

Play and Tolerance:  
notions of looseness in social and material assemblages

by

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May 19, 2004

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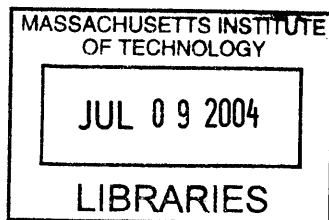
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Abstract

The material scenario provides the most illustrative of entry points into this collection of evidence embodying the difference between play and tolerance. In a material assemblage, the looseness in a joint (expansion, pin, etc.) allows the assemblage to respond to dynamic loads such as wind and heat. Without this play, the construction becomes brittle, unable to flex under the concrete conditions of its situation. The looseness in this sense is productive. Tolerance, in the manufacturing of components, begins with a diagram (engineering specifications) and the looseness in its production, the difference between the diagram and actual, is derogatory. This thesis uses play and tolerance as points of departure and return, organizing a collection of evidence that frames technology, aesthetics, social organizations, systems of control and analysis as a way to illustrate and dramatize the effects of these different attitudes towards looseness, attempting to find places for play in the city in hopes of identifying potential for an urbanity outside the paradigm of compliance.

Thesis Supervisor: Julian Beinart  
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Inexperienced diary-writers make their first entry the largest. They come to the paper with a constipation of ideas-eager, impatient. The white paper acts as a laxative. A diarrhea of words is the result. The richness of the flow is unnatural; it cannot be sustained.

*The Secret Life of Balso Snell*

*Nathaniel West*

The problem with beginnings is that, by their location, they want to launch into the argument immediately; to say all there is to be said in a single immense breath. This thesis, instead, begins with a preface on the nature of two words, and the interrogation of their difference will sustain the development of this research.

### **on beginning with two words**

Framing a thesis with two words is always suspect. It suggests a number of biases, ones that I must first clarify before being allowed the latitude to mine their material implications.

To begin, the reliance on words to frame the subsequent work implies a relegation to a semantic or post-structuralist account of difference. And while this thesis will appropriate ideas from formalism, structuralism, and post-structuralism, it does not remain a purely semiotic endeavor. The immediate insinuation of their materiality is what provides substance for their opposition. It is the effect their difference makes that is of interest here.

The two-ness of the words should not be misconstrued as a dichotomy. In truth, the didactic relation of one and another will continue to be a major theme in the work. The two words are employed merely a way of describing difference, so their differences should not separate their objects of observation, but give us avenues of investigation. As these two words develop, their relation will reveal parallels and interferences rather than outright oppositions.

These words were chosen for their ability to insinuate themselves into material, mechanical, technological, social, psycho-analytic, and political scenarios. As such, their application will be diverse but consistent in the way they open up a discussion of their operational differences, how they implicate similar attitudes across the diverse areas of deployment. These two words were not flippantly nor passively accepted, but were opportunistically conscripted into service.

To note their capacity to infiltrate disparate discourses should not suggest that they are universally applicable. The motivation for using two terms is to extend the scope (by infiltrating into another arenas) in order to distinguish abetting principles and common presuppositions and simultaneously limit the scope of how these arenas will be coordinated in order to effect productive collisions.

### **on evidence**

Because this thesis does not present a simple argument (beginning with a hypothesis and collecting evidence of its truth) nor a chronological argument (evidence from one argument concluding in the synthesis of the next, sequentially repeated) the evidence assembled must hold a different logic and structure. The evidence of this work is composed of 21 exhibits ranging chronologically from gothic to contemporary and discursively from literature, psychoanalysis, and social anthropology to production techniques, architecture, and urbanism. These 21 exhibits will be probed by the machine built by two words; each framed and organized under their interrogation.

This thesis deals with, under multiple names and guises, things in the making, to borrow a term from William James's pragmatism (for it seems the most appropriate for the process). The attempt to keep them "in the making" is to hold them open, to hold them incomplete. Once complete, they are [al]ready-made, off the shelf objects and experiences ("things" refer to objects, situations, and experiences). And because things in the making are not part of the produced-distributed-advertised machine, it is often difficult to identify them, and more so to identify the conditions of their emergence.

The identification of these scenarios is evidence of the potential for openness, their potential to be creatively perceived and intervened in. Detailing their existence is not in aid of supplanting, duplicating, or even translating to another environment. The appropriation, the subversion, is bound immediately to the situation and to the bodies that populate them. It is intrinsic to the situation making extraction a futile (and antithetical) exercise. While their existence provides hope, it does not provide an answer.

The need to create these situations is often driven by a stifling inability to live in the world as it is given to us. But we can't assume that creativity is only an imperative under duress or crisis. Such a position denies the necessity to feel that we participate in any meaningful capacity in

the patterns and practices of our lives. If it is only necessary to create something new or different under explicit and violent oppression, we are presented with a very bleak picture of our everyday lives. If this were the case, our lives would simply be an assemblage of on hand experiences and products, a fate of capitalist determination. So while some of the evidence is forged under conditions seemingly out of the ordinary, as creatures in the world, we may always find the ordinary world wanting, and organize creative adjuncts to fit our desires.

### **on structure**

These diverse exhibits are organized and opportunistically (if not idiosyncratically) framed by two systems. The overarching organization of the two words provides a common ground on which all they aggregate. A selection of the most pertinent definitions of each word represents a matrix to which each of these refer. The second system is composed of the internal relations of each exhibit that emerge under the scrutiny of these two words. Each element connects to others, there is no isolate exhibit. Some of these constitute nodes connecting to many others, by providing a common potential alluded to by a number of exhibits, while others intend to be quite singular and clear in their relation to the over arching scrutinizing machine of two words and connecting to few others.

The parallels that develop will illustrate and dramatize the effect of the implicit difference between these two words. The thesis is not concerned with developing a better definition of either word, but demonstrating their potential impact as presuppositions. The conclusion is presented concurrently with the exhibits. Following the presentation of evidence, I look at two attempts to introduce these notions actively into the design process, interrogating them with the sensibilities gained through the scrutiny of the 21 exhibits.

As such, each exhibit is presented as a contained analysis within its own right. These are not exhaustive examinations of the subject, for they refer to things outside of themselves, both explicitly through the development of their internal relations among the 21 and implicitly through by the appropriation of terminology and references to exterior sources. For example, in the exhibit on the queer tactics of New York City, the term tactics is taken from Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*. This is alluded to in the presentation of the exhibit, but not explicitly developed within the course of this work. This is done as the exhibits are composed of demonstrative instances. attempting to allude only referring to analytical frameworks, by constantly probing the



material instances where available. To remain solely in the comparison of analytical frameworks would be to simply remain a discourse on discourse.

These 21 exhibits are organized by both their overall relation to the two words as well as their internal relations. As such, neither the first nor last nor middle is the most important. There is no taxonomic organization (as there are multiple definitions of the two words and multiple parallels and foils implicated) that describes their order or significance. Some instances are presented in sequence as they relate to the two words, others as they begin to form an argument in their own right. The relation of each particular exhibit to the two words is explicated by the definitions presented at the beginning, referring to them by way of their individual participation per definition, and also in relation to the overall matrix of definitions. The internal relations are developed within the body of the document itself as references to images and text presented outside of each exhibit.

## Definitions of Play and Tolerance

play:

- 2a. of physical things. rapid, brisk, or light movement, usually alternating or fitful; elusive change or transition (of light or color); light motion about or impact on a thing
  - 4a. Action, activity, operation, working: often implying the ideas of rapid movement or change, variety, etc.
    - b. actively engaged (in play)
  - 5b. Freedom or room for movement; the space in or through which anything (esp. a piece of a mechanism) can or does move
  - 6c. Amorous disport, dalliance, sexual indulgence.
  - 7a. Jest, fun, sport (as opp. to earnest) trifling
  - 10g. An attempt to gain something; a move, maneuver, or venture
- verb
- 6a. to wield;... to actuate.

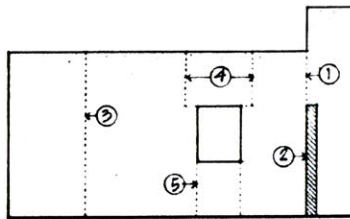
tolerance

- 1a. the action or practice of enduring or sustaining pain or hardship; the power or capacity or enduring; endurance
- 2. the action of allowing; license permission granted by an authority
- 4. (tolerable) moderate in degree;.. moderately good, fairly good or agreeable, not bad
- 4b. Mech. an allowable amount of variation in the dimensions of a machine part. More widely, the allowable amount of variation in any specified quantity.

(all definitions taken from The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition 1989)

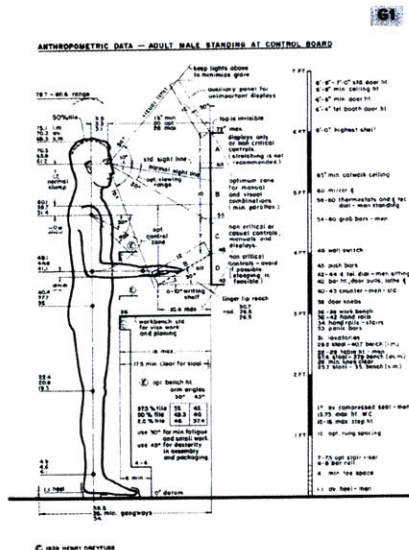
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<b>2a</b> 4a 4b <b>5b</b> 6c 7a 10g 6a <b>1a</b> 2 <b>4b</b>	2
<b>2a 4a 4b</b> 5b 6c 7a 10g <b>6a</b> 1a 2 4b	3
<b>2a 4a</b> 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b	4
2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a <b>1a 2 4b</b>	5
2a 4a 4b <b>5b 6c</b> 7a 10g 6a <b>1a 2 4b</b>	6
<b>2a 4a 4b</b> 5b 6c 7a <b>10g 6a</b> 1a 2 4b	7
2a 4a 4b <b>5b</b> 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 <b>4b</b>	8
2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 <b>4b</b>	9
2a <b>4a</b> 4b <b>5b</b> 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b	10
<b>2a 4a 4b</b> 5b 6c <b>7a</b> 10g <b>6a</b> 1a 2 4b	11
2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a <b>10g</b> 6a 1a 2 <b>4b</b>	12
2a <b>4a</b> 4b <b>5b 6c 7a</b> 10g 6a 1a <b>2 4b</b>	13
2a 4a 4b 5b <b>6c</b> 7a 10g 6a 1a <b>2 4b</b>	14
2a <b>4a</b> 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a <b>2 4b</b>	15
2a 4a 4b <b>5b</b> 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a <b>2 4b</b>	16
<b>2a 4a 4b</b> 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b	17
2a <b>4a</b> 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 <b>4b</b>	18
2a <b>4a 4b</b> 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 <b>4b</b>	19
2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a <b>2 4b</b>	20
2a 4a <b>4b</b> 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a <b>1a</b> 2 4b	21

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b



**Figure 1.1**  
Ching p22  
Possible expansion joint locations

In the same way that Ching locates possible lines of movement for a wall, Richard Dreyfuss diagrams the lines of movement in the body. Both are in aid of controlling a limited amount of movement, but movement that is necessary to the system. Both strategically organize a system of play.



