deception and truth/falsity, is a concern with the speaker. Whereas denotation points outward at objects or states of affairs, manifestation points back to the speaker. Hence, Deleuze says manifestation manifests the Cogito, that which “grounds the judgment of denotation” (14).
The third element, signification, is “found in the indirect process that corresponds to it, that is, in its relation to other propositions from which it is inferred, or conversely, whose conclusion it renders possible” (14). Signification, then, is an intralinguistic property, which, according to Douglas Thomas, is an element “of the proposition that [indicates] conditions in which the proposition may be true or false” (364). May uses the familiar syllogism, “All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.” In this case, the first two propositions signify the truth conditions for the third. We do not need to know the denotation or manifestation of the first statements: “It doesn’t matter who Socrates is or who is speaking the three propositions” (May, Gilles Deleuze 98). In Deleuze’s words, they signify “the condition of truth, the aggregate of conditions under which the proposition would be true” (Logic 14). Given the first two statement, we have the truth conditions of the third. We know under what conditions it can be held as true. These three elements comprise the elements of representational language. However, there is a fourth element, more dynamic and complex than these three. Deleuze calls this element “sense.”

Sense is “the attribute of the state of affairs” (22), the “expressed of the proposition, [an] incorporeal, complex, and irreducible entity, at the surface of things, a pure event which inheres or subsists in the proposition” (19). Sense is a virtuality that is both of a proposition and in things themselves, and yet it is not reducible to either. Sense “merges neither with the proposition or the terms of the proposition, nor with the object or with the states of affairs that the proposition denotes, neither with the ‘lived,’ or representation or with the mental activity of the person who expresses her self in the proposition, nor even with concepts or signified essences” (33). For Deleuze, words
intersect with a situation to create a new situation, something that did not exist beforehand. In other words, it creates a new line of differentiation for the virtual—another way of becoming, a line of flight. This act of creation, the “unfolding of the circle along the length of the border between propositions and things,” cannot be accounted for by representational language. Representation can point towards the speaker, and it can point towards things, or can name particular truth conditions, but only sense causes a new situation to unfold that was not present before.

Sense, as I mentioned, is a virtuality, and so we now have a context in which to understand these processes. As a virtuality, it follows the logic of expression Deleuze has already delineated. Sense is inseparable from the proposition that expresses it, it is immanent to the proposition, but it also relates to things and to bodies. In Lambert’s words,

> What transforms the accused into the convict is the incorporeal attribute that is the expressed of the judge’s sentence; again, the expressed cannot be separated from its expression, and neither can the attribute be located in the body of the convict to account for this transformation in sense. The logic of expression addresses precisely these transformative events both at the level of sense and at the level of bodies, or rather, the event that occurs at once both at the surface and in the depth.

(36)

Sense allows for the ways in which certain things can and do happen. When a judge declares a defendant a convict, the judge has now allowed for certain things to happen to that individual. Various apparatuses can now act on the individual in certain ways, because of the sense that has been created. It is not that the convict’s status was forever...
possible, lying in wait for the judge’s words to bring them forth. Rather, the criminal’s status as criminal is immanent to the judge’s proposition. It cannot be separated from the expression, but it is also immanently tied up with the convict’s physical existence. Sense is constantly at work in this way in daily life.

With sense in mind, the idea that protocol, as Galloway suggests, takes the possible as its object should begin to take on a new dimension. Code takes the possible as object through the restriction of sense. Galloway writes, “To follow a protocol means that everything possible within that protocol is already at one’s fingertips. Not to follow means no possibility” (Protocol 53). Only what is allowed by the protocol is possible. If one follows a protocol, one has success. If one does not follow the protocol, there is not only no success, nothing happens. Deleuze refers to this level of control when he avers in his “Postscript” that the coils of a snake are more controlling than the burrows of the molehill. Discipline (burrows) relates to the control of bodies, but there is room for error. The body of a soldier is meant to move in this way, and to hold a gun in this manner, and to fire in this fashion. However, within disciplinary constraints there necessarily exists some level of variance. Protocol has no such variance. Protocological mechanisms (coils) dictate flows and those mechanisms create the conditions of possibility (they don’t represent them, they are them). Protocols are dependent upon bringing every machine (and by proxy, every person) together at the same communicative level—Galloway says, “It consumes diversity, aiming instead for university” (Protocol 243). Protocols are followed completely, or they are not followed. In this way, protocols represent a restriction of sense: a completely reactive language. If sense overflows representational language, then protocols are meant to contain that overflow.
In a protocological system, everything that exists must be codifiable: literally turned into code. In order for something to exist, it must be codifiable and storable, hence a correspondence noted by Galloway and Thacker between happening and storage: “The twentieth century will be remembered as the last time there existed nonmedia. In the future there will be a coincidence between happening and storage” (*Exploit* 132). If everything is coded, then by virtue of Lev Manovich’s definition of new media, everything is media. The function of biopower switches from action on material bodies to modulating populations. As we move forward into the protocological, everything becomes codifiable and quantifiable: everything can be rendered as data. All that is, is there as data. Biopower becomes increasingly pervasive because everything is rendered for modulation. William Bogard’s comments are worthwhile here:

> Individuation, the logic of disciplinary societies, is external division of a mass into distinct, numbered (or signed) entities. Dividuation, on the other hand, is the internal division of entities into measurable and adjustable parameters, in the way, for instance, a digital sound sample is divided into separate parameters of tone, pitch or velocity. For audio engineers, their parameters, or ‘modules,’ can be independently adjusted. (“The Coils of a Serpent” par. 18)

Bogard goes on to comment that dividuation functions on populations in much the same way. When everything can be rendered as data and stored, then everything is available for modulation. This is life in an informatic society. These are the operations that code enables. This is why I argue against (alongside Kittler, Galloway, and Thacker) the notion that digital media, especially the internet, are open and more inherently democratic. If anything, digital media allow for much more control via the restriction of
sense. However, if sense is what overflows representation, then what is necessary for digital media is a means of overflowing possibility.

To overflow these possibilities is to induce what Galloway calls hypertrophy: “The goal is not to destroy technology…but to push it into a state of hypertrophy, further than it is meant to go. Then, in its injured, sore, and unguarded condition, technology may be sculpted anew into something better, something in closer agreement with the real wants and desires of its users” (Protocol 206). We cannot abandon technology, but by inducing hypertrophy, we overflow the possibilities of protocological language. Code does not have sense, it only actualizes in one way. Code is always immediately executed. Herein lies the importance of Robert Ray’s formulation to restore the function of surprise. To work against protocol is to work towards the virtual, the unexpected, surprise. Galloway says as much when he suggests that we must make the language of protocol overflow its possibilities. To overflow possibility is the virtual dimension of sense.

Here Galloway parallels Deleuze when he indicates that language itself can overflow its own categories: “It is language which fixes the limits (the moment, for example, at which the excess begins), but it is language as well which transcends the limits and restores them to the infinite equivalence of an unlimited becoming” (Logic 2-3). Language is not code. Memory is expressed from the virtual not the actual. Ontological memory, being a field of pure difference, and actualizing differently, presents a more sustainable model, if, and only if, we can experiment and create new forms of testimony and expression. The aim of hypertrophy is to bring a virtual field to bear on new media. It is necessary to establish a virtual field of difference that can overflow the categories of code. The goal of
protocol is the elimination of difference, but because of difference, we can break up protocols.

Inventive Tactics of Becoming

Protocol controls sense through limiting sense to what is allowed in the encoding. If protocol can be overflowed, then we must establish connections to the virtual in order to restore the function of surprise. Because sense is virtual, it expresses itself in infinite ways: it transforms through the operations of language. Claire Colebrook writes, “Language can operate actively or reactively to the incorporeal transformations of sense. Reactively, it can present itself as mere description, as a simple recognition or proposition about a world that remains the same, and that language merely doubles. Actively, it can extend and express its transformative power” (111). Sense itself transforms, it becomes always something else. The extension and transformation of sense can occur because sense is produced from somewhere else: this somewhere else Deleuze calls nonsense. While sense is an incorporeal dimension that inheres between objects and propositions, nonsense is something quite other. Generally speaking, nonsense is something that doesn’t make sense, specifically something that lacks sense, often the absurd. Nonsense is not the absurd, for Deleuze, but a specific term, which, while it is without sense, it is not the absence of sense: “Nonsense is that which has no sense, and that which, as such and as it enacts the donation of sense, is opposed to the absence of sense. This is what we must understand by ‘nonsense’” (71). Sense and nonsense share a non-exclusionary relationship, as Paul Patton asserts, “[F]or Deleuze, nonsense is immediately sense, and yet is divided from sense” (Between Deleuze and Derrida 72-3). Not “a-sense” or subsense, it is what creates sense.
Sense is part of both words and things, while nonsense moves between them, as May suggests: “Sense is the paradoxical element that resides in the proposition but is the attribute of things. Nonsense is the paradoxical element that circulates among language and things and brings them together” (108). Nonsense does so by not being any named element, but rather an “aleatory point” that occupies two different series. This aleatory point is “an empty space lacking its own place, an unfixable element from which determinate elements arise” (Deleuze on Literature 26). In other words, nonsense is not a “thing.” It is an element, but one that is not identical to itself (it constitutes a virtuality). Moreover it occupies two realms, words and things, propositions and object, the world and language: “The realm of difference that is the world and the realm of difference that is language are brought together and kept apart by nonsense, a paradoxical element that ‘traverses’ them” (May Gilles Deleuze 107). These two divergent series inhabited by nonsense, according to Ronald Bogue:

[C]onstitute the minimal elements of any structure, according to Deleuze, and just as the domain of sense is generated through the play of the aleatory point of non-sense, so the domain of events issues from the play of aleatory points, for the aleatory point, finally, is simply a figure for difference—a self-differentiating (i.e. generative) differentiation (through divergent determinations) differing from itself (nowhere itself fixed, stable or possessed of a single identity). (Deleuze on Literature 26)

Because nonsense is that which produces sense, it is alleviated of the burden of “making sense” in the traditional manner. Nonsense expands what sense is able to be. Exploring nonsense means leaving safer modes of discourse and practice in an effort to find a
different way of doing them: “In nonsense, causal relations are frequently reversed, temporal sequences ignored, identities confused” (Deleuze on Literature 25). The function of protocol can be seen as the limiting of language to sense only, excluding nonsense. By excluding nonsense, surprise can be eliminated. Because of nonsense, it is impossible to know precisely how one’s statements might be taken in other contexts, what effects they might have, what changes might occur. Eliminate nonsense, and this unknown element ceases to be a problem. Such is the basic function of protocol. The basic function of counterprotocol is the exploration of nonsense.

The robust flexibility of protocol means that it can handle just about anything users throw at it, as long as it’s written at the level of protocol. This flexibility is something to be eschewed in favor of a kind of liquidity. In The Exploit, Galloway and Thacker distinguish the concept of pliancy as opposed to flexibility. Flexibility is precisely the advantage of protocol (what it was designed from the very beginning to be). Protocol is both flexible and robust, hence never changing. Galloway and Thacker seek a pliancy instead: “We’re tired of being flexible,” write Galloway and Thacker, “Being pliant means something else, something vital and positive” (98). Pliancy involves backing away from the flexibility of informatic identity: Recall here the IBM commercial featuring a woman, walking up to the “IBM Helpdesk.” In her hands she holds a box. She tells the man behind the desk, “This is me.” The man looks confused, to which she replies, “Social Security Number, Credit Card number…” Now understanding, the man replies, “You mean your identity,” illustrating precisely the formulation of identity as code about which Galloway writes. Selfhood no longer denotes an individual, regulated by disciplinary institutions, but a dividual—a series of
codes available for modulation. Alongside the regulation of sense (and imbricated with it) stands protocols “fostering, impelling, and optimizing life” (82). Galloway and Thacker refer to this conception of life as “life-itself.” To be pliant is to reject such being codified, and to embrace a sense of fluidity in identity. It is to reject becoming-codifiable. There is an entirely new political dimension to selfhood when the self is pure data. The self becomes endlessly manipulated. The dividual is always controlled. It represents “[a] shift in the object of control, from the individualized body or organism of the civil subject to the massified biological species-population” (Exploit 76). If we are no longer dealing with the liberal subject, then most models of subjectivity that rhetoric/composition have focused on are not applicable to the information age: from the Expressivist subject of Elbow and Murray to the critical consciousness of Berlin and the critical pedagogues. These models are less appropriate to the digital age as a means of expressing wants and desires. Such subjected subjects, as Galloway reminds us, are precisely what hold protocols together.\(^\text{xi}\)

The invention I seek is experimental. What rhetoric/ composition needs are Deleuzian concepts: expression (in the renewed sense) and experimentation. These concepts must not seek an outside—a transcendent place from which to assess—but rather must attempt to “lodge [themselves] on a substratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them” (A Thousand Plateaus 95). These must be inventions that expand the sense of what is possible, and fly in the face of protocol. They must work in tandem with the counter-protocological practices delineated by Galloway and Thacker. These practices are meant to produce the aforementioned
pliancy, as opposed to robustness. Counterprotocols are not a resistance in any traditional sense, but rather they are impulsi ons, “thrusts,” as Galloway and Thacker put it, that move technology ever closer to something that is more in line with the desires of its users as opposed to a means of tight control. In other words, counterprotocols must be active, not reactive. If protocol means always making sense, then counterprotocols must attempt to explore nonsense, randomness, and perversity. By perverse I refer to Nealon’s discussion in *Foucault Beyond Foucault* in which he looks at a prominent Penn State advertising slogan. As part of one particular campaign, the catchphrase “Making the World a Better Place” was introduced. Nealon’s facetious response is, “Now who could possibly be against that?” Protocol, as we have seen, always “makes sense,” it always shows for users the most open manner for communication to occur, as determined by industry standards. Correspondingly, control is always “the best way.” Hence, when asked who could possibly be against something so good, the resistant response must be, “We are.” The capacity for the perverse and nonsense is the “resistive” act to protocol. Additionally, Galloway lists mutation as a resistive act to protocol. Mutation must be accomplished through continual recutting and recasting memory into new forms of testament. D.N. Rodowick, in the conclusion from *Gilles Deleuze’s Time Machine*, writes, “[R]esistance means the struggle for new modes of existence. It is therefore a battle for difference, variation, and metamorphosis, for the creation of new modes of existence” (201). Rodowick could be seen here as defining mutation: seeking variation and change in order to carve out new modes of existence. This is what protocol discourages, yet this is what we must do. This is the connection between digital media (actual) and memory (virtual).
Conclusion

I have, over the course of this chapter, moved very far afield from the initial concepts of expressivist rhetoric and critical consciousness. Beginning with the work of theorists such as Elbow, Macrorie, and Murray, who all embraced the development of individual voice through expression, we have moved to an experimental expression. This is an expression that, rather than finding words that express an identity, instead reject identity, and embrace becoming, especially becoming-imperceptible. To reject identity is to reject informatic identity, networked being, and ultimately the concept of “life-itself.” While I have demonstrated that the limits of a protocological system are finite, the limits of the virtual are not. The virtual can be expressed in infinite ways. The concept of protocol, as Galloway conceptualizes it, represents an attempt to limit the virtual, to force it to unfold in one way only (or at least a pre-established set of ways). Language, however, is not code; language expresses, sense is expressed, life is expressed, and memory is expressed. New media, however, offer a different way of accessing memory. They offer a new means by which to express that memory. Although digital memory is always differentiated, hence actual, ontological memory can always find a new way of being expressed. What we must develop are different ways for this memory to be expressed. The path to finding a new way lies with experimentation. As May reminds us:

To experiment is to expose…lines of flight that are both of us and not of our identity. It is to explore the virtual without knowing what it will yield. It is to palpate difference in one’s thought and in one’s living. It is to throw the dice joyously without calculating the numbers that will fall back. To experiment is to ask with the fibers of one’s being—the
individual fibers—the only question Deleuze deems worthy of a life: how might a life go, how might one live? (Gilles Deleuze 172)

The path of experimentation may be difficult, and it means embracing a very different set of thoughts with which rhetoric/composition is less familiar. However, what makes Deleuze so useful to rhetoric/composition is his emphasis on invention. Thinking is nothing less than inventing new possibilities of life, as Deleuze once remarked (Nietzsche and Philosophy 101), and digital media provide a radically useful means for doing just that. The framework of Deleuzian expressivism calls for much more than proclaiming a truth, establishing a voice, and telling personal experience. Instead it calls for the rejection of identity in order to become imperceptible. It does not seek individuality, but connections. It seeks to express memory: to allow memory to be expressed.

Vitanza’s famous challenge to expressivist rhetoric comes in the second of his three countertheses: “Who speaks when something is spoken?” (152). If it is simply a stable ego, a human being, that speaks, then the logical corollary of this idea is to find the most natural voice appropriate so that I can speak as honestly as possible. If, however, it is not an I, or rather if that I is expressed just as much and as often as it expresses, then writing becomes about much more. It becomes about finding what it is that is trying to be expressed, and trying to lend voice(s) to whatever is expressing. It becomes a bold experiment, to try and construct new voices and press against language to overflow it. It becomes about finding new ways to look at and think about the world. Vitanza’s question finds a new potency in the information age. Galloway and Thacker suggest that networks invent life as a function of information. In the face of Being becoming informatic, the solution is to experiment with forms of non-being: to assert, with Gorgias, that nothing
does indeed exist. Such experimentation is what Deleuze offers expressionism, and what he offers to composition. The push towards experimentation represents a move in favor of the virtual; the unexpected, the unpredictable. It is through the exploration of the virtual that new ways of thinking can be found. Henri Bergson, who was vital to Deleuze’s formulation of the virtual, writes that it “signifies invention, creation of forms, continuous elaboration of the absolutely new” (Creative Evolution 11). The virtual is a realm of genuine rhetorical invention because of its unpredictability. This unpredictable nature is opposed to protocol. It does not exist informatically, and so to think with it can mean to experiment with non-being. We must work out of the virtual in new media, which means looking to memory.

As Lynn Worsham notes in “Going Postal: Pedagogic Violence and the Schooling of Emotion,” often the work of composition asks students to develop a voice, only for the purposes of that voice being evaluated. Thomas Rickert extends Worsham’s argument in Acts of Enjoyment where he interrogates composition’s hostility toward methods that might express a more unexpected, unanticipated, even virtual sense of non-voice: “What other forms of writing and thinking are being shut down or distorted—forms of writing that have their own, different powers and inventive allure?” (164). Following Rickert, I would formulate a concept following Deleuze’s expression, in which we might explore non-being through nonsense, by reversing temporal linkages and by eschewing voice in favor of a plurality of voices. Rather than telling stories to unify and make sense, we might expand sense by telling other stories and finding other voices. Such an expression would work at restoring the virtual, surprise, nonsense, in an effort to induce hypertrophy. What we do not want are more classic subjected subjects. This idea does not
command, “Express yourself! Produce some content!” (The Exploit 41). This is rather an attempt at becoming imperceptible and making nonsense. The regulation of memory is the regulation of sense, of expression. The goal is to make this memory express, to expand sense through nonsense, by connecting it to the virtual: to impel towards hypertrophy.

But how to transfer these concepts to writing, and especially multimodal writing? What to do with them in the domain of electracy? The answer to these two questions will be the goal of the next two chapters. For that, we must specifically think these concepts in the domain of the screen. Deleuze has done this in an extensive project theorizing “The Movement-Image” and “The Time-Image.” In the next chapter, I will relate these two concepts to new media, and ask what applications they might have. Afterward, I will apply this entire framework to Ulmer’s concept of electracy. For now, let us look to movement and time.

Notes

i See Sharon Crowley’s seminal piece, “The Evolution of Invention in Current-Traditional Rhetoric,” where she argues that the tendency of current-traditionalism is to neglect invention in favor of very formal rhetorical devices.

ii It is perhaps in this sense that he is most different from scholars such as David Bartholomae, who claim that our job as writing instructors is to help students learn the rhetorics of the academy. See the Bartholomae-Elbow exchange in the February 1995 CCC.

iii See On Rhetoric, Book 1, Chapter 2 (Ed. George A. Kennedy)

iv Perhaps the culmination of antipathy toward expressivism can be found in Jeannette Harris’s Expressive Discourse, in which she advocates abandoning the term expressive discourse altogether. The concept is vague, convoluted, and without a clear referent. Elbow takes Harris to task for her book, suggesting that she seriously misunderstands expressivism as a field, and views it “through an inverted telescope as an alien threat” (87) rather than as a serious object of study. Her view, Elbow claims, fails to take into account that there are multiple discourses, and many different kinds are of value.

v Berlin’s readers will no doubt be familiar with his tendency to switch between expressionism and expressivism, depending on what text he’s writing. These terms here, as with Berlin, should be seen as synonymous.

vi Most importantly, see Rhetoric and Reality, 11.
Think of Plato’s conception of the forms. What we see are merely pale imitations, shadows, of the forms, which exist in the heavens. The forms transcend that which expresses them on earth. Their substance is superior to the material realm. See “The Allegory of the Cave” in The Republic, Book VII.

Intriguingly, Thomas relates these three aspects of representational language to three concepts perhaps more familiar to most readers: J.L. Austin’s constative, perlocutionary, and illocutionary. The constative and denotation, both of which have as their criteria truth and falsity, share a correspondence. The perlocutionary, he claims, corresponds with manifestation, as both point to “production of real and conventional effects (363). Lastly, in a move that Thomas admits is a bit more difficult, the illocutionary corresponds to signification, inasmuch as both “are indications of conditions in which the proposition may be true or false” (364). That Deleuze locates sense in a fourth dimension unrelated to representational language makes his schema more detailed and superior to Austin’s. It also, Thomas claims, allows us to maintain the distinctions between constatives and performatives. See Thomas, “It’s Not What You Say, It’s That You Say It: Speech, Performance, and Sense in Austin and Deleuze.”

There is, of course, a certain difficulty in this substitution. Namely, pedagogy does not operate at the level of code. Nevertheless, Galloway points to a number of distributed networks that are not necessarily coded. Pedagogy can function in a similar way.

At this point a note on the concept of technological determinism would be helpful. Technological determinism has become something of a dirty word in academics, especially in humanist fields like rhetoric/composition, and a position to be avoided. At best, if one presents such a deterministic argument, it necessitates a strong defense. I prefer to take an offensive strategy, following Galloway and Thacker, who criticize Hardt and Negri for their technological neutrality with respect to networks. The network, Hardt and Negri claim in Empire, is married neither to progressive nor reactionary politics. However, given that protocol produces the restriction of sense, and sense produces conditions of becoming and connection between bodies, we can conclude nothing other than that protocol produces a reactive force. Protocol is a technological practice, and as Foucault once reminded us, so is liberty. Protocol is anti-democratic. If this is technological determinism, make the most of it.

I should note here that, like the models of thinking and writing espoused by Greg Ulmer, these practices ought to be taken as a kind of prosthesis for existing practices. As Galloway notes, “Let us reiterate that we are referring only to protocological resistance and in no way whatsoever suggest that non-protocological practice should abandon successful techniques for effecting change such as organizing, striking, speaking out, or demonstrating. What we suggest here is a supplement to existing practice, not a replacement for it” (82). In a similar vein, Ulmer writes, “I want to learn how to write and think electronically—in a way that supplements without replacing analytical reason” (Teletheory x).

On this point, see Gregg Lambert and Douglas Thomas in the aforementioned pieces.
Chapter 3
Rhetorica Ad Kinesis: Arrangement

In the last chapter, I suggested that we might deploy Deleuzian concepts as a function of cinematics. The purpose of this chapter will be to articulate how that might work. Deleuze’s cinema project, which he delineated across two books—*Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*—will provide the basis for how his theory of memory and invention can work in the context of images. Deleuze gives us a thought of the image through cinematics—a cinematic philosophy: not a film theory, and not viewing film in order to read philosophy into them, but a philosophy that takes as its cue filmic concepts. In so doing, he breaks with the traditional mode of viewing films in order to interpret them (the project of hermeneutics), which he eschews in favor of thinking with film. Because of this “thinking with,” I believe we can place Deleuze’s work in the Cinema books in the general camp of post-hermeneutic or post-critical theory (more on that in a moment). The books, Flaxman says, should be understood in light of Deleuze’s notions about what philosophy is: “the process of constructing, creating, and inventing concepts” (3), which is precisely where my own project fits. I seek to create concepts for rhetoric and composition, specifically in the multimodal dimension.

Deleuze conveys this thought across two major types of images: the classic “movement-image” and the modern “time-image.” Deleuze will extend some of his earlier work on Bergson and his concepts of virtual and actual in the cinema books, suggesting an ontology of image. Martin Schwab suggests that Deleuze’s ontology is not one of “semiosis or signification, but a general ontology of the universe—the universe of images” (110). The universe, in this case, is imagistic, it is understood as an image.
Being, in this case, is bound up with the image as well. Schwab argues the following: “Being—being itself, without further qualification—is conceived as imagehood; all being is ‘image-being’ and/or ‘being-image’” (110). So then Deleuze’s formulation is not merely an ontology of the image, but it is an ontology grounded in the image. Ontology is wholly imagistic. In this sense, Deleuze is a striking departure from just about every other film theorist who attempted to formulate an ontology of the image or of cinema. The latter of the two major images, the time-image, is an image that fuses the past with the present in viewing them. It gives us a direct image of time by eliminating subjective/objective and virtual/actual. As such, what we want is an image of memory that can fuse that memory with the present—one that arranges memory in a new way. We can achieve such a vision through the remix. I want to deploy these concepts, especially those associated with the latter, in order to describe a cinematic rhetoric of multimedia. Eventually, these concepts will come back to bear on writing (in chapter four). For now, what we need is first an explication of the concept of cinematics, and how I can bring Deleuze’s concepts to the multimedia screen. In order to do this, I will begin with a discussion of Greg Ulmer’s “The Object of Post-Criticism,” to give some context in which to place Deleuze’s cinematic project. Afterwards, I will discuss Deleuze’s project, specifically the concepts of movement and time-image. This reading will deal with the predominant models of multimedia that obtain from the work of Gunther Kress and the New London Group. However, this still leaves the issue of protocol, which will always render remixed visions unitary without being diverse. Hence, we must push it further. Galloway gives us a glimpse of such a push through the concepts of hypertrophy through internet art, as well as a concept towards which I will gesture: becoming-viral.
Post Criticism and the Cinema Books

Greg Ulmer’s essay “The Object of Post-Criticism” reads almost as a rosetta stone for understanding the bulk of Ulmer’s work—exploring new and alternative methods of invention that work from new media and their techniques, rather than attempting to interpret them or place them in the same contexts. Ulmer seeks to open new contexts through the post-critical object. The goal of the piece and of such an object is to articulate a means of commenting upon or critiquing a medium within that same medium. Or, at the very least, to allow the techniques of other media to influence the ways in which we use language. Ulmer argues “that ‘post-criticism’ (-modernist, -structuralist) is constituted precisely by the application of the devices of modernist art to critical representations; furthermore, that the principal device taken over by the critics and theorists is the compositional pair collage/montage” (83). For Ulmer, critiques of the post-structuralist/modernist variety allow themselves to be altered by the very techniques at work in a particular medium. Nowhere is this more evident than in writing that utilizes collage and montage as a guiding principle (evinced by texts such as Jacques Derrida’s *Glas*). These works attempt to learn from the medium they critique, rather than view themselves as a master discourse evaluating media that cannot adequately represent themselves. In collage, works (and words) are taken from one particular context and transferred to the other, while in montage, new linkages are forged between objects. Ulmer looks to the specific example of photomontage, claiming that photomontage works by placing images “into new, surprising, provoking juxtapositions” (85). The surprising and provoking juxtapositions will be key for my purposes, since the time-image will create similar sensations. Ulmer is careful to note that while there is nothing inherently avant-garde
about principles of montage, it is the creation of unanticipated linkages that is key for both Ulmer’s project and my own. Ulmer traces the impetus for such a project to Roland Barthes, whose suggestion that literature critiques language, and moreover that criticism is not a meta-language, brings concepts of critic (subject) and medium (object) ever closer together. Rather than hermeneutically attempting to master an object through *ekphrasis* and interpretation, criticism can enter a relationship with the object of commentary.¹

Perhaps most importantly, the project of post-criticism has significant consequences for the work of the classroom. Ulmer draws on Derrida, who argues that post-criticism is “[t]he deconstruction of a pedagogical institution and all that it implies. What this institution cannot bear, is for anyone to tamper with language” (‘Living On” 87). Typically our writing classes allow students to produce whatever content they please, so long as it satisfies given forms (the five paragraph essay). It is the form that is non-negotiable, and ensures that student writing remains manageable, disciplinary, and within the confines of the given language structures. In other words, the student can write whatever she likes, so long as she follows the protocols of “good academic writing.” The sentiment should, of course, sound familiar as we have a kind of precedent for this thought in the protocols of new media (although new media are coded, pedagogy is not).

Post-criticism is then an effort to work against the confines of a language, to expand them, and to touch the very margins of that language. In this way, working against language opens a path toward new possibilities and new vistas. In post-criticism, we find a context in which to place Deleuze’s thought of the cinema. Deleuze writes, “Cinema itself is a new practice of images and signs, whose theory philosophy must
produce as conceptual practice. For no technical determination, whether applied (psychoanalysis, linguistics) or reflexive, is sufficient to constitute the concepts of cinema itself” (*Cinema 2* 280). Deleuze here demonstrates his desire to give us a thought of cinematics—neither an interpretation nor a history of cinematics, but to develop thought itself through the cinema. In so doing, I argue that Deleuze here places himself in line with Ulmer’s concept of post-criticism: learning the medium and understanding the medium through a particular medium. D.N. Rodowick, in *Gilles Deleuze’s Time Machine*, echoes my point when he claims “Deleuze takes great pains to demonstrate how philosophical ideas resonate through artistic and scientific work, and back again to philosophy” (xiv). Deleuze does not proceed from the point of view of the critic reading an object, but rather traffics between film and philosophy. Rodowick furthers this point when he tells us “[w]here semiology wants to define the cinematic sign by imposing a linguistic model from the outside, Deleuze applies Peirce’s logic to deduce a theory of signs from material the cinema has itself historically produced” (*Time Machine* 7). So then we should understand Deleuze’s treatment of cinematics in the context of Ulmer’s post-criticism: we seek a model of working on the screen that will proceed from the material of screens themselves. The cinematic project of Deleuze will have much to say with regard to new media, if we are willing to engage his rather difficult thought. Ultimately, my goal here will be the goal Rodowick claims for Deleuze: “[N]ot to produce another theory of film, but to understand how aesthetic, philosophical, and scientific modes of understanding converge in producing cultural strategies for imagining and imaging the world” (5). Let us begin with Deleuze’s conceptualization of the image.
Deleuze’s two books on the Cinema are fundamentally concerned with Bergson and the concepts of durée and memory. So concerned with Bergson are the books, that some have called the theory of images Deleuze presents a Bergsonian-ontology (Schwab). I have already presented Deleuze’s readings of Bergson in chapter two, and so that should provide the necessary background to understand Deleuze’s cinema project. The project is, like most of Deleuze’s work, connected to the remainder of his corpus. His works tend never to stand in isolation from each other. In fact, they often seem to presuppose knowledge of his other work (*Time Machine*). In the case of the cinema project, Deleuze gives us a philosophy that thinks with and through the cinematic, in a postcritical manner. The difference between the movement and time images lies less in what is in the actual composition of the images, and more in what will be a critical function for the remainder of this essay: the linkages between images. What I would like to do here is give an account of his movement and time-images on the way toward understanding how they relate to new media.

In order to understand the movement of images, it is necessary to understand how Deleuze views both movement and image. This means understanding how Deleuze conceptualizes images through Bergson, as well as movement of something Bergson calls durée. The movement of images is what we are after. Images move on screen, and this movement is critical because movement is always a section, specifically a mobile section, of durée. “Movement is a translation in space” (*Cinema 1* 8). *Durée* is a somewhat vague term, never clearly defined, but Ronald Bogue gives a useful shorthand: “Our basic psychological experience of time is that of durée, of a dynamic continuation of past into a
present and toward a future” (14). This conception should seem familiar because we have a framework from which to deal with it: the concept of the virtual, and its passage into the actual. The movement of time, by which we move from an expansive past into a specific present moment, and then to the future, is called durée. Durée is an inventive concept: Bergson goes so far as to suggest that “Time is invention, or it is nothing at all” (Creative Evolution 341). Rodowick suggests that durée is the “continual elaboration of the new, a totality being created in an essentially open process of development without any preestablished model” (Time Machine 20). Cinematics gives us a means of seeing or experiencing this newness by breaking up the way that we see. Cinematics is not a natural perception (like phenomenology), but rather, its power lies in its artifice—its ability to break up perceptions and help us to see in a new manner. In so doing, it can help us to see in a manner that is much closer to the way in which Deleuze theorizes memory. Bogue writes, “ Normally, we do not perceive the coexisting actual present and virtual past, but in certain experiences of déjà vu and automatism we receive faint intimations of time’s double nature” (Deleuze on Cinema 6). Cinematics helps us to find such a glimpse, or, as May suggests, it helps us palpate the virtual.

Bergson’s philosophy is, on one level, a solution to the dilemma between realism and idealism. Where realism tends to focus on physical material to the exclusion of the mind and ideas, idealism focuses exclusively on the latter, leaving out the world of materials. Both tend to emanate from conceptions of duality, the subject and object binary, which Deleuze finds so objectionable. Bergson alleviates (we might even say deconstructs) this binary through the concept of durée. Bergson wrote roughly two books that treated extensively on cinematics. In the first volume, Matter and Memory, he shows...
tremendous hope in cinema to help bring about his philosophy that matter and image are alike, perhaps one and the same. “Matter,” he writes in his introduction, “is an aggregate of ‘images.’ And by ‘image’ we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a representation, but less than that which the realist calls a thing,—an existence place half-way between the ‘thing’ and the ‘representation’” (vii). Bergson’s second volume, Creative Evolution, exhibits a somewhat cooler response to cinema. Undeterred, Deleuze believed that Bergson saw only cinema as it was—not yet self-conscious, unaware of its possibilities—and simply did not see what cinema could become. Flaxman suggests, “Bergson’s reversal constitutes a retreat from the potential of the cinema to transform perception, to ‘deregulate sense,’ and to compel a revaluation of philosophy itself” (89). All of these potentialities are, for Deleuze, a kind of essence of the cinematic. In Bergson’s both realism and idealism are excessive concepts, but time and space are the extremes of contraction and dilation of this virtual field of durée. Time and space are part of the whole of durée, and it is in this whole that all things find their movement. However, Bogue provides a useful caveat to this formulation:

The vibrations of this whole are not vibrations of something—they are not the movement of matter, temporal elements of space. Our inherent tendency is to use visual, spatial imagery to speak about time, and hence to think of bodies as entities distinct from their movements. But movement is inseparable from that which moves, and as soon as we speak of a thing as distinct from its action we reinstate a division between movement and the moving entity. (Deleuze on Cinema 19)
So then when we say *durée* is a whole, one in which movement occurs, we must come to see objects as inseparable from their movement. We must also see matter as image, according to Bergson. Bergson’s ontology of image is not an ontology in the sense of André Bazin, who sees an equivalence in matters existence as material an its existence in the photographic image. Rather, for Bergson matter is a collection of images. Bergson sees these images as both more than representation, but less than a ‘thing.’ Of course, it might be said that phenomenology viewed matter in a similar way: focusing on the perceptions of matter, and the way in which these perceptions were both more than representations but less than rigid. But then, the poststructuralists generally tended to buck against phenomenology in that it presented a stable subject (an ego), and placed that subject in the role of a universal observer. Deleuze sees Bergson as carefully avoiding this pitfall through a critical move: Bergson suggests that consciousness itself is another image. If consciousness is an image, like matter, then it appears in succession with matter, not as an independent observer, which would only ever reinvent the subject/object distinction Deleuze wants to avoid.

**Consciousness and the Movement-Image**

Consciousness finds itself not outside of, but rather in the flux of, this play of images. On the whole, images in flux go about interacting with one another, as Bogue suggests, like billiard balls on a table. These interactions are generally predictable: to throw a rock at a car will crack the window and deflect the rock in another direction. Consciousness is part of this flux of images. It is, however, a certain kind of image. Where most images interacting tend to do so in a predictable manner, the interaction between matter and living beings can produce unexpected reactions. In other words, there
is some indeterminacy with respect to living beings. To throw a rock at another person may cause them to cry in pain, to cover the part of the body that is hit, to dodge, or to become angry and attempt retaliation. This series of actions is precisely the image flux to which Bergson refers. However, in centers of indetermination, it is difficult to know what will happen after movement passes through the center. Rodowick suggests that “[w]hat is special about the special image is that it no longer allows movement to pass through it unopposed or unchanged. Whatever movement it receives on one side is reorganized and transformed on the other” (34). A living image is, quite literally, a system for relaying movements. The movement to which Bergson and Deleuze refer is a double movement: there is both a relative and absolute movement. Relative movement suggests a change in position, isolated and separate; for instance, my movement in walking from one side of a room to another. As far as anyone can tell, this is no more than a simple positional change. However, there is another movement, the absolute movement of durée, in which the transformation of my position also means the transformation of the open totality. In other words, any change in position means changing the world itself! Bogue suggests, “[T]he universe is a vibrational whole, various entities being diverse contractions and dilations of durée, and that vibrational whole may be thought of (with due caution) as time-space or matter-flow” (32). We can think of movement in both ways, which are always intertwined. The interval of movement starts when a perception is made on one side, and this produces action.

Bergson notes that it is perception that allows us to navigate in space by subtracting from other images that we encounter whatever does not concern our future actions. Perception, then, is not any kind of addition to the image flux, but the
subtraction, by consciousness, of that which does not concern it. This is one of the movement-images: the perception-image. Bogue writes, “The perception-image, in short, is the ‘thing’ minus those features filtered out by perception” (*Deleuze on Cinema* 35). The second movement-image, the affection-image, is the image that is in the interval between perception and action. Bogue notes that there is a corollary between nouns and perception-images, and adjectives and affection-images. Our own perceptions are of things, but colored by the affection-image. What these nouns and adjectives lead to are verbs, or the action-image. These three movements are the three movement-images. It is important to note that Deleuze states, “the movement-image is not analogical in the sense of resemblance: it does not resemble an object that it would represent,” but rather the movement-image “is the object; the thing itself caught in movement as continuous function. The movement-image is the modulation of the object itself” (*Cinema 2* 27). The movement-image is not a stable photographic image (here Deleuze agrees with Bazin, who claims that cinema is an imprint of time), but the portrayal of both movements: relative and absolute. Cinema presents a mobile section of durée, photography an immobile one.

The last point to make with respect to the movement-image regards consciousness. For Deleuze, as for Bergson, the brain is a screen (hence the title of Flaxman’s collection): “The image reflected by a living image is precisely what will be called perception. And these two aspects are strictly complementary: the special image, the living image, is indissolubly the centre of indetermination or black screen” (*Cinema 1* 62). For Bergson, matter is already luminous. Breaking with the philosophical tradition “that identifies spirit with an interior light that illuminates the world, bringing things out
of their ‘native darkness’” (Time Machine 33), Bergson suggests that consciousness is not only of something (Husserl), but consciousness is something. Deleuze states that consciousness “is indistinguishable from that thing, that is from the image of light” (Cinema 1 61). Rodowick claims, “Instead of consciousness being a beam of light illuminating things, it is a luminosity flooding the subject” (33). So then the picture should start to take on some clarity at this point. Consciousness is an image, but a certain kind of image, in that it is a center of indetermination. It is a relay for movements: it perceives and reacts, but in unpredictable ways. Moreover, this consciousness is in matter, it is a screen, which reflects and represents that which it interacts with. Before we move on to the time-image, which will be hopefully even more suggestive, it is time to reflect on what resonances these ideas have with digital media.

**Conceptualizing New Media**

If the brain is a screen, what does it mean that the brain has become a computer screen? Lev Manovich is a leading theorist of digital media, and his book, The Language of New Media, is a central text in new media studies, especially the historical ways in which new media are inflected by the language of cinema. In Language, Manovich suggests that cinematic material (mise-en-scene, perspective, montage) becomes the language by which new media expresses itself. Manovich is tremendously useful because he provides a bridge between the cinematic philosophy of Deleuze and the new media theory of Galloway.

Because new media is created on computers, distributed via computers, and stored and archived on computers, the logic of a computer can be expected to significantly influence the traditional cultural logic of media; that is, we may
expect that the computer layer will affect the cultural layer. The ways in which the computer models the world, represents data, and allows us to operate on it; the key operations behind all computer programs (such as search, match, sort, and filter); the conventions of HCI [human-computer interaction]—in short, what can be called the computer’s ontology, epistemology, and pragmatics— influence the cultural layer of new media, its organization, its emerging genres, its contents.

(46)

So then while we may be talking about digital media, there is always an influence by media on the culture at large. These two aspects are not in isolation from one another, but influence one another. Indeed, we have seen, through Galloway, how technology can provide a kind of administrative diagram for a culture. It is only on the basis of computerized media that protocol can arise.

It is necessary to remember that new media are always, by definition, code. As such, they share less in the relationship between photographs and the real put forth by Bazin, and extended by Deleuze. Andre Bazin tells us that the photographic image is very distinctive from painting and other types of image making that had come beforehand. The major difference lies in the automatic production of photography. In other words, a photographer sets up lighting, positions models, places the camera and completely manipulates the composition of the shot. However, when she presses the button on the camera that makes the device shoot the image, what takes place is an automatic process over which she has no control. The camera automatically takes that image. This is not to suggest that Bazin takes an instrumentalist view of technology—far from it. He is simply suggesting that for the first time, the medium of image-making is
automatic in a way it had not previously been. The implications of this automatic mode are substantial. Because of the nature of the photograph, when we look at a shot of, for example, a ’57 Chevy, the traditional assumption is that at some point, in times past, there was a ’57 Chevy in front of a camera—this ’57 Chevy. Photography (analog photography, anyways), shares an identity with its object that no other mode has ever presented to us. Bazin claims that the photograph has “ontological identity” with its object. Bazin is thus not claiming that the photograph is a new form of image making, but that it presents possibilities to change the very way about which we think of things. It can fundamentally change thought itself.

However, with respect to new media, we are not talking about the same thing as Bazin. New media are always coded, which means they are something fundamentally different from the photographic reality of Bazin’s world. Hence, a photographic image is only ever the sum of pixels that can be endlessly modulated and manipulated. In Manovich’s words, “A new media object is subject to algorithmic manipulation. For instance, by applying appropriate algorithms, we can automatically remove noise from a photograph, improve its contrast, locate the edges of the shapes, or change its proportions. In short media becomes programmable” (27). In “What is Digital Cinema?” Manovich claims traditional cinema pushed the techniques of animation to the margins. The techniques of animators, as opposed to live-action filmmakers, were not the predominant techniques. In the digital image, the digital camera pixellates and encodes the photo, opening up endless possibility to transform images into something else, hence returning animation to the forefront. Manovich claims this change reinvents the cinematic as a subset of animation, rather than the other way around. In animation, there is no
physical foundation, no central point of reference for the real, it is created from the ground up.

Stephen Prince notes the changes in film with the advent of advanced digital techniques. Film has, heretofore, involved creating an image in camera through the manipulation of light and position. The film strip is exposed to light, hence capturing the thing photographed. In film, motion is also captured by the film strip, a point at which Rodowick notes Bazin and Deleuze are in complete agreement. However, new media are made of discrete, coded entities, leading Manovich to aver the following:

While some old media such as photography and sculpture are truly continuous, most involve the combination of continuous and discrete coding. One example is motion picture film: each frame is a continuous photograph, but time is broken into a number of samples (frames). Video goes one step further by sampling the frame along the vertical dimension (scan lines). Similarly, a photograph printed using a halftone process combines discrete and continuous representations. Such a photograph consists of a number of orderly dots (i.e., samples), although the diameters and areas of dots vary continuously. (28)

While film does work by breaking up movement into discrete points, the photographic technology by which it works is continuous. Prince notes various techniques for manipulating and changing color, contrast, and overall feel in traditional film processes such as silver retention processes. He states, “All of these processes work on the entire image at once and, in this respect, provide filmmakers with relatively blunt instruments for manipulating image elements” (27). New media work on discrete elements, cinematic photography works on an entire image. The distinction presented here is exemplary of the
difference I have drawn earlier between discrete, actualized media and the continuousness of the unfolding from out of the virtual. Traditional film showed the various imperfections that might obtain (grainy footage, sunspots, etc.) in film stock. By contrast, these imperfections do not show up in digital media. At the very least, they can be modulated out of existence, or, in a perfectly captured digital video, the “imperfections” can be programmed in, even on the most basic of editing programs.

While new media may get their basic “language” from cinema, Manovich is unswerving in his argument that new media have distanced themselves from the traditional cinema:

The pretense of modern media to create simulations of sensible reality is…canceled; media are reduced to their original condition as information carrier, nothing less, nothing more. In a technological remake of the Oedipal complex, a son murders his father. The iconic code of cinema is discarded in favor of the more efficient binary one. Cinema becomes a slave to the computer. (Manovich 25)

Manovich’s argument here is a somewhat common one: that the computer represents a media container (referred to by Bolter as remediation), which both works in and alters previous media forms (film, writing, etc.). Computers are not montage machines, but addition machines that place elements together. They do not necessarily seek contrast, but a continuous flow of text, image, and video clips (143). Moreover, cinema and new media differ in the concepts of juxtaposition and blending: “In digital compositing, the elements are not juxtaposed but blended, their boundaries erased rather than foregrounded” (155). Manovich’s ideas provide here a useful distinction vis-à-vis the
object of post-criticism. If we are to critique a medium in that medium, we cannot
unproblematically deploy the cinematic concepts of Deleuze without adequately
considering the changes that arrive when we switch from analog to digital media. While
certain techniques may function as a critique of cinema in cinema (new camera
techniques, metatextual cinema, etc.), it is not enough to simply create a video of these
films and post them online and expect them to function as such a critique. New media
take on new dynamics.

We can, however, account for the smooth, regulated memory of digital media
through Lev Manovich. Digital media are conduits of information and executors of code,
as we have seen. However, Manovich errs in suggesting that new media create memory
as public, where before it was private:

What before had been a mental process, a uniquely individual state, now became
part of the public sphere. Unobservable and interior processes and representations
were taken out of individual heads and placed outside—as drawings, photographs,
and other visual forms. Now they could be discussed in public, employed in
teaching and propaganda, standardized, and mass-distributed. What was private
became public. What was unique became mass-produced. What was hidden in an
individual’s mind became shared. (61)

Here, Manovich performs a move not dissimilar from the Edward P.J. Corbett’s move,
riticized by John Frederick Reynolds in “Memory Issues in Composition Studies.” In the
seminal Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, Corbett makes a simple equation
between memory and memorization so that he can quickly dispose of the canon. If
memory is equivalent to memorization, as Corbett suggests, then Manovich’s statement
can hold water. Memory is a private mental process, which digital media (and all forms of external memory, from writing onward) are mechanisms designed to expose such private sentiments to public scrutiny. But if memory is something more than simple memorization, then Manovich’s claim falls apart.

Reynolds goes on to look at historical conceptions of memory. Drawing on Frances Yates’ *The Art of Memory* and Mary Carruthers’ *The Book of Memory*, Reynolds argues that memory is fundamental to deriving very public and social mnemonics such as the *topoi*, and a fundamental key to invention. Memory, he claims (working from Yates), “included improving the memory” as well as “imprinting on the memory,” and perhaps most importantly, holding in memory for the purposes of preserving and retrieving from memory. Indeed, we have seen from formulations such as the treasuryhouse of the *Ad Herennium*, memory has long been conceptualized as a very public matter. If memory has ever been such a public matter, then Manovich’s claim seems less likely.

The distinction between conceptions of memory is a critical one. We are working out of the Deleuzian-Bergsonian framework of memory, of which the *Cinema* texts are an extension. Manovich’s work has a more difficult time accounting for this conception. Deleuze’s conception of memory is (not surprisingly) ontological, and hence very public. It actually adheres much closer to a conception of memory critical to invention (and all of the canons).

**Programming Memory**

If the brain is a screen, and the new media screen is a programmable one, then we must see new media as programmed memory—the programmed screen. Rather than the flow of a virtual memory toward an actualized one, new media give us discrete entities:
discrete memories. The coding is crucial to memory because, as Rodowick reminds us, “Consciousness is not identical to perception. In fact, consciousness only appears with memory and in relation to how memory occupies duration” (88). The coding of digital media will regulate precisely the way in which memory occupies duration. The distinction is similar to the difference between the continuous media of film (which exposes photographic paper to light in an effort to “catch” the light), and the algorithmic, coded programs of digital media. This distinction provides us with an answer to the question: what happens when the brain becomes a computer screen. As we have seen, Deleuze considers the special or living image to be a zone of indetermination. When memory is coded—when the movement-image becomes a coded image—then this indetermination can become directed, predisposed to certain linkages, rather than able to create new linkages. The movement-image is a relay, which perceives and then acts, with affect functioning as a kind of intermediary. Where action ought to be indeterminate, it becomes directed. There is a precedent for this, of course, and it is what Deleuze calls the sensory-motor-schema, a mechanism for governing temporality in the movement-image. Gregory Flaxman frames the schema as “a neural network that ‘affectively’ contains the image-flux: the images procured are recognizable, capable of being linked to other images along a methodical, and ultimately normative, chain” (5). The purpose of the sensory-motor schema is to regulate that flux of images, which are our means of relating to the world, and to force the montage of images to “make sense,” to form a cogent, coherent narrative. It is striking that Flaxman notes, for Deleuze, this compulsion to make sense is a “moral exigency”—moral in the sense that it recapitulates the belief that this is the “best of all possible worlds,” the formulation of Leibniz. Under the regime of
the sensory-motor schema, film is able to propagate this belief. In the movement-image, which finds its best expression in films prior to World War II, one image gives rise to the next image through rational linkages. The controlling mechanism, the apparatus that reigns in the image flux, is what Deleuze calls the sensory-motor-schema.

Protocols might be viewed as an intensified form of this schema, regulating all screens at the level of their encoding. Protocols ensure that all communication falls within their purview. All communication must be legible and communicable. Furthermore, one is either compatible with a protocol or not. Protocol is normalization at its lightest and least visible, yet also its most immanent, regulating the messages of a digital media machine directly, hence keeping with Hardt and Negri’s description of the control society as functioning immanent to the social field. The living image is an indeterminate one, which provides for, I would argue, a broader sense of deliberation. If our purpose is to press against that which is possible—which would be in keeping both with Ulmer’s post-critical object as well as Deleuze’s general question of asking how one might live—we are only capable of such pressing in the event that creation is possible, meaning outcomes are not predetermined. Durée is unpredictable in precisely such a manner. Durée is never a given, “nor can it be given, for the future is genuinely new and undetermined” (Deleuze on Cinema 25). Movement is an expression of durée (and all the logic that expression entails). We see movement in closed sets. When I move something, I am changing the configuration of the universe, but it’s difficult to say that my moving a soda can has an effect on another galaxy. Movement, as Bogue tells us, “can be seen in two ways, then, as a translation of bodies and as a transformation of relations among bodies, and hence a closed set may also be taken in two ways” (Deleuze on Cinema 28).
My moving the soda can is a part, a small slice of the whole of *durée*, which is one way to view the closed set: an immobile cut. But if I see these not as a translation, but a transformation of the relations between my body, a table and the can with respect to the whole of *durée*, then it is not an immobile cut, but a mobile cut that allows a glimpse of movement as transformation of relations: *durée* itself. *Durée* is precisely what gives us this sense of indeterminacy.

The purpose of control is to iron out such indeterminacies. The relay of indetermination, central to the concept of the movement-image, is flattened, reduced by the logics inherent to new media, which Manovich argues exemplify the “logic of advanced industrial and post-industrial societies, where almost every practical act involves choosing from some menu, catalog, or database. In fact, as I have already noted, new media is the best available expression of the logic of identity” (128), wherein identity refers to the selection of predetermined pathways. Picture, for example, the construction of an avatar on a popular site such as *Yahoo!*, in which the user is allowed to select specific hairstyles, colors, skin tones, eye shapes and so forth in the development of one’s own “online identity.” However, as we know from Galloway, such selections are simply the “best ways” presented to the user. Once again, asking Nealon’s all important question: Who could possibly be against that? Of course, the paths of predetermined selections, Manovich claims, do not construct anything unique, but rather “adopt already pre-established identities. Similarly, choosing values from a menu or customizing one’s desktop or an application automatically makes one participate in the ‘changing collage of personal whims and fancies’ mapped out and coded into software by the companies” (129). The alternative here, of course, is to simply create one’s own software from
scratch, which is generally a neglected option since it is, to say the least, labor intensive. However, certain movements such as open source coding have sought to create programs—including entire operating systems, such as UNIX—from the bottom up. Therefore, it is useful to ask whether or not such movement represent the counters to protocol for which we are looking.

The answer, in short, is no. Both Galloway as well as Hardt and Negri note that in control, the mechanisms of regulation become increasingly democratic. We are at liberty to select the means of control that suit us best. Consider a social media site such as Facebook, in which the user is prompted to set up a profile that best “expresses” oneself. However, each alternative is selected from a set list, and each of those alternatives is equally legible and communicable to the network. Once again, we find the dictate that Galloway articulates so well: “Express yourself! Produce some content!” Through protocol, control mechanisms work within the social field, and are produced democratically. The process of constructing protocols is an open one, with clarity and transparency emphasized. Because these controls are coded, and code is algorithmic, it is always executed perfectly, hence limiting indeterminacy perfectly. But digital media are not perfect. We need to ask what imperfections they enact that we can deploy in the service of reconceptualizing the digital image.

More on Movement

While Manovich may well be correct in suggesting that digital media seek seamlessness over fragmentation, there is still a sense in which web publication mirrors traditional cinematics, specifically in the relations between frames. Sean D. Williams’ work on integrated pedagogy in hypertext is a good example of such a relationship.
Williams suggests a pedagogy that helps students to make meaningful connections between linkages. Williams contends that we should ask “students to connect others’ ideas (in whatever medium) with their own ideas (in whatever medium) to build meaningful compositions. The point is echoed in Johndan Johnson-Eilola’s Datacloud, where he says, “we are not looking for simplicity, but interesting juxtapositions and commentaries” (4). These varied and sundry juxtapositions are precisely the material of the cinematic, and the same material that can be found in hypertext. Williams goes on to cite Nicholas C. Burbules, who, Williams states, has argued that “links express specific argumentative intentions by subtly guiding users to recognize or intuit the connection between specific pages in a Web site. Users must ask themselves, for example, ‘what is the implied meaning that the juxtaposition of two pages connected through a link suggests?’” (Williams 476). In other words, as a reader moves through a page of hypertext (e.g., a Wikipedia article), the various linkages between pages generate a kind of montage, with the interval between clicking and the appearance of a new page serving as the interstitial space. In Williams’ terms, then, we can see a connection between the movement between web pages and the movement-image of Deleuze.

Deleuze claims that the movement between shots provides a view to the open whole of durée. As the various shots become interconnected, a narrative arises. A change in the montage means a change in the open whole. Here a change in the relations of screens means a change in the whole of the network, a different relationship. A digital movement-image provides an indirect view of the network through linkages. A change in one represents a change in the whole (the network), not unlike montage in the movement-image. I will refrain from referring to the network as an “open” whole, since I do not
believe it is open, although it is a whole. The view, however, like the movement-image, is only ever an indirect view of the network and the way in which it works. When we discuss the time-image, we will see how a direct view might be obtained. The linkage between shots as montage, however, is a relatively obvious one. Less obvious, but still important, is the relation between images on the screen. For Deleuze, the arrangement of objects in the mise-en-scene also reflects a change in the open whole. In terms of viewing the semiotics of the page layout, there are few more qualified to speak than Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen.

The field of rhetoric/composition has tended to feel very much at home with the semiological work of scholars such as Gunther Kress and the New London Group with respect to multimodal discourse and composition. Kress’s semiological analyses of the visual, which have been wildly popular in Great Britain and in Australia, and have gained a head of steam in the U.S., seek to delineate grammars for visual design and composition on the screen. Kress has been a major proponent for many years of the idea that image and screen are slowly replacing book and writing as more dominant modes of cultural expression (although he believes talking has and will remain the dominant one). The logic of the traditional page will be replaced with the logic of the image, the screen (websites, etc.). The primary example of his thinking on visuals is found in his book, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. Rhetoric/composition has tended to see the visual in somewhat similar terms to Kress, who proposes grammars of visual design and other scholars who see editing as a technique learned from film.

Kress gestures at a kind of liberatory pedagogy in which students, as future laborers in the marketplace, would attain to a critical consciousness. He quotes Rick
Iedema as saying that workers should be “not merely capable of doing their work, but also…capable of talking and thinking about their work and its effectiveness” (34). In a talk, given at the 2004 Conference on College Composition and Communication, he states:

Agency of the individual who has a social history, a present social location, an understanding of the potentials of the resources for communication, and who acts transformationally on the resources environment and, thereby, on self are requirements of communication. Where critique unsettles, design shapes, or has the potential always to shape. It makes individual action central, though always in a field saturated with the past work of others and the present existence of power.