**Figure 2.1**  
Richard Dreyfuss  
Measure of Man

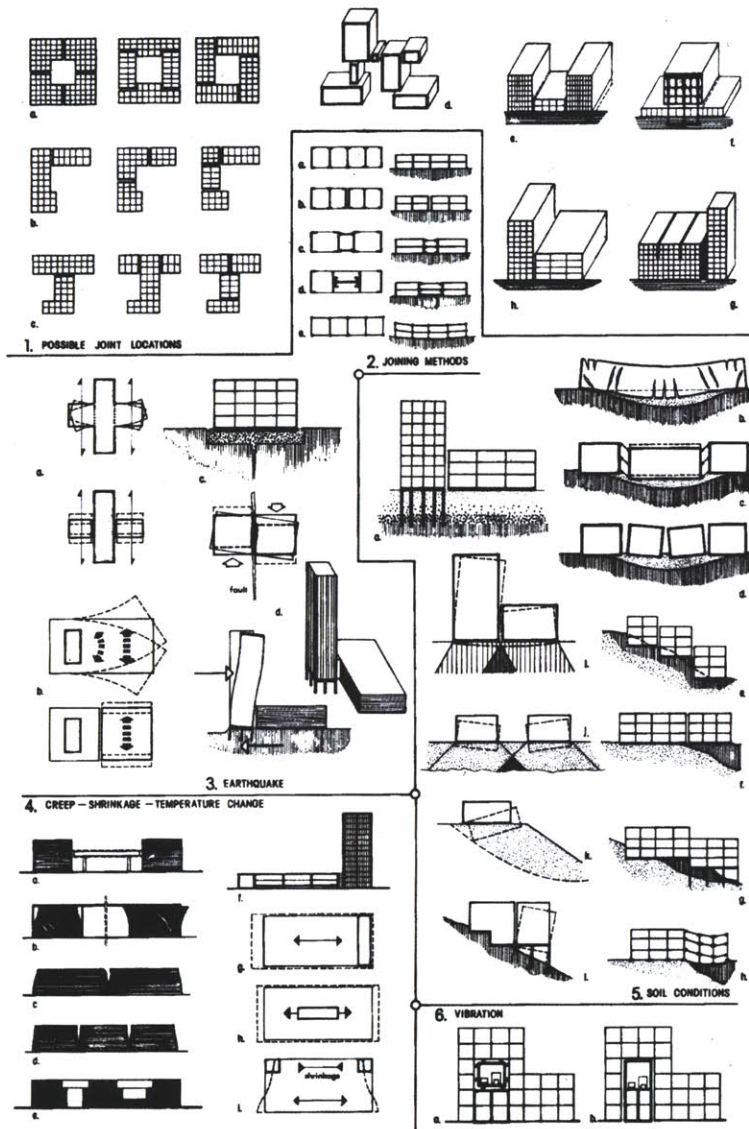
Prefabricated panel systems (concrete, metal, polymer, etc.) and masonry construction techniques incorporate both play and tolerance in their production and assemblage. As a modular construction system, each instance of the module must operate as a single unit. That is, each unit is produced with similar structural tolerances, internally rigid. The process has obvious economic and material consequences that include repetition, consistency, and compliance to systems of measurement. Each repeated instance must be in compliance with the expected structural norm, diagrammed by aesthetic and structural specifications. However, at a certain scale, those internal tolerances that allow each unit to operate independently are unable to accommodate flexible loads such as heat, wind, and uneven settlement. Consequently, play is introduced into the connection between panels and as expansion and control joints in masonry construction, allowing the system as a whole to respond to dynamic loads. The rigidity inherent to the repetitious mode of production is corrected by a strategically organized system of play. Without this introduced flexibility, the structure as a whole would become brittle, unable to accept the dynamics imposed by its situated deployment.

A similar problem of brittleness in construction materials was encountered with the use of iron. Iron, although much stronger than wood, was far less ductile, and prone to catastrophic failure. To combat this brittleness, industrial manufacture of steel (by means of the Bessemer and other processes that could provide the necessary amount of steel for construction purposes) controlled impurities and carbon content to produce a new metal with the strength of iron but pliancy of organic materials. The rigidity of the iron frame construction was mediated by the reconstitution of the material itself.

In the case of iron/steel, play was introduced into the nature of the material, producing a qualitatively different metal. Whereas in the prefabricated panel system play is introduced as a secondary system by leaving gaps inbetween panels, in the example of iron, the material itself undergoes a transformation. Play in the prefabricated model is corrective and peripheral, introduced after the fact and at the edge. In steel, however, play is incorporated into the material itself.

In both cases the dynamics of the situation inform the assemblage of the whole. By breaking volumes and surfaces to allow for their respective differential movement or by reconsidering the nature of the materials themselves affords the potential to mitigate the brittleness of a rigid

This thesis is about finding the possibilities that hide in the world itself. This is not about invent-



structure. Different attitudes towards this incorporation of flexibility, as pliancy or differential movements suggest different ways of assembling the constituent bodies.

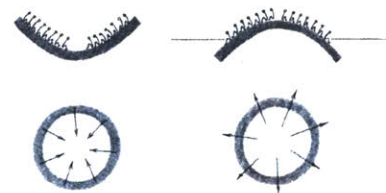
- Cerver, Francisco Asenio. 1997. *The Architecture of Minimalism*. New York: Arco, photo by Eugeni Pons.
- Ching, Francis. 1975. *Building Construction Illustrated*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold/co Wiley.
- Schueller, Wolfgang. 1996. *The Design of Building Structures*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.



Figure 1.2 (above)  
Ignacio Vicens/Jose Antonio Ramos  
Faculty of Journalism  
Expansion joints and volumes organized compositionally  
Cerver p80

Figure 1.3 (left)  
Sцуeller p64  
Ways of assembling volumes in response to slope and dynamic forces

The relation of individual bodies, of people and buildings, as informed by their connection to the ground. There is an ambiguity between their singularity and their assembled composition in such a way that they are afforded different potential movements and connections aesthetically, structurally, or socially. Different dynamics suggest different ways of being together.



People seated concentrically in a hollow, gazing inwards towards the center, and people seated concentrically on a hill, gazing outwards towards the horizon. Two kinds of centrality. Two ways of being together - or alone. The images, of course, have ambiguous meanings - though the hill reveals what the

hollow may mirror: that man is both center toward and horizon toward (the horizon and the shifting center) - the center and the shifting horizon. Both hill and hollow, horizon and center, are shared by all seated concentrically either way, both in and builture.

Figure 10.1  
Aldo van Eyck  
Hill and Hollow

ing new forms of action, or prioritizing certain aesthetic presuppositions, and certainly not about a

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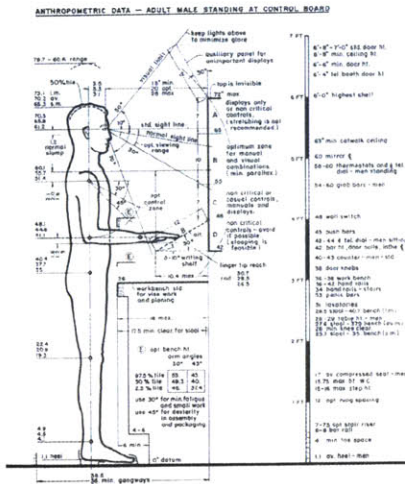


Figure 2.1 Richard Dreyfuss plate G1 Measure of Man

Comparing Dreyfuss's representations to Rabelais' illustrates significant differences in the connotation of the body. While Dreyfuss's work is predicated upon measurement, the Rabelais image is seemingly cont. p6



Figure 13.3 Rabelais Songes Drolatiques

didactic relation between the two. This is not instructive. "Architecture is a useful coincidence be-

The Ford model of production is the paradigmatic model of tolerance. There are specified tolerances not only for the materials produced, but for the way in which they are produced. All of these tolerances are specified in diagrams. The entire process of the Taylorist mode of production is presupposed by the diagram, and all work is judged against it. There are diagrams which detail the range of motion of the human body. There are diagrams that break down the necessary time per task. There are diagrams that articulate the shape, contour, physical thresholds, connections, and assemblages of the material produced. These diagrams, when taken together, describe the purely mechanical system that tolerance presupposes, intending to atomize the process and refine each episode prescribing an allowable looseness per part and as a whole. Any deviation is detrimental to the system, even those which might be considered beneficial. For example, if one process moves too quickly, a surplus is created, the next process in the chain must store and deal with, and space and time are wasted. If one gear turns too quickly it puts stress on the entire assembly.

The system is therefor judged by the diagram. The closer the actual is to the planned, the better. The value system exists a priori, it is immediate to the diagram and before the production. It is [a]lready made. The two sacrosanct principles of the Ford mode of production are compliance and repetition. As the diagram exists a priori, and all production and products are judged against it, both the manufacture and material resultant must comply with it. While efficiency is the imperative, compliance is the measure. These improvements may be minimal taken in and of themselves (a few seconds here, a few millimeters there), but by repetition may prove to substantially reduce time or make possible more finely grained assemblages, a heightened control of structure and aesthetic. Repetition, under the Fordist logic, assures each instance will be the same as others, within a standard deviation. The diagram serves as a normalizing device, the standard deviation acts as the allowed discrepancy prescribed by tolerance. In short, the diagram becomes the controlling device of space and time, with efficiency as its imperative.

Within this practice, an aesthetic emerges. With the limited palette of materials and manufacturing techniques, the particularity of the arithmetic (measurable) curve, the polished metal, and the repetition of each to exacting degrees converges on a specific machine aesthetic. This machine aesthetic of the Fordist logic abolishes the irregular or variant, placing priority on the clean and mechanical. Each instance is essentially the same, and the imagery promoting the Ford aesthetic

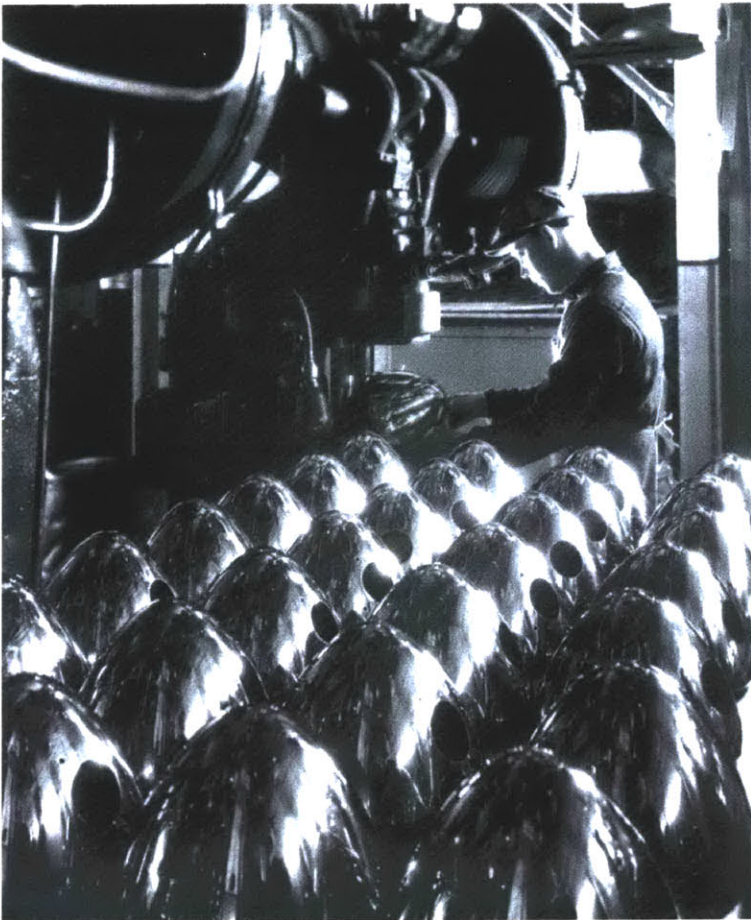


Figure 2.2  
George Ebling  
Moulding Headlamp Shells

And so, held accountable for nothing, life fades into nothingness. Automization eats away at things, at clothes, at furniture, at our wives, and at our fear of war... The purpose of art, then is to lead us to a knowledge of a thing through the organ of sight instead of recognition. By “estranging” objects and complicating form, the device of art makes the perception long and “laborious.” Art is a means of experiencing the process of creativity. The artifact itself is quite unimportant.

Victor Schlovsky  
Exhibit 3

establishes the values of repetition (abundance), exactness (control and precision), and regularity (measurable geometries).

The Fordist diagram also positions the body in a particular way, subservient to the machine. There is an obvious affinity between the Fordist diagram and repeating machine, and the body is held captive to that logic.



Figure 15.3  
Greg Lynn : Intricacy  
singularity, anexactness, difference

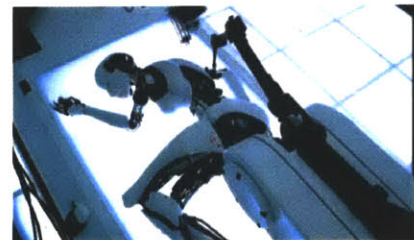


Figure 14.3  
Bjork: All is Full of Love  
a different body machine relation

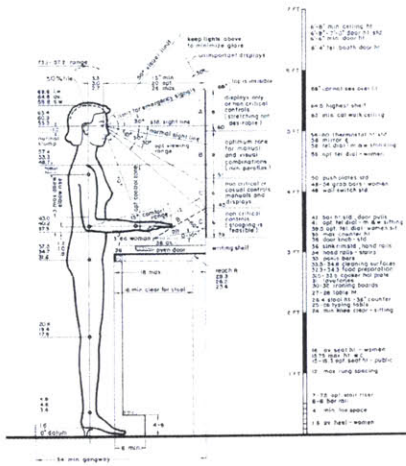
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Dreyfuss, Richard. 1967. *The Measure of Man; Human Factors in Design*. New York: Whitney Library of Design,  
George Ebling. 1932-34. *Moulding Headlamp Shells*, Ford Motor Co., River Rouge plant, Dearborn, Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Collection.  
Smith, Terry. 1993. *Making the Modern: Industry, Art, and Design in America*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press.

tween form and life. Building reveals these relationships, occasionally invents them. Attempting

(below) Figure 2.3  
Dreyfuss plate G2  
Measure of Man

(right) Figure 13.4  
Rabelais  
Songs Drolatiques



cont. from p4

unmeasurable, its grotesque proportions and precarious positioning suggest the body is always in the process of becoming something else. Dreyfuss's man is comfortably poised and all movements inscribed by the tolerances of the body's joints. Somehow though, Dreyfuss fails to capture the scowl of the Rabelasian image (he fails to measure the mouth's elasticity) and there is no evidence of the possibility of a hat (let alone codpiece). The gender of the Dreyfuss image is illustrated by posture and relation to work (in the man's case a workbench, in the woman's a stove). The Dreyfuss image, then, sanctions and affirms the gendered workplace with the implicitly encoded appropriate body type while sanctifying his work as ergonomics (why measure a woman's body in relation to a workbench?)

to invert this is a formula for trouble." (Sorkin 6) There are no forms that prompt us to be creative,



In [Yuri Lotman]’s works *The Structure of the Artistic Text* (1970) and *The Analysis of the Poetic Text* (1972), Lotman sees the poetic text as a stratified system in which meaning only exists contextually, governed by sets of similarities and oppositions. Differences and parallelisms in the text are themselves relative terms, and can only be perceived in relation to one another. In poetry, it is the nature of the signifier, the patterns of sound and rhythm set up by the marks on the page themselves, which determines what is signified. A poetic text is ‘semantically saturated’, condensing more ‘information’ than any other discourse; but whereas for modern information theory an increase in information leads to a decrease in ‘communication’ (since I cannot ‘take in’ all that you so intensely tell me), this is not so in poetry because of its unique kind of internal organization. Poetry has a minimum of ‘redundancy of those signs which are present in a discourse to facilitate communication rather than convey information -but still manages to produce a richer set of messages than any other form of language. [...] Every literary text is made up of a number of ‘systems’ (lexical, graphic, metrical, phonological, and so on), and gains its effects through *constant clashes and tensions* between these systems. *Each of the systems comes to represent a ‘norm’ from which the others deviate, setting up a code of expectations that they transgress.* Metre, for example, creates a certain pattern that the poem’s syntax may cut across and violate. In this way, each system in the text ‘defamiliarizes’ the others, breaking up their regularity and throwing them into more vivid relief. Our perception of the poem’s grammatical structure, for example, may heighten our awareness of its meanings. *Just as one of the poem’s systems threatens to become too predictable, another cuts across it to disrupt it into new life.*

Terry Eagleton 1983 p101-2  
emphasis added

Eagleton begins by remarking that the poem’s text is a “stratified system,” a body composed of different systems which produce meaning by their relative coincidences and collisions. It is the nature of the poetic text that all these systems operate in a domain of semantic saturation. These systems coordinate, they compete and cooperate, with each other sometimes holding together to reaffirm a particular reading, other times violating the established order “to disrupt it into new life.”

It would be inappropriate to say that these systems tolerate each other, that they acknowledge each other and operate in a state of benign co-existence. Each system holds the potential to cooperate or antagonize, to affirm or deny, to interfere constructively or destructively (but productively either way). Tolerance denies these very antagonisms that give poetry meaning, or multiple meanings. One could argue that the “norm” produced by the cooperation of dominant systems tolerates the aberrations of the other systems. But that position prioritizes the norm while making the aberration subservient, and if we follow Lotman and Eagleton’s logic, it is the aberrant that gives the poem life. It is the play

that prompt us to play. But it has always been easier to design in ways that preclude certain ac-

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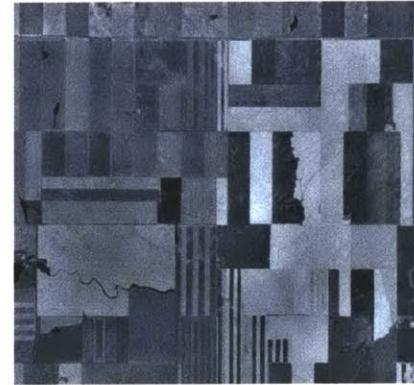
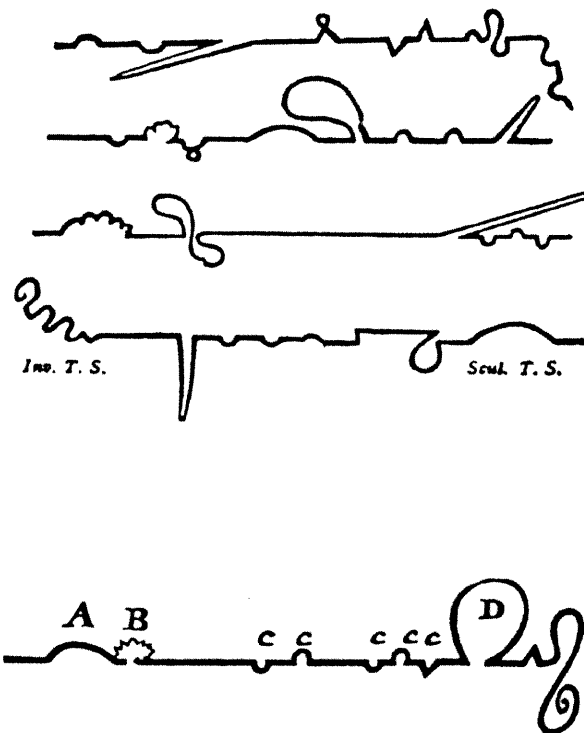


Figure 4.1  
Montana Farmlands Aerial Photograph  
another stratified system

of systems which produces a multiplicity of meanings, without prioritizing the norm and marginalizing the aberration. The norm, in play, only holds validity in the way it prepares for the aberrations, in the way it sets up an expectation to be violated and transgressed. In this light, it seems more appropriate to say that the systems of the poem play up, off, and into each other. It is in its lightness, in its predisposition to variety, in its abandoning a presupposed, singular, didactic meaning that play finds its value.

Abandoning a single or didactic meaning does not necessarily disregard any legible or coherent meaning. The beginning with a “stratified” system accords each system an order of legibility, of internal coherence, an identity. It simply goes on to say that those identities are always in relation to other identities and are susceptible to their interference. The ability for each system to play off each other is presupposed by their integrity. If each system degraded into illegibility, if all the meanings became muddled, then there could be no play. Play needs each system to be “identified” but only as a means of coordinating their collisions. Their identities aren’t a priori or essential, they are in the making, they are in their relation to others. Their ability to be identified is necessary in the same way the norm prepares for the aberration. Their identification is always in aid of their transgression.