(“Gains” 20)

The purpose, then, of these discourses, is political action—for students to impact the social environment, as well as produce a critical consciousness within themselves, to give them agency. I see in Kress’s work a resonance with critical pedagogies as well as the work of James Berlin in that they seek to create workers with a critical consciousness of what it is that they are doing. The objective, of course, is that if they can see what they are doing, they will seek to ‘act transformationally’ on their social worlds. Of course, Kress is also talking about design, a point with which I agree because it goes beyond critique. It is, however, still a design most comfortably situated within the transactional, in Berlin’s terms. Kress sees the image as an example of depiction, of representation, as opposed to the linguistic orientation, which is one of telling. In depiction, “the order of the world is yet to be designed (fully and/or definitively) by the viewer,” (16) whereas in telling, the order of the world is a “given” from the author. The difference between words
and images is that words require someone else to come along and “fill” them with meaning, since they have no intrinsic meaning of their own. Depictions, however, are “full of meaning; they are always specific” (80). Since they are more specific, Kress holds out the hope that images might have the potential to be less ambiguous than text, and more “precise, specific, and full of meaning” (80).vii

Kress suggests that instructors of multimodal composition move further away from pedagogies of interpretation and hermeneutics (the traditional work of analysis) and towards design and invention. He maintains that what is needed are theories for design:

It seems clear to me that we cannot continue with existing theories of meaning given the facts of the changes in the social, economic and cultural domain. At the moment, our theories come from the era dominated by notions of conventions and competence, whereas we need theories apt for an era of radical instability. Instead of competence in relation to stable social frames and stable resources for representation, we need the notion of design, which says: In this social and cultural environment, with these demands for communication of these materials, for that audience, with these resources, and given these interests of mine, what is the design that best meets the requirements? (“Gains and Losses” 20)

In this sense, Kress’ goals are more than admirable. I am in favor of pedagogy that emphasizes less the transmission of received and accepted knowledges and more towards teaching creation and invention. Although such valuable conceptions as critique ought not to be lost, we can also incorporate concepts like critique into design.viii Kress’ overarching project is to give a general grammar of visual design for multimodal discourse.
In *Reading Images*, Kress and Van Leeuwen delineate many of the basics of their theory regarding the analogous relationship between the text and the image in justifying why they believe a grammar of visual images is both possible and necessary: “Just as grammars of language describe how words combine in clauses, sentences and texts, so our visual ‘grammar’ will describe the way in which depicted elements—people, places and things—combine in visual ‘statements’ of greater or less complexity and extension” (1). The objective, then, is to delineate a discourse that will properly conceive of the composition of the image. That is, they seek to say what is seen so that we can accurately know. For Kress, social semiotics is the means for understanding a code of visual images, but one which is also capable of being altered by those who are working in the discourse. Therefore, just as with textual discourse in semiotics, imagistic discourse has structure. Kress writes: “Like linguistic structures, visual structures point to particular interpretations of experience and forms of social interaction” (*Reading Images* 2). The visual has as its correlative the social experience from which it arises. It stands to reason then, that Kress would insist that this discourse is teachable. Furthermore, that teachability “is crucially dependent on having the means of analysis, the means for talking about the ‘new literacy,’ about what it is we do when we produce and read images (34). What ‘we’ do is reflect our own social situations, but also “participate ourselves in the reshaping of the semiotic landscape,” which Kress tells us he realizes “is a highly political enterprise” (44). In reshaping this landscape, we will see how Kress gives a movement-image of new media.
Kress suggests that the changes in terms of layout and aesthetics in the multimodal environment—which for our purposes here we might equate with the mise-en-scene—is reflective of a broader change. He suggests that discursive practice is always at least reproductive, at one level—the discourses which are in play are reinstated in this instance in the text, and the modes used in their articulation are also instantiated. And discursive practice is always also productive and transformative, in that particular configurations of discourses and their modal articulation inevitably produce a new, changed, transformed arrangement, with effects on each of the contributing discourses, and on each realisational mode. (*Multimodal Discourse* 32)

Here we can see the movement with which Deleuze is concerned. Discursive practices (which for Kress includes both the verbal and the visual), as they change, create a change that affects the entire mode, in this case on the computer screen. The various configurations in which one can engage are significant for the way in which they impact an entire series of practices (the whole). For these reasons, Kress and Van Leeuwen can state that they “see semiotic action as real action, as work. Work transforms that which is worked on. Action changes both the actor and the environment in which she or he acts” (*Multimodal Discourse* 36). This is the movement within the realm of the mise-en-scene. A change in arrangement (in movement) is always two-fold: there is the change of local objects, what Deleuze calls an immobile section, but also the mobile section, or change in the whole relation between parts. Deleuze’s formulation, “[m]ovement is a translation in space” (*Cinema 1* 8), cuts both ways: a local translation of parts, and a broader movement of the whole.
Of course, there are distinctions to be made between Deleuze’s conception and those of Kress and Van Leeuwen. In the tradition of liberal political analysis, Kress and Van Leeuwen’s goal is to link design and invention to the individual. In *Multimodal Discourse*, Kress and Van Leeuwen suggest that “[d]esign stands midway between content and expression” (*Multimodal Discourse* 5). Kress and Van Leeuwen’s argument is that there is expression, and then there is the mode in which it subsists. In other words, that intentions become coded in a particular medium: “[W]e move towards a view of multimodality in which common semiotic principles operate in and across different modes, and in which it is therefore quite possible for music to encode action, or images to encode emotion” (*Multimodal Discourse* 2). They go on to suggest that the composer must decide whether to express an intention in sound or with digital images, or a mix of both. Regardless, Kress is dependent upon a language independent of pragmatics—precisely opposed to Deleuze’s conception of their inseparability. In this project, however, I follow Deleuze in attempting to avoid thinking through individuals, but rather through assemblages. Byron Hawk makes the point well, regarding invention, suggesting that it need not come only through the individual. Hawk, echoing Deleuze and Guattari, is worth quoting at length here:

> For Deleuze and Guattari, it is not simply humans that express; it is the world that expresses. For them, matter is unformed, unorganized bodies and flows—subatomic, submolecular particles and forces; content is formed matter; expressions are functional structures. For example, nucleic acids express compounds, organs, and functions of organisms. Plants, animals, rocks, rivers all have forms of expression—a river’s banks are an expression of its functional
operations; even fish that live in it are expressions of the river’s evolving ecology.

In a poetics in which functional, material relations express, the point is not to interpret or decode the expressions but to do something with them, to map them and create new relations with and through them, to invent. (Hawk 200)

Hawk suggests for me the problems with Kress’s mode of analysis, namely, that there is a pre-existent expression, and that it finds its expression through a particular semiotic mode. Furthermore, these semiotics are codes that can work throughout various modes (which is not to suggest that these modes lack limitations—Kress and Van Leeuwen are clear that the mode impacts expression, but they limit that impact with their version of semiotics). Bogue explains Deleuze’s resistance to this idea, insisting that “[m]any French theorists adopt a Saussurean approach to the sign, and Deleuze’s effort is to propose an alternative that maintains the autonomy of the visual sign from the linguistic sign” (66). In other words, the discussion of a particular modality should arise from the stuff of that modality, or at the very least be influenced by it. There is little sense in Kress that the medium might be used to critique the medium itself. Instead, through a politically charged discourse, individuals contribute to good design principles. While there may be a sense of instability in terms of visual signs in Kress and Van Leeuwen’s work, it is less the transgressive image that Deleuze offers in the time-image. Hence, the turn towards the post-critical object, which allows itself to be updated by the materials of other media, rather than finding universal semiotics that cut across modes. In looking next to the time-image, we will be searching for a conception of images that works from out of a medium, yet critiques the mode in which it is working. While both conceptions can be viewed as
an arrangement of memory, only the time image will offer a new arrangement by which memory might unfold.

**The Time-Image**

Image and concept are integrally related, or still better, *organically* related. Jean-Luc Nancy suggests that for Deleuze, the concept means “making cinematic” (quoted in Schwab 110). Cinematics are concepts, concepts cinematic. The new concepts that arise out of the any-space-whatever are disruptive concepts, challenging the viewer to create meaning, rather than imbibe an obvious flux of images. To revisit an earlier concept, the time-image creates nonsense. Deleuze says that “the composition [of the film] does not simply express the way in which the character experiences himself, but also expresses the way in which the author [auteur] and the viewer judge him, it integrates thought into the image,” and in bringing together director, viewer, and audience in such a close, triadic relationship, it also creates “what Sergei Eisenstein called ‘the new sphere of filmic rhetoric, the possibility of bearing an abstract social judgment.’ A circuit which includes simultaneously the author, the film and the viewer is elaborated” (*Cinema 2*, 161). Deleuze here also echoes an earlier film critic, Bela Balazs, in the collapse of subject and object, but also is working with Eisenstein in his goal of bringing the audience into a relationship with the film, helping to construct meaning rather than sitting as passive spectators. Deleuze also shows his major project for both of the books, which is to read film across philosophy (rather than the other way around) and, ultimately, to deterritorialize the cogito.

After World War II, destruction and degradation take away the ability to believe in “any good, any *justifiable*, reason for the rational linkage of images” (Flaxman 5).
Absent the compulsion to make sense, film begins to link together images as non-sequitur, which splinter the formerly unified world into infinite “any-spaces-whatever.” Instead of action, movement, and unification, the audience gets subdivided time, a “whole new sense of mental duration, and involution into psychic states” (Flaxman 6). This revolution of time recapitulates, for Deleuze, the Kantian revolution in that time is no longer subordinate to space. In the time-image, image and thought are merged. Or, as Felicity Colman explains, we “shift from an image of action to an image where movement takes place in the passageways of the perception of an absolute and autonomous optical or sound image” (142). Such autonomy is gained by the crisis of the action image, brought about most directly, Deleuze says, by the Italian Neo-Realists (Rossellini, De Sica, Fellini) and French New-Wave filmmakers (Truffault, Godard, Rohmer). The time-image arises out of the crisis of the action-image. No longer can we place faith in the relationship between perception and action, which in turn produces a crisis of the sensory-motor-schema (which links perception to action). When this correlation is lost, we now find a situation in which new linkages can arise. Deleuze articulates it thus: “The cinema is going to become an analytic of the image, implying a new conception of cutting, a whole ‘pedagogy’ which will operate in different ways” (Cinema 2 22).

There are multiple signs of the time-image, and here I would like to focus on three: the hyalosign or crystal-image, the chronosign, and the noosign. The hyalosign, the crystal-image, is a sign that produces an indiscernibility between the virtual and the actual. The hyalosign is one that will combine virtual and actual. For Bergson, it is important to note that the point of perception (actual) and the point of memory (virtual), while distinct, are inseparable. The present moment is always both, and cinema can give
us a picture. Bogue clarifies: “Though expressed as two terms, AO [the point of
perception and the point of memory] is a two-in-one, a point of indiscernibility. Like a
mirror image that joins actual object and virtual reflection, the point of indiscernibility is
an ‘objective illusion,’ not something simply ‘in our heads’; it is a real doubling in which
virtual and actual are distinct but unassignable” (Deleuze on Cinema 119). So then a
collapsing of the virtual and actual image would be an image that shows perception and
memory as indistinct from one another. Such a point of indistinction is a crystal-image, a
hyalosign. Flaxman illustrates the collapse of virtual and actual images: “In terms of the
cinema, the image is actualized from a virtual plane, but it is paradoxically at the point
when images become ambiguous—when we cannot tell what is real and what is
imagined, what has happened in the past and what is happening in the present—that we
begin to see the outlines of how Deleuze understands the virtual aspect of the cinema”
(32). We are not unused to seeing memory displayed on-screen; that in and of itself is
nothing new. What has changed, however, is that we see memory rushing back onto the
present moment, in a way that shows perception and memory simultaneously, much
closer to our actual experience of memory and reflection. Bogue explains that the crystal-
image is “something like an animated mirror-reflection, photograph or postcard, an image
detached from the sensori-motor schema in which there is no means of distinguishing the
object from its description” (Deleuze on Cinema 120). One of the great artists of the
crystal-image, according to Deleuze, is Fellini. Bogue points to Fellini’s film And the
Ship Sails On as an exemplar of this image, in which art and life, the actuality of the
image and the virtuality of reflection, are rendered indiscernible, constantly switching
places. Moreover, in keeping with the formulation that links technology with memory,
Flaxman suggests that the time-image is one that foregrounds the use of memory, not in the sense of a flashback, wherein we always retain our temporal and spatial bearings, but in the sense of memory as déjà vu, or other anomalies, where memory surges onto present consciousness: “[A]lthough memory existed in classical cinema (say, as flashbacks), the past was always demarcated as such; by contrast, the present in modern cinema seems almost to laps into the past, or the past to overtake the present” (Flaxman 32).

Another aspect of the time-image is the chronosign, an image of time that renders the true and the false undecidable through motivating what Deleuze calls the powers of the false. Colman explains: “Recognition of possible futures, of new and aberrant signals of the future, are revealed by the image in situations of time, or of what Deleuze describes, after Nietzsche, as ‘detours’ in evolution” (152). There is, in the chronosign, no sense of certainty with respect to time, but rather possible times in which we might exist. We see sheets of the past, what Bogue calls a time-space that is more than a representation of an internal state, but gives us an image much closer to the ontological memory that Deleuze derives from Bergson (145). In Bergson’s formulation, which Deleuze adopts, there is a psychological (or for Deleuze, ontological) memory which unfolds in different ways. This memory moves through us, we are in memory, rather than memory existing in us. In the chronosign, we can see an image that is much like the way in which this memory moves through us. However, since we are not dealing with an individual memory, we must remove the focus from the individual, and see memory unfolding directly, rather than as an individual state. Deleuze finds just such a creation in
the filmmaking of Pierre Perrault, who seeks to create what Bogue calls a kind of participatory ethnography in his films. Deleuze writes:

What cinema must grasp is not the identity of a character, whether real or fictional, through his objective and subjective aspects. It is the becoming of the real character when he himself starts to ‘make fiction,’ when he enters into ‘the flagrant offence of making up legends’ and so contributes to the invention of his people. The character is inseparable from a before and an after, but he reunites these in the passage from one state to the other. He himself becomes another, when he begins to tell stories without ever being fictional. (Cinema 2 150)

Deleuze here articulates an entire pedagogy for creating this type of thinking. Rather than express one person, or even a group of people, an experience is created in the process of making the film. Bogue tells us that the characters “enact and narrate a fictional story, but one that combines historical experiences in the formation of a new collectivity that emerges through the process of making the film” (152). The goal should not be to represent a truth, but to create one. To allow for something to be created that was not there before: a people to come. In this sense, the chronosign allows us to see an entire memory—not this or that memory, but an entire memory as it unfolds through a group of people and in inventing that people. This would be a pedagogy that would call not for standardized arrangements, but rather call for students to create their arrangements, and in the process, create themselves as a collectivity. ix

The last image I’d like to focus on is the noosign, which Deleuze defines as “an image which goes beyond itself towards something which can only be thought” (Cinema 2, “glossary”). The means of creating such an image is a shift in focus, away from the
image itself, and toward the connections between the images. Eisenstein saw montage as a means of embodying the dialectic itself: images in collision with one another, giving rise to new forms. While Deleuze sees value in Eisenstein, he also looks to modern cinema, which shows an image in which the whole is the outside. Deleuze writes thus: “In the first place, the question is no longer that of the association or attraction of images. What counts is on the contrary the interstice between images, between two images: a spacing which means that each images is plucked from the void and falls back into it” (Cinema 2 179). Deleuze views Godard as precisely an artist of such an image—one in which the connections between images are irrational. Hence, rather than a dialectic of images (or a coordination of images, as in the “Kuleshov Effect”), there is a breakage that continually opens up between images, forcing the viewer to think the outside. “Given one image, another image has to be chosen which will induce an interstice between the two. This is not an operation of association, but of differentiation” (Cinema 2 179). This, then, is the noosign: an image that gives a direct image of time by forcing the viewer to become more than passive spectator, but an active participant in constructing the film. We see “relinkages subject to the cut, instead of cuts subject to the linkage” (Cinema 2 214). The time-image manages to make the viewer think, but only by ceasing to communicate what she expects to see communicated. It is an image that thinks, and the viewer thinks with it and through it.

As useful as the concept of the time-image is, there exists one counterpoint that ought to be briefly considered. John Mullarkey suggests that the time-image is overly essentialized, and here he has a good point. The time-image can be seen in any number of mainstream Hollywood pictures, so we must ask to what extent the time-image remains
capable of involution into psychic states, given Deleuze’s emphasis on the newness and creative capacity of *durée*. Colman suggests that “images become time-images through their ‘disturbances’ of thought, of memory, through their display of” (153) what Deleuze calls a “temporal panorama” (*Cinema 2* 55). This disturbance can only happen through newness. Once overused, it loses its effect. So it must be for the time-image. It might be useful, then, to agree with Mullarkey and suggest that the time-image is a placeholder for what transgresses. We must also recognize—as Lev Manovich notes in “What is Digital Cinema?”—that the digital image provides for a sense of increased fluidity. In digital cinema, the techniques of animation come to the fore, rendering traditional cinematics as a subset of animation. In fact, there is much to suggest that in the digital age little faith can be placed in the “truth” of the image, given the easy access to technology that can alter images in ways that can completely change what it communicates. Time, Deleuze argued, places the notion of truth in crisis. In this sense, so does animation. This might be another sense in which cinematics motivate the powers of the false in contradistinction to Manovich, who suggests that cinema and all new media are based on lying. Instead of a simplistic view of lying, the powers of the false are deployed as means of creation that transgresses against a given image of how thinking ought to go. Here we must depart from Manovich, who cannot help us. What transgresses is likely not going to come to us by way of Manovich (neither through Kress and Van Leeuwen, for that matter).

However, we can see it through Galloway.

**A Vacuole of Noncommunication**

In an interview with Antonio Negri, Deleuze speaks to what we must do, in the society of control, if we are ever to invent: “We’ve got to hijack speech. Creating has
always been something different from communicating. The key thing may be to create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so that we can elude control” (Negotiations 175). I am arguing that the time-image is precisely such a vacuole of non-communication, because it does not allow us to make easy distinctions between now and then, true and false, he and me. As such a vacuole, it appears temporarily, and is then gone. As a placeholder for what transgresses, it is opposed to limitation, and to openness of communication in favor of creating, constructing, and inventing new meanings, new assemblages, new people.

In the case of the movement-image, we looked at how traditional conceptions of new media are reflective of such a concept, in the sense that they provide an indirect view of the network, a mobile and immobile section of the network, and also, through regulation, create an intensified schema, one which renders all linkages rational. This is precisely the issue with new media, all connections must be made on the basis of protocol, which values open communication. The question, then, if we are to look to the time-image as a vacuole of noncommunication, is how to create noncommunication on a network designed to rule that out as an impossibility in advance? How do we create a new media installation that allows us to glimpse a direct view of new media as networked? To this end, let us look once again at Galloway.

**Internet Art as Time-Image**

Internet art is a key area in which to discuss the vacuole of noncommunication. The term should not be understood as art created offline on a traditional medium (like paper or canvas) and then scanned and placed online. Rather, internet art is a means of creating art using the net itself. In this sense, it treks with Deleuze’s project of using the
materials of the medium towards developing concepts of the medium, rather than importing them transcendentally. Internet art (and its important sub-movement, net.art), bears much in common with Guy Debord and the Situationist movement, inasmuch as it works toward a kind of détournement, turning the spectacle of the Web into a spectacle. Galloway writes: “Internet art doesn’t simply mean using browsers and HTML, but instead is an aesthetic defined by its oppositional position vis-à-vis previous, often inadequate, forms of cultural production” (Protocol 212). Rather than keeping protocols (and all code) “under the table,” net.art often works to expose these concepts, and use them as a means of invention. Rachel Greene claims internet art is a typically “marginal and oppositional form, often uniting parody, functionality and activism under a single umbrella” (12).

The particular examples that are of interest here deliver a kind of protocological affect, rather than a cinematic one—a sense that openness and communication have not been established. One of the prime early examples of such a work is the installation Refresh, created by Russian-born net artist Alexei Shulgin. The installation contains nothing but links between web pages. Working together, users create a chain of pages, each programmed to link automatically to the next on a 10 second delay. Shulgin writes: “If you don't get depressed by homeless homepages and wandering websites, if you have shed the hope that names and places in webspace will always have a fixed locality, and if you don't mind to get zapped after 10 seconds, why not join 'Refresh’” (http://redsun.cs.msu.su/wwwart/refresh.htm). In linking the pages together, Refresh gives a visibility to the network. Inasmuch as this is the case, it also brings us back to the
time-image—the construction of meaning occurs through juxtapositions. The installation exists in the montage, the association of pages, however irrational. Galloway writes,

*Refresh* was one of the first works to render the network in an artistic way—as a painter renders a landscape or a sculptor renders a physical form. The art exists ‘out there’ in the network, not on any individual Web page in the chain. Refresh made visible a virtual network of collaboration that was not based on individual content. Shulgin’s work spatializes the Web. It turns the Internet, and protocol with it, into a sculpture. (*Protocol* 216)

Rather than an indirect view of the network through rearrangement of the visible elements, or through the standardized linkages of hypertext (which protocol ensures are always rational, sense-making linkages), we have a more direct view of the network through the jumping between random pages. Refresh works through the irrational linkage in the network, helping to produce its visibility.

Also working in this vein, as Galloway notes, is the work the net.art duo Jodi as well as Lisa Jevbratt, specifically with respect to the 404 error page (the page that pops up whenever users try to access a site or file that cannot be found). The 404 error page is one of the moments where something unexpected takes place, where the circuit of open communication cannot be rendered. It is largely considered undesirable by computer engineers. However, Galloway argues that Jevbratt “transforms the 404 message into a generative doorway, where the requested page is generated on the fly, as if it had always existed for the user and was not the result of a mistake” (*Protocol* 217). Hence, users invent from one of the key aleatory moments of Web users—the point at which
communication fails. Creation, as Deleuze admonished us, is something different than 
communication.

The previously mentioned Jodi—an artistic duo composed of Joan Heemskerk and Dirk 
Paesmans—continue to be among net.art’s most trenchant inventors. In addition to 
previous work on the 404 error page, Jodi has become somewhat notorious for their use 
of computer code in the designs of their pages, often using code directly as the interface. 
One particular installation, http://wwwwwwwwwww.jodi.org, shows a front page of 
indecipherable symbols: what appears as jumbled code. Rachel Greene articulates: “The 
front page is confusing, repetitive, discordant and alphanumeric, but the compositional 
effects are not what they seem: for behind this web page lies source code…which reveals 
a cascade of traditional images and diagrams that are almost scientific or astrological” 
(40). However, if a user selects to show the source code (a simple operation standard on 
web browsers), the art is revealed: the source code is rendered in pictorial fashion, 
showing diagrams of explosive devices.xii They use each part of the protocological 
function (source code and surface image/text) in reverse fashion. Greene writes, “Hiding 
coherent images in source code seems playful and riddling, a means of separating 
instructions (the HTML) from the completed task (the front page). This surreptitious 
divide of the browser is accomplished by radicalizing the source code into the pictorial, 
and radicalizing the executed task into the readable” (Greene 40-41). The question 
becomes: what, then, is the image or the text the viewer is supposed to see? There is a 
playful instability introduced between the two, rendering the digital image, I would 
argue, as a kind of hyalosign—a collapse between virtual and actual.
A further, perhaps even more radical, installation from Jodi is an “operating system” known as OSS. OSS is, however, only an operating system in an abstract and artistic sense. It is an operating system that, once initiated, takes over and begins to function in a chaotic manner. Julian Stallabrass describes the experience well: “Jodi play with dysfunction, causing users to wonder whether their machines have started to play up, perhaps due to some virus infection or badly programmed HTML. Windows shift, scroll-bars judder, text jumps about, colours flash” (36). Stallabrass notes that the confusion may have been compounded for those experiencing the system in the earlier Web, since often, in early Web pages, such experiences may well have happened unintentionally! Nevertheless, I view OSS as a time-image, par excellence, for the Web. Galloway explains: “OSS is abstract art for computers. In it, content itself has been completely subordinated to the sometimes jarring and pixelized topography of the computer operating system” (Protocol 224). OSS gives a view of the network by setting protocol against itself: the automated execution of code towards open communication is here used to execute something befuddling and completely irrational. Paesmans himself has stated that the “computer presents itself as a desktop, with a trash can on the right and pull down menus and all the system icons. We explore the computer from the inside, and mirror this on the net” (cited in Stallabrass, 38). Jodi have demonstrated, tactically, what a vacuole of noncommunication might look like on the web. It requires an act of nonsense. Something that pushes up against the boundaries of protocol the same way in which the post-critical object of Ulmer is meant to push against the boundaries of language. Refusing the protocological conventions of robust, open communication, Jodi
push on that communication to turn it into creation. In so doing, they give us a direct view of protocol, of the network, as such.

As both Galloway and Greene note, however, we have and continue to push past this first phase of internet art toward art drawing on “software engineering, game design and the free-software movement” (Greene 131). Galloway gives, as an example, Toywar, a gaming platform for multiple players. “The goal of the game,” he clarifies, “was to negatively affect specific capital valuations on the NASDAQ stock market” (227). The material of the technology at hand continues to effect particular oppositional tactics. However, these pieces are sufficient, it would seem, to give us an idea of how the time-image can be deployed on the computer screen.

**Becoming-viral**

The objective of developing a time-image of digital media—a vacuole of noncommunication—is simply to grant to new media the possibility of something unexpected happening. The regulation of the linkage is an incredibly powerful mechanism for dictating flow, and for tightening control, because this regulation always determines in advance the “best” way. Of course, this best is only ever in a technocratic, calculated sense—an efficient sense. It is the best way of communication, not of creation. To think in a manner that cuts against such efficiency gives the living image a sense of indeterminacy. In this delay, this indeterminacy, deliberation might be found. It introduces a sense in which one might consider other possibilities besides the most efficient one. As we look for other possibilities, we may well find alternate means by which the virtual may unfold. Searching for a virtuality with respect to new media is no easy task—new media are discreet, hence always actual. However, there is a particular
entity that does introduce a virtual field in new media, but hardly one to which most would look: the computer virus.

The virus, as virus, is a rhetorical invention. Galloway indicates that the literature characterizes the virus as “almost exclusively…hostile or harmful. They are often referred to completely in the negative” (Protocol 177). Of course, we might ask, why wouldn’t they be. Viruses cause a great deal of harm. The infamous “Love Bug” virus attacked over 10 million computers and caused inestimable damage to machines worldwide. How then, would one see the virus as anything other than a vice to be eradicated? Galloway suggests that if viruses had been developed only a few years later, they would likely have come to be known as a self-replicating program. However, the time in which they began to gain prominence (the early 1980s) coincides with the rise of HIV and AIDS in the United States (and worldwide). This association has permanently damaged the ethos of these programs. As Cohen and others have claimed, there are such things as beneficent viruses, which carry out network maintenance operations and information retrieval.

Viruses, according to Frederick B. Cohen, are living entities, noting, “I personally believe that reproducing programs are living beings in the information environment, and I am not alone” (20). Lest that sound like an overly romantic sentiment, it should be noted that Cohen is an extremely prominent computer scientist, and the author of *A Short Course on Computer Viruses*, the first sustained treatise on these programs and a foundational text on the subject. They are a kind of emergent, self-organizing system. Yet, as Galloway notes, despite a great deal of research on the subject, the virus has continually been viewed exclusively as a terrorist’s weapon. The virus presents a virtual
field in new media—the continuation of life by other means. Viruses continue to present a threat because they threaten control. They can be used towards certain purposes, but they present a threat to security, to the integrity of networks. Again, Cohen argues that “[v]iruses are programs that replicate, evolve, and/or infect. They spread from program to program, user to user, computer to computer, and network to network…They are an integrity problem, not a secrecy problem” (28). The virus is an exploratory, experimental, even virtual machine (they unfold from life).

What I wish to suggest is the virus presents a kind of becoming. However, much like Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the schizo, there is a danger here. Deleuze and Guattari used the schizophrenic as a kind of model, which is not to suggest that they valorized schizophrenia as a form of resistance, neither did they romanticize mental disorders, but rather conceptualized through it another way of thinking in opposition to the major or dominant modes of thought. The becoming here would be a becoming-minor, more specifically a becoming-viral. Let’s look briefly at what Deleuze has to say about becomings-minor as a means of suggesting some very preliminary comments about becoming-viral.

Todd May suggests that the important question to ask regarding becoming is not “what is a becoming,” which already does becoming a disservice in attempting to fix it with a particular identity, but rather “when is a becoming,” because becoming is inextricably linked with time and the unfolding of the virtual. Where we typically try to affix particular identities to things (such as the self), Patty Sotirin notes that the self, or identity, is only a threshold between two becomings. A threshold is a zone between multiplicities. Hence, Deleuze and Guattari note in A Thousand Plateaus that the “self is
only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities” (249). What is typically a focus of philosophy, the identities of phenomena (whether a thing is this or that sort of object), is conceptualized by Deleuze as a temporary zone, time being an important focus. Since identity is not a final state, but only a threshold, a becoming is not a what, but rather a when, leading Sotirin to observe, “When we are ‘in-between,’ on the threshold, what keeps us distinct from this or that can become indiscernible or indistinct or imperceptible” (100).

Deleuze and Guattari argue that becomings “imply two simultaneous movements, one by which a term (the subject) is withdrawn from the majority, and another by which a term (the medium or agent) rises up from the minority” (A Thousand Plateaus 291). Hence, all becomings are becoming-minor, which works against the majoritarian identities to which we are affixed. It is crucially important to note that minority and majority here have nothing to do with relative population sizes. Rather, major and minor refer to sets of arrangements, with the majority declaring a certain set of arrangements the normal, correct, or right ones. The minority, by contrast, “undercuts the dominant [discourse] in an act of creation that points to new arrangement unacknowledged by the majority” (“When Is” 150). Becoming-minor, then, is a creative act that allows for new lines of flight to develop, or for new ways by which the virtual can unfold. It is a creative act, in contradistinction to a communicative act, as we have seen before. All becomings, Deleuze and Guattari tell us, start with becoming-woman, the first quantum in A Thousand Plateaus. Sotirin writes: “Becoming-woman disrupts the rigid hierarchies of sexual binaries such as male/female, heterosexuality/homosexuality, masculinity/femininity that organize our bodies, our experiences, our institutions and our histories”
May suggests that our sexual roles are among our most fixed identities, so for this reason, becoming-woman finds pride of place.

So then, becoming-woman, like all becomings-minor, works against a majoritarian discourse or arrangement, working to disrupt or undercut that majority discourse. We might ask, therefore, what the majority discourse of digital media is. Although it is non-hierarchical, digital media are not without their fair share of power centers. The minority of digital media must work against these. As Galloway observes, “tactical media means the bottom-up struggle of the networks against the power centers. (And of course the networks against the power centers who have recently reinvented themselves as networks!)” (Protocol 175). These tactical media, among which we might number the virus, struggle against these powers. The majority arrangement, as we have noted, is one of clean, efficient, open communication. It is one which suggests the “best” way, and then questions who could possibly oppose such efficiency.

The efficient (or, as mentioned in chapter one, the expedient) is the majoritarian discourse of the web: open, transparent, non-hierarchical, completely efficient communication. A becoming-minor of digital media must show arrangements, produce a discourse, that undercuts such efficiency. Only then can other arrangements be found. Such a becoming would be one that I call becoming-viral. Becoming-viral is uncontrollable, aleatory, and cannot be accounted for in advance, which is opposed to the exacting control of digital media. Becoming-viral is contagious, like the becoming-woman of small talk, which Sotirin delineates as a “contagious microfeminism” (105), moving wildly and without the approval of the dominant order. Where protocol favors clear and open communication, becoming-viral is nothing less than the disruption of
communication in favor of a creative, inventive act, much like Jodi’s OSS. The becoming of a vacuole of noncommunication is a becoming-viral.