Figure 4.1  
Plot Diagrams for *Tristram Shandy*  
Laurence Stern



tions (as we do not walk up steep inclines if there is another route, we do not see through walls

“Art as device” (Schlovsky 1) was Schlovsky’s way of entering into literature’s constituent systems. His proposition was that the interference caused by the complication of plot structure, narrative, and description impeded any vacant or innocuous reading. For Schlovsky, it was art’s imperative to break the habituated and automated response predicated by modern man’s existence. With the growing regimentation of life, and the emergence of leisure culture in proportion to the middle class, art’s value was to be found in it’s ability to break with the habituated recognition of the world.

Motivated by a caution from Tolstoy’s diary:

As I was walking around dusting things off in my room, I came to the sofa. For the life of me, I couldn’t recall whether I had already dusted it off or not. Since these movements are habitual and unconscious, I felt that it was already impossible to remember it. If I had in fact dusted the sofa and forgotten that I had done so, i.e. if I had acted unconsciously, then this is tantamount to not having done it at all. If someone had seen me doing this consciously, then it might have been possible to restore this in my mind. If, on the other hand, no one had been observing me or observing me only unconsciously, if the complex life of many people take place entirely on the level of the unconscious, then it’s as if this life had never been.

(Schlovsky 5)

Schlovsky proposed that it was art’s mission to re-enfranchise a society that was growing more distant and less involved with the world in which they lived.

And so, held accountable for nothing, life fades into nothingness. Automization eats away at things, at clothes, at furniture, at our wives, and at our fear of war... The purpose of art, then is to lead us to a knowledge of a thing through the organ of sight instead of recognition. By “estranging” objects and complicating form, the device of art makes the perception long and “laborious.” Art is a means of experiencing the process of creativity. The artifact itself is quite unimportant.

(Schlovsky 5-6)

When Schlovsky writes about form, he is not interested in the superficiality of what the thing looks like. By form, he means the composition of the characteristics of perception. He is interested in how the object engages, or disengages, in order to break with the passive, monotonous, and unconscious. The object of Schlovsky’s analysis is literature, the devices he employs are textual. He is interested in the structure of plot, how complications to the simple linearity of a narrative estrange the reader, forcing the laborious task of seeing.

While Eagleton’s recount of Lotman is more overtly systemic, the same

unless we walk around it intentionally, and being exposed visually intimates surveillance, whether we are being watched or not) then it has to create them.



Figure 14.6  
Chris Cunningham and Bjork  
All is Full of Love

The notion of estrangement, or defamiliarization, appears in not only Lotman and Shklovsky’s work, but in Bahtkin’s analysis of the fair, and is seemingly implicated in Winnicott’s conception of creativity. While the initial bias of both terms is the disruption of habituated recognition, there is a difference between the two translations (estrangement and defamiliarization). Estrangement, or making strange, intends to complicate the internal workings of conventional formal logics (such as the coordinated progress of the narrative with the physical progress through the book) and in this way is more akin to Shklovsky’s work than Lotman’s cont. p10



Figure 13.2  
Bartholemew Fair Detail  
Hogarth

cont. from p9

or Bakhtin's. Defamiliarization intends to resist any single reading by compounding multiple systems (as the way the meter may defamiliarize the symbolic meaning by the way it cuts across it) and is therefore more appropriate for Lotman and Bakhtin. Bakhtin's notion of the fair is that the hybridities of the proper and subversive or grotesque (a dialogism of multiple contending voices) that defamiliarize and



Figure 11.1  
Children Playing S. Maria Maggiore  
Experiencing Architecture

therefore open up a space outside the official and conventional. For Bakhtin the breaking of convention is also, implicitly, a political act. For Winnicott, the breaking of recognition, "creative apperception," is a presupposition to play. In this way we could note that the children playing in Santa Maria Maggiore defamiliarized the space, and Rasmussen "sensed the whole three-dimensional composition as never before." The act of playing took time and therefore could not be simply recognized (not a ready made image and meaning).

apparatus is at work. Instead of a stratified system, however, Schlovsky relies on the internal contradictions of satire, riddle, and discontinuity (digressions and unresolved stories) within continuity (one page after another). Meaning is thus produced through the inversion, subversion, aversion of conventions and commonality. The articulations of the internal contradictions, the estrangement of the reader, were devices to interrupt the mechanistic reactions of the habituated.

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Eagleton Terry. [1983] 1996. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Press.

Lotman, Jurij, *The Structure of the Artistic Text*, Gail Linhoff and Roland Vroon, tr., Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Contributions, 1977 (1970).

Lotman, Jurij, *Analysis of the Poetic Text*, D. Barton Johnson, tr., Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1976 (1972).

Shklovsky, Victor. *Theory of Prose*. trans Benjamin Sher. Dalkey Archive Press 1991. orig published 1929.

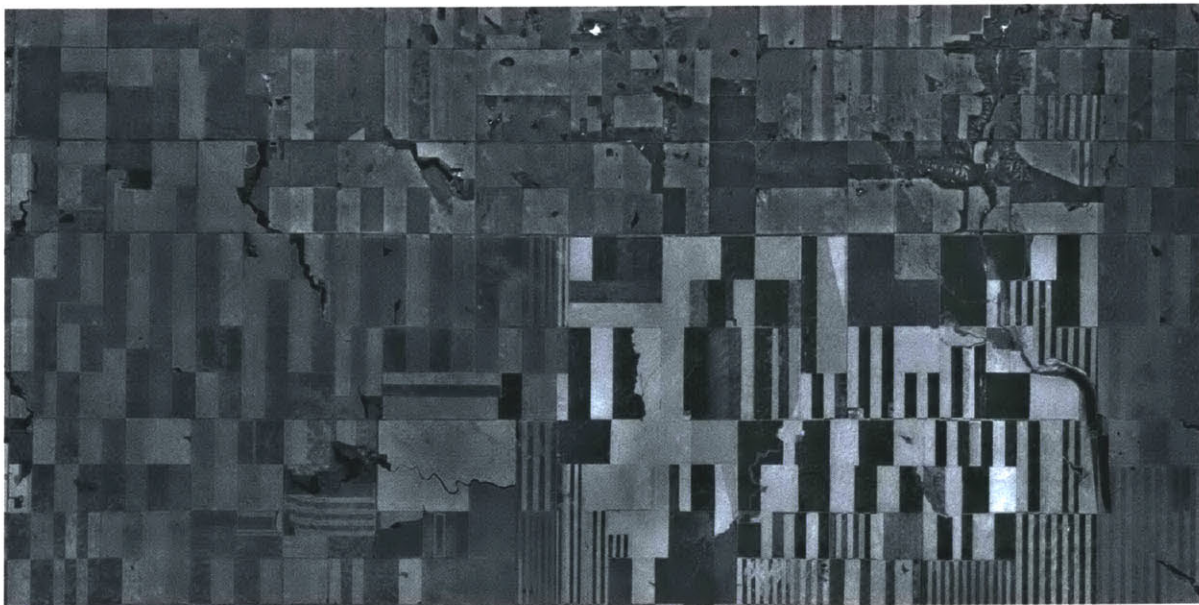
The aerial photograph of Montana's farmland presents a clear depiction of the stratified system alluded to in both the analysis of Lotman and Appadurai. A number of systems are operating simultaneously, colliding with each other, sometimes affirming each other, sometimes denying or transgressing. In this pattern, plot lines, bodies of water, types of crops, soil constituencies, and topography account for the shifts in tone and geometry. Sometimes these systems affirm each other and sometimes transgress each other. While we assume the horizontal stratifications are plot lines, there are larger scale stratifications and smaller scale striations also evident, as each plot may be subsequently broken down into smaller crop fields. The crop types pull across plot lines, as adjacent farmers grow the same crops, more dependent on the economy and soil type than contrived plot lines. The bodies of water, that would initially seem to disregard anything other than topography, shift in order to accommodate roads.

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

Framed as such, we can see how a stratified system operates without singularizing or hierarchically organizing concerns. Each of the systems (plot lines, bodies of water, crop types, soil constituency, and topography) exerts its presence in competition and cooperation with other systems. There is no single overriding order which explains the pattern. There is no mechanical linearity. There is a complex interaction of concerns.

Each system has its own logic. The plot lines are drawn out according to the land distribution that settled the area, reorganized later on by the

Figure 5.1  
Aerial Photograph, USGS  
Conrad, Montana 1997



It is, however, important to see these useful coincidences of form and life, to render visible certain

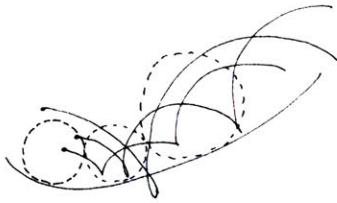


Figure 19.2  
Chemnitz Stadium  
bundle of turnings

One could frame the landplots of Montana as a bundle of turnings. The systematized logic, the striated system of concerns, produces a topography of solutions. Its patterning is neither predictable (as the logics compound each other) nor irrational (as there are logics that inform the shaping). The bundle of turnings, however, is helpful in implicating time (progress, history, expectations of the future) whereas the striated system seems to exist outside of time (existing in the text itself). The bundle of turnings can be seen as a constantly churning system of production. Its trajectory is not towards a known end but perpetuated by a constant recombination of considerations. Any particular instant may be described by the entanglement of these logics, but there is no supposition that the logic that is given priority at one moment will hold the same position, or combine in the same way, the next.

scale of agricultural production. Bodies of water tend to be in depressions in the topography, natural or constructed. Crop types depend on the soil constituency, crop rotation, and economic profit of certain crop types. And while each of these systems has a logic of its own, the manner in which they combine is contingent on its specific location in time (crops may change from season to season) and space (agricultural production might demand larger or smaller scale plots). Similar to Lotman's analysis of poetry, just as one of the "systems threatens to become too predictable, another cuts across it to disrupt it into new life".

The logic of each system (plot lines, topography, agricultural economics) has the potential to infect others. Even the things that seem to follow the simplest clearest logic are informed by others. For example, while water settles generally in depressions in land, those depressions may shift to accommodate for roads or irrigation sources. In this way, it is inappropriate to say that each system tolerates the others. Tolerance denotes a resistance to difference, the way a body proper might develop a tolerance to drugs or other foreign agents. At best, these differences, these foreign agents, can be viewed as benign, as not harmful. There is nothing productive that these differences might afford, tolerance holds that these differences cannot infect the functioning each other.

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US Geological Survey, <http://terraserver.microsoft.com/>

fundamentally implicit and invisible inversions and appropriations. We can leave the door open

Enacted by mayor Rudy Giuliani, the zero tolerance policy was initially created and deployed on the streets of New York, but has become increasingly familiar interpretation of conduct in schools, malls, and the work place. The zero tolerance policy mandates that the letter of the law remain unaffected by extenuating circumstances (external considerations), that the law is not flexible. Targeting small offences (deemed infractions on the “quality of life” by Giuliani) like jay walking and turnstile jumping on the subway, the policy was intended to signal the absolute priority of the law, letting no infraction go unpunished.