I believe that we can see actions that approximate these acts to a certain extent in the work of so-called internet “trolls.” The term “trolls” refer to people who post typically inciting or incendiary messages online in an attempt to disrupt the smooth flow of discussion. According to Judith S. Donath, “[t]rolling is a game about identity deception, albeit one that is played without the consent of most of the players. The troll attempts to pass as a legitimate participant, sharing the group’s common interests and concerns” (45). Trolls, as Donath observes, play a game with identity, posing as a user with a particular interest or, probably more commonly, posting in an anonymous fashion altogether. Like the virus, in Galloway’s account, the troll is a rhetorical invention. Often, incidents of problematic identity are conflated with trolling entirely. For example, Mattathias Schwartz, in his rather extensive article on trolling for the New York Times, suggested that the false Myspace account created by Lori Drew was an incident of trolling. Drew created the account to imitate a young boy, then used the account to romance a 13-year-old girl named Megan Meier before breaking up with her, which provoked Meier to hang herself. While this may bear certain similarities, I want to suggest that trolling is far less direct in nature, and covers only certain instances of “false identity.” In this case, Drew had gone out of her way to invent a false persona. Trolling, on the other hand, tends to revolve around its anonymity, and focuses less on a specific reaction from a known individual, but thrives on the impersonal discourse of the web—locations such as message boards, chat rooms, etc.
Although they have, deservedly, a predominantly negative reputation, I would argue that there is something to which we ought to pay attention in this phenomenon. The overt willingness to sustain a fluid identity, to alternate between roles, to be a tactically disrupting influence—all of these facets are indicative of a writing that is becoming-viral. Donath suggests that trolling can be a disruptive influence, undermining trust in a particular online group. The act of trolling utilizes the openness of communication and the robustness of the network against any aspect of communication, but rather for a creative purpose. In this case, trollers often suggest that they do it for the “lulz.” That is, as Schwartz writes,

‘Lulz’ is how trolls keep score. A corruption of ‘LOL’ or ‘laugh out loud,’ ‘lulz’ means the joy of disrupting another’s emotion equilibrium. ‘Lulz is watching someone lose their mind at their computer 2,000 miles away while you chat with friends and laugh,’ said one ex-troll who, like many people I contacted, refused to disclose his legal identity. (par. 8)

Trolling, then, is the use of the open dynamic of regulated communication on the internet towards an inventive purpose. It is, I would argue, a localized and strictly tactical form of resistance from the bottom up: using networks against networks. I want to note, however, that I am neither lionizing nor romanticizing the manner in which much trolling has been deployed. I do not advocate treating people poorly, nor using people and their emotional lives to tally “lulz.” However, where most of the discourse tends to focus on deception in the negative, as well as on the evils of a “type” of person, I would also suggest that this debate can also be viewed not in the sense of good and bad, but rather minoritarian and majoritarian. An alternate example might help.
In “The Ambivalent Dynamics of Secretarial ‘Bitching’: Control, Resistance, and the Construction of Identity,” Sotirin and Gottfried argue that women’s small talk, typically referred to by such pejoratives as “chatter, gossip, girl-talk, bitching” (105) and the like are typically thought of as essentially women’s discourses, connected with “women’s embodied, essential nature” (105). However, Sotirin and Gottfried argue that these discourses are not representative of women’s essential nature (even if there was any such thing), neither does is represent “capitulation or resistance to their gendered subordination” (105). Rather, they suggest, through the concept of becoming-woman, we can think differently about these discourses and the arrangements they produce, which open “radical alternatives for living a ‘political’ life by creating wild lines of resonance and intensity through and beyond the binary relations of domination and oppression that structure the molar position of conventional gender politics” (105). The majority response is seen clearly in the nomenclature of such discourse: bitching. Those who engage in such discourses can easily be written off as “bitches.” Similarly, those who engage in trolling can be dismissed just as easily as jerks, assholes, etc. What must be considered, however, is whether alternative arrangements can be produced through such discourses, ones that subvert the majority arrangements of expedient communication. It seems that they do, and therefore we should not be concerned that the predominant uses of such discourse have less to do with any effort we might traditionally conceive of as noble. The figure of the “asshole” is every bit as dismissive as the “bitch.” Yet when we look at these concepts through the lens of becoming-minor or becoming-viral, we can see where the wild lines of resonance to which Sotirin refers become apparent, and particularly beneficial.
I want to suggest that, in the concept of trolling, there is something akin to a becoming-viral that we might see: the invention of an alternate set of arrangements, the truncation of the open communication of the robust web, and the subversion of identity formulated as information. I do not advocate emotional abuse, nor working to upset people’s emotional lives. However, I do suggest that we attend to the kinds of writing that occur in these spaces, and to the creation (as opposed to the communication) of the minority discourse that obtains therein to think and rethink how we might see the screen differently. We must pay heed to the ways in which becoming-viral creates vacuoles of noncommunication.

**Conclusion: The Arrangement of Memory**

Reynolds suggests that we have too easily conceived of the canon of memory as memorization, rendering it a far less applicable canon to the present age, especially the digital age, where machines seem to do much remembering for us. Reynolds suggests that from antiquity, memory has been intimately connected with invention. Here we also connect it with arrangement. In his section on memory as database, he suggests that memory can be seen as a “repository for information” (11) that affects invention, arrangement, and style. However, if memory is posited as a database, in the digital sense, then we must see it as a rigidified memory, one in which the linkages are always rational, sense-making linkages with the arrangement always predetermined. In contradistinction to this conception, Deleuze’s virtual memory that unfolds gives us an unpredicatable memory that expresses itself. The image that expresses this memory can be seen in cinematics, when cinematic moves break with the sensory-motor-schema that regulates action, and opens up a space for time to be revealed as we experience it in memory.
Victor Burgin expresses this sentiment well (despite the fact that he’s trying to argue *against* the concept of control society) when he says, “The film we saw is never the one I remember” (107). It’s a statement about the multiplicity of ways that memory can unfold. However, in rhetoric/composition, we must learn to construct such an object: the film/webpage/multimedia project that I remember (or better yet, that is remembered *through* me). The time-image is the arrangement of memory. I have argued that we must begin to look for these operations on the computer screen, as a part of cinematics, rather than only cinema. We must find ways to grapple with the boundaries of discourse, as in Ulmer’s post-critical object, to open up a way for other modes of seeing, saying, and thinking—an alternate form of arrangement. If memory and technology are intertwined, then we must beware of a technology that allows for memory to become overly constrained, even modulated. It is under the conditions of protocol, that the regulation of control society can do its work: regulating all other possibilities at the expense of a ruthless efficiency.

We have traced such an image through the more constrained images of Kress and Van Leeuwen, and the possibilities opened by Manovich. We have also looked to net.art to find a transgressive image, one that grapples with the possibilities set forth by protocol, and seeks to create a virtual image for digital media. Lastly, I have demonstrated a becoming-minor of the Web—becoming-viral—where we see a rejection of identity, and of the robust yet regulated communication of the web towards an inventive act. This becoming will function as a valuable linkage in considering how to relate these concepts now to print texts. Ultimately, I am as concerned with writing textually as visually, and the theses of this chapter will have a great deal of import for traditional writing. However, we will have to consider the way, the style in which we write, our *inventive*
methods. The method of the time-image is an irrational one, a method that plays off of the audience’s sense of expectation and what “makes sense” in order to create the unexpected. We will need, then, a linkage between the time-image and the printed text.

In his essay, “From Heuristics to Aleatory Procedures; or, Toward ‘Writing the Accident,’” Vitanza hearkens back to the NEH seminar he attended in 1978 in which he first posed the question of aleatory methods to Young. Since that time, he writes, “I have continued in my attempts to understand both the conditions and possibilities of this apparently rather mysterious approach to invention called aleatory procedures, or as it is sometimes referred to, ‘a throw of the dice’” (186). The throw of the dice should of course remind us here of both Nietzsche and especially Deleuze’s take on the same, in which he tells us, “There is creation, properly speaking, only insofar as we can make use of excess in order to invent new forms of life rather than separating life from what it can do” (Nietzsche and Philosophy 185). To throw the dice is to live actively rather than reactively, it is to experiment with possibility, and to place oneself in line with the virtual. We don’t know, in advance, what will happen in the aleatory, which is precisely the benefit. May articulates it thus: “Good players affirm both chance and necessity. They play not for a particular combination, but with the knowledge that the combinations are infinite, and are not up to them” (65). In this sense, aleatory methods serve as a counter to protocol because they are opposed to any sense of uni-versity, any attempt to determine the outcomes and account for them in advance. The aleatory affirms the virtual, which protocol attempts to regulate. Vitanza affirms this sentiment, challenging us to recognize that
While [heuristics] discovers or invents meaning by way of defining (i.e., limiting), and therefore while it is indebted to the basic principles of formal logic (identity, noncontradiction, and the excluded middle), the latter is not indebted to these principles and instead makes meaning by recalling to mind what heretofore had been excluded by the principle of the excluded middle. (The latter would embrace all the excluded so-called monsters of thought). (“From Heuristic” 186)

Not to suggest that Deleuze’s thought was ever impractical or unconcerned with political practice, but in the age of protocol, we must recognize the renewed value (in political terms) of Deleuze’s thought. Protocol stymies invention by rendering the possible as given in advance. The means of combating this tendency is, quite simply, to work in a manner that is not predetermined. One of the principal ways in which this works is through aleatory methods. Vitanza helps us to theorize the aleatory, showing how aleatory methods open up a new mode of composition. Remember Robert Ray’s anecdote about the computer programmer—when asked about the chance of something happening by accident, he responds by suggesting that accidents are precisely the situation he seeks to avoid. The aleatory method will show a time-image of print, helping us to pattern our writing after the time-image. It will give us a post-critical object of the time-image, using its accidental flow of images as a means of writing the text. However, because we are working out of the time-image, we will also need to think through what has been said about this writing, viewing it through the lens of Deleuzian memory. With that, we turn to aleatory methods.

Notes

1 Composition is fraught with examples of the former, but see the edited collection *Cinema(to)graphy* as an example. While a very useful collection, the articles tend to skew towards ways of writing about film,
although there are pieces about using film in a composition class. Still, Ulmer’s method goes further in allowing the two to inflect one another.

ii Deleuze’s distinction here is decidedly different, however. Deleuze is, at his core, a materialist. He is an unusual materialist as he brings such phenomena as thought into the realm of the material, but his thought is a materialist thought.

iii Note here the parallels between Manovich and Ulmer, where Ulmer sees poststructuralism as tending toward avant-garde art practices, the kind found especially in new media.

iv Indeed, Bazin has often been treated as a sort of naïve realist by several film scholars. For my part, I prefer Daniel Morgan’s reading of Bazin’s concept of realism, who reads it in light of the concept of acknowledgment, a term borrowed from Stanley Cavell. It is the interaction between content and the form (or medium) in which it exists. Acknowledgment is to not only know something, but to do something or to respond to it in some way. In terms of aesthetics, acknowledgment means to respond to certain features of a particular medium one is working in that cannot be escaped. In Morgan’s words, “The nature of the medium becomes the basis for the artwork; the work of the artist is to figure out the appropriate way, given the particular situation of the artwork, or acknowledging it” (471). Acknowledgment becomes a framework to delineate Bazin’s notion of realism. “A film, if it is to be realist, must construct a style that counts as an acknowledgment of the reality conveyed through its photographic base; it must do something, in some way or other, with this knowledge of its medium. But what it does is left open for individual films to achieve” (471). Realism then, is not a checklist of stylistic elements, it’s not even a noun, but an attitude or orientation towards one’s medium and a way of interpreting reality. In this sense, Bazin might even be placed in our general disposition towards post-criticism.

v Comparisons to traditions within Composition Studies at this point are striking. The classical CBS method (clarity-brevity-sincerity), which is still very much a model for composition, in that we seek to help students compose a rational, cogent narrative, provides a salient parallel with Deleuze’s comments on the evolution of cinematics.

vi Note the distinction between Deleuze here and other narrative theorists. Deleuze does not suggest that narrative pre-exists the connection of images, but only arises after the images have been connected. Narrative is not prior to the image, but arises from their juxtaposition.

vii One critique that is possible, and has been made, is that Kress is drawing a false distinction between word and image. Ron Fortune, responding to Kress, writes that we need to avoid a simple dichotomy that treats word and image as eternally fixed semiotic systems” (50). Deana McDonagh et al claim that rather than a strictly binary model, we should see images as occupying symbolic and semiotic nodes simultaneously. Andrew Morrison says that “multimodal discourse needs not be framed as page or screen, or reader to visitor, or text to message entity; instead, these are overlapping, intersecting and interdependent relations of congruity, convergence and communicability” (88). Clearly, then, the point has been made in rhetoric and composition that image and text are not mutually exclusive. They are in a dynamic relationship and can accomplish similar objectives.


ix I would argue that precisely such a collectivity can be seen in the installation, “Hello World: Or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Noise,” where media artist Christopher Baker, using a display screen, presented 5000 different video diaries from YouTube, every one of which could be heard and seen simultaneously. Wrenching these videos from their initial context, he presented them in new, immersive manner. In so doing, he presents a collective image, not of this or that individual (which is, of course, the hallmark of the diary and the video diary), but rather an assemblage.

x For more on declining relations between photographic imagery and believability, see Nancy Allen, “Ethics and Visual Rhetorics: Seeing’s Not Believing Anymore,” as well as Barbare E. Savedoff, “Escaping Reality: Digital Imagery and the Resources of Photography.”
xi I will not, for time’s sake, give a full history or overview of internet art. However, for the intrepid reader, I highly recommend both Julian Stallabrass’ *Internet Art: The Online Clash of Culture and Commerce* and Rachel Greene’s *Internet Art* as superb tools for gaining a grasp of this fascinating field.

xii Not detailed enough to construct one, of course, just detailed enough to recognize what the viewer is seeing.

xiii See Kim Zetter “When Love Came to Town: A Virus Investigation” in *PC World*. 
Chapter 4
Ele(ctr)ocution: Style

In the last chapter, we focused on conceptions of rhetoric specific to the multimedia and digital environments. This next chapter will focus on rhetorics that may well express similar ideas, or ideas adequate to the challenges laid out in chapter three, but they will not be exclusive to writing on a computer screen. In fact, some of them may well work with technology little more advanced than a pen and paper. In other words, they are methods that should be of great interest to traditional composition. In the novel Generation X by Douglas Coupland, the three main characters retreat to a veritable non-place—Palm Springs—escaping the lives they hated. There they spend their days telling stories in an effort to restore personal unity. One of the characters, Claire, remarks, “Either our lives become stories, or there’s just no way to get through them” (8). The narrator agrees, commenting, “We know that this is why the three of us left our lives behind us and came to the desert—to tell stories and to make our own lives worthwhile tales in the process” (8). However, notwithstanding the emphasis on personal unity, it is useful to ask in what ways student experience can become the stuff of writing. However, I don’t want to recapitulate the same work that has already been done here. Rhetoric/composition has spent a great deal of time on utilizing personal narratives and journals in the composition classroom. We’ve all read that book and I have no intention of writing it now.

However, we might ask what other kinds of stories students could tell, especially if we were to remove the focus from telling “this” particular story from “my own” experience in a strictly linear, chronological fashion. It might be useful to seek out other methods by which experience can narrate itself, and for new connections to be found.
Such methods would be the style of memory. Style is of critical importance to Deleuze’s theory. Tom Conley seeks to remind us, in “From Multiplicities to Folds: On Style and Form in Deleuze,” that a “style of composition conveys a tactic and a way of dealing with the world, hence a habitus, understood in a general fashion, that determines both being and action” (630). Style is nothing less than a style of thinking. Again, Conley drives home his point: “Deleuze came to place a greater stress on form and style as what mobilizes a politics” (631). Once again, we find a connection to the concept of deliberation. We are attempting a politics of the aleatory unfolding of the virtual, one which can be open to other and still other rhetorical encounters. Control and protocol come increasingly to depend upon the fact that nothing will happen by chance—the very elimination of deliberation. Instead, I seek methods that enable other possibilities, which might be deployed in a style reflective of memory. It is to this end that this chapter will be devoted. We will start by revisiting Deleuze’s concept of expression, and what Deleuze thinks it means to have an idea. We will then connect this concept to composition using Byron Hawk’s rereading of vitalism in the history of rhetoric/composition. At that point, I will turn to specific examples of aleatory methods, reading them through the lens of Deleuze.

**What Does it Mean to Express an Idea?**

As this chapter will focus on forms of writing that allow something else besides a self to be expressed, it seems fitting to begin with the following piquant and terse observation from Deleuze and Guattari: “There is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 79). Gregg Lambert responds to this quote by saying that as a result of moving away from a subject of enunciation, we
conclude that “language is primarily social and is made up by statements and order-words. One does not speak as much as one repeats, the emphasis here being placed on the redundancy of statements as well as on the effect of the relative identity (or stability) that corresponds to the subjectivity of speech-acts” (35). Composition is accustomed to some of these very ideas. We are fond of repeating such ideas as “language is social” and the truth of any statement is generated in a transaction between speaker, audience and the world (Berlin). Min-Zhan Lu’s work enjoins compositionists to work out of such a context by seeking out conflicts that students have as they are brought into so-called academic prose. Such conflicts are the very basis of writing, not an impediment to writing. In recognizing and dealing with conflict, students are meant to recognize a breakdown in the typical binary between academic writing and writing for the “real world.” Indeed, they are meant to recognize that no such inside/outside actually exists. Lu observes, “The supposed separation between language, thinking, and living reduces language into discrete and autonomous linguistic varieties or sets of conventions, rules, standards, and codes rather than treating language as a site of cultural conflict and struggle” (“Conflict and Struggle” 905). Inasmuch as students must come to recognize struggle as a necessary precondition of writing and their work in the academy, they must also come to a knowledge that writing will in fact change who they are. Formalist approaches to writing, of the sort that she criticizes, will only try to suppress such realities “because of [essentialist assumptions] that words can express but will not change the essence of one's thoughts,” we find a situation in which “pedagogy promises to help students master academic discourse without forcing them to reposition themselves—i.e., to re-form their relation—towards conflicting cultural beliefs.” (906). Min-Zhan Lu’s
suggestion at the end of the article towards what she wants is further telling, as she recommends that composition needs “more research analyzing and contesting the assumptions about language underlying teaching methods which offer to ‘cure’ all signs of conflict and struggle, research which explores ways to help students recover the latent conflict and struggle in their lives which the dominant conservative ideology of the 1990s seeks to contain” (910). By understanding their situation in terms of the conflict of engaging other ways of thinking, students come to recognize the ideological situatedness of their own writing. Lu continues, “Most of all, we need to find ways of foregrounding conflict and struggle not only in the generation of meaning or authority, but also in the teaching of conventions of ‘correctness’ in syntax, spelling, and punctuation, traditionally considered the primary focus of Basic Writing instruction” (910). Lu calls for a means of foregrounding struggle, to utilize it as a means of invention, rather than viewing it as an obstruction to invention.¹

Lu’s work ultimately seems to recognize the shifts students undergo in terms of ideological change. Students will struggle as they encounter new ideas and cultures and the ideology from which they proceed begins to alter. However, Lu’s dependence upon social situation and ideology is not, for Deleuze, the most fruitful place to begin discussion. Ideology is not the cause that it is for Min-Zhan Lu, but rather an effect. Ian Buchanan, in Deleuzism, writes,

Although it may sometimes seem like it…Deleuze and Guattari are not rejecting false consciousness, naturalisation, or even ideology out of hand when they denounce the explanatory power of these terms. The quarrel is rather with anyone
who would claim them to be causes, or even indices of causes, when they are in fact nothing more than effects. (30).

Ideological shifts in students are only effects. This idea does not negate the value of Lu’s analysis and others like it. Rather, what it shows is the limitations of focusing on these concepts, as composition is often wont to do. What Deleuze seeks, rather than ideological analysis, is a form of expression, the expression of adequate ideas rather than inadequate ones. “[I]nadequate ideas are what we are condemned to so long as we do not inquire after causes. Adequate ideas, therefore, are what we have when causes are known” (Deleuzism 31). We must ask after what is means to express an idea adequately.

As noted in chapter two, Lambert writes, “The problem of expression in Spinoza’s philosophy concerns, first of all, the interplay between the internal thought and external bodies, and how ideas come to express this relation between inside and outside as being internal to the power of thought” (31). Deleuze borrows his ideas on the subject from Spinoza, which we have already seen. However, I will here try to take us a little further into these concepts, such that we can see the value of the writing methods I will exposit. An understanding of an idea expresses an idea adequately. This expression is simultaneously of the object and also in the idea. Hence, as Lambert argues: “The famous subject-object dualism is subtracted from this exposition of the act of understanding, since the idea of understanding, its object and the power of the act are in fact identical” (32). So then a proposition expresses something. When we speak an idea, we express something. According to Deleuze, we can express ourselves (from which he wants to move away), we can express something else, or we can be expressed.
In a given proposition, what is expressed is sense. Sense, as we have seen, is a *something* (Deleuze calls it aliquid), that is neither of the proposition, nor of a thing itself, but is expressed in both dimensions. Lambert observes, “Sense would be irreducible to all these determinations, signaling an extra-being that belongs neither to the order of words, nor to the order of things. This dimension is called expression” (33). The expression then is neither properly a proposition nor a thing, but it works between both even as it is never actually a part of either. Sense, as we have seen, arranges bodies and effects on bodies. It takes an extraordinary state of language to ever alter sense. Moreover, as Buchanan suggests, Deleuze’s philosophy cannot “work by fashioning imperatives (‘you will have fun!’). It can only proceed by demonstration.’ His doctrine, then, is not to be found in a secret instruction manual, but in his praxis” (33). We cannot prescribe that our students discover extraordinary states of language. Buchanan argues that Deleuze’s philosophy is ultimately one of joy, but we cannot command students to enjoy themselves. Instead, what is needed is to find alternate modes of expression.

The value of these modes of expression reflects what Ulmer delineates regarding the postcritical object. Postcriticism could quite adequately be characterized as a form of expression in which (with apologies to McLuhan), the medium is the method. It does not try to describe or represent an idea (in the sense of hermeneutics, *ekphrasis*, etc.), but rather to enact an idea. The hope, in so far as we are concerned, is that students might find ways of expressing that lead them away from expressing themselves or their opinions—for that they have Facebook. Moving out even from conceptions of writing by multiple authors, the goal is instead closer to a collective assemblage of enunciation. J. MacGregor Wise’s comments might be useful here. He articulates an assemblage in the
following ways: “First, assemblages are not just things, practices and signs articulated into a formation, but also qualities, affects, speeds and densities” (84). Here would be a key distinction between a co-authored composition and an assemblage. We are not interested in expressing one or even both authors, nor of putting together language written by multiple authors, there must be something more, something that perhaps critiques the very language or medium in which the enunciation is made. Wise continues, “Secondly, assemblages work through flows of agency rather than specific practices of power” (84). Thus, we would be seeking a means for non-hierarchical contribution, not centered around any one person, but rather in flows between people or even within one person. Wise completes his formulation by suggesting that while assemblage is to some extent about contingent connections, “assemblage is also about their territorialization and expression as their elements and actions” (84). Assemblage is not about being one or more things, but about becoming something else, in the sense of becoming that we have already explored.

While they are not certainly guaranteed to produce these effects (as if there were any method that could make such a promise!), the aleatory methods we will explore in this chapter can create conditions under which such possibilities might obtain. They are other ways of working with language, and of finding new possibilities. They work in proprietary code, not outside of it. However, they are means of having an idea adequate to its expression, so while they may not specifically work with encoding, they represent possibilities for finding new and surprising linkages, which is the goal, and also a means of allowing for language to overflow its own categories (also known as hypertrophy).
They work against control. They do not always produce collective assemblages, but they can.

However, before we explore these methods, it is necessary to take a look at one of the key theorists of such methods, Greg Ulmer. Ulmer’s pedagogy is one of invention that works from memory. In this sense, he is an ideal theorist of my project. However, some distinctions are, I believe, in order. Fundamentally, these concern the relationship between digital and virtual memory, which Ulmer seems has too easily grafted together. Ulmer’s theory seeks invention in a classical sense, working from out of memory as a treasury of invented things. In this he seeks a theory of invention that will take memory (individual and cultural) and explore new linkages between them. His method is perfect for a Deleuzian theory of memory, and also as a linkage between screens and print texts. He writes of his pedagogical method: “These practices are not medium specific: rather, they entail a revision of the liberal arts trivium (grammar, rhetoric, logic) open to writing on a screen as well as on paper. It may be that eventually the screen will replace the page (and the database replace the library) as the support of all academic work” (*Heuretics* 17). So then what we are after are methods that will work through both image and text, screen and writing. Moreover, the relations between computers and thought are integral: “The assumption is that changes in the equipment of memory involve changes in people and institutions as well. Chorography as a practice corresponds to recent developments in computing” (*Heuretics* 36). The way in which memory works will change depending upon technology. This is a concept for which we can account using Deleuze: we might say that technology can provide another means by which the virtual can unfold.
Ulmer works with conceptions of artificial memory—those means that have historically provided a mode of storing and retrieving information outside of one’s own body and mind: “Alphabetic writing, as an ‘artificial memory’ capable of sustaining long chains of reasoning outside living memory and making them available for spatial manipulation, democratized the skill of analytic logic. This technology required the foundation of a new institution—School—to turn analysis into a cultural habit of mind” (*Heuretics* 140). The effects, as we have seen, of print literacy on the ways in which we remember were significant. So too will be the effects of digital media. Ulmer understands the dangers inherent to digital media, suggesting that we must invent methods of digital media that can allow for surprise, observing that “it is a question of intervening in this invention, whose outcome is not determined in advance, recognizing that memory will be the point of inception of this change, as people, interacting with electronic technology, come to experience their conduct differently” (*Teletheory* 133). The means will have to be invented from out of the material of the technology itself. There will always be means of doing so, Ulmer claims, “As Paul Virilio pointed out, every invention brings into the world its own form of accident” (*Electronic Monuments* 36). In other words, every solution presents its own problems. We must allow for accidents, for ideas to come about by chance. The end goal will be to create the possibilities of other ways of seeing, writing, and thinking, possibly even the dissolution of our current conception of the individual altogether: “In electracy, for better or worse, the borders of identity—of the group subject (between individual and collective)—become writable” (*Electronic Monuments* xviii). In an effort to practice such work, we must have a method that forges
new linkages by taking ideas, texts, visuals, etc., and send them in alternate directions.

One of the central concepts for Ulmer’s methodology is the concept of the relay.

The relay is a means of sending ideas, or information, from one location to the next. Ulmer does not offer a firm definition of the relay, but he does give suggestions as to what it does, specifically suggesting in Internet Invention that every work encountered is a relay. In other words, “every example constitutes a relay that helps direct you to your own material” (21). Among the first instances of the relay can be found in his first book on electracy, Applied Grammatology, where the relay is a connection between Heidegger’s concept of Enframing and Derrida’s grammatology: “Enframing, in short, concerns not any given form of technology, but the production and relaying of information by whatever means, which is to say that techne itself cannot ‘end’ or ‘arrive at its completion,’ since it is what allows anything at all to become present” (15). It will be more useful to understand this concept if we take a slight detour to understand the concept of Enframing.

Heidegger teaches us that modern technology differs from ancient technologies in that it is a different sort of “bringing-forth.” It does not bring forth in the sense of poiesis (the old way), but in the sense of challenging. We might call this a forcing. To use Heidegger’s example, a windmill utilizes the wind that comes—it is left to the wind’s mercies, as it were. Modern technologies, such as a hydroelectric dam, unlock the energies from the water by forcing them out, by damming up the river, etc. Another example might be the difference between a sailboat and a motorboat. A sailboat uses the winds that come, and without winds there is no motion. A motorboat
uses fossil fuel to power an electric motor and forces, or challenges the water to move the boat forward.

Heidegger identifies four causes of poiesis from traditional philosophy. The first cause is the material from which an object is made (the silver metal that makes up a chalice). The second is the form (the shape of the chalice). The third cause is the end purpose that technology serves (the religious ritual for the chalice). The fourth cause is the builder or maker or artisan, who Heidegger suggests we have come to privilege unduly. Heidegger switches the formulation somewhat, insisting that in traditional technology, the artisan is the one responsible for gathering together the other three causes. Heidegger explains, “The three previously mentioned ways of being responsible owe thanks to the pondering of the silversmith for the ‘that’ and the ‘how’ of their coming into appearance and into play for the production of the sacrificial vessel” (8). Heidegger expounds on the concept of cause by referring to them as ways of being responsible for something. If something is brought into presence, the four causes are ways of being responsible for it. The smith is the one who puts the causes into play, which bring the chalice into presence. The four ways of being responsible together are what bring the object into appearance, into presence. To bring a thing to presence means to reveal it: the smith has brought forth a chalice out of concealment into unconcealment. Aletheia, the Greek word for truth, is also a word for revealing. “Technology,” Heidegger states, “is a way of revealing” (12), and hence a way to truth. Technology is present where truth occurs.

Modern technology is still a revealing, but now the technology does not work in traditional fashion. Mechanical reproductions of artifacts (such as our chalice) are
repetitive, indistinct instances in which objects are brought forth not from the hand of an artisan, but from a machine’s imprint. The mass reproduction of objects challenges forth nature into standing reserve. In purchasing said object, the object becomes a resource on its own. The *telos*, or purposes of things, as Heidegger explains, is difficult to find in modern technology. As in the case of mining coal to burn for electricity, it is constantly deferred through various channels. Heidegger explicates, “That challenging happens in that the energy concealed in nature is unlocked, what is unlocked is transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is stored up is, in turn, distributed, and what is distributed is switched about ever anew” (16). Nature is transformed into a household decoration, stored in the house as something for observation, and the real becomes standing reserve. The individuals who look at the chalice then become like Heidegger’s tourists on the Rhine, inspectors as a “tour group ordered there by the vacation industry” (16), or in this case the beverage container industry. To add an additional turn, even the chalice, whose purpose once was definable and whose presence was wrought by a particular artisan, is now a commodity for mass reproduction, which then turns the presence of the chalice into standing reserve. This idea of industry also has the character of a setting upon, but in this case a setting upon that sets upon humanity. The challenging can also become a challenge, an order, to humans for humans. Heidegger explains, “The forester who, in the wood, measures the felled timber and to all appearances walks the same forest path in the same way as did his grandfather is today commanded by profit-making in the lumber industry” (18). Thus humans are challenged, and set upon, and can also be placed within the standing reserve, evidence of which Heidegger finds in rhetoric such as “supply of patients” and “human resources” (18). Both terms indicate that people be a standing
reserve, available to ensure the possibility of doing something (perhaps being sick or
doing work).

Of course, humans are the ones who are challenged into ordering, hence they are
never simply standing reserve. However, Heidegger says “man drives technology
forward, he takes part in ordering as a way of revealing. But the unconcealment itself,
within which ordering unfolds, is never a human handiwork” (18). Rather now humanity
is challenged, set upon, and gathered into ordering to reveal nature as standing reserve.

Much as in the old technology, the artisan gathered together the modes of being
responsible, the causes, humanity is now gathered into ordering the real as standing
reserve. The challenge that gathers humanity into such an ordering is Enframing. In
Heidegger’s words, “Enframing means the gathering together of that setting-upon which
sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as
standing-reserve” (20). Enframing is the essence of modern technology, and the essence
of mechanical reproduction. It is that essence which is itself nothing technological.
There is nothing technological about the gathering together, the setting upon, the
challenge, etc. Rather it is the essence of modern technology, of mechanical
reproduction. The parts of mechanical reproduction, the tools of the assembly line, are
technological, the putting together of mechanical reproductions is a technological
activity, but the activity itself is what responds to the “challenge of Enframing” (21).

Through mechanical reproduction, humanity is set upon by demand and although they
drive the technology forward, they are not in control but set upon by it, by this
unconcealment within which ordering unfolds. Ergo, what exists is lying around for us to
use.
Conditions of Enframing are contrary, for Heidegger, to reflection. If mankind is an agent of the revealing, then it can also be used to safeguard the coming to presence of truth. However, the coming to presence of technology threatens all revealing (which all truth is, for Heidegger), and hence threatens the coming to presence of truth. Human activity can’t fight it, only human reflection “can ponder the fact that all saving power must be of a higher essence than what is endangered, thought at the same time kindred to it” (33-4). Mechanical reproduction is contrary to such a reflection. Mechanical reproduction is purely distraction. What is necessary to come into a right relationship with technology is to resist that distraction and to reflect on the saving power of an essence higher than humanity, but kindred with it (Being). All that mechanical reproduction can accomplish is to distract us from Being and maintain the focus on beings.

Such a condition connects with a state, previously mentioned, theorized by Guy Debord as the society of the spectacle, and which Ulmer tells us is the term of literate culture for electracy. The spectacle, according to Debord, is a system of relations under mechanical reproduction that keeps people in order, and that suppresses the masses by holding them in a continual state of distraction from their real conditions of existence. The mechanical reproduction holds whether the system is capitalism or Soviet communism. The only difference those distinctions make is whether we are discussing the diffuse or concentrated spectacle. The question, then, for Debord is whether or not there is any possibility of resistance to the spectacle. The conclusion that he comes to is yes, there is. Resistance to the spectacle comes in the form of détournement, which conveys the idea of a reflexivity of the spectacle, or turning back onto itself. Since the
spectacle serves to hold us in distraction, that is to keep us from recognizing our current conditions of existence, it is anti-reflexive. The spectacle tries to prevent reflection; hence the possibility for resistance comes from turning the spectacle back on itself. The idea then, is to make a spectacle of the spectacle.

For instance, one given example of détournement comes from a group of individuals who, while taking a tour of the stock market, proceeded to dump a bag full of dollar bills onto the stock market floor. In so doing, they managed to stop all trading on the floor for a number of minutes while chaos ensued from investors and traders who tackled and leaped over one another while trying to get at the money. Through this act, these individuals made a spectacle out of this system of relations that hides conditions of existence by parlaying capitalist greed into a homogenized and sterilized environment. That is to say, trading shares of Nike on the stock market floor is a respectable act. People go into work every day to take part in this respectable activity. The stock market itself is in a wealthy section of New York City. It is a stately old building that is clean (albeit busy to the point of chaotic—no doubt also a part of the spectacle) inside, and it has all of the state of the art technology to maintain constant updates about the status of various shares and at what price they trade. However, this entire system of relations serves to mask Nike’s propensity to hire sweatshop workers in third world countries for pennies an hour. We are thus blinded to the real conditions of existence by this paradigm of the spectacle. Furthermore, when the working classes involve themselves in the stock market, they involve themselves in companies that further the oppression of lower classes by funding and supporting them. In order to show what this whole system is about, it is necessary to make a spectacle of this part of the spectacle. In so doing, everyone can
then see the stock market for what it really is: a paradigm of unfettered capitalism that makes a virtue of greed.

So, then, the relay is a concept designed specifically to exist within electracy, or the society of the spectacle, as a means of taking any given example, image, text, etc, and directing that example in an alternate trajectory. As we have seen, Ulmer’s starting place for this concept is Enframing, which he suggests concerns the relaying of information by whatever means—a sort of intensified expediency, which we have already explored. Yet and still, I would suggest that there is a step missing in this particular formulation—a step between resource and information. For Heidegger, the Enframing of Being is a condition in which all things are invented as resources. Existence is dependent upon usefulness and functionality. However, a resource is an object upon which work must be performed in order to yield results. For example, fossil fuels must be extracted as oil using significant loads of technology (oil pumps), and must then be taken in crude form to be refined, and then rendered as useful forms of fuel. These forms of fuel can then be burned in combustion engines to provide work. The key difference between Enframing (as a concept of Modernity, and theorized by Heidegger) and protocol (the function of control), is that control renders all things informatic. As Galloway and Thacker note, “The twentieth century will be remembered as the last time there existed nonmedia. In the future there will be a coincidence between happening and storage” (132). In other words, if in Enframing all that exists is lying around for us to use, then in protocol, all that exists is information. Information supplants the resource—we could even argue that resources become informatic. However, information does not have to be extracted in the same manner that resources do. We need not tear into information to extract from it useful
work. It is, rather, always available for endless modulation. Such an operation, Ulmer reminds us, renders humans as information as well, with varying consequences:

Writing as technology is a memory machine, with each apparatus finding different means to collect, store, and retrieve information outside of any one individual mind (in rituals, habits, libraries, or databases). Part of the contribution of hypermedia as Target for my method is the models of memory developed for it, inasmuch as individuals and societies tend to internalize as forms of reasoning the operations of their tools. *(Heuretics 17)* 

It is in this vein that we must see Ulmer’s relay as a relay for information. Information is taken from one location and redirected to another in an attempt not to communicate, but to create. I agree wholeheartedly with the goal of Ulmer’s project. What can, perhaps, be reconceptualized is the source of this relay.

Derrida’s conception of memory would allow for the memory of technology to be grafted onto living memory relatively easily. In so doing, the relay functions as a tool of memory—to take memory from one location and send it elsewhere. However, this conception of memory, which inflects Ulmer’s conception, is different from that of Deleuze, for whom relations between technology and virtual memory would perhaps be more difficult. What I want to suggest is that we might utilize Deleuze’s conception of memory instead of a Derridean one, which I argue would be a more open conception. Derrida most certainly agrees that technology affects (possibly effects) memory. In *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Derrida claims that an archive is conceived of as an archive only inasmuch as it is conceptualized as external to living memory. Hence, archival work is always linked to technology. The very idea of an archive is dependent
upon technology (diary, library, database, etc.). Technology, Derrida argues, does have the ability to change the view of internal memory, indeed, the way in which we think.

In “Plato’s Pharmacy,” however, Derrida flatly rejects the distinction between artifice and naturalism as these terms concern memory. Derrida argues that Plato’s conception of the sophists is that of one who deals in repetition, not memory: “The sophist thus sells the signs and insignias of science, not memory itself (mneme), only monuments (hypomnemata), inventories, archives, citations, copies accounts, tales, lists, notes, duplicates, chronicles, genealogies, references. Not memory but memorials” (109). In so doing, Plato creates a binary conception that cannot be maintained: living and artificial memory. The attack is not on the sophists but on mnemonic: “What Plato is attacking in the Sophistics, therefore, is not simply recourse to memory but, within such recourse, the substitution for the mnemonic device for live memory, of the prosthesis for the organ” (111). We cannot see these two phenomena—memory and writing—as opposites because both are dependent upon repetition. Moreover, Derrida observes, “If it were purely external, writing would leave the intimacy or the integrity of psychic memory untouched” (113). Memory and technology do have an effect on one another, for Derrida, for Ulmer, and for Deleuze, and it is from this conception that the methodologies of electracry are born.

However, the difference between writing texts and writing in digital media lies in the encoding of digital media. Writing on a computer entails discrete entities—codes—that are always actualized. However, Deleuze’s conception of ontological memory proceeds from a virtual field of memory, one which is not composed of discrete entities. So then the difficulty of grafting one memory onto the other lies not in the conceptions of
pure memory, or memory without the taint of material signs, but in the fact that digital media is composed of discrete entities, while virtual memory is not. Based on grammatology as it is, Ulmer’s concept of the relay takes discrete terms and then redirects them to another purpose: “The places of memory in mystery, appropriating the signature, are organized into an alternative way to gather materials into a set—a sweep through the encyclopedia following the rhizome of the proper name as inventio” (165). Particular materials are redirected in an effort to invent something new, which mirrors also the processes of deconstruction. Whether a negative deconstruction (privileging the marginalized term in a binary) or a more affirmative deconstruction (eliminating the binary altogether), deconstruction proceeds outward from discrete terms. However, like the relay, it takes those terms in a new direction. In this sense, deconstruction could be understood as working out of the virtual field of sense. In Tamsin Lorraine’s “Living a Time Out of Joint,” a comparison and contrast of Deleuze and Derrida’s conceptions of time and meaning, she argues, “Deconstruction walks the tension between words and things by forever refusing to finalise an interpretation. Instead, it exploits the relations of sense at work in a text, rendering them explicit in order to show how all meaning draws upon and returns to a paradoxical set of relations. Some of these relations are more ‘just’ to a given situation” (43). Deconstruction then might be seen as partaking of sense, looking for nonsense, in an effort to expand sense. However, as I have demonstrated, control works against these tendencies by always making sense (one is either entirely compatible with a protocol, or not at all).

It has been assumed, mistakenly, that hypertext reproduces the operations of deconstruction and poststructuralism generally. One of the key theses of both Jay David
Bolter’s *Writing Spaces* and George Landow’s *Hypertext: Critical Theory and New Media in an Age of Globalization* is precisely that poststructuralist theory almost portends hypertext (Landow suggests that Derrida “instinctively theorizes” as much). Landow suggests that “Derrida conceives of text as constituted by discrete reading units” (54), and that these units have a correspondence with hypertext. Moreover, it is possible to demonstrate the intertextuality of any text by linking with other texts. Imagining a certain hypertext presentation of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Landow postulates, “a hypertext presentation of the novel links this section not only to the kinds of materials mentioned but also to other works in Joyce’s career, critical commentary, and textual variants. Hypertext here permits one to make explicit, though not necessarily intrusive, the linked materials that an educated reader perceives surrounding it” (55). These kinds of mistakes, I would argue, are easier to make precisely because Derrida’s conception of deconstruction begins with discrete terms rather than a virtual field. If we read deconstruction as pressing against sense and expanding the ways in which sense can unfold, then it is easier to see exactly how hypertext linkages *do not* enact the operations of deconstruction. Hypertext linkages always make sense. They reduce the possibilities of indeterminacy. The deconstruction of a hypertext linkage might have more to do with changing or altering the possible linkages that might be made.

The goals of Ulmer’s project—a means of creating with digital media an articulation not of one’s self, but of something closer to an assemblage, the possibility of an aleatory invention—these are concepts that inhere within Deleuze’s conception of the virtual. However, Deleuze does not begin with specific terms that are relayed elsewhere, as in deconstruction. It makes sense, then, to go back to the beginning, in a way. If
Derrida’s method of deconstruction is a pressing on the virtual field of sense, we might begin, then, with a virtual field rather than discrete terms. In this way, we have a basis for understanding the distinction between new media and what we might call living memory. It would not be an internal-external distinction, neither an artificial-natural distinction, but rather a virtual-actual one.

**The Genius of the System**

Byron Hawk’s *A Counterhistory of Composition* shrewdly investigates the marginalization of vitalism at the inception of composition studies. Struggling for disciplinarity in the 1970s, composition looks to rhetorical invention as a critical means of establishing itself as a discipline with something to teach. Indeed, the canons of invention, arrangement and style are often conceptualized as having served as rhetoric/composition’s *raison d’etre*. Hawk traces this marginalization to Richard Young, in particular, who grounds his arguments in a poor reading (a non-reading actually) of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, dismissing romanticism in a manner not at all dissimilar from Plato’s famous attack in the *Gorgias*. Romanticism is a knack, a gift, dependent upon inherent genius, and not a teachable methodology or series of methodologies. Young bases his concept of vitalism on a doctoral dissertation written by his student, Hal Rivers Wiedner, entitled “Three Models of Rhetoric: Traditional, Mechanical, and Vital” (Hawk 18). In this dissertation, Wiedner relegates vitalism to a category based on knack or inherent genius. However, the problem, Hawk maintains, lies in a certain conflation of romanticism (an eighteenth- and nineteenth century philosophical and literary discourse), expressivism (an approach to composition pedagogy that, according to James Berlin, began in the 1920s and become prominent in the 1960s), and
vitalism (a set of philosophical and scientific theories that extends from Aristotle to the twentieth century) [which] does not allow the possibility of method as nonsystematic heuristic to be seen or valued. (Hawk 2-3)

The error, located in singular fashion in Wiedner’s treatise, become propagated throughout the scholarship of the field, eventually becoming one of the bases for Berlin’s “triad”—current-traditionalism, expressivism, and social-epistemic rhetoric—which still dominates the mapping of the field to this day. Hawk seeks to rehabilitate the conception of vitalism in rhetoric/composition by looking at Young’s error. In so doing, he makes the case for vitalism as a wholly useful set of inventive methodologies, albeit ones more resonant with theories of complexity. He argues in favor of reconceptualizing vitalism in composition studies through reading three distinct kinds of vitalism: oppositional, investigative, and complex vitalism. Coleridge exemplifies oppositional vitalism through his concepts of polarity, or “opposite forces that drive power” (Hawk 141). Coleridge’s philosophy is one of abstract forces, an organic philosophy, but still one heavily steeped in method, hence cutting against the traditional characterization of romantic rhetoric in the field. The second form of vitalism Hawk traces is investigative vitalism, in whose tradition he places Bergson and Nietzsche. Both thinkers rail against the perceived mechanistic philosophies of their day. In Bergson, we see this in his concept of durée, and its movement towards the future, what he calls the élan vital. For Nietzsche, this vitalism is characterized in terms of power—specifically the will to power—which is “not a substance that causes the flow of the material world but a becoming with its own source of fertility” (Hawk 146). The third vitalism of which Hawk speaks is complex
vitalism, the exemplars of whom are Deleuze and Guattari. The schizoanalysis of *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* most directly evinces for Hawk this vitalism:

> By putting parts of machines and humans together as desiring-machines, Deleuze and Guattari are combining the vital flow of metabolism with artificial life. They are complex systems that are interconnected; there is no distinction. Deleuze and Guattari thus collapse vitalism/desire and mechanism/machine into desiring-machines. This is complex vitalism. (163)

Deleuze and Guattari remove their emphasis entirely away from the individual, instead understanding bodies as complexes of machines that connect to other machines (mouth to food, foot to bicycle pedal, etc.). In so doing, they place humans within an environment, and an ecology. Life is a force, in this conception, that works through bodies, and through artificial forms of life as well (see discussion on viruses, chapter three). Hawk’s goal is to move us towards what he calls methodologies of complexity, aleatory methods, which broaden the concept of rhetorical situation and help students to engage a wider swath of rhetorical encounters. These methods make for a complex composition by utilizing the aleatory, or in another sense, what happens. These are methods that will take us away from writing that emerges from out of a stable self and towards writing something other than the self altogether. These are methods that will cut against the predetermined outcomes of protocol and heuristics and towards an encounter with the unexpected.

Although their examples could be legion, I will here focus on four: Geoffrey Sirc’s “Box Logic,” Greg Ulmer’s “mystory,” the concept of juxtaposition as it is expressed by Jeff Rice as well as Johndan-Johnson Eilola, and finally Robert Ray’s “exquisite corpse game.”
Mystery

Ulmer’s pedagogy is, I would say, a Deleuzian pedagogy *par excellence*. Although his principal influence has been Derrida, Deleuze has had a continual influence on his work and, as I said earlier, it seems Deleuze actually offers a better description for what Ulmer seeks to do in his work. His pedagogy is no less than “a program for popularization capable of reuniting the advanced research in the humanities disciplines with the conduct of everyday life” (*Teletheory* vii). In other words, Ulmer seeks a teaching that asks, “how might one live?” It asks such a question by working out of the concept of memory—the ways in which memory can influence writing. “The advantage of a pedagogy,” Ulmer articulates, “based on such assumptions is that a student is not expected to reject his/her culture before starting to think” (viii). Ulmer suggests that technology breaks down the barriers that have traditionally held apart the personal and the professional. Rather than try to separate them, Ulmer would like the personal, and all the memory associated therewith, folded into academic discourse. Digital media make such a move possible, but, since the forms do not exist, they must be invented. Ulmer’s thought reinvents invention and creation, from individual writings to the invention of new methods of proceeding.

Ulmer develops the form of writing he calls *mystery* principally in *Teletheory*. He attributes its development to a number of theoretical trajectories, including the dysfunction of metanarratives,*vii* as well as appeals to using personal experience as a form of scholarship. He suggests that the key is to “identify the kind of knowledge that defies all rules, that enables a lover to differentiate the lover as unique” (88). Hearkening back to Bergson, who Deleuze reminds us raised intuition to the level of a method, Ulmer
suggests that the key is precisely intuition, finding a key term that continues to exhibit itself in various contexts. Here, we are concerned with four: the personal, the professional, the popular, and the cultural. These four discourses have traditionally been separated, compartmentalized, such that the personal is seen as having no place in professional (especially academic) discourse. Rather than hold certain discourses in abeyance whilst proceeding to use others, Ulmer enjoins us to write with all four (which, in *Heuretics*, he terms the popcycle), generating a mixture. Ulmer’s methodology is aleatory inasmuch as it works differently for each person, and can even shift in time: “A mysterical essay is not scholarship, not the communication of a prior sense, but the discovery of a direction by means of writing” (*Teletheory* 90). Although the means of thinking the mysterical essay are electronic, the essay itself need not be. The mystery is a means for thinking and inventing utilizing memory in fragmented form: “This montage or filmic procedure, juxtaposing fragments from widely dispersed places and times, has a critical value, bringing into the composer’s awareness hidden features of the present as well as the past” (*Teletheory* 112). Moreover, these memories “are not a spectacle for nostalgic contemplation, but tools for opening up the present” (112). Memory might be explored in video (the original medium of teletheory), film, websites, print texts, and even other media. The point is both discovery and the layering of discourses from various aspects of one’s life into a new genre.

As an example of seeking out connections, Ulmer discusses the possibilities of using one’s own name. If I were to serve as an example, I might take my first name, Joshua, the shortened version of which is Josh, which also means to joke or to jest. My middle name, Conrad, could be broken into two words. The Latin word “cum,” meaning
with, has come down through some of its descendents as “con.” The second part of the name, “rad,” was in my childhood a word we would use as a superlative, short for radical. My last name, as I have often quipped, is the word “Whilst,” without the “W.” Whilst is, of course, a term that holds a question or situation open. Taken together, it might lead to the concept (or as Ulmer terms them, punccepts) of a joking, with radicality, whilst. So then it would be a radical joke that holds the joke open—connecting nicely with the title of David Foster Wallace’s famous novel, *Infinite Jest*. The connections continue to proliferate. Thinking along the lines of radical jokers, slippery figures who cannot be nailed down, we might also begin to consider disciplinary (non)conventions through my own institution. My doctoral program might easily be seen as just such a slippery figure, working between and among such disciplines as English, Philosophy, Communications Studies and Art. The point is to continue to make these unexpected linkages.

In *Heuretics*, Ulmer expands the discourse of mystery to a kind of writing he calls chorography, a writing based on *chora*, which would replace the *topoi*, in Ulmer’s formulation. In simplest terms, *chora* are a space of rhetorical invention. According to Ulmer, *chora* “evokes the thought of a different kind of writing (without representation) and a different mode of value” (66). Furthermore, he comments, “It must be in the order neither of the sensible nor the intelligible but in the order of making, of generating. And it must be transferable, exchangeable, without generalization, conducted from one particular to another” (67). Ulmer seeks a mode of rhetorical invention that would move out of representation and towards invention. To this end, he posits the *chora*, which must “be approached indirectly, by extended analogies” (67). The *chora* reflect a similar inventive procedure as the time-image, which Deleuze reminds us is “less a function of
reality than a function of remembering, of temporalization: not exactly a recollection but ‘an invitation to recollect’” (Cinema 2 109). Like the memory of mystery—not nostalgia, but an opening up of memory onto the present—the time-image is indirect (although it gives a direct image of time). The time-image is evocative more than representational. The *chora* open a space for a time-image of writing.

In *Internet Invention*, Ulmer suggests moving out past the more simplistic models of standalone hypertext and towards generating a website that would both complicate and express relations between an individual and a profession or discipline. Such a website Ulmer calls a widesite, because it is meant to expand the immediacy of the mystery to a broader area. The widesite is built around the wide image, which is an emblem developed from out of the popcycle, one that resonates with the various discourses that the popcycle seeks to map. Ulmer articulates it thus:

The mystery has no innate form of its own. The wide image itself (or themselves) is an embodiment of themes or “themata” (abstract orientations) that we propose to locate through mood. We are evoking it as an emblem because of the connection of that form with allegory. A Renaissance scholar has demonstrated the continuity between the emblem tradition of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and modern advertising (Daly, 1988: 350), which is important since advertising, working within the institution of Entertainment, is a principal site of the invention of electracy. (*Internet Invention* 248)

The image is meant to be an emblem in allegorical fashion. It is meant to comment upon, and find connections with, the various forces that make up this concept we call myself. Like the interplay of form and style in Deleuze, we are looking for new and newer
patterns. Conley observes that Deleuze and Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus* takes on an emblematic form, acquiring “the appearance of…a piece of storyboarded philosophy that opens up visual and discursive ‘lines of flight’ within and through its typography. It asks the reader to look at paratactic patterns of images and texts as one might study different areas of a painting” (632). The writing produces an image of thought, but an abstract one. Again, in keeping with my own example, I tend to use cards, especially jokers. Among my principal wide images is the figure of Rhetorica, with certain changes. Removing the staid expression on her face, I give her a joker’s smile. She becomes a smiling figure. Holding open the question, she becomes ‘jokers all the way down,’ which I show to be perpetuating the image on and on ad infinitum. Ulmer enjoins us to connect such random images together. Instead of choosing between them, we work with all of the connections, as he puts it, writing the paradigm. Finding these linkages succeeds in restoring to the concept of the link the function of surprise.

Ulmer’s pedagogy opens out onto the other methods I discuss in this section. These methods are aleatory methods, which involve a roll of the dice. They do not determine the results in advance, but attempt to see what happens. They all share several important facets of Ulmer’s mystery: dependence upon chance, juxtaposition, utilization of “found objects,” and the linkage. They all serve in various capacities to bring a kind of pedagogy of the time-image.

*Sirc’s “Box Logic”*

Sirc provides an aleatory method in his pedagogical project entitled “Box Logic.” The title and the assignment are both carried over from Marcel Duchamp’s *Green Box,* a
collection of random notes Duchamp wrote while working on a different art installation, *Large Glass*. Sirc describes the box assignment as a “prose catalogue,” the re-arrangement of textual materials in an effort to create something new out of them, to grant them new meanings. The basic idea is to collect various images and texts, either online, or in more material formats, and to present them with either prosaic or poetic commentary. The assignment can take various forms—presented in an actual box, printed into a more traditional paper, or preserved in a Web-based format. The items for the box assignment are meant to be little more than marginalia, a simple collection of statements. Sirc urges that it ought to be “a compelling medium and genre with which to re-arrange textual materials—both original and appropriated—in order to have those materials speak the student’s own voice and concerns, allowing them to come up with something obscure, perhaps, yet promising illumination” (113). What I want to argue here is that what box logic provides is a glimpse less of a stable self, and more the series of forces that might create such a self.

Sirc, following Peter Elbow, is led to question whether what we teach in composition ought to be college or life. Like Elbow, Sirc is inclined to side with life. What is key about his method of composition here is the way in which it links with Deleuze’s famous conception of working with life in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*: “There is creation, properly speaking, only insofar as we make use of excess in order to invent new forms of life rather than separating life from what it can do” (185). In utilizing only found objects, Sirc creates an aleatory method. The “found-ness” of the objects ought to be as far removed from the intentional process as possible—only what one encounters will do. In this way, there is no possibility of predicting in advance what will be placed in the
box, what will find its way in, what will be viewed as the most meaningful items to use. In short, we don’t know what we are going to find. However, in the arrangement of these items, memory unfolds along new paths. Box logic reflects the style of memory. It represents an openness to what happens, to the rhetorical encounter.

Sirc adds that the box assignment ought never to be fully finished, suggesting the box as an act of becoming. Not what is, but what becomes; never complete, always in process. He observes that a genuine “connection with one’s composition is when the work has a strong life in the writer, when it’s part of an on-going project, which means it continues growing, appearing in variant versions. Thus, no draft is ever finished” (120). The assignment is meant to be one that connects with the various forces that compose a student’s life. If that is the case, then it ought to be connected with much more than just classroom work, but rather something highly meaningful for the student, in ways that other assignments are not. Sirc attempts to accomplish such significance through the continual renewal of interpretation—a sort of “magic” to the objects in the box—which might also be viewed as a continual plunge into memory. It is a composition that, like Deleuze, seeks the interesting and the remarkable over the true or the verifiable. In an effort to find such remarkable objects, a sense of pause must be introduced: “Caesura,” Sirc suggests, “the stylistic device most absent in our curricula” (123). The pause of the caesura introduces an indeterminate moment, a break that holds out the possibility for something else happening. Sirc’s terse line suggests the controlling (protocological) nature of far too much of our pedagogy—that it calls for communication without creation, the execution of protocols (The writing process) on the way to a product.
If there is anything problematic about Sirc’s approach, it is his apparent affection for the self. Sirc does not articulate a theory of selfhood, but his approach seems to recapitulate some of the more difficult elements of expressivism inasmuch as it seeks “personal symbologies” through box logic. However, I find that Sirc undermines (in a positive and productive way) even suggestions like this when he quotes Brian O’Doherty who claims that the objects of the box ‘are not subjects of inquiry, but immensely learned and allusive carriers of meaning. They support a vision’ (quoted in Sirc 124). Sirc suggests here that these objects might be seen as guideposts for how we both think and see, or as “short fabulous textual realities, a kind of street-derived genre of drive-by criticism, blips of unfinished text needing the reader as participant in the inquiry, to fill in the holes” (124). Here, Sirc gives us our most direct correlation with something akin to the time-image. It is a collapse of subject and object, rather than sustaining a particular self, into an image in which the observer must participate. Meaning is not granted explicitly, but must be constructed implicitly and mutually. Sirc’s pedagogy seeks to dive again and again into memory, to see by what other means it might unfold.

*Juxtaposition—Rice & Eilola*

In the *Rhetoric of Cool*, Jeff Rice develops a pedagogy of new media designed to produce different sorts of visual pieces and web texts. He develops his essay conceptually, moving along the lines of *chora*, appropriation, juxtaposition, commutation, nonlinearity and imagery. For the purposes of this essay, I will focus exclusively on his treatment of juxtaposition, as it seems to reflect better the particular cinematic and expressive rhetoric I am developing. Additionally, the concept of juxtaposition is developed by Johndan Johnson-Eilola, who works through the concept
throughout his corpus, but a particularly interesting instantiation is in “Negative Space: From Production to Connection in Composition.”

Rice argues that juxtaposition in writing borrows from the cinematic in forging associations. It follows an associative logic inasmuch as readers and writers must “interact with the unexpected textual and visual associations juxtapositions force us to encounter” (76). In the sense that we can create unexpected associations, Rice’s concept creates an aleatory method. His epigraph for the chapter, taken from William S. Burrough’s novel *Nova Express*, explains the pedagogical program well: ‘The basic law of association and conditioning is known to college students even in America: Any object, feeling, odor, word, image in juxtaposition with any other object, feeling, odor, work or image will be associated with it’ (quoted in Rice 73).

The goal of such a method will be to re-arrange various textual and visual objects in an attempt to create alternate linkages—to expand the sense of those different objects. It might be that the different linkages created are nonsensical, but this is something to be embraced, not elided. Like Deleuze’s sense of montage, it is not from the specific textual or visual objects that the meaning would be created (at least not in its fullest sense), but rather from the associations forged—the linkages between and among the objects. Remember that it is not from the images that narrative is created, for Deleuze, but rather in the series of images, the ways in which those images are edited, spliced together. Rice echoes this very concept in suggesting

A media directed approach would not try to find films that teach writing points (how to conjugate verbs/how to outline/the difference between independent and
dependent clauses) as Braddock and colleagues appear to require but would instead pose media as an applicable rhetoric to writing studies. It would view film as another source of rhetorical expression for study and output. (78)

Rice shows a pathway to countering the sense of the linkage by trying to forge different ones through new juxtaposition, and in so doing, brings the rhetoric of cinematics into traditional print texts.

In looking to McLuhan, Rice observes that memory is invention, an act of discovery, not an inert container. Hypertext writing might mirror such a process so that we can formulate an idea adequate to the virtual—to counter protocol. Writing might “generate an interconnecting network of knowledge, to practice discovery though this interlinking” (81). Such interlinking might be placed in the service not of an author, or authorial “I,” but rather to question precisely who speaks when something is spoken. Rice suggests that McLuhan’s famous The Medium is the Massage combines text with image, quotation, and insight towards utilizing new media to “generate the process of discovery” (82). While it is questionable that McLuhan’s text does this, I agree with the commitment Rice has to discovery through linkage. The problem is quite simply that media are encoded, books are not. McLuhan’s text may work against language (in the sense of a post-critical object), but we must work against web language. Rice suggests that hypertext rejects outlines (and other trappings of traditional text) and works “by way of associations and juxtapositions, not purpose” (83). While I would disagree with this assertion—protocol is highly purposeful—that he moves away from the concept of a stable author is a highly useful one.
Johndan Johnson-Eilola shows a specific idea through which juxtapositions might work. He asserts some of the same concepts Rice does, suggesting that writing has ever been “about making connections: between writers and readers, across time, and through space” (17). He proposes a pedagogy of connection, not of asserting the self, but rather something closer to a collective enunciation. It recalls Bogue’s exploration of chronosigns in the context of the ethno-fictions of Rouch, where Bogue claims these films as “a form of participatory ethnography, a collaborative effort to create the truth of a lived cultural experience” (*Deleuze on Cinema* 152). Here, Eilola enjoins composition to bring together multiple forms in the context of Web-based writing. To this end, Johnson posits a particular text, one developed in his seminar on computers and writing, entitled “Erotic,” which he argues “critically interrogates the meaning of each of the texts through contrast and complication” (29-30):

[Conley.Seductions.180]
Nowhere are the problematic effects of vr clearer than in the realm of the erotic…Bruce Clark has pointed out that the violation or dissolution of body boundaries in inherently erotic; the same observation has been made by writers as diverse as Ovid, St. Teresa, and the Marquis De Sade.