In effect, the zero tolerance policy acts to externalize decision making, taking the application of the law out of the hands of those who distribute it (judges and juries) and putting it purely in the hands of those who enforce it. Unable to account for the situation of these infractions, zero tolerance assures that all actual conduct be in compliance with an abstract ideal of appropriate conduct.

Zero Tolerance is not a law. It is a way of interpreting and enacting the law. The terminology of zero tolerance is consistent with that of mechanical assemblages. Similar to the way tolerances enforce compliance with the engineers diagram and its material production, Giuliani’s policy measures conduct in relation to the diagram of the law. Such loosenesses afforded by due process and trial by jury, is removed in favor of decisive action. The decisiveness of the “quality of life” infractions was a message to be sent to those who would perpetrate more violent crimes, a message which meant to say that violent crimes would be handled with proportionally severe punishments as swiftly and resolutely as the minor infractions.

Both the Zero Tolerance enactments and “quality of life” imperative stem from a a position on the organization of the environment first laid out in “Fixing Broken Windows,” the argument put forward by James Wilson and George Kelling. They consider the degeneration of public spaces due to graffiti and vandalism as symptoms that breed fear in the community and lead to further “serious” crime. The organization of the environment, in the case of New York City, was a social/political/and economic underpinning to the police actions of “Zero Tolerance” in their crack down on “quality of life” crimes. Alongside of these were congruent attempts at removing the homeless from the streets of New York, banning of pornography stores in particular zones, and enacting neoliberal economic policies aimed at corporate development. In short, zero tolerance cannot be seen in the vacuum of a “tough on crime” pos-

for them, or possibly the door is always open if you stand in the right place, just at the edge of

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b



Figure 13.1 William Hogarth Barholemew Fair

The scripting and compliance of appropriate conduct.

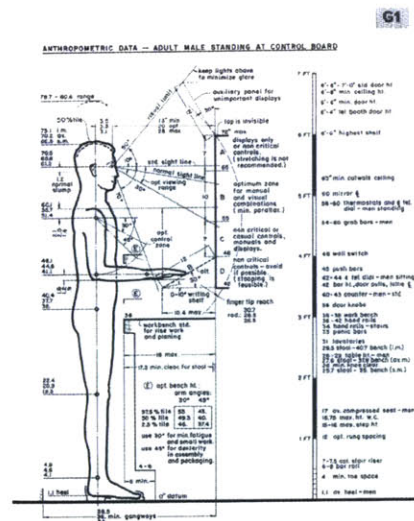


Figure 2.1 Richard Dreyfuss Measure of Man

Figure 5.1(right)  
Rules and Regulations of Crossgates Mall



Figure 5.2(above)  
Giuliani  
BBC News

Although graffiti was particularly targeted under the zero tolerance/broken windows regime, it has been a act targeted by previous New York Mayors with equal verocity. Mayor Ed Koch (1978-1989) pro-cont. p25



Figure 20.1  
New Orleans  
Bills posted on telephone pole

parallel.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS Crossgates Mall

The following rules and regulations are currently in effect at Crossgates Mall. Violators will be trespassed from Crossgates Mall property for a minimum of six (6) months.

All mall shops at Crossgates Mall close at 9:30pm Monday through Saturday; 6:00pm on Sunday.

Capital Cafe seating is limited. Please be considerate of others. One person per chair.

Running, horseplay, loud, abusive and obscene language is strictly prohibited.

Alcoholic beverages are not allowed outside of restaurant property.

Skateboards, radios and portable stereos are not allowed.


Shirts, shoes and pants are required, hoods and masks must be removed upon entering Crossgates Mall.

Smoking is prohibited in the mall common areas, vestibules and restrooms per the NYS Clean Air Act.

Loitering and littering are prohibited in the mall common areas, vestibules, restrooms, fire exits and parking lots.

If you're not shopping, eating or moving you're loitering.

**QUESTIONS? Stop by Customer Service**



IF YOU BREAK THE RULES, FIRST YOU WILL BE ASKED TO REFRAIN FROM THAT CONDUCT. THE SECOND TIME YOU WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE.

www.800-888-8888

While Giuliani had initiated this practice in New York City, it has spread to other countries. Tony Blair is now an advocate and Giuliani's consulting company is proposing the same in Mexico City for a \$4.3 million consulting fee (Tuckman). Schools now practice this conception of rules for suspending students who bring Tylenol to school as a drug infraction (Cauchon) as well as privately owned shopping malls. And while there may be recourse to these practices judicially (many New Yorkers are suing the City for illegal strip searches) means of combatting them in other arenas are scarce. Once people are always conceivably doing something contrary to the rules, zero tolerance acts as a means for simply removing the undesirables. The last rule in the above poster for the Rules and Regulations of Crossgates Mall makes this abundantly apparent.



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Cauchon, Dennis. "Zero Tolerance Policies Lack Flexibility." USA TODAY. April 13, 1999. <http://www.usatoday.com/educate/ednews3.htm>  
Crossgates Mall, Pyramid Corporation, rules and regulation

Hughes, Jane. "NYPD: 'New York Pays Damages'". BBC News. July 3, 1999. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/384263.stm>.

Kelling, George, Catherine Coles and James Wilson. 1998. *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities*. New York: Martin Kessler Books.

McArdie, Andrea and Tanza Erzen, ed. 2001. *Zero Tolerance: Quality of Life and the New Police Brutality in New York City*. New York: New York University Press.

Stylewars. 1983. dir. Henry Chalfant and Tony Silver.

Tuckman, Jo. "The Zero Tolerance Roadshow Arrives in Mexico." *The Guardian Unlimited*. January 16, 2003. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,875559,00.html>

cont. from p24

posed surrounding the subway car train lots with two layers of barbed wire fencing with dogs patrolling the perimeter in order to keep graffiti artists away from parked cars. When informed that the dogs might be in danger, Koch suggested using wolves.  
Stylewars 1983

## 6 Gay New York: Street Tactics

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b



Figure 6.1  
The Ramble  
STUD p229

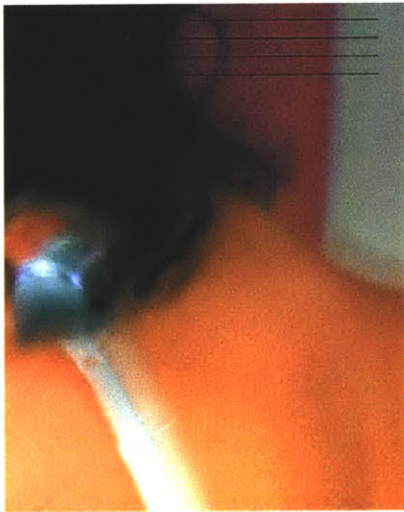


Figure 16.1  
DoCoMo Advertisement  
Tokyo

“There is no queer space...”

George Chauncey (1996) p224

Privacy Could Only Be Had in Public: Gay Uses of the Streets

To dispel the myth that prior to Stonewall, gays were relegated only to the marginalized spaces of the city, invisible to both the straight world and other gays, George Chauncey articulates the tactics of gay men in the streets and parks of New York City (hardly the marginalized spaces of the city) to implicitly and explicitly identify themselves. This process of identification had to be subtly negotiated, as New York in the early 20th century confronted homosexuality as a lewd behavior, on par with prostitution.

...gay men had to contend with the threat of vigilante anti-gay violence as well as with the police. In response to this challenge, gay men devised a variety of tactics that allowed them to move freely about the city, to appropriate for themselves spaces that were not marked as gay, and to construct a gay city in the midst of, yet invisible to, the dominant city.

Chauncey (1996) p225

This was not a space outside the city, but “in the midst of,” the city, not reconcilable with the official politics of the city but somehow not yet separate (identifiable) from it. The need to be simultaneously public (visible to find other gay men) and invisible (to the vigilantes and police) leaves no space within the city, or at least in the city as it is given. To construct this space where it was possible to be simultaneously identifiable and hidden from the respective queer and official worlds required not only a system of communication (from phrases, to gestures and

And this is how the thesis is broached. If we move straight towards it, we see only what faces

gazes) but also sites where “cruising” would be camouflaged. There are two sites in particular that illustrate of both the queer tactics of appropriation and the character of the spaces that left them “vulnerable” to such appropriation.

### The Park

The public parks of New York City were considered an amenity by the official city, providing a release from the density and tempo of the physical city and allowing a return to “nature.” It might then be considered in this light, doubly troubling that homosexual activity occurred in this “natural” place, symbolically implying that homosexual activity was natural. For the gay community, however, the bushes did not “mean” nature, they simply afforded cover for more intimate engagements. In this way, the bushes and paths are taken as the basic elements of the park, without inherent meaning. Returning to the quote that opened this analysis:

„there is no queer space; there are only spaces used by queers or put to queer use. Space has no natural character, no inherent meaning, no intrinsic status as public or private.  
Chauncey (1996) p224

Queer activity put this public or private distinction in jeopardy and evidenced its very constructedness, and in the case of the park the constructedness of the natural as well.

### The Tearoom

A word play on the tearooms in which respectable women went to socialize without the risk of encountering drunk men, the Tearooms refer to the subways toiletrooms (t-rooms) and comfort stations in the early 20th century. Gay men, and straight, would use these public bathrooms for sex. While these bathrooms were used by both laborers who could find no privacy because they either lived with their families or in tenement housing and “successful professionals” who tended to hide their homosexuality. The Tearooms, because even their proper use as public bathroom was far from “clean,” provided a place where men who were curious about homosexuality could encounter men and afterwards could minimize its importance on their everyday life. By occurring in the public bathroom, it could simultaneously be written of as having the same significance as defecation, as simply bodily maintenance. It could also be nonchalantly considered as outside the important work of the day because it occurred in a place connoted as illicit, dirty, and improper in the arena of bourgeois discourse. Meeting other men and having sex in bathrooms without the conspicuousness of entering a gay bar or rumored movie theatre, Tearooms allowed men to move in and

us, but by swerving so slightly to the edge of parallel, not yet out of line but hardly contained by



Figure 11.1  
Children Playing S. Maria Maggiore  
Experiencing Architecture



Figure 6.2  
Central Park West  
STUD p242



Figure 14.6  
Chris Cunningham and Bjork  
All is Full of Love

out of the gay world without participating identifiably in it.