[imag.teler.5]
Teledildonics lend new dimensions to Ma Bell’s slogan: “Reach out and touch someone.”

[anon.I]
:-o
Anonymous request for a virtual blow job. 9/15/95

[Flame.Rape]
To participate, therefore, in this disembodied enactment of life’s most body centered activity is to risk the realization that when it come to sex, perhaps the body in question is not the physical one at all, but its psychic double, the body-like self representation we carry around in our heads.

As Eilola notes, the texts were not written by the participants, but are (not so) simply arranged by them, the various fragments retaining “much different meanings that are read and rewritten as the reader-writer traverses different threads in the text” (30). So then we have a view of a Web text that would be closer to such a participatory ethnography, a creation for new possibilities of texts. Where it seems Eilola errs is in his contrast between production and connection. If we were to look at these concepts through the lens of Deleuze and Guattari, we would see that connection is production. The process by which points connect, machines link to other machines, and assemblages are created, is a process by which desire flows, and by which lines of flight are creative. While I understand Eilola’s desire to back away from the authorial “I,” which he does admirably, these two concepts—production and connection—must not be held separately, but must link. Only in linking the two do we have a concept by which the virtual can unfold, because invention is what is required.

Rice suggests as much in warning against any tendency to see juxtaposition as some kind of panacea against the ills of composition. It can, he argues, “lead to control and predictability and thus should not be romanticized as an idealistic writerly alternative” (84). Instead, juxtaposition ought to be used to open “writing to discovery and invention” (84). Likewise, Galloway would remind us that juxtaposition would take place in the context of protocols. However, as I have argued from the beginning, the point is to create an idea, to find another way of looking. When that has happened, then it may well be that we come to see the constraining nature of protocols and begin to work against them more directly. The moves must be made within technology. Moreover, as Hardt and Negri show, the control society does not only work through the Web, but in the
context of everyday life. These modes of writing can serve to find the unexpected, which helps to cut against control.

*Film Expresses Itself*

It may be an odd thing to consider that film can express itself in writing, and I’m not talking about screenplays. Students might express a film, rather than a self. Film might express itself in my own writing. Robert Ray’s use of cinematic technique in the study of film and, more specifically, writing about film represents an attempt to change the trajectory and the nature of film studies. Like Ulmer, Ray works out of surrealist technique, utilizing some of their methods and means to write and think with film. Like others who work in aleatory methods, Ray seeks methods that have a way of re-enchanting older methods. Ray writes,

The desire for a transformed everyday life, the faith in chance, the reliance on automatism and collaboration, the delight in provocation, the taste for a mechanized eroticism, the belief in procedures rooted in “the arbitrary” and accomplished in distraction—these features of the movement have proved abidingly seductive. (44-5)

Ray sets about making such techniques and features of avant garde art not only seductive, not only enchanting, but also useful for the work of film studies. The use of aleatory methods—those of chance and the arbitrary—help to make such a move possible.

From Andres Breton, he takes what the Surrealists called the “exquisite corpse” game. The exquisite corpse was, for Breton and others, a means of using an old parlor game as an inventive tool. In Ray’s version of this game, we work in a group of three
people. We begin with a question, such as “What is a ______?” and an answer, “A ______, ______, and _______.” The object after which the question asks is an object chosen from the film—it can be just about anything. We then work in a group to fill in answers to the blanks, using words chosen at random. The point is to take oneself out of an intentional position with regards to choosing the words directly, they should be pulled into the sentence in blind fashion. This process should be repeated about 25 times or so. The best questions and answers are then chosen as conceptual starting places for writing a paragraph or even brief essay about the film (Ray 49-58).

In Ray’s particular example, he uses *The Maltese Falcon*, in which the main character’s name is Sam Spade. We then select “spade” as an object from the film. So the question to answer becomes, “What is a spade?” The answers, in Ray’s example, are three random words: virus, icy, perfect. So the answer to the question is, “A virus, icy, and perfect.” This would be a particularly useful example, because we could envision how such an essay might work: Spade is a viral character, who infects the other characters from the film with aggression and paranoia. He is a cold character who sends Mary Astor off to her fate at the end without the slightest hint of sentimentality. His viral and icy nature are perfect, showing not the least bit of weakness or flaw in that cold exterior. The method is an aleatory one, seeking an open ended means of writing. It invents writing as a game, as a series of open puzzles. They are not designed to be solved in any traditional sense, but parsed. The particular questions and answers that can be used are whatever ones appeal most to the writers. Performing the method 25 times may yield several interesting results, or very few. The point is to see what comes about, and in what ways it can be used to make interesting commentaries about the films. Although there is a
sense in which hermeneutics are used (we do end up interpreting the film), we do not begin with methods or key words that will predetermine the results. We throw the dice in an effort to see what happens. Ray comments:

As a research method, the Exquisite Corpse game is typically Surrealist, working by fragmentation (the isolated detail), automatism (players producing elements only on the basis of their grammatical value), and recombination (the juxtaposition with unexpected adjectives). As a procedure, the game mimics photography, perhaps intentionally: as I have mentioned, Breton once described automatic writing, a similar game, as a “true photography of thought.” (52-3).

The value of Ray’s aleatory method is the way in which it works with and through cinematics. In utilizing these methods, we back away from the concept of expression as the expression of a self, and we instead seek a way for something else to be expressed in writing: namely a particular film.

Conclusion

We have seen how the work of memory can be imported into composition, not as fodder for writing a classically expressive essay that reveals the innermost feelings of a given subject, but rather as a mode of expressing those forces that make us, or expressing something else altogether. For Deleuze, to express means to express oneself, or to be expressed, or to express something else. Rhetoric/composition has already seen far too much of the first, too little of the second two. Memory is an inventive resource, a creative resource, but it must be conceptualized as creative in and of itself. Time, in which memory exists (Deleuze suggests it insists), is invention, as Bergson once said. But in
order to invent, we must think inventively from out of memory. We must draw on
methods that allow for other ways in which memory can unfold—even moving away
from the concept of “my” memory entirely, to express a collective memory, or another
memory. Ulmer gives us a pedagogy to achieve these goals, and I regard this pedagogy in
the highest esteem. What I have done here is to give that pedagogy a Deleuzian re-
reading. I have attempted to formulate his pedagogy with respect to the distinctions
between the virtual and actual. These distinctions are useful because when we begin with
discrete terms, it is too easy to mistake hypertext as already doing, by its very nature,
what poststructuralism only theorizes. Contra such thinking, I want to argue that
hypertext does not embody deconstruction or intertextuality. We can see that it does not
when we return to the concept of the virtual, which is the key. Deconstruction,
intertextuality, and many of these concepts may be read as pressing against the virtual
field of sense, which digital media do not do. They are already actualized. In order to
press against the constraints of hypertext, we must think with the virtual.

In directing an eye towards the conclusion of this essay, it is now time to
conceptualize a pedagogy that will be adequate to these ideas. As we have looked at
aleatory images and aleatory writing methods, we must also begin to conceptualize a
pedagogy that can allow for the unexpected to take place without attempting to direct the
ends in advance. Such a pedagogy will be what has been called postpedagogy, or an
attempt to rethink pedagogy without resorting to either the dialectics of Ramus or the
closed politics of critical pedagogy. With that, we turn to the final section—teaching.
Notes

Lu’s challenge to the inside/outside binary seems somewhat more questionable. In order for there to be no binary whatsoever, there would need to virtually completely open admissions, and as of this writing, such a situation does not describe Lu’s institution (University of Louisville) or mine (Clemson University). The extent to which the gate-keeping function of college admissions cordons off the university is debatable, and the university is, of course, socially situated. However, there is certainly a sense of meritocracy that keeps out some while admitting others. Lu seems to overlook this.

E.g., Lunsford and Ede’s Singular Texts/Plural Authors.

Specifically, the four causes are derived from Aristotle’s Metaphysics.

Again, these are two terms which are closely related and may seem interchangeable, but I don’t believe them to be so. Although Heidegger never mentions mechanical reproduction, he would likely regard the idea as a part of modern technology, and probably a huge part, but not the entirety of it.

Let us not make the mistake of thinking Debord views this (or any resistances) as an easy solution. Theory and practice must be bound up in one another, and he says, “Such a theory expects no miracles from the working class. It views the reformulation and satisfaction of proletarian demands as a long-term undertaking” (143, my emphasis). Most détournement is only momentary, and to build up a total proletarian resistance will require great patience.

See Berlin, “Rhetoric and Romanticism.”

See Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition.

For more on the history and other uses of this game (and similar games) see The Exquisite Corpse: Chance and Collaboration in Surrealism’s Parlor Game, eds. Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren, Davis Schneiderman, Tom Denlinger.
Chapter 5
Hyper/Kresis: Delivery

οJ kukewn diivstatai (mh) kinouvmeno

Even the sacred barley drink separates when it is not stirred.
~Heraclitus, Fragment 125

To frame this chapter, I want to begin with Richard A. Lanham’s essay, “The ‘Q’ Question.” Lanham’s essay suggests that a question has plagued rhetoric for the better part of its history regarding the relationship of rhetoric to ethics. The question is, “Is the good man speaking (the vir bonus dicendi that was the goal of the Roman rhetoricians) a good man?” In other words, does a rhetoric construct its own ethics, or is ethics something independent of rhetoric altogether? If rhetoric and ethics are independent—or to use Lanham’s conception, if we give the weak response—then we can safely conclude that rhetoric is good or bad depending on how it’s used. Rhetoric is an inert body of ornamental tricks, not fundamentally concerned with whether or not the body of discourse it is dressing up is put to good or bad ends. On the other hand, there is a strong response to the question, one which states that rhetoric and ethics are fundamentally intertwined, and that the extent to which rhetoric is good or bad is bound up with the construction of ethos. This view of rhetoric is what Lanham (following Richard McKeon) calls architectonic. The good person speaking is a good person, because rhetoric helps to construct what we mean when we refer to an ethical person. The pertinence of this question regards Lanham’s comments on the relation of theory to pedagogy: “To design a humanities curriculum (or even, as we more often do, to decline to design one), you must know how you get from a theory of reading and writing to a curriculum, and that requires
having a theory of reading and writing in the first place. Requires, that is, answering the ‘Q’ question” (*Electronic Word* 156). Hence, to move to a pedagogy will require taking into account the theories of writing that I have elucidated here in the last four chapters. Language, we have come largely to accept in the humanities, is not value free. Although composition has paid some lip service to the idea that technology is not value free either, we often go about our work as though it is, too often embracing technology without a critical eye.

Galloway responds, at the conclusion of *Protocol*, to a related question here: Is protocol good or bad? Protocol isn’t necessarily either, but it is dangerous. This danger exists on two levels: “First it is dangerous because it acts to make concrete our fundamentally contingent and immaterial desires (a process called reification), and in this sense protocol takes on authoritarian undertones.” Secondly, protocol is dangerous because it “is potentially an effective tool that can be used to roll over one’s political opponents” (245). Galloway notes that the greatest threat to Microsoft is neither competition from Apple nor the Justice Department and its antitrust legislation. What poses a threat to Microsoft are the other protocols that lie outside its purview, that threaten the tight control they levy over, literally, the majority of technological culture. Protocol is dangerous because what it tells us is that a relation exists that, under certain conditions can be intolerable, even in completely decentralized networks (rhizomes). Protocol is a managerial system for control society; however, Galloway and Thacker challenge Hardt and Negri on their response to the “Q” question. Specifically in *The Exploit*, Galloway and Thacker part ways with the analysis of Hardt and Negri, suggesting that these scholars take the network as a politically (hence, ethically) neutral
entity. Networks aren’t exactly good or bad, but their importance lies in how we use them. For Galloway and Thacker, we can say this represents a weak response to the “Q” question. They see the network as a politically fecund site. Technology has an ethos, one which it constructs itself. We must attend to this ethos in our pedagogy, both by understanding the concept of control, and how that can play out in a classroom setting, as well as taking to heart post-criticism, or a critique of the very medium in which one is working. My discussion of protocol calls us to think of such a relation through our teaching. In what ways can our teaching be complicit with the philosophy of and control inherent to protocol? What Galloway recognizes is not only the suppressive view of power, but also a more positive one. In other words, as Foucault and Deleuze have recognized, we are never outside power relations. Power does not only suppress, it also creates. What is needed is for those of us who theorize and conceptualize power relations in the classroom to recognize such a poststructuralist view of power with an eye towards constructing a classroom that subsists within such an idea. If we cannot be outside power relations, then our goal ought not to be to move beyond power, but to experiment with power relations in the classroom, to find alternate arrangements.

What Galloway proposes as counterprotocols serve as a means of expanding past decentralization towards mutation and perversion. In other words, they are the local, bottom-up means that users have deployed in order to mold technology into something in line with their desires. He recognizes the danger of protocol but also insists that we not withdraw from technology. He rather suggests inducing a state of hypertrophy: working within technology to refashion it into something more in line with our wants and desires. “We’re tired of being flexible,” he writes with Thacker, “Being pliant means something
else, something vital and positive” (The Exploit 98). In other words, Galloway wants to view power relations as having a positive, creative dimension. It is important that users are pliant, open to alternative forms of relations that we can create within power. We have explored some of the means through which such alternations occur: the time-image, aleatory methods, etc. As Lanham suggests, it is perfectly fine to have a theory, however, one must enact a paideia, or pedagogy, from that theory. Counterprotocols are an experiment with power relations. What we need is a pedagogy that reflects such experimental concepts for deliberation.

Henry Giroux suggests that the liberal arts are always concerned with deliberation, more specifically, a vision of the future, with which deliberation is always concerned. “As an introduction to, preparation for, and legitimation of social life, a liberal arts education always presupposes a vision of the future. In other words, like the process of daydreaming, the liberal arts is fundamentally involved in the production of images of that which is ‘not yet’” (“Liberal Arts Education” 115). Giroux turns to critical pedagogy in an effort to give education a democratic turn. In this sense it seems, prima facie, that critical pedagogy may give us the democratic turn towards education that we seek. Critical pedagogy seeks to democratize the often hegemonic classroom through more democratic practices. This chapter will begin with Walter Ong’s famous critique of pedagogy as it has derived from the work of Petrus Ramus, as well as Cynthia Haynes’ treatment of the same. This will give us the sense of dominant pedagogy so that we can understand what we are opposing. I will move on to critical pedagogy, investigating its characterization of education and promise of democratic reform. I will then move on to a theory of postpedagogy, culled from of Thomas Rickert, Lynn Worsham, and Geoff Sirc,
demonstrating its sympathies with anarchist political theory. Theorizing pedagogy in this way will put us more in the realm of the virtual, dealing with aleatory methods from chapter four. Pedagogy, especially in the society of control, must experiment with power relations. We cannot teach randomness, students must find that on their own. At the same time, as Byron Hawk demonstrates, that doesn’t mean we must be mystical, or reliant upon personal genius. There are methods to use. We, as teachers, still have a role to play here. My essay on pedagogy will argue for what that role is.

**Ramus & Pedagogy**

Perhaps the best starting place for understanding the problems with pedagogy remains Walter Ong’s study, *Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue*. Ong traces out the ways in which a relatively minor 16th century logician became fundamental to how pedagogy works. Ramus, through a famous attack on Aristotle, begins to move invention away from rhetoric and place it within the realm of his dialectic. More importantly, what Ramus wants taught in the classroom is whatever is most imminently and easily taught in the classroom. Whatever can escape, whatever is slippery, for Ramus, is problematic and must be incapacitated forthwith. Ong reminds us that the “heart of the Ramist enterprise is the drive to tie down words themselves, rather than other representations, in simple geometrical patterns” (89). The problem lies in the words themselves— their duplicitous nature—with students serving as a proxy. Ong further elaborates, “Words are believed to be recalcitrant insofar as they derive from a world of sound, voices, cries; the Ramist ambition is to neutralize this connection by processing what is of itself nonspatial in order to reduce it to space in the starkest way possible” (89). In Ong’s account, interaction and dialogue are replaced with charts and trees that can be memorized, because rote
memorization is precisely what we are after (as pedagogues). If students are simply handed a set of instructions that they must master, then they likely are not considering more devious behavior, such as reveling in the play of language. Therefore, complex concepts such as rhetoric and dialectic are rendered as spatial tables: “Instead of representing an approach to truth through the real dialectic of Socrates’ midwifery, or through a series of probabilities as in Aristotle’s conception, dialectic or ‘logic’ became the subject a teacher taught to other coming teachers in order to teach them how to teach, in their turn, still other apprentice teachers, and so on ad infinitum” (154). The end purpose, as Ong has mentioned here, is to produce new subjects that have mastered the materials. The end purpose of those subjects is to generate new subjects. Pedagogy, after the time of Ramus, becomes a way for teachers to teach other teachers. The emphasis becomes not difficulty, validity, nor usefulness, but what can be conveyed with the least amount of entropy in communication. Cynthia Haynes picks up on this notion that what is called teaching is little more than the teaching of teaching. The world, through Ramus’ dialectic, is reduced to the classroom while reason, she suggests, “is perfected in pedagogy” (“Writing Offshore” 673).

Pedagogy engages in a double move that ensures its survival. The extent to which something can be taught becomes a measure of its validity at the same time the world becomes conceived as classroom. In Ong’s words, “This tradition more or less took for granted that teaching is carried on abstractly, since knowledge was generally equated with abstract or scientific knowledge. What is not conveyed abstractly and explicitly, is not taught. *Doctrina is scientia.* Teaching something is the same as proving it.” (156). If teaching equals proving, and the world is classroom, then contrary to Protagoras, of all
things the teacher is the measure. Teaching also becomes the elimination of the random, of the mutations and perversions that we seek. Students, like words, are recalcitrant. As such, they require orthopedic measures to straighten them out. By perfecting a dialectical system that perpetuates itself through the teaching of teaching, Ramus attempts to eliminate the possibility for other possibilities to emerge.

In general terms, then, our postpedagogy must be one that avoids what Ong terms the pedagogical bias and “break[s] with a system in which teachers are the sole possessors of abstract thinking,” in which “students are taught as if they are nascent teachers” (“Writing Offshore” 673). I mean to say, then, that postpedagogy urges us teach students not in order to produce more teachers, but to produce students that can think on their own—students who, in a very real sense, don’t need us. Such a pedagogy would mark a stark contrast with one in which the teacher is the possessor of reason and students learn as if they were learning to teach. Of course, critical pedagogy is designed to break with much of these tendencies, and in some senses we might see it as successful. Critical pedagogy marks a turn away from the centrality of the teacher and toward a classroom of democracy and dialogue. Let us turn to giving a general (probably all too brief) account of critical pedagogy. The purpose in giving this account will be to see whether or not it is enough of a break with the traditional pedagogy, handed down from Ramus, to the present day. If critical pedagogy is to be useful to us in the digital age, then it must provide the possibility for chance, and for the unexpected to take place. Anything less is not up to the task of finding new means for the virtual to unfold, and inadequate to control.
Critical Pedagogy…

Critical pedagogy, which is a blanket term for pedagogy that takes critical theory as a conceptual starting place, like many terms, does not have a systematic articulation. In this section, I want to give the best account of critical pedagogy that time and space will allow. It is important to note that, unlike some philosophical positions, critical pedagogy is not a monolithic doctrine with lockstep adherents. It is a broad educational philosophy. Nevertheless, we can speak of certain generally accepted principles in the interest of giving a relatively certain account of its theory and practice. We can still draw on much of the scholarship in an effort to derive a number of basic commitments that critical pedagogy holds. The purpose of giving such an account will be to check the claims of critical pedagogy for functionality. If it seeks liberation, to what extent does it liberate? If it seeks democracy, does it democratize? We are seeking a pedagogy that extends possibility. If critical pedagogy can be said to extend the possible, then it is successful. However, if critical pedagogy does nothing more than reassert the problems of traditional pedagogy in new ways, that is, if it closes possibility in a significant sense, then we would do well to look in another direction.

Generally speaking, critical pedagogy views education as attempting to function in an apolitical manner. Schools conceal dominant ideologies and practices within vocabularies of clarity, efficiency, brevity and so forth. This concealing serves as a masking of ideology. Henry Giroux, perhaps the Anglo-American world’s foremost expositor of critical pedagogy, explains that “higher education in general, and liberal arts in particular, are often discussed as it they have no relation to existing arrangements of social, economic, and political power” (“Liberal Arts Education” 114). Often,
specifically in composition, such ideological masking takes place through what has come to be termed current-traditional pedagogy,¹ which focuses on formal elements of a paper: grammar, syntax, brevity, focus, etc. By focusing on the fact that a student writer has failed to author a term paper in the most clear and concise manner, or has failed to deploy the proper grammatical conventions, the particular argument that he or she makes can be conveniently ignored. Moreover, all argumentation at such a political level can be all too easily discounted. In this traditional mode of pedagogy (descended from Ramus), teachers become mere conduits of knowledge, and purveyors of simple skill sets, which are always politically neutral. As such, traditional pedagogy develops into a hegemonic system in which students are swept up into a classroom in which they are powerless, merely picking up a particular skill set before going to the next class to learn another one. Giroux notes that classrooms, in the sense, serve a normative and regulative function: “The University is a place that produces a particular selection and ordering of narratives and subjectivities. It is a place that is deeply political and unarguably normative” (“Liberal Arts Education” 114).

The response to traditional, hegemonic pedagogical forms is critical pedagogy, which Giroux defines in the following passage:

[C]ritical pedagogy refers to a deliberate attempt to influence how and what knowledge and subjectivities are produce with particular sets of social relations. It draws attention to the way in which knowledge, power, desire, and experience are produced under specific conditions of learning. It does not reduce classroom practice to the question of what works; it stresses the realities of what happens in classrooms by raising questions regarding “what knowledge is of most worth, in
what direction should we desire, and what it means to know something” (“Liberal Arts Education” 123-124).

This form of teaching seeks to influence sets of social relations in a positive, democratic manner. In critical pedagogy, teaching is regarded not as the transmission of, but rather the creation of knowledge: “[P]edagogy is itself part of the production of knowledge, a deliberate and critical attempt to influence the ways in which knowledge and identities are produced within and among particular sets of social relations” (“Liberal Arts Education” 119). In a critical classroom, students are ideally a part of the generation and transmission of such knowledge. Teachers counter traditional hegemonic strategies through teaching critique: critique of local institutions, local situations, even the university can serve as an object of criticism. Students can be encouraged to direct their criticism towards these various institutions in order to gain power. Through teaching critique, the teacher sets up the students with the skills needed to function not in a particular job or marketplace, but to be a thriving and fully functioning democratic citizen. An individual who knows what he or she wants and is clear on the available means to convey such a desire. As Colin Lankshear, et al. note, critical pedagogy moves past the interpretation of texts and extends “the scope of critical study to take in the wider education structures and relations within the overall set of socio-cultural practices” of students and society (“Critical Pedagogy and Cyberspace” 150). Such pedagogical practices counter the hegemony of traditional pedagogy. They do so by focusing more on content than form, critique more than clarity. Such traditional pedagogical concepts are useful only inasmuch as they serve the democratic goals of the classroom.
Critical pedagogy should be taken as part of a broader resuscitation of public and critical discourse. Sensing (especially in the Reagan era of neo-conservatism) both a withdrawal from public life on the part of the middle classes, as well as an outright silencing of lower classes and persons of color, the project of critical pedagogy looks to bring both into the public discourse. Critical pedagogy is especially concerned with those who traditionally have no voice. It seeks to restore voice and power to these traditionally marginalized and silenced groups. Its goal is to allow these groups “to believe that they can make a difference, that they can act from a position of collective strength to alter existing configurations of power” (“Liberal Arts Education” 124). In order to act from a position of strength, however, the disenfranchised must learn their own strength. They must come to recognize the power of language and critique, which can be established through critical literacy: a means of avoiding established canons in favor of questioning the very fabric of canon formation. Rather than reading the classics, critical literacy asks what voices have been silenced through the formation of canons. Through critical literacy, marginalized groups come to understand that “literacy is not just related to the poor or to the inability of subordinate groups to read and write adequately; it is also fundamentally related to forms of political and ideological ignorance that function as refusal to know the limits and political consequences of one’s view of the world” (“Literacy” 5). By embracing a broader view of who is allowed to speak, teachers can “develop pedagogical conditions in their classrooms that allow different student voices to be heard and legitimated” (“Literacy” 20). The multiplicity of voices is crucial here, as is the ability to speak in one’s own name. One’s ability to act on one’s own behalf is critically linked to the ability to accurately convey one’s own experience. “To be able to
name one’s experience is part of what it meant to ‘read’ the world and to begin to understand the political nature of the limits and possibilities that make up the larger society” (“Literacy” 7).

The end goal of critical pedagogy is the transformative intellectual. One who is capable of not only existing, but thriving, in a democratic society. One who can speak for oneself, name one’s own experience, and transform society in a beneficial way. The transformative intellectual is one who “exercises forms of intellectual and pedagogical practice which attempt to insert teaching and learning directly into the political sphere by arguing that schooling represents both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations” (“Teacher Education” 215). The transformative intellectual understands that there is no such thing as a value-neutral education. Education, especially in the liberal arts, is always already political. The transformative intellectual makes it explicitly so, and complicates the relationship between the liberal arts and politics. A critical liberal arts education is a liberal arts education that is reconstituted “around a knowledge-power relationship in which the question of curriculum is seen as a form of cultural and political production grounded in a radical conception of citizenship and public wisdom” (“Liberal Arts Education” 121). Rather than view culture as “an artifact immobilized in the image of a storehouse” (“Liberal Arts Education” 124), the transformative intellectual seeks to shift culture through engagement and critique in local practices and politics.

The classroom itself must become a democratic space in critical pedagogy: “Students need to be introduced to a language of empowerment and radical ethics that permits them to think about how community life should be constructed around a project of possibility” (“Literacy” 21). The classroom is meant to be part of such community life,
and the teacher ideally should offer the students the opportunity to voice their concerns with the course, thus becoming fundamentally involved with the course and the directions in which it will go. Some critical pedagogues have gone so far as to establish syllabus contracts with their students to allow them input to all aspects of the class. Other means are of course employed, but the ultimate goal is a democratic, open classroom in which students are able to make their voices heard, indeed, in which a plurality of voices can be heard, all in the interest of creating intellectuals capable of individual and collective action.

Critical pedagogy has also developed a discourse with respect to technology. “We confidently predict the rise of collaborative, multi-authored publications which, in new hybrid discourses, erase the distinction between informal communication on the one hand, and traditional forms of scholarly publication on the other.” (“Critical Pedagogy and Cyberspace” 164). Further, that through “such means the democratic impulse formulated by Dewey, and its participatory and collaborative logic outline by theorists of critical pedagogy, can be preserved and enhanced—albeit transposed—in the mode of information” (“Critical Pedagogy and Cyberspace” 164). They also suggest that traditional education tends to teach particular discourse practices, such as textbooks, classrooms, curriculum, as modernist space of enclosure (i.e. Foucauldian institutions). It strains out these particular discourses as those of education. In so doing, it renders these discourses and practices as functions separate from everyday life (think of the classic topos of school vs. the “real world”). By failing to connect education and the broader practices of life, education is complicit in alienating or mystifying what they term Word-World relations. Where an education (specifically a critical education) ought to show
students how life in the classroom is always connected with life outside of it (indeed, that no such binary of inside/outside classroom actually exists), it separates them. Certain practices are those of education, others are not. However, they note that “electronically mediated communication tends to break down such spaces of institutional enclosure and subvert their mystification of the Word-World relation” (“Critical Pedagogy and Cyberspace” 166). The suggestion is made that the interactivity and collaboration provided for by the digital text provides a means for even further critique, that the “very bases of modernist institutionalized spaces of enclosure are open—and are explicitly open—to critique” (“Critical Pedagogy and Cyberspace” 167). Cyberspace, they claim, makes it virtually impossible to maintain the supposed illusion of individuality to which the book gave rise. To be online is to work in a virtual community. Such a community radically increases the possibility of critique and of organizing with others on the web. It also radically redefines what it means to be local (as all politics are), if we are to take McLuhan’s concept of the “global village” seriously. By expanding the concept of local, cyberspace “makes readily available the kind of scope and scale that can inform inquiry and critique with enlarged generative experiences and themes, and to discover commonalities across difference” (168).

...And Its Discontents

Critical Pedagogy has hardly been without its detractors. One of the first critiques came by way of Maxine Hairston in “Diversity, Ideology, and Teaching Writing.” Hairston castigates proponents of not only critical pedagogy, but of any pedagogy rooted in what we might broadly consider high theory (deconstruction, poststructuralism, critical theory, postmodernism). For Hairston, these are models that “[put] dogma before
diversity, politics before craft, ideology before critical thinking, and the social goals of the teacher before the educational needs of the student” (180). Hairston sees these views as simplistic and “naïve” (188). To Hairston, the university is a place for the free exchange of ideas, “a place where students can examine different points of view in an atmosphere of honest and open discussion, and, in the process, learn to think critically” (188). If teachers are free to peddle Marxist ideology in the name of writing instruction, what is to stop them from teaching fascism, racism, or religious dogma? Furthermore, they neglect to teach traditional skill sets associated with attaining the basic levels of writing competency.