What both the parks and comfort stations have in common is the acceptability of loitering, of lingering without purpose. Walking around the park or waiting for a train gave men time to approach one another without being immediately identified as doing something illicit or inappropriate, similar to the practice of window shopping (which also helped camouflage cruising). A gay man could walk up to another man and ask the time, and if the other man was straight or uninterested, could simply respond with the time. If, however, the other man was interested, it would serve as a way to begin conversation. And if the conversation led to sex, there were intimate spaces provided by bathroom and brush that afforded a modicum of privacy. The looseness provided by the acceptability of lingering and the commonality of the question (“Do you have the time?”) gave gay men the opportunity



Figure 6.3  
Bryant Park  
STUD p243



Figure 13.1  
William Hogarth  
Bartholemew Fair

to be both identifiable to each other without being overtly or explicitly queer.

The gay world therefore was not outside the straight world, but contingent on it. It tactically took up normal speech and spaces for queer use without explicitly challenging the dominant culture, but nonetheless constructed a space in the midst of it that could not be reconciled or identified. In this way, one cannot say that straight New York tolerated gay New York because gay New York could not yet be identified outside of straight New York. Once the appropriated locations and subverted idioms became evident, clearly outside and identifiable, they could be combatted, and later tolerated.

it, we may see something new. It may have been there all along or it may have been invented

The issue between play and tolerance is not one of tolerance and intolerance, the former being obviously preferable to the latter. The issue is that to tolerate something involves two practices. First, the group or practice to be tolerated must be identifiable, avoided in the case of the queer tactics. The second is to tolerate the group or practice that one may find offensive. To tolerate another group merely sanctions the normative majority and replacates the status of the other as outside or beneath, something to be tolerated. In placing the group to be tolerated outside, at best a benign coexistence of groups, negates any practice in which the difference between groups and communities could be productive. There is no good natured antagonism, no play between the groups or identities, only a mechanical segregation of people and practices.

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Chauncey, George. 1994. *Gay New York*. New York: BasicBooks.  
Chauncey, George. 1996. *Privacy Could Only Be Had in Public: Gay Uses of the Street*. in *STUD: Architectures of Masculinity*. Joel Sanders ed. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

Caption for Photos Accompanying Text from *STUD: Architectures of Masculinity* (p260):

The photographs accompanying this text, shot by an unknown photographer in the 1940s and 1950s, show that several spaces prominent during the 1910s and 1920s continued to be important. Discovered in a photo album anonymously given to the Out of the Closet Thrift Shop in Manhattan, they are now part of the Gay Beach Collection at the National Museum and Archive of Lesbian and Gay History, New York City. The appearance of anyone in these photographs should not be taken as an indication of his sexual orientation.

by our moving ever so slightly out of vertical, but that is neither here nor there. That is where

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

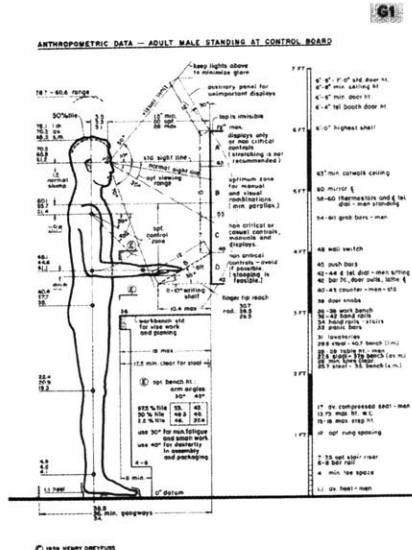


Figure 2.1  
Richard Dreyfuss  
Measure of Man

It is creative apperception more than anything else that makes the individual feel that life is worth living. Contrasted with this is a relationship to external reality which is one of compliance, the world and its details being recognized but only as something to be fitted in with or demanding adaptation.

Winnicott 2002 p65

It is, perhaps, extraneous to begin an investigation of play and its connection to creativity by introducing the third and seemingly further removed term “creative apperception.” This, however, is Winnicott’s intention, to divorce creativity from creation, with all the objectness associated with the latter. The interference produced from the addition of perception to creativity deflects the simple reading of the creative as the creation (also side stepping religious and god-like connotations) and refocuses the creative on its active and incomplete presuppositions, rather than its finished object. For Winnicott, the object created is of less significance than the active participation in the construction (both physical and mental) of the on going world. This isn’t to mystify creativity, but done in order to locate creativity, or the potential thereof, and thereby clarify its place in our everyday world.

For Winnicott, creativity does not reside exclusively internally, as one might suggest the creative impulse of the genius, nor does it reside externally, in the expressive capacity of a created object. It resides in between. It exists in the space in between external reality and internal formulation.

The important part of this concept [playing] is that whereas inner psychic reality has a kind of location in the mind or in the belly or in the head or somewhere within the bounds of the individual’s personality, and whereas what is called external reality is located outside those bounds, playing and cultural experience can be given a location if one uses the concept of the potential space between mother[object] and baby[subject]... [it is] in playing, and perhaps only in playing, the child or adult is free to be creative.

Winnicott 2002 p53

It is the negotiation between the external and internal where creativity resides and affords the potential to play. His notion of compliance, that which contrasts creative apperception, regiment this negotiation process in difference to the looseness attributed to the creative. In the model of compliance, the exterior world and the internalization are coincident, the former being complete without space to accommodate anything new its use might bring to it. The exterior world is simply recognized, its specificity (or lack of) overshadowed by unimpeded habituation. There is, therefore, no looseness in its internalization, no

potential for creativity lies. So through the lens of play and tolerance, instead of looking directly

negotiation. The world and our participation in it is already made, coercing only our compliance with it. One question, in this regard, must never be asked “Did you conceive of this (illusion) or was it presented to you from without (already there)?”

Winnicott 2002 p12

Play, then, is the activity that opens up this gap in between, that opportunistically pries open the habitual and betrays mere recognition by reciprocally incorporating the external within the subjective, and in doing so, animating it. This incorporation or appropriation is not speculation or concentration. It is not an internal thought process. Winnicott, for this reason, reintroduces the object, having prepared its incompleteness with the possibility of creative apperception.

The transitional object, and relatively interchangeable transitional phenomena, re-positions the object. In his analysis of infants, this is the first “not-me” object, one which has reality outside, but still contingent, of the child’s perception. The transitional object mediates the development of object relation and object use, upon whose difference he elaborates:

In object-relating the subject allows certain alterations in the self to take place... The object has become meaningful. Projection mechanisms and identifications have been operating, and the subject is depleted to the extent that something of the subject is found in the object, though enriched by feeling... Object-relating is an experience of the subject that can be described in terms of the subject as an isolate. When I speak of the use of an object, however, I take object-relating for granted, and add new features that involve the nature and behavior of the object. For instance, the object, if it is to be used, must necessarily be real in the sense of being part of a shared reality, not a bundle of projections. It is this, I think, that makes for the world of difference that there is between relating and usage.

Winnicott (2002) p88

Object usage, by being part of a shared reality, becomes a cultural experience. The subject’s isolation and internalization have been twice transgressed. Originally by using the object (by affording it existence outside of the subject and its meaning accordingly beyond projection mechanisms and so not within the subjects omnipotent control) and by participating in a shared reality (making creativity a social activity).

Creativity, then, involves the social manipulation of objects, presupposed by a looseness in between their internalization and external, shared, social reality. This is first evidenced in the transitional object (the first “not-me” but also not simply given object), but as a phenomena it cannot simply be relegated to that of the infant. Although the transitional object marks the beginning of cultural experience, it also

at creativity, compliance, repetition, deviation, or any of the other abetting discourses, we breach



Figure 16.1  
DoCoMo Advertisement  
Tokyo



Figure 11.1  
Children Playing S. Maria Maggiore  
Experiencing Architecture

marks the conditions for creativity later on in life. This, then, is the potential space of play.

Creativity resides in play. Play does not occur in a state of compliance, in a space of ready made experience and reaction (recognition). As such, play is not simply coincident with cultural experience, for cultural experience may be largely constituted by compliance and recognition. Play occurs as a part of cultural experience where there is a looseness between the internal and external, a looseness creatively perceived as opportunity for participation. Winnicott likens play to a search for the self, but it seems that the self in this case is as much a way of locating oneself in the social and physical world rather than an internal machination. A few of the characteristics of play will help situate how Winnicott imagines the productive capacity of play.

He compares the playing child with concentration in older children and adults. What is of concern is the preoccupation, the near-withdrawal state, not the content of the play. While this might be simply attributable to an internal concentration, he goes on to note that playing involves the body at least in the degree of object manipulation. He concludes that:

Playing is inherently exciting and precarious. This characteristic derives not from instinctual arousal but from the precariousness that belongs to the interplay of the child's mind that which is subjective (near-hallucination) and that which is objectively perceived (actual, or shared reality).  
Winnicott (2002) p52

Although beginning with "creative apperception" as a way to move away from the object, the physical world re-emerges with a new sensibility. The body, and its precarious relation to the external, are characteristics of play. This precariousness derives from the irreducibility of a particular experience to recognition, but defines that irreducibility in the positive. Playing, for Winnicott, is prompted by an engagement with the material world in such a way that the response is not simply a didactic reaction to the object, and for this reason is not formulaic. There is no right or wrong reaction, and as Winnicott demands, the therapist must withhold judgement because of this. If the therapist analyzes and instructs the patient, it relegates the patient to a role of being simply subservient to the therapist, who will prescribe how to act and respond. By withholding judgement, the patient learns how to play, how to creatively perceive the situation as a way to understand oneself and ones relation to a shared reality.

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Winnicott, Donald Woods [1971] 2002. *Playing and Reality*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

them tangentially, seeing how they cluster idiosyncratically, but certainly not irrationally. We make



Before mechanically standardized materials and construction techniques, as well as engineering practices, the soft technique (the design, structural engineering, and construction being inextricable from the object) of building production was the paradigm. This process was “soft”, as the boundaries between the design and execution, between disciplines, and between the very constituent materials of the assembly, were permeable. Stones, for example, were cut and placed particular to the assembly of the arch, not premanufactured with each stone approximating the manufacturing diagram of the normal stone. However, as the process hardened, both the construction techniques and the disciplinary distinctions became more clear, more complete, with more explicitly defined professional responsibilities. Once diagrams (mathematic and material) could be relied upon to insure each professions responsible execution of the design, the soft technique in construction hardened not simply the construction process but also the liabilities and design practices of those who participated in them. In short, as the materials became more clearly defined and regimented, so did the professions that produced and deployed them.