While Hairston doesn’t ignore the fact that critical pedagogues do, in fact, think that politics does in fact precede craft (and determine what it is), she certainly doesn’t give it due diligence. Her dismissal of the claims of critical pedagogy as naïve certainly seems naïve in itself, and avoids mentioning the crucial issues that are at the heart of critical pedagogy, reducing her argument to little more than academic name calling. If politics do in fact precede craft, then it seems necessary that politics should become part of the discussion in any classroom. In fact, we might recognize discussions of varying rhetorical situations and the suitable forms of discourse for each of them as a form of precisely this discussion. Hairston’s overdependence on vague, undefined terms like “critical thinking” don’t seem to better her argument much. She tends to ignore, or at least marginalize, Giroux’s central argument that the university serves to promulgate central ideological forms in society. It should be noted that Giroux claims, “By linking curriculum theory and practice to radical social theory, we are not arguing that students should learn the discourse of, let’s say, a specific doctrine such as Marxism. On the
contrary, the notion of radical as we are using it in this context is much broader and more fundamental than any one version of Marxism or any other political doctrine” (Teachers as Intellectuals 134). The premium on empowerment occludes, for Giroux, overemphasizing a particular doctrine in the manner Hairston describes.

Another famous critique comes by way of Gerald Graff, famous for his “teach-the-conflicts” pedagogy in the 1980s. Graff and Gregory Jay published their “Critique of Critical Pedagogy,” in which they argue for an alternative model of helping students become active participants rather than passive spectators in the classroom. The difference, for them, lies in the perils of identifying (at least in the American classroom) who the oppressors are as opposed to the oppressed. Ann George, however, notes the irony inherent in the fact that their model of such democratic discourse is a “faculty symposium in which Graff and two other instructors debated revision of Chicago’s general education humanities course before a two-hundred-member student audience” (“Critical Pedagogy” 110). Perhaps this is not quite the democratic forum the critical pedagogues had in mind.

However, where the critiques may have a better point lies in the issue of authority. Hairston notes, “The real political truth about classrooms is that the teacher has all the power; she sets the agenda, she controls the discussion, and she gives the grades” (188). It is a simplified point, but a powerful one. Victor Villanueva expounds on a similar idea in “Considerations for American Freireistas,” where he spends time watching an avowed critical pedagogue teach a National Writer’s Project classroom for low income, African-American youths. Ultimately, the course is not a particularly great success. Villanueva suggests that critical pedagogy perhaps underestimates the power of hegemony. The
teacher had “introduced the word and he spoke of the world, yet he was not likely to move those who were not already predisposed to his worldview” (256). The reason for their obstinacy lies in the complex history of oppressor and oppressed: “Oppressor and oppressed have histories, cultures, ideologies, traditions in common. This is the tug inherent in the hegemony” (256). Ultimately, Villanueva concludes that despite some validities and positive movement in the class, there was no dialectic in this particular classroom: “The hegemonic and counterhegemonic were not allowed evaluation” (256). Howard B. Tinburg echoes a similar problem with critical pedagogy, albeit one from the other side of the street as Villanueva’s, suggesting that the pedagogy of Freire—which was designed to teach the most downtrodden members of third world society—could be problematic when applied to teaching middle class white students in a first world country. He suggests an openness to other pedagogies, lest the dialogue of critical pedagogy become merely the slogan of autocratic pedagogue. The problems of critical pedagogy become more apparent in consideration of what may be critical pedagogy’s Achilles’ Heel: authority.

Critical Pedagogy and Marxism

A persistent question in critical pedagogy regards its relationship with Marxism. In Composition Studies, specifically Marxist analyses are typically associated with James Berlin’s social-epistemic or transactional rhetoric. While Berlin openly embraced the Marxist perspective, the critical pedagogues have often tried to distance themselves from Marx, suggesting that while their analysis has sympathies with Marx, it is quite different from Marxism and even neo-Marxism. Peter McLaren suggests that the political philosophy most aligned with Freire (and by proxy, critical pedagogy) is less the Marxist
dialectic and more a sense of classroom dialogue, insisting that Freire’s work “is fashioned not so much from dialectics (with its emphasis on collectivity and scientific objectivity vs. false consciousness), as it is from dialogue (with its emphasis on reciprocal engagement, subjectivity, and performance/ community), and in this light he is closer to Levinas, Buber, and Bakhtin than he is to Marx.” (“Liberatory Politics” 146).

Here McLaren seeks an entirely different setup from Marxism, likening critical pedagogy to the concern for the Other exemplified by Emmanuel Levinas, or the dialogism of Mikhail Bakhtin. For Giroux, the fundamental problem is the reductive nature of the Marxist analytics. He asserts, “By recognizing that certain forms of oppression are not reducible to class oppression, Freire steps outside standard Marxist Analyses; he argues that society contains a multiplicity of contradictory social relations, over which social groups can struggle and organize themselves” (Teachers as Intellectuals 109). It’s no secret that the Marxist analysis is problematic for its tendency to reduce all social relations to the economic, and furthermore for its tendency to see economic exploitation in terms of surplus value.

Still, James Berlin certainly didn’t think critical pedagogy and social-epistemic rhetoric were all that different, calling Ira Shor’s Critical Thinking and Everyday Life the “most complete realization of [social-epistemic] rhetoric for the classroom” (“Rhetoric and Ideology” 730). It might be useful, in furtherance of articulating the relationship between critical pedagogy and Marxism, to provide a brief account of Berlin’s social-epistemic rhetoric. Berlin defines social-epistemic rhetoric in contradistinction to the two other forms of rhetoric he claimed predominated Composition Studies: expressivist and current traditional.iii Social-epistemic rhetoric locates reality “in a relationship that
involves the dialectical interaction of the observer, the discourse community (social
group) in which the observer is functioning, and the material conditions of existence”
(730), which of course leads to Berlin’s also calling this rhetoric transactional.
Knowledge is not located in the self, nor in the objective world, but in a dialectical
relationship of the self, world, and community. If knowledge is transactional, then it
makes no sense to teach language as if it were some sort of unchanging and static
phenomenon (current-traditionalism). It is worthwhile to teach students that language
changes, and language usage varies depending on the situation in which one is engaged.
Moreover, since knowledge and reality are both influenced by social factors, the self is
also influenced by these same factors. Hence there is not a transcendent self that lies
outside of history, the self is itself historical. Therefore it is problematic to suggest that
pedagogy be grounded in the students expressing themselves, because the self may
change with the rhetorical situation. In a social-epistemic classroom, there are no
transcendent truths unavailable for challenge: “Social-epistemic rhetoric,” says Berlin,
“views knowledge as an arena of ideological conflict: there are no arguments from
transcendent truth since all arguments arise in ideology” (732). Such a viewpoint shields
no one, including oppressive institutions and forces (like the university), which are more
than available for critique.

Also, like critical pedagogy, social-epistemic rhetoric embraces interdisciplinarity
(like critical pedagogy), looking to multiple perspectives to establish its critique. Because
social-epistemic rhetoric, like critical pedagogy, attempts to refrain from reliance on one
particular discourse, it seeks an advantageous position in terms of its being adapted to
oppressive interests. For Berlin, expressivism was easily adapted to corporate interests,
wherein self-expression avoided more important questions of oppression and domination. Current-traditional rhetoric, as I have shown, also tends to avoid these questions altogether in favor of mechanistic critiques.

Additionally, Patricia Bizzell, in “Marxist Ideas in Composition Studies,” reads Giroux’s work (favorably) as exemplifying Marxist theory in classroom work. Bizzell reads Giroux’s project of unifying various oppositions, which she suggests “occur in isolation and without much reflection” (61). Giroux prefers to bring oppositions into resistance, that is “Giroux hopes to change its meaning from the ineffectual defiance of a monolithic process of reproducing social injustice to the intellectual basis for liberatory social change” (61). Ultimately, Giroux’s project engages in what Bizzell calls a “utopian Marxist analysis that projects beyond struggle to an achieved collective unity embodying social justice” (64). There must be, for Bizzell, an intellectual engagement that can produce, from these varying examples of opposition, a unified resistance. Only then can these dispersed oppositions become something more than the sum of their parts.

So then, by the admission of critical pedagogy and the rhetorical similarities of both critical pedagogy and Berlin’s social-epistemic rhetoric, critical pedagogy retains a strong Marxist bent, even if it is too complex to be reduced to explicit Marxism. But the exact nature of its Marxism remains a question. Giroux and McLaren argue in favor of something they term emancipatory authority, which is “one that can illuminate the connection and importance of two questions that teacher education programs should take as a central point of inquiry in structuring the form and content of their curricula” (“Teacher Education” 225). They go on to ask what kind of society educators seek, and what kind of teaching can we advocate given a serious stance toward citizenship and
democracy. If we ask—in advance of prescribing a curriculum and advocating pedagogy—what sort of society we want and what kind of teaching will portend such a society, then we must seek such an emancipatory authority, which “rests on the assumption that public schooling should promote forms of morality and sociality in which students learn to encounter and engage social differences and diverse points of view” (225). In conditions of emancipatory authority, the teacher is the individual who can lead her students to critical consciousness. She is the bearer of “critical knowledge, rules, and values” and the formation of a democratic classroom is finally dependent upon her leadership.

Authority, even of an emancipatory sort, is both unavoidable and necessary. However, when a teacher’s role is to convince the students that they have the power, the authority, to fashion the classroom after the model of their own desires, it can take on an insidious function as well. Ann George, who is generally favorable to critical pedagogy, states, “Shor and Freire run into similar difficulties [with authority] trying to reconcile their notion of democratic dialogue with the fact that their teachers know more than their students: they admit that when teachers plan courses and select texts, they understand the object of student better than students” (105). She goes on to suggest that the insistence on an egalitarian classroom is misplaced when the classroom is obviously not an egalitarian space, but one where, as Hairston suggested, the teacher still makes the rules. Critical pedagogy then, rises or falls based on where the teacher stands in relation to the students. It claims emancipation and egalitarianism, but these seem difficult concepts to fulfill in the face of the necessary authority to the teacher to, first, ensure there is a class at all, and second, to bring the students into democracy and teach them what values they ought to
espouse. The issue is whether the teacher is teaching the students what they should be and what they should want. David Bleich makes this issue abundantly clear when he writes, “There is reason to think that students want to write about what they say they don’t want to write about,” specifically subjects such as racism and homophobia. In other words, Bleich (who is certainly not among critical pedagogy’s foremost representatives, but the sentiment is made clear here) sees students as not wanting what they should, or worse, not knowing what they want. What we must do now is move to a more fruitful and productive critique of critical pedagogy, and then explore the difficulties inherent in emancipatory authority.

Critical Pedagogy and Avant Gardism

Lynn Worsham provides one of the most valuable critiques of emancipatory authority. In “Going Postal: Pedagogic Violence and the Schooling of Emotion,” she enjoins composition not to be easily taken in by pedagogies that promise liberation and democratization through leading students to a more democratic classroom. The turn to pedagogy has supplant the theoretical turn, Worsham claims, inasmuch as the principal interests of many English departments (and theorists) have turned to look at pedagogy as a source of concern in the wake of the “theory wars” of the 70s, 80s, and 90s (see also, Spellmeyer etc). Worsham considers “the turn to pedagogy in American literary and cultural studies, which arguably represents an effort to change, through the language of critique and empowerment, the emotional constitution of the postmodern subject” (251) Worsham is deeply concerned for the state of affective struggle, which is usually relegated to the outside (abject) in most pedagogical theory. Pedagogy, in the wake of theory, has witnessed a turn to notions of a democratizing, liberating pedagogy that
empowers students to speak with their own voice, to master particular discourses, to critique social institutions, etc. However, Worsham sees problems in conceptions of pedagogy both as transmitters of knowledge, and as liberating theoretical enterprises. Much as we see it developing after Ramus, pedagogy “retains its authority precisely through violence, through its power to impose the legitimate mode of conception and perception, through its power to conceal and mystify relations of domination and exploitation” (238). In other words, following Althusser and others, pedagogy legitimates certain forms of knowledge and writing even as it delegitimates others. Worsham is specifically critical of the forms that the schooling of emotion has taken.

The problem, for Worsham, is that we “cannot simply unlearn what dominant pedagogy teaches by mapping a new regime of meaning onto an old one” (233). Critical pedagogy, while it does develop theories of emotion, does not break with dominant pedagogy (or at least not nearly enough). Specifically, critical pedagogy works to “separate emotion from meaning, empty it of content, and relate it specifically to the body” (252). In this fashion, emotion remains separate from reason, as well as its diametric opposite. Emotion is the subordinate figure. Through retaining the emphasis on critique, and by denying the place of affective struggle in the classroom, critical pedagogy fails to distinguish itself from the dominant pedagogy which “mystifies emotion as a personal and private matter and conceals the fact that emotions are prevailing forms of social life, that personal life always takes shape in social and cultural terms” (240). The goal of critical pedagogy is a more democratic classroom, a less hierarchical pedagogy, one in which students can write and critique for themselves. While this might not, of itself, seem a problematic goal, where it seeks to downplay
affective struggle in favor of reasoned critique, it overlooks the central dominance that takes place in the classroom. It isn’t that the teacher is always the central hub of knowledge, but that s/he is the one who administers such feelings as shame (in giving a poor grade), apathy (by failing to engage students), embarrassment (by correcting students), etc. Critical pedagogy fails to account for students and their struggles with affect, and so it leaves their emotional lives outside the classroom.

Where it recognizes affective struggle, Worsham tells us, “[C]ritical pedagogy sees affective struggle in terms of empowerment rather than resistance” (1020). Affective struggle is seen as a means of gaining power, rather than changing power relations. For the critical pedagogue, then, teaching must seek to direct these affective struggles in a particular way, with an eye towards gaining power. Worsham writes,

This view of the affective struggle for empowerment expresses the affirmative stance of critical pedagogy, a stance that recognizes in students’ resistance their affective investments in popular cultural experience and knowledges. The job of the educator is to understand this investment, even better than students understand it, and to harness its potential for engaging students in and empowering them through self-criticism and cultural critique. (253)

At issue here is one of the pedagogue as authority. The pedagogue comprehends students’ affective struggles, ergo s/he is in a position to lead the students into a more democratic state of affairs through empowering them with rhetorical ability. Worsham understands critical pedagogy as failing to recognize, however, the manifold ways in which disempowerment manifests itself. For Worsham, as for me, disempowerment can show itself in “boredom, apathy, bitterness, hatred, anger, rage, generosity, nostalgia, euphoria,
sorrow, humiliation, guilt, and shame” (253). In other words, affective struggles, if we are to recognize them, render the class undemocratic in many ways. The student who refuses to engage in the teacher’s knowledge game quickly finds himself embroiled in power relations when he receives a failing grade. Because critical pedagogy renders affective struggle to the abject position, it only perpetuates the same power relations it claims to upend. It institutes a hierarchy wherein teacher knows best, and students need only to follow her/his lead in an effort to find the correct path.

Worsham is thoroughly incredulous to the notion that there is a particular pedagogy that will “empower” students, and always for the better. What I am interested in, however, is a notion of pedagogy that seeks not to gain power for this or that party, but rather one that seeks to experiment with power relations. As we have seen, critical pedagogy seeks to move the teacher out of the center, as it were—away from being the sole dispensary of knowledge, and towards a classroom in which teacher and student share authority. However, it reconnects with dominant pedagogy, and with hegemonic power relations, in its schooling of emotion. The teacher, in critical pedagogy, remains the one who leads students to democracy. However, as Worsham demonstrates, this takes place through the directing of affect and desire—by telling students what they want. The classical term in Marxist studies for such a figurehead is an avant garde. One particular individual (or class of individuals), aware of the appropriate values, and in a position to educate others about those values, is an avant garde.

Though critical pedagogy may not be explicitly Marxist in every sense, it remains very Marxist in its retention of the avant garde. Todd May outlines the problems with such dependence on a particular party in his book, *The Political Philosophy of*
Poststructuralist Anarchism. One of the central issues we must address is where exactly pedagogy and literacy lie in terms of its centrality to the project of empowerment and liberation. Specifically, in traditional Marxist theory, the exploitation of the working classes takes place at a specific site (in the surplus-value of commodities—the means by which commodities are sold for more than their labor-value). If teaching and literacy are the specific sites at which democracy is thwarted, then critical pedagogy would have recapitulated a significant tenet of Marxism.

May’s second chapter, “The Failure of Marxism,” might actually be titled the failure of the avant garde. May seeks to address not the writings of Karl Marx, but their legacy in political philosophy, and so he begins with Lenin, who he claims “sets the agenda for twentieth-century Marxism. It is to be a strategic political intervention: that is, an intervention with a single goal, where deviation from that goal is either regression or betrayal” (20). That single goal leaves aside any middle choices. There is not a multiplicity of struggle, but the one, all important struggle. The logical corollary of the singularity of struggle, May tells us, is that there can be only a single theory and a single leadership. Moreover, such “leadership must comprise a group of people who understand the theory and how to apply it” (21). These leaders who understand the theory will allow for the revolution to come about. The workers, meanwhile, may not recognize their true interests. Hence, they must be taught those interests. The avant garde is tasked with teaching the workers where their true interests lie. May argues that the deception of the working class remains the “crux” of Lenin’s concept of the avant garde. Of course, in the wake of the Russian Revolution, and the ensuing bloodshed, Western Marxists began to wonder why events had turned out so contrary to what was predicted. May suggests that
the specific question related to why the workers, which were the revolutionary party for Western as well as Soviet Marxists, did not define themselves as revolutionary. This question becomes the conceptual starting place of Critical Theory.

Critical Theory (which gives rise, in many ways and forms, to critical pedagogy) postulates a new totalization that accounts for the failure of the working class to assume its revolutionary role. For Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, totalization is accounted for in the “culture industry,” which is omnipresent, visible in film, television, music, etc. May writes, “Bourgeois culture has become pervasive; its project, to subordinate everyone to the dictates of capitalism” (25). In the culture industry, all resistance becomes “yet another spectacle in the parade of culture. Resistance that cannot be appropriated is merely left outside the system, a testament to its own absurdity” (25). It is from the notion of critique, specifically critique of the culture industry, that the seeds of cultural studies are planted. Much as in the Leninist strains of Marxism, however, a single enemy still needs to be countered, and that enemy is capitalism. However, in the culture industry, the reach of capitalism has grown: “[T]he turn to ‘cultural capitalism’ by the Critical Theorists does not change the analysis of capitalism; it merely spreads it across the entire social space” (26). We cannot point to one particular individual in the culture industry as the source of the problem, we must critique more broadly, we must critique institutions.

Critical pedagogy can be seen as emerging from this general project, picking up as it does on the work of the Critical Theorists. In general, students are either seen as not particularly knowing what they want to write about (Bleich). They may well wish to resist, but they must be shown the transactional condition of their lives and their selves if
they are to understand their position as always already ideological (Berlin). An introduction and education in critical literacy (Giroux) will help them to gain such an understanding. Only then will they be able to direct their newfound rhetorical empowerment towards the institutions and regulations that render them disenfranchised (Bizzell). While the students must gain this understanding for themselves, the teacher will bring them into the fold, will help them on their path to understanding the ideologically loaded conditions under which they exist. However, this tends not to be the case. As we have seen through Worsham, we must ask what happens when students refuse to be empowered, refuse to play the knowledge game. In short, what happens when they resist their resistance? Critical pedagogy has difficulty getting around the fact that it recapitulates the failures of Marxism by utilizing the teacher as an avant garde. Professors of English (or whatever subject) are representatives of the institution, and teaching, as Rickert notes, is complicit with institutional mores.

Moreover, critical pedagogy’s transposition to the web does not help alleviate these burdens. Although I cannot fault Lankshear et al. for not having read Galloway, the manner in which they suggest technology helps the goals and aims of critical pedagogy can be read as little more than the classic “rhetoric of freedom” that Galloway critiques. The assumption is strictly that the technology is open, interactive, and will allow worldwide collaboration. However, as we have seen, digital media function strictly on the level of protocol. The internet does not automatically enable the diversity they seek. While the internet may enable certain critiques of modernist institutions, how might one, through critical pedagogy, enable the critique of protocols themselves? Protocol remains beyond the reach of such liberatory pedagogies. They fall into what Galloway calls the
“popular discourse of cyberspace as a global frontier or as a digital commons, where access is a commodity, conveys the message that the political economy of networks is managed through connectivity” (The Exploit 62). But protocol is concerned with regulation at a massive level. As Worsham has explained, critical pedagogy attempts to counter hegemony through a certain method of emotional schooling. In so doing, the subject becomes reterritorialized, to use Deleuze and Guattari’s term—re-subjected. Critical pedagogy is reliant on precisely such a subject, as is protocol. Galloway notes that the controls of protocol are enabled through “subjected subjects” expressing themselves on the web.

**Postpedagogy**

In trying to develop a conception of postpedagogy that will be useful to us, I will position myself by borrowing from a number of theorists. Geoffrey Sirc comments on the value of avant garde writing techniques and practices. Thomas Rickert positions us in the society of control, while J.A. Rice thinks through critical pedagogy as a response to control society. Through Worsham, we understand that what is at stake in a postpedagogy, then, is affective struggle. An experiment with power relations must be one that recognizes affective struggle as being part of the discourse of the classroom. Through the remaining theorists of postpedagogy, I will attempt to articulate how it is that we might reconceptualize “our affective relationship to the world” (Worsham 1026). Reconceptualizing this relationship helps pedagogy to reconfigure the relations of power between teacher and student, not in order to gain power for one party or another, but to find other arrangements.
Rewriting Power Arrangements: Breaking with Control

Thomas Rickert, in *Acts of Enjoyment*, gives perhaps the fullest account of power relations in the classroom. He reminds us that “teaching writing is fully complicit with dominant social practices, and inducing students in accordance with institutional precepts can be as disabling as it is enabling” (Rickert 164). The prospect of teachers creating students who are resistant to this or that institution or cultural trend through critique and empowerment seems moribund. Teachers, whether they like it or not, still remain representatives of the academy, and moreover a figure of power in the classroom. For Worsham, this resistance can demonstrate itself in the form of embarrassment, shame, etc. For Rickert, post-Oedipal subjectivities resist through “the Look” (a term borrowed from Sacks), “the blank, bored stare of utter disengagement” (162). The concept of the post-Oedipal society parallels, for Rickert (and for me) the society of control that Deleuze postulates. Both terms are indicative of the withdrawal of modern forms of power (such as institutions), yet without increase in liberation. Instructors who wish to question their authoritative role find that the first time grades are assigned, the question of who runs the class is revealed. I would say then, with Rickert, “[T]he notion that we can even foster resistance through teaching is questionable” (164).

“Students,” Rickert writes, “will dutifully go through their liberatory motions, producing the proper assignments, but it remains an open question whether they carry an oppositional politics with them” (183). To ask students to adopt oppositional and critical stances in the interest of empowering themselves is to present them with a forced choice, the answer to which is an easy one: Do you want to critique and empower yourself or fail
the class? What then emerges is not the desired critical distance of liberatory pedagogy, but “cynical distance” (Rickert 183). Ultimately, Rickert claims, critical pedagogy positions itself in such a way that “it is the teacher who knows (best), and this orientation gives the concept ‘schooling’ a particular bite: though it presents itself as oppositional to the state and to the dominant forms of pedagogy that serve that state and its capitalist interests, it nevertheless reinscribes an authoritarian model” (182). The teacher remains the authority in the classroom, even in a critical class, since it is the teacher who provides both the exigency and the values in the classroom. Critical pedagogy asks students to critique a particular institution, but is ultimately responsible for the grading and evaluation of those same critiques. Hence critical pedagogy remains a form of avant-gardism: the teacher knows best.

The goal then is to find an alternate path of invention for students. To this end, Rickert writes, “What other forms of writing and thinking are being shut down or distorted—forms of writing that have their own, different powers and inventive allure?” (164). Finding such inventive forms is a key goal of my own postpedagogy. The marker of such a postpedagogy is, along with Rickert’s, “the element of surprise” (Rickert 172). It is a pedagogy of risk. One that refuses “the reproduction of the everyday, or better, seek[s] to reenchant the everyday via the new” (Rickert 195). Rickert’s attempt at a postpedagogy does not, however, attempt to provide an altogether new pedagogy, but rather theorize a means “that recognizes inventive possibilities already inherent in post-Oedipal subjectivities in order to promote writing Acts that shift control of the dominant loci of contention from the teacher to the student” (163). In other words, the goal is to work within the dominant discourse, not through critique of the dominant discourse,
neither through empowering students through encouraging them to take power for themselves. In other words, Rickert’s postpedagogy becomes an experiment in power relations. Taking the view that power relations are unavoidable, he asks how else we can approach the issue of power in the classroom. If the loci of contention are shifted from teacher to student, then we can remove the teacher from the position of knowing best, that is, the teacher no longer serves as an avant garde for the student. Rickert’s answer in shifting contention from teacher to student is to create a pedagogy of risk. His example (which is also utilized by Sirc) takes its cue from David Bartholomae.

In “The Tidy House: Basic Writing in the American Curriculum,” Bartholomae describes a significant student essay he received as a young teacher. Asking the students to respond to a question about Sartre, existence, and essence, one student named Quentin Pierce, submitted the following:

Man will not survive, he is a[n] asshole.

STOP

The stories in the books [are] mean[ing]less stories and I will not elaborate on them[.] This paper is mean[ing]less, just like the book, But I know the paper will not make it.

STOP.

I don’t care.

I don’t care.
about man and good and evil I don’t care about this shit fuck this shit,
trash and should be put in the trash can with this shit
Thank you very much
I lose again. (qtd. in Bartholomae 6)
Quentin’s paper has become a source of fascination to a number of scholars. Like
Rickert, I don’t mean to tout the essay as a masterpiece of first year writing, neither do I
want to make the student into some sort of liberating antihero. But there seems to be
something about the response that this essay represents that keeps composition scholars
coming back. Bartholomae is obviously intrigued as well, hence his choosing to write
about it. He says, “I was not prepared for such a paper. In a sense, I did not know how to
read it,” while at the same time, he chose to keep it for 18 years (“The Tidy House” 314).
Like Bartholomae, Rickert and Sirc, I too am intrigued by its potential. What it enacts is a
writing that questions pedagogy itself. For Deleuze, the means of discovering how we
might live is to experiment. I see a potential in the writing as an experiment. It could be
read as an experiment in voice—Bartholomae says he did not take it as “an expression of
who Quentin Pierce ‘really was’” (314)—by which the student embraces a lack of voice,
and a lack of empowerment as a means of resisting the game of knowledge. The choice
against voice as a means of empowering himself might be seen as what Deleuze calls a
“becoming-imperceptible” (Essays 1), refusing the everyday identities that define us. In
this case, Quentin refuses the identity of student. Rickert sees the essay as transgressing
the goals of critical or liberatory pedagogy. Quentin instead experiments, introducing
what Vitanza has called “postmodern theatricks” (“Three Countertheses” 158), cutting up
his answer into fragments, and answering back with what Bartholomae calls a “fuck you.”

When pedagogy presents, as Rickert suggests, a “forced choice” to students, those choices function as regulations, determining what is possible in advance. The student above transgresses that model, which is why I (and many others) have found it so fascinating. To struggle against control is to fight in favor of the virtual, the unexpected, surprise. It generates a more sustainable model, which can be endlessly renewed, since the virtual can actualize in infinite ways. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze indicates that language itself can overflow its own categories: “It is language which fixes the limits (the moment, for example, at which the excess begins), but it is language as well which transcends the limits and restores them to the infinite equivalence of an unlimited becoming” (2-3). Galloway similarly advocates inducing states of hypertrophy, which works within technology but pushes it “further than it is meant to go. Then, in its injured, sore, and unguarded condition, technology may be sculpted anew into something better, something in closer agreement with the real wants and desires of its users” (*Protocol* 206). Likewise, Rickert attempts to work within pedagogy, to find moments at which students are pushing against our own teaching, calling our terms into question. Such resistance cannot be taught, but at key moments, students working against our teaching may find something that will push composition further than it is meant to go. We cannot abandon pedagogy, or writing instruction, but by inducing hypertrophy, we overflow the possibilities of language. I see the beginnings of such a potential in the essay by Bartholomae’s student.
Geoffrey Sirc’s *English Composition as a Happening* battles against what he terms modernist notions of composition (which both proliferate and dominate the field) in favor of avant garde writing practices. iv Similar to Greg Ulmer, Sirc seeks a means by which students need not reject their culture before beginning to write, thus adding another wrinkle to postpedagogy: the readymade. From where are unusual practices to derive? From where will we gain the material to do this work? The answer, Sirc tells us, is right in front of us. Sirc’s postpedagogical practices derive from various artistic techniques that rebel against an easy notion of what is available to write in the composition classroom:

> Our texts are conventional in every sense of the word; they write themselves. They are almost wholly determined by the texts that have gone before; a radical break with the conventions of a form or genre (and I’m not speaking here about the academic convention of the smug, sanctioned transgression, e.g. Jane Tompkins) would perplex—how is *that* history writing? what community group would need *that* for its newsletter? how is *that* going to help you get a job? (Sirc 10)

Here Sirc gives an almost perfect description of control at work in the classroom. Everything is rendered in terms of its informational value. That which has no value is abject from the classroom. Sirc works in order to bring all of the “noise” (or what Deleuze calls, in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, excess) back into the classroom. It is a postpedagogy of mutation, perversion, of cutting up and rendering in new ways.

Sirc positions his pedagogy against Bartholomae (much of the time), seeing in Bartholomae a tendency towards a traditional pedagogy, one Sirc sees as a pedagogy of
the museum: students walking through the humanist hall-of-fame, perusing the “great essays” produced by the “great minds,” never really encouraged to take these masterpieces off the wall and work with them in new ways. In its stead, Sirc looks for texts that do something else: “I’m interested…in failures that really aren’t, in works barred from gaining the prize which end up changing the world. Brief, personal jottings that become a litany for posterity; apparently impoverished writing that proves a rich text” (35). The inability to account for the obvious value of such writing is precisely what makes it so valuable. Control society renders linkages rational—everything must make sense. What does not make sense cannot be part of protocol. This is protocol’s limitation of the logic of sense. What Sirc provides is a composition of nonsense. That virtual field from which sense unfolds. The point of making nonsense is that at some future point in time, it might make sense through expanding what sense can be. Sirc makes nonsense through artistic practices, suggesting, “What’s involved is finding a new conceptual use [for everyday objects]: taking a hat rack, for example, putting it on the floor, and calling it Trébuchet (Trap)?” (56). Resistance to control involves working against models of strict efficiency in an effort to create noncommunication, at least temporarily. The concept of nonsense, which Sirc enacts in his pedagogy, is always a function of time. It is not a simple matter of creating something in which sense is absent, but creating something that challenges traditional notions of common sense. In this way, Sirc’s work presents a function of postpedagogy that seeks the always rational, sense-making function of composition in favor of expanding the purview of what sense can be.