This is not to suggest that prior to these more explicitly organized techniques of production, prior to diagrams that disciplined both materials and professions, that builders were not aware of the logics of structure. Although the catenary arch was not mathematically diagrammed until the late 17th century, builders still implicitly followed its organizing logic. However, once a mathematical diagram was established, it allowed a disconnect from those who would organize the structural diagrams and those who would enact their material deployment. The professions then were constructions, contrived organizations of the constituent bodies of the design and material production processes. Once mathematical models had allowed a separation of responsibilities,

Figure 2.2  
George Ebling  
Moulding Headlamp Shells

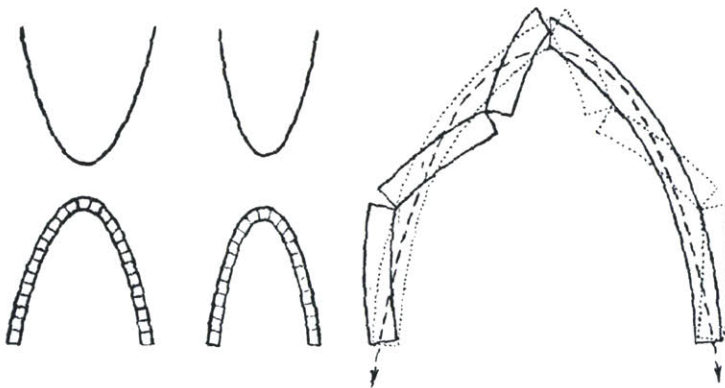


Figure 8.1  
Fitchen 1961 81  
Construction of Gothic Cathedrals  
Catenary Arch

connections between them depending upon how they appear to us. If we always approach them

designers needed standardized models of materials (modules, panels, nominal measurements) that would allow them the capacity to organize material as well as mathematical descriptions of the building. Therefore, the diagrams served not simply as a means of organizing the mathematical structuring of forces, but became the paradigm for normalizing the entire process of construction to allow control at a distance. The engineer and architect, to practice at this distance afforded by disciplinary distinctions, needed assurances. The engineer must fulfill their role, that the structure will stand up. The builder must fulfill their role, that the material construction will be as the architect prescribes. The materials of the building must perform structurally and aesthetically as prescribed by modules and norms. These assurances afforded by the diagram hardened both the nature of material specifications by prescribing normalizing devices and the professional disciplines that took those diagrammed assurances in order to design at a distance.

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Fitchen, John. 1961. *The Construction of Gothic Cathedrals*. London: Oxford University Press.

Weisstein, Eric W. "Catenary." From *MathWorld--A Wolfram Web Resource*. <http://mathworld.wolfram.com/Catenary.html>

in the same way, how can we expect to find or bring anything new to them?

Contracted as the structural engineer for Frank Gehry's DG Bank in Berlin, Schlaich Bergermann und Partner set about designing the glass roof to cover the atrium organized structurally around a grid of stiffened spoked wheels at 16m intervals. The structure was composed of 60mm by 40mm stainless steel mullions what would juncture at a six-fingered nodes that not only would bend in three dimensions to accomodate the complicated geometry of the surtace, but also twist. With this complicated geometry, Schlaich's office went about designing the overall structure too exacting tolerances, potentially too exact in the eyes of Mick Eekhout of Octatube (a possible subcontractor for the con-



Figure 5.2  
Giuliani  
Zero-Tolerance

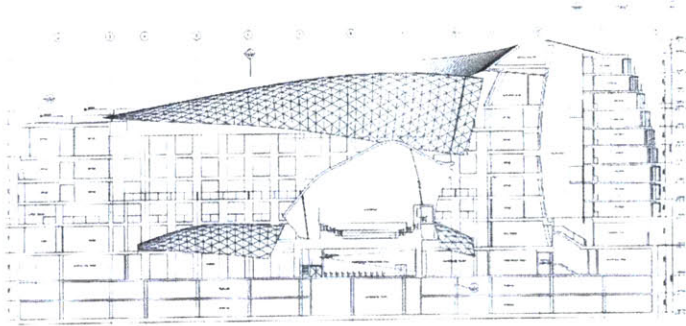


Figure 9.1  
Schlaich DB Bank  
Eekhout p11

struction of the roof). As project would need to comply exactly with the three dimensional structural models developed by Schlaich, this would require Octatube to hire a full time three dimensional draftsmen trained in Catia (Gehry's preferred software package) as well as computer to run the software (approximately \$100,000) and time coordination (not just knowledge as it is now coincident with the model itself) on the single model between the three groups. Not only was Eekhout worried about structural instabilities due to the material deployment of the model, but also the implicit shifts in liability proposed in such a professional model. As Schlaich would have run the structural calculations of the model and tendered the work, placing the nature and responsibility of its construction, and therefore the recalculation of the structure for its actual deployment, squarely on the shoulders of the subcontractor.

But certainly when the structural engineer wilfully positions the project details on the edge of the possible, showing off his eternal cleverness, while he delib

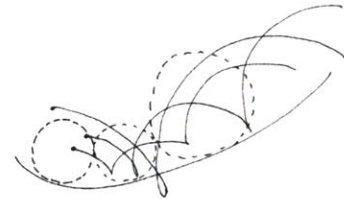


Figure 19.2  
Chemnitz Stadium  
A Performative Solution

erately neglects possible errors and tolerances in production and realisation, and he disappears when complaints are made, then one could speak about an unbalanced development in the responsibilities in the building process.

It was a matter of due course that the exact engineering of Schlaich, the attitude that the reality of its deployment was in hostile en that the dome failed (both materially and economically) part of the glass cracked, as to be expected when there are mere millimeters of for material deviations. Also, the subcontractors who took the job are now bankrupt.

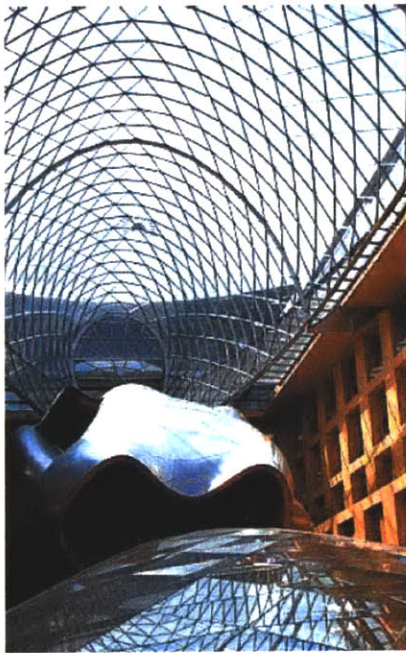


Figure 9.2  
Schlaich DB Bank  
Eekhout p13

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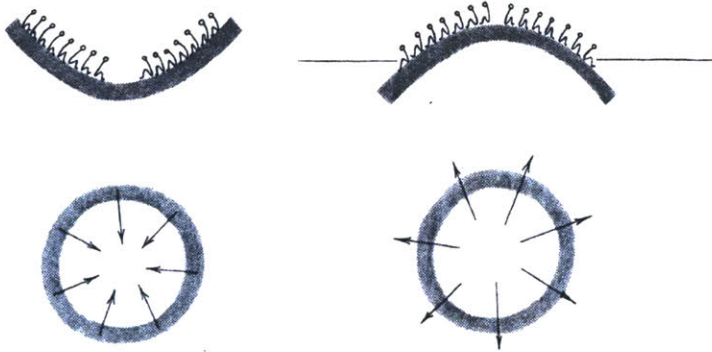
Eekhout, Mick. "Three Design Proposals". Taken from lectures at TU Delft.

<http://www.bk.tudelft.nl/bt/krachtswerking/onderwijs/downloads/MSc-A1/iBT%20-%20Part%2008.pdf>

Play and tolerance are helpful in this endeavor by providing multiple points of entry, and therefore

If the diagram is the controlling device of tolerance to ensure compliance under the mechanical rubric of Fordist manufacturing and Rudolph Guiliani's Zero Tolerance, are there diagrams that aren't presumptive, prescriptive, and didactic in their application? It seems that to demonize diagrams, to hold them exclusively in the domain of tolerance and compliance, negates any of their potential for insight. Are there diagrams which suggest what a thing can do rather than what the thing is?

Aldo Van Eyck, a Dutch architect and former member of the COBRA group, is an apt figure in this provocation because of his propositions concerning the diagram, with his implication of social identification and organization, and his novel use of repetition in pragmatic service of those agendas. In response to the suspicious oppositional categorizations of public and private, social and individual, Van Eyck positioned the idea of twin phenomena to deal with these dualities by showing their contingency, their non-exclusivity.



People seated concentrically in a hollow, gazing inwards towards the center, and people seated concentrically on a hill, gazing outwards towards the horizon. Two kinds of centrality. Two ways of being together – or alone. The images, of course, have ambivalent meanings – though the hill reveals what the

hollow may conceal: that man is both center-bound and horizon-bound (the horizon and the shifting center – the center and the shifting horizon). Both hill and hollow, horizon and center, are shared by all seated concentrically either way; both link and both lure.

1964

In this diagram, Van Eyck begins to articulate the manner in which the physical environment proposes different practices of individual/social relations. Both the hill and hollow engender particular ways of implying a shared centrality and distant horizon, they invoke “two ways of being together”. This diagram, far from generating form (Van Eyck is not interested in making hills and hollows) positions the body and the

multiple lines of inquiry. By following their definitional boundaries, oscillating among and between

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

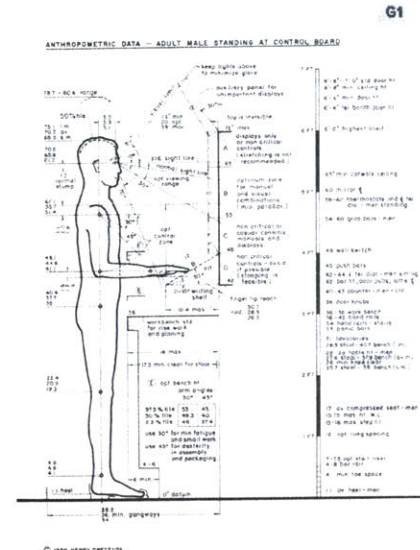


Figure 2.1  
Richard Dreyfuss  
Measure of Man

Figure 10.1  
Hill and Hollow  
Aldo Van Eyck  
Hertzberger 44-45

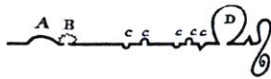
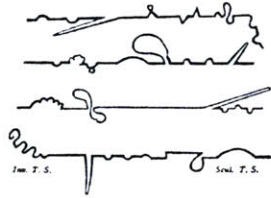


Figure 4.1  
Plot Diagrams for Tristram Shandy  
Laurence Stern

physical environment by describing how the two play off each other, by describing how the two perform. The simplicity of the example should not undermine its potential. Its value in indicating a position not simply alone nor simply in a group, but potentially both simultaneously.

The hill/hollow scenario illustrates a polemic case, but a polemic which shows the non-dialectic nature of the two extremes. What is evident, and significant in the course of this argument about play, is the ambiguity of the relationship between alone (internal) and together (a social, shared reality) implicated by this diagram. This notion is played out in the physical constructions of Van Eyck, soliciting these contingencies as the organizational apparatus in built form.