Is postpedagogy anarchist?
While postpedagogy has typically not been formulated along political lines, it does have, I would argue, a decided political commitment. This political commitment has much in line with anarchist political philosophy. To the extent that critical pedagogy functions in a Marxist fashion, postpedagogy works in an anarchist one. That is, the politics of postpedagogy are anarchist. There are similarities between anarchism and Marxism, but anarchism differs from Marxism at the level of intervention. Where Marxism advocates a revolution that is brought in by an avant garde party, anarchism always works from the bottom up, eschewing any notion of an avant garde. In other words, anarchism can be seen as recognizing that power relations always exist, and our best solution is an experiment in power relations to find a suitable situation for the present time. As Colin Ward suggests in *Anarchy in Action*, “There is no final solution, only a series of partisan struggles.” (29). In other words, we don’t find a final day of rest, but continually work with power relations to rethink them. May’s book will help to shed some light on these ideas. Where Marxism was reliant on a specific group of people who understood correctly the conditions of the working class, anarchism recognizes no such authority. The failures of Marxism, May tells us, serve as “no proof against strategic political philosophy. The legacy of Marxism, and the reasons for its demise—specifically the reductionism of it analyses combined with the failure of its revolutionary predictions—provide, not a refutation of strategic thinking, but an invitation to another kind of thinking” (44). The other way is anarchism, which May suggests has been suppressed by both Marxism and liberalism as an alternative. What anarchism tries to achieve is a nonhierarchical form of governance. In contrast to Marxism, anarchism does not try to take over the state, nor the means of production, but to abolish the state, and to
decentralize means of production. Where May differs from most historical anarchist accounts is on the positivity of power. For most traditional anarchists, power is something that can be done without. There is a suppressive sense in which power works, but it is not the only way. Foucault’s analysis of power in *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*, shows a means by which power works that is not restraining, or at least not only restraining, but is creative.

May deploys Foucault’s four propositions on modern power as anarchist views of power. The first states that power is “exercised from innumerable points,” the second that “relations of power are not in a position of exteriority to other types of relationships,” the third that “there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix” and lastly, “power relations are both intentional and nonsubjective.” At issue here is whether anyone ever wields power. Power is not something one holds, and can certainly not be something that one takes. Power relations exist between individuals, in the relationships, not exterior to them. Power is something we find when various people are in relation to one another. This should not be taken to mean that there can be no beneficiaries of power relations. Some will profit or benefit more than others. However, these individuals are still within and created by power and are a product of its relations.

Through the use of poststructuralist theory, May ameliorates a historical error in much anarchist theory—that we can move out of power. If Foucault is correct, then we are always in power relations. However, through the strain of anarchism May advocates, we can move into a situation where we might experiment with alternative power arrangements. The issue is not whether power is exercised or not (it always is), but
whether that exercise is an intolerable one. “For Foucault,” May states, “the rise of current power relationships is traceable to specific local practices and must be understood on the basis of them. Failure to do so would lead…to the assumption that by destroying oppressive macropolitical entities and practices, the power arrangements reflected in those entities will themselves disappear” (99). Here we find the great mistake of critical pedagogy, and where postpedagogy serves as a solution to that problem. Where critical pedagogy seeks to empower students through critique of oppressive institutions, it only serves to reinscribe that same authority through the power arrangements between teacher and student. These power arrangements are no different than those of traditional pedagogy. Critical pedagogy often does not suggest that one can move out of power, of course, as many have attested. Power relations are inevitable, and critical consciousness does not move outside of ideology, but works within it.

May concludes with a discussion of ethics and whether or not an ethics can be derived from poststructuralism. The principle upon which he settles is one of antirepresentationalism, and it is a twofold principle. First, “[T]he power to represent people to themselves is oppressive in itself: practices of telling people who they are and what they want erect a barrier between them and who (or what) they can create themselves to be” (131). The legacy of Marxism, which is also present in critical pedagogy, is precisely such a practice. Students are told (given the forced choice) to empower themselves or fail. They must become cultural critics, and desire that which the teacher desires. The second issue, “representing people to themselves helps to reinforce other oppressive social relationships” follows from the first. The process of representing students’ desires back to themselves creates a situation in which the teacher remains an
authority, even when critique is directed outward towards oppressive entities. For instance, Bizzell writes “the individual subjectivity or consciousness that becomes critical also becomes more cognizant of tensions, contradictions that the dominant society has tried to conceal” (65). However, what of the tensions and contradictions that the teacher tries to conceal? The teacher remains, no matter how democratic the classroom, an emblem of authority. It is the teacher who will suggest, ultimately, whether the students are resistant in the “correct way,” which leaves her in the position of an avant garde figure.

Colin Ward gives an alternative way in which to conceive these relations through the concept of direct and indirect action. He writes, in Anarchy in Action, that direct action is one in which a particular group acts to attain an end that lies within an individual or group’s power. In other words, it is an action that does not appeal to an outside authority for legitimation. For Ward, such actions as strikes, general strikes, and the slowdown (factory workers deliberately reducing productivity) are categorized as direct. An indirect action, by contrast, is an action that attains an end, but one that is outside of one’s power. In other words, it appeals to a higher authority. These actions include such operations as lawsuits or any judicial procedure (some even consider voting an indirect action). The differences between the two are dramatic. For Ward, anarchism is “an extended network of individuals and groups, making their own decisions, controlling their own destiny” (26). Under most current conceptions of critical pedagogy, student action is always indirect because it must appeal to the authority of the teacher. Consider, alternatively, Rickert’s conception of student resistance. In Rickert’s formulation, the teacher is neither directing students outward to critique institutions nor enjoining the
students to protest anything in particular. Rather, what Rickert encourages us to do, on a tactical level, is to look for those forms of resistance in which students are already engaged. To this end, he looks at the famous Bartholomae assignment, not as a form of resistance taught to the students, but rather one developed independently. Ultimately, the question is this: if students are resisting in a manner prescribed and evaluated by the teacher, is it resistance at all? The challenge to any sense of avant gardism is that the ones “in the know” ever assume that they know how to resist better than those who are directly involved and engaged in the practices that may require resistance. It isn’t as though composition ought not to be transgressed. Surely if I have argued anything in these pages, it is precisely that it should. However, to what extent we, as teachers, can ever teach students to transgress without its simply becoming a standardized, de rigeur practice is highly questionable.

J.A. Rice’s recent article, “Reconfiguring Critical Pedagogies for the Logic of Late Capitalism,” is an interesting step in terms of critical pedagogy. Rice is favorable to the overall project of critical pedagogy, but he faults those in the business of politically active pedagogy for certain instantiations of “ethical certitude,” claiming that students’ critiques are meant to value such unassailable terms like freedom and equality, rather than grappling with “changing methods of material reality, communicative processes, and economic hegemony” (4). The certainty regarding such terms renders most strains of critical pedagogy “less strategies of social change than assertions of it” (4). Additionally, the popularity of critical pedagogy readers published by the textbook industry lead to the valuing of resistant social movements on the basis of profitability. Rice looks to the rhetorical similarities between the conservative organization Students for Academic
Freedom (SAF) and Sharon Crowley’s book Toward a Civil Discourse. Rice claims that organizations with decidedly anti-left goals are simply responding, and fit neatly within, the goals of multiculturalism and heterogeneity for which Crowley calls. Crowley’s discourse is a classic instance of liberalism being hoisted by its own petard. These and other strategies, Rice argues, attend to the recognition that injustice occurs, but say nothing of how such injustice might occur. He argues thus: “[S]trategies that call for resistance of ‘recognition’ by conscious cultural or ethical organization, interpretation, or participation in dominant language practices may not be possible—or at least progressively productive—for students of critical pedagogies” (7). In other words, a critical pedagogy must engage in much more than critiques in the name of freedom or resistance, but must question even these concepts.

How then will critical pedagogy push itself further? Rice argues in favor of moving towards what he calls the “speculative dimensions of critical theory” and against a liberal-democratic fundamentalism (7). Where this takes us is towards a pedagogy in which everything can be questioned: “[T]his speculative dimension implies that if we are to remain critical without commodifying this term as a methodological limitation, nothing—methodologically, pedagogically, politically, culturally, and ethically—should be off limits to critical investigation, including our own presuppositions about those very critical theories” (8). Theory, for Rice, moves beyond informing practice to actually becoming it. Rice has laid down a challenge to critical pedagogy to answer, in a far stronger manner than it has, the “Q” question. If rhetoric is constructive of ethics, then it is extraordinarily problematic to establish, by fiat, the orthodoxy of the liberal-democratic view and then maintain that view as incontrovertible. Such viewpoints should also be
exposed to scrutiny, questioned, and critiqued. The extent to which such a pedagogy is possible remains questionable. Whether such reflexivity would paralyze a class beyond the point that it can do anything seems a strong probability. However, I like Rice’s critique inasmuch as it exhorts teachers to consider the extent to which their actual pedagogy (and its ethos) is a rhetorical construction, and the ways in which the practice of teaching the class is conscripted by the university as well as other competing political and rhetorical interests.

Rice’s reconfiguration of critical pedagogy for the logic of late capitalism (Jameson’s term, which, while different, will here suffice as a synonym for control society) is a positive development, but ultimately, I fear its dependence upon indirect action, by maintaining the teacher as emancipator. If he does not do so, then it will also be important to ask, I think, at what point of transformation does critical pedagogy cease to be critical pedagogy and become something else? His suggestion that the theory become the praxis bears a great deal of similarity to the postcritical methodology of Ulmer. It seems useful to ask whether Rice advocates a pedagogy that falls within the purview of critical pedagogy at all. On this point I completely agree: all things should be up for grabs, including the pedagogy, but to teach this is problematic. More importantly, however, and more to the point regarding technology, what of the critique of the technology itself? Ulmer’s postcritical object, as well as the time-image, can be deployed as critiques of the language of technology and new media. Technology is not value neutral and must be interrogated as well. The critique of technology, I would argue, is as important (if not more so) than the critique of pedagogy. As Rice looks at “strategies that desire to address and work against global and corporate logics” it is worth considering
that those global and corporate logics are largely articulated through computer networks. They are of a piece with control. Interrogating such logics means criticizing the medium in which they work, understanding it, and discovering tactics that subvert it.

**Conclusion**

Our postpedagogy, then, is one of the aleatory. It seeks to restore to linkages the function of surprise. In this sense, it is also a postpedagogy that seeks nonsense as well as sense. I am not suggesting that students only ever make nonsensical claims, but I am suggesting that there be room for such discourses. These are the forms of student resistance that resist us as teachers. A postpedagogy, as Thomas Rickert reminds us, is one that provides for the element of surprise. In an age of protocol and control, surprise stands as one significant way in which we can experiment, and find new ways for the virtual to actualize. In control societies, possibilities are determined in advance. The means to resist such control, as Galloway notes, is through mutation, perversion, and randomness. Such randomness cannot, however, be found in traditional pedagogy, neither in its more contemporary counterpart, critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is fully complicit with institutional mores and tenets. It seeks to determine the grounds of what can happen in a classroom in advance. It does so through positing the teacher as a kind of avant garde with respect to the students. In so doing, it comes closer to the philosophical tenets of Marxism than most critical pedagogy advocates (such as Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren and others) would like to admit. Postpedagogy attempts to move the instructor out of the role of an avant garde, creating a pedagogy of risk, or chance, of the possibility for mutations and perversions to occur. However, “Rickert argues that “[s]urprise cannot be orchestrated in advance as the glittering pedagogical prize achieved by means of good
theories devoted toward just ends” (173). Instead, we must enact a pedagogical experiment, one much closer in terms of politics to anarchist theory.

Worsham urges us to attend to the ways in which authority is reinscribed in critical pedagogy—through the emotional schooling inflicted upon the student wherein emotion is abject, and empowerment through critique is the final goal. Rickert exhorts us to attend to this arrangement by allowing for a pedagogy of risk, one in which students are able to produce a text that might transgress against pedagogy itself. When we decide in advance everything that is possible, and when we set out to “fix” student problems (and consider the meaning of “fix” as both repair and secure), we do nothing more than to reinvent ourselves as a kind of therapist, and subject our students to the kinds of emotional schooling Lynn Worsham decries. However, when we give our students room to surprise us, then we find forms of thinking and writing that we didn’t even know existed. However, this requires flexibility on the part of the instructor, and risk on the part of the student. This is a true method of rhetorical invention, and it can only happen when we allow for the unexpected and the unaccountable. Surprise, if anything, is the essence of postpedagogy.

These modes of composition have a use even beyond the immediate contexts in which they write. The aleatory battles composition as such. The virtual never shows in advance its unfolding, and it can unfold in infinite ways. Protocol works against this function by always unfolding in only one manner. Pedagogy enacts a similar turn when it sets out possible grounds in advance through the positing of the instructor as avant garde: the one who knows what the students ought to be and what they ought to want. Postpedagogy is a commitment to circumventing these processes by reinventing
pedagogy after the aleatory: teaching as throw of the dice. Hawk gives us perhaps the best summation of the goals of postpedagogy one could imagine: “Rather than change consciousness, Ulmer’s method [and all postpedagogy] taps into local student embodiment first. Whether they ultimately argue against the institutions that construct them or not, this ground puts them in the position to do so. Where that ground leads is up to the student and the lines of flight that emerge out of the particular constellation or desiring-machine they enact” (245). Students may or may not choose to critique in a manner we would support, but we should understand them as recognizing what they need better than we do. We must not direct, but allow for students to produce direct action on their own behalf, and understand the moment when it arrives. In this way, pedagogy becomes a kind of game played within power. We recognize and accept our own authority as instructor, but are also willing to play along as lines of flight develop and students find ways of critiquing not only outside institutions, but also our own teaching, as Rice suggests. We cannot teach the random; we cannot teach students to risk something and roll the dice. What we can do is be open to what happens, work with them, and help students to see that there is far more possible than they had ever considered.

Notes

1 See Berlin’s Rhetoric and Reality
2 See Ira Shor, When Students Have Power, who claims that one group tried to actually abolish the class altogether.
3 My account of current-traditionalism is located within this chapter. For expressivism, see chapter two.
4 Here, of course, I must make a crucial distinction between uses of the term “avant garde.” In Marxist theory, the avant garde (literally advance guard or vanguard) refers to a party that is keenly aware of the workers’ struggle, and can lead the workers to revolution. In Sirc’s writing, as in art criticism, avant garde refers to artistic practices that are outside the dominant practices—alternatives, so to speak.
5 Most advocates of postpedagogy take other lines of delineation, such as avant garde art (Sirc), psychoanalysis (Worsham, Rickert), vitalism (Hawk, Haynes), and even schizoanalysis (Vitanza).
6 May is careful to point out that Lenin does not insinuate that every desire the workers have is wrong. As he points out, “Such a claim would deny the validity of the entire proletarian experience. If that were to be
denied, one wonders what their motive would be for revolution at all: there would be no unhappiness, or at least no legitimate unhappiness, to be overcome” (21).

vii All propositions can be found in The History of Sexuality, 1 (94).

viii See Bizzell, 64, for her discussion of the differences between Freire and Giroux on how directive the teacher ought to be. Moreover, Bizzell discusses the fact that students, ultimately, must learn to read behavior as resistance on their own.

ix May furthers his discussion in The Moral Theory of Poststructuralism after beginning it in his final section.

x Again, we should not be led to think that those in favor of critical pedagogy are ignorant of these ideas, only that their practices don’t counter them in the most effective manner. See Bizzell, 66.

xi Indeed, it is possible to ask, contra critical pedagogy, whether or not one has any obligation to a democratic society, or to help foment one. On such lines of argument, see A. John Simmons’ Moral Principles and Political Obligations, where he convincingly argues that no one has any obligation to a democratic society, nor are they obligated to create one.

xii See also on postcritical methods, Sullivan and Porter, Opening spaces: Writing Technologies and Critical Research Practices.
Conclusion: What Hath Technology Wrought?

We will end by discussing what Deleuze has said to us, and what he has still to say to rhetoric/composition and what invention means in a society that wishes to determine all outcomes in advance. What I suggested at the beginning holds true: this is a theory of deliberative rhetoric that comes to us by way of Ulmer and other key figures, but one that is updated to account for control society. Ulmer has specifically formulated his concept of electracy in the context of deliberation. To such ends, Ulmer posits what he terms the EmerAgency, a virtual consultancy. The point of the EmerAgency is to develop practices of deliberative rhetoric on the Web. Ulmer explains,

Policy debates until now have been structured by an impasse — the confrontation between the modalities of thought (metaphysics) created within each of the previous apparati: Religion, faith, obedience (Orality) / Science, knowledge, proof (literacy). The key to understanding the aporetic character of policy problems in modernity is to note the incommensurability of these modalities, and their respective institutionalizations. Another version of the impasse, more revealing of its irreducibility, is the pair Pain/Fact. (Ulmer

http://heuretics.wordpress.com/about-2/)

Ulmer’s suggestion is that the internet moves us past some of the traditional distinctions that he associates with literacy such as public and private. These are not necessarily startling conclusions, and they have been echoed by others. For instance, in Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age, Viktor Mayer-Schönberger suggests that because of digital media, we have forgotten forgetting. To wit, he tells the story of a young
college student who was denied a teaching credential after a picture of her was discovered on a social-networking site. In the photo, she was costumed and holding an alcoholic beverage. The school claimed that they did not see such conduct as befitting a future educator. What might have been a private, transitory moment before, becomes, in the digital age, a permanent, public fixture. Lessig suggests unparalleled access to other people and to creative expression through remix, and through the ability to create, share such creations, and then comment on those creations with other people. But the virtue of Ulmer’s theory does not lie in the fact that he recapitulates these same arguments, neither in the fact that, unlike Mayer-Schonberger, Ulmer seems more optimistic about the possibilities. It lies his recognition that new practices are required: that every solution presents its own problems, and these problems are the ones we must rise to meet in composition. He observes

Electracy proposes the possibility of a third institutional practice, based in an image metaphysics native to digital media, capable of mediating, negotiating, bridging the aporia organizing the relationship between orality and literacy. The dimension of thought institutionalized and therefore brought to the table of policy debate supported within electracy is expression. (Ulmer

http://heuretics.wordpress.com/about-2/)

Ulmer’s goal is a new practice altogether, an alternative institutional practice of expression. We see this expression throughout Ulmer’s corpus, as well as the works of those he has influenced. Ulmer is not naïve about the internet, and he manages to avoid rehearsing a great many of the tired “internet is democracy” arguments that have become
so trite and clichéd. He responds, in a definite sense, to Deleuze’s clarion call in *Negotiations*:

> We ought to establish the basic sociotechnological principles of control mechanisms as their age dawns, and describe in these terms what is already taking the place of the disciplinary sites of confinement that everyone says are breaking down. It may be that older means of control, borrowed from the old sovereign societies, will come back into play, adapted as necessary. The key thing is we’re at the beginning of something new. (182)

Ulmer recognizes this something new and attempts to formulate methods for encountering these means of control. To such an end, he creates a pedagogy of the aleatory.

The value of the aleatory is the manner in which it works against control. Control is a managerial system that supplants Foucauldian discipline. Discipline works by means of institutions: school, factory, military, state, church, etc. An individual is passed from institution to institution, each of which legitimate forms of knowledge and practice, while rendering others deviant. In school, a student learns how to read and write, what topics, and what rhetorical forms are appropriate for writing, and which ones are not. In other contexts, a student (or soldier or factory worker) learns certain movements, certain bodily positions meant to maximize production and minimize waste. The managerial system, if you will, for discipline is panopticism. Taken from Jeremy Bentham’s fully developed, though unrealized model of a hypothetical prison, the panopticon was a prison which rendered every inmate fully visible, and always subject to the gaze of power. The inmates can see only the tower, never one another. Moreover, they are unable to see the insides of
the tower, hence never fully certain whether or not they are being watched, their observation is always potential. The purpose of such administration is to produce the docile, self-disciplining subject that always takes care of himself/herself. Control, in simplest terms—where discipline worked by passing an individual from institution to institution, hence allowing for breaks in regulation—regulates continuously. Where discipline works through the institution, control works through the network. In working through information networks, power is able to work on the mind in an immediate fashion. Control is less concerned with particular institutions like the state, which functions more abstractly. Through the use of networks, there is no need of an institution like a school to intervene locally, instead, as Hardt and Negri observe, “intervention has been internalized and universalized” (35). Networks, unlike institutions, recognize no physical or geographic boundaries, but are free to work across both time and space.

Networks function by means of protocols, which we have seen through Galloway perform the equivalent function of panopticism in discipline. Protocol is to control as the panopticon is to discipline. Although we can easily see protocols by looking at the rules that govern how information is exchanged in networked environments, protocols are a means of governing all possibility. It is in this sense, that of the possible, that we can say that protocols attempt to determine the outcome in advance: by universalizing communication. Actually, they render every utterance as communication in the sense of communication as distinct from creativity. Creativity no longer serves as an inventive act, but only another link in the chain of protocol, only more communication. When all the ends are determined in advance, then deliberation has been rendered null and void. Hardt and Negri anticipate this conclusion when they write that struggles are incapable of being
translated into other contexts. They observe that “(potential) revolutionaries in other parts of the world did not hear of the events in Beijing, Nablus, Los Angeles, Chiapas, Paris, or Seoul and immediately recognize them as their own struggles” (54). They go on to note that “in our much celebrated age of communication, struggles have become all but incommunicable” (54). What they call communication here, we might interpret as what Deleuze calls creativity—the possibility of thinking differently, which control and protocol render increasingly difficult. It is a new form of communication that Hardt and Negri seek, one that partakes of Deleuze’s formulation: hijacking language in an effort to create vacuoles of noncommunication.

I find an inspiration for such a vacuole in Deleuze’s time-image. While Deleuze takes the time-image from cinema itself—suggesting that it supplants the movement-image after that early form has exhausted itself—I work with new media, and so we must reformulate Deleuze’s time and movement images for working with discrete, coded entities. Protocol tends to reduce all things to information, which always makes sense—good, common sense. It is precisely through this operation that control regulates deliberative rhetoric. Through rendering all communication informatic, it attempts to regulate the unfolding of the virtual into the actual. This unfolding can occur in infinite ways, but protocols only unfold in a particular way. Memory is precisely such a virtual unfolding. Memory is not information or data stored in the brain. Memory is not in us, we are in memory. It works in an indeterminate fashion, not informatically. A vacuole of noncommunication must, therefore, work against information. We see a corollary for the movement-image in the work that views pages on the internet as frames, and the movement between them as montage. This connection can and has been made several
times over. But Deleuze also suggests that the movement within the mise-en-scene of a particular shot also gives an image of movement, and an indirect image of time. For this, we look to the arranging and design work of Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen. They conceptualize useful modes of arranging the page, and arranging the relations between pages. These movements might allow an indirect image of a network, because we can take stock of the relations between pages as we synthesize them, and also in working online as we move the elements of the page to create an aesthetically and functionally useful screen image.

By contrast, the time-image is an image of disruption. It takes various forms, such as the short film *La Jetée*, by Chris Marker, wherein the linkages between shots becomes thoroughly irrational. Deleuze suggests that this image sequence collapses the distinction between subject and object, filmmaker and audience, by forcing the audience out of a passive relation to the film, and into one where they must work with and through the film in order to construct the various meanings that might exist. It is not in the individual shots that the time-image insists, but in the linkages between them. It riffs, almost fugue-like, on Victor Burgin’s final line from *The Remembered Film*: “[T]he film we saw is never the film I remember” (107 emphasis mine), allowing for film to both evince and effect the startling unfolding of memory. There is also a time-image of digital media, but it must be one that scrutinizes the informatic character of the Web as the cinematic time-image does for film. We find such an image in certain works of internet art, which works out of the Web itself, utilizing its coded status to draw attention to the function of protocols. In this way, we are privy to a fuller sense of the network, seeing its constrained nature. In one particular installation, Jodi’s *OSS*, the purpose is to work against all
measure of “good Web design” in a deliberately perverse fashion. Much like art that also uses the “404 error” page as a means of design, this art works out of mistakes, exploits, flaws in protocol, to use them as a starting place for something creative, for thinking and seeing differently. They draw attention to the smooth flow of information that Web discourse seeks, both at the level of form and content. Protocols should be smooth and deliver information without losing it, and Web design principles look to deliver information to the eye with minimal entropy. Works that draw attention to this condition by making nonsense create vacuoles of noncommunication. They embody the aleatory unfolding that is the hallmark of the time-image, and one closer to Deleuze’s concept of memory.

The goal from here is to push out towards traditional composition, and the work within and against the protocols of the composition classroom, working with aleatory methods that allow for endlessly varying possibilities, not determined in advance. These methods share in the vitalism delineated by Byron Hawk. Hawk suggests that composition has worked to marginalize vitalism from its inception. However, composition’s antipathy towards vitalism is steeped in misreading the views it as inherent genius, the “knack” of Plato’s disdain in the Gorgias. However, vitalism is extraordinarily methodological, but the methodology is aleatory—a dependence upon chance, upon something happening by accident. They are also methods that move away from a model of subjectivity that begins with or moves towards a whole subject. Current-traditional rhetoric tends to start with a whole subject that needs only the constitutive parts of good writing, while expressivist rhetoric moves towards a whole subject, using writing as the composition of a complete self. Aleatory methods might express something
else altogether. The exquisite corpse game might express film, mystery might express the discourses and forces that compose oneself. Sirc’s box logic looks to see what happens, what might be found, and how other narratives might be composed around found objects. Rice and Eilola’s juxtaposition forges new linkages, and other associations, perhaps on the way to a collective enunciation. While these methods work within proprietary software, they work to give us an idea that breaks with control. Remember that protocol does not only subsist in computer code, but protocol is a managerial system that seeks to remove the unexpected. I seek to restore it.

Ultimately, we must delineate a pedagogy, and so I take the line of postpedagogy, especially in the work of Rickert and Worsham. Critical pedagogy would be one that might try to cut against control, but it only ever recapitulates it in positing an end goal. In other words, it projects a correct answer, which the student only need arrive at in order to become an effective agent of resistance. Resistance, in critical pedagogy, is part of the protocol. Critical pedagogy also assumes, in the vein of classical Marxism, that it knows better how resistance ought to go better than the students do. However, Worsham recognizes that resistance takes manifold forms, including boredom, embarrassment, and apathy, while Rickert observes that students are the ones that know how they need to resist. As a teacher, we can neither instruct nor facilitate these forms of resistance, but we can recognize them when they happen. In this way, postpedagogy comes much closer to political conceptions of anarchism. Colin Ward and others suggest that it is not the duty of one particular group to instruct the rest on how they should resist, while Todd May fully realizes this principle in the concept of antirepresentsationalism: we should not, all things being equal, represent to others what they ought to want. Other groups can realize,
for themselves, what it is that they need, and how they ought to proceed in effort to get it. Composition’s ethic of service cuts directly against this principle, which is why Rickert cites Paul Mann in *Masocritism* when he states that “nothing is more aggressive than the desire to serve the other” (“Hands Up” 291). We cannot teach resistance, which has been a difficult lesson for many in the critical and social-epistemic traditions to learn. However, Hardt addresses this tradition precisely when he states,

> There was a line in Althusser’s ‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses’ where he says you can resist ideological state apparatuses in the classroom. That seemed like an enormous permission for a lot of people working in universities and schools, imagining revolutionary activity in the classroom and seeing what teachers do as revolutionary. I wouldn't want to minimize the good that one can do teaching, or the good that one can do working in health care or any number of places. But thinking of politics now as a project of social transformation on a large scale, I'm not at all convinced that political activity can come from the university. It doesn't mean that we shouldn't take our politics into everyday life, as teachers and as health care workers and as sales clerks and everything else. I don't mean to divorce politics from our daily life at all. Nonetheless, I continue to have the notion that the revolution won't start in the university.

However, certain methodologies can be employed, and then students can decide for themselves how they ought to be implemented. Hawk suggests that aleatory methods and postpedagogies connect with “local student embodiment first. Whether they ultimately argue against the institutions that construct them or not, this ground puts them in the
position to do so. Where that ground leads is up to the student and the lines of flight that emerge out of the particular constellation or desiring-machine they enact” (245).

These are the principles for which I have argued in this essay. I wish to find other modes of thinking, writing, feeling and seeing. I wish to ask the question that May associates with Deleuze: “How might one live?” I cannot make a student answer this question, only encourage and be open to the various rhetorical encounters and connections I might make with my students. I view composition as part of a complex web of discourse that weaves through the university. Our job, as teachers of writing, is to teach ways of thinking, as it is for philosophy, the sciences, history, engineering and others. Composition embodies an approach to the world and to others. Rhetoric is an approach to life, a method for living, one which always upends established parameters and urges us to answer Deleuze’s all important question. My fear for the present information age is that it may be discouraging us from approaching that question, eschewing how one might live for how one might live expediently. My fear for composition is its complicity in that rigidness. Memory has been, from antiquity, a key to invention: a treasury of invented things, or a custodian of the parts of rhetoric, for Quintilian. Memory unfolds, virtually, and so it can and does surprise us. The ways of thinking that we must also consider, in the information age, are non-informatic ways of thinking—ways that allow for other means by which the virtual can unfold. It is only in considering these other ways that we can continue to experience the richness of so many other encounters, and see multitudinous forms of life and our connections to them. The virtual always surprises us, because it is inexhaustible and can always unfold another way, which is ultimately what I will have sought: another way.
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