A dialectic based on reciprocity and equality is a nimble and penetrating one - because it makes cross-alliances between diverse twin phenomena possible, which affects (alters without distortion) their assumed meanings, imparting an added - often unexpected - dimension.

(van Eyck in Hertzberger 45)

In Van Eyck's orphanage the twin phenomena of intimacy and community are precariously organized by a differentiated repetition of public

Figure 10.2  
Orphanage  
Aldo Van Eyck  
Strauven 294

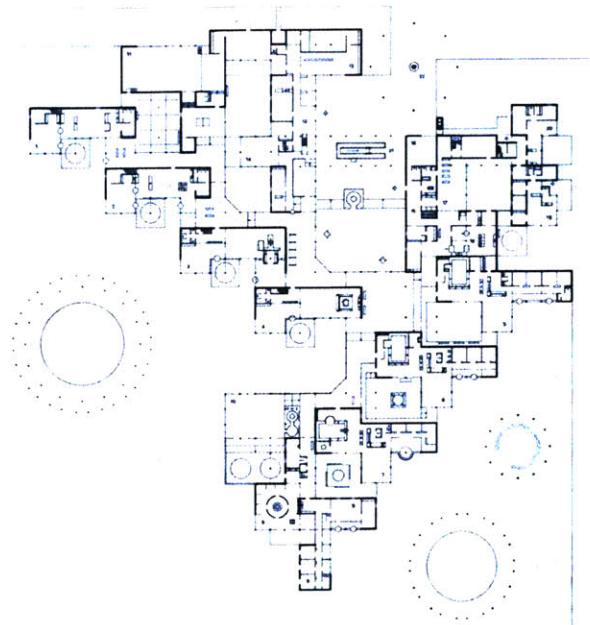


Figure 5.3  
The Ramble  
STUD: Masculine Architecture

them, we follow a logic, an opportunistic one at that. In this way, the two words are considered

corridors and private dwellings. The repetition sets up an expectation, one which is constantly antagonized by particularities of program, scale, relation to other repeated elements, and the permeability of the exterior. The body is at once withheld and exposed, composed of internal (personality) and external (publicity) considerations. The space in which the body moves is analogically characterized as “turfed” (owned territory of a particular body) and “common” (provisionally unclaimed).

The orphanage’s explicit (state institution) and expressive (the repetitive unit forming a coherent whole) social readings belie the more performative social and humane agenda of the building itself. In the same manner that the hill and hollow diagram implicates the physical environment in the way that we conceive of ourselves in relation to the world around us the physical apparatus of the orphanage attempts to organize different ways of being together.

The physical apparatus of the building cannot be said to determinately produce better people, or even necessarily a better sense of the community. The spaces, more specifically the combination of spaces, afford different possibilities of being together by creating multiple relations of the interior and exterior, private rooms and common spaces, and being visibly protected and exposed. Although the tendency may be to hook interior/private/protected and exterior/common/exposed together, the combination of these twin phenomena entangle these seemingly coherent triumvirates to provoke different combinations and therefore different potentials of being together. How these spaces perform is quite different from both a prescriptive relation of form and action and the expressive aesthetic reading of the orphanage.

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Strauven, Francis. 1994. Aldo van Eyck: relativiteit en verbeelding. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff.

Hertzberger, Herman, Roijen-Wortmann, Addie van, Strauven, Francis. 1982. Aldo van Eyck: Hubertus House. Amsterdam: Stitching Wonen

organizational devices, an apparatus that approaches but neither contains nor is contained by

## 11 Rasmussen: Santa Maria Maggiore

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

The enormous church of S. Maria Maggiore stands on one of Rome's seven famous hills. Originally the site was very unkempt, as can be seen in an old fresco painting in the Vatican. Later, the slopes were smoothed and articulated with a flight of steps up to the apse of the basilica. The many tourists who are brought to the church on sight-seeing tours hardly notice the unique character of the surroundings. They simply check off one of the starred numbers in their guide-books and hasten on to the next one. But they do not experience the place in the way some boys I saw there a few years ago did. I imagine they were pupils from a nearby monastery school. They had a recess at eleven o'clock and employed the time playing a very special kind of ball game on the broad terrace at the top of the stairs. It was apparently a kind of football but they also utilized the wall in the game, as in squash—a curved wall, which they played against with great virtuosity. When the ball was out, it was most decidedly out, bouncing down all the steps and rolling several hundred feet further on with an eager boy rushing after it, in and out among motor cars and Vespas down near the great obelisk.

I do not claim that these Italian youngsters learned more about architecture than the tourists did. But quite unconsciously they experienced certain basic elements of architecture: the horizontal planes and the vertical walls above the slopes. And they learned to play on these elements. As I sat in the shade watching them, I sensed the whole three-dimensional composition as never before. At a quarter past eleven the boys dashed off, shouting and laughing. The great basilica stood once more in silent grandeur.

Rasmussen 16-18

Figure 11.1  
Children Playing S. Maria Maggiore  
Experiencing Architecture  
Rasmussen 16-17

The recount of these children playing on the steps of Santa Maria Maggiore is not laid out here as evidence of any particular formal arrangement being more conducive to play than others. There may



the exhibits present. By setting up the machine of play and tolerance, letting it burrow through



be nothing that can be normatively described as provoking play at the scene. What is of significance, and why Rasmussen's account in particular is helpful, is the way in which the church is appropriated by the different constituencies that visit it, and the way they attribute meaning to it.

The meaning of the church may be as a religious icon, historical artifact, or urban landmark as in the case of the tourists, and Rasmussen. These are meanings that exist outside, meanings that are to be read in the structure by its enormity, its symbolism, its reputation. Its meanings are already made. It may be possible to participate in these meanings, by taking a photo or "crossing it off the checklist," but this seems to be weak and apologetic participation. The reason why the children interest Rasmussen is because their interaction with the space is not attributable to these meanings or their derivative participation. The children, by simply playing on the steps, produce a different meaning, one that is specific to them and their game, and specific to the space. The game is both informed by the place, and reciprocally the place is informed by the game. That is, the rules of the game are particular to the nature of the space (When the ball was out, it was most decidedly out, bouncing down all the steps) and the place is articulated by the particularities of the game (I sensed the whole three-dimensional composition as never before.) The movement of the bodies articulate the composition exposing the intricacy of the surface (the way the ball will bounce of particular sculpted portions of the wall) the slope of the ground (the velocity of the ball rolling and then its relative speed to the cars, vespas, and children chasing after it.)

Rasmussen is amiss in minimizing the importance of this type of meaning. By equating the children's engagement with that of the tourist, Rasmussen reaffirms the simple and didactic meanings of architecture and urbanity. By referring to their experience of the "basic elements" of architecture, he misses the subtlety of the speed and materiality that playing exposes. He misses the tacit knowledge built into playing. He misses how the body renders the space visible, and how the body inscribes a different kind of meaning than the eye. The body's meaning is immediate, not distanced by the reading and understanding of symbols. This is why Rasmussen attributes it to the "basic" elements, basic because they have no inherent meaning attributed to them.



Figure 5.3  
The Ramble  
STUD: Masculine Architecture

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Rasmussen, Steen Eiler. 1964. *Experiencing Architecture*. Cambridge Mass.:MIT Press.

these 21 pieces of evidence, and simply marking the relations among them, this thesis resists a

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b



Figure 11.1  
Children Playing S. Maria Maggiore  
Experiencing Architecture

Troy, New York is located roughly equidistant from New York City and Boston. Both of these cities constitute a drug buyer's market, where there are enough dealers in an area that they need to compete with each other, in effect driving down prices. Dealers would pack up some of their supplies and bring them to Troy where there is a depressed economy, smaller relative police force, and an established drug market. Here, dealers could set up territory and sell the same drugs at higher prices. The nearby institutes and universities like Rensselaer and SUNY Albany also allowed them to sell a variety of drugs to a variety of customers. In dealing with local residents, the homeless, and college students, the drug dealers had to find ways to locate themselves so they could be simultaneously hidden and public.

#### Site 1

A drug dealer set up shop on 9th Street in Troy, New York in a house with a colorful history. In the 1970's it served as a clubhouse for the Hell's Angels in Troy, and is now located across the street from a neighborhood playground renovated in 1997 by the residents of the area. Although the dealers were across the street, they never sold drugs to the children on the playground, and the residents never called the police on them. The process for buying drugs was worked out to hide the



single hypothesis or instructive lesson. The message is not "go forth and design spaces of play!"

activities that went on inside the house.

Troy is a mixture of one-way and two-way streets, with only an ad hoc logic to explain their irregular shifts. The drug dealers were located on 9th street, a one-way street for northbound traffic. To buy drugs, a car would descend the hill westbound on Jacob street, where it would stop at the corner of 9th and Jacob to let the passenger/buyer out of the car. By the time the driver had continued down and turned left onto 8th Street, turned left onto Peoples Avenue at a traffic light, and another left back onto 9th street, the buyer has had enough time to pick up the drugs and meet the driver back at the original corner. Without buyers standing outside waiting or a neighborhood angry at drugs being sold to their children, it was difficult for the Troy police to track the drug traffic or collect evidence.

#### Site 2

The one-way streets in downtown Troy provide cover for drug dealers. Because of the cold climate in Troy, police officers generally stay in their cars, which restricts them to the one way flow of traffic. This allows dealers to set up two outposts (instead of four) to watch oncoming traffic, usually at least two blocks away. Equipped with cell-phones, and now cigarettes due to the law which prohibits smoking inside buildings, these outposts can camouflage into the environment by simply sitting on a stoop, giving the dealer notice up to 4 blocks in advance.

In both of these cases, the drug dealers were able to remain simultaneously hidden and public using the logics of the city (mixtures of one- and two-way streets, prohibitions of smoking in bars, the stoop, police routes and the restriction to the car). They had a tacit and intimate knowledge of the spaces and rhythms of the places they worked. They were available to construct a new space in the city, one inside the geographic boundaries of the city, but outside the surveillance and authority of its officials. It is a space simultaneously hidden (camouflaged and unnoticed) and highly public (taking place in streets or known house where buyers could find them). It is their specific activity that affords them this particular knowledge of the place.

This drug dealing practice is fundamentally different from the occupation strategy of urban housing projects like Cabrini Green. In those practices, the place was overtaken by the dealers and gangs associated with them, surveilled and protected from other gangs and police by the single point of entry. Instead of overtaking the place, the practices in Troy exist along-side without subsuming.

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US Geological Survey, <http://terraserver.microsoft.com/>

Play for whom? What kind of play? Why play here instead of there? If one of the conditions of



Figure 5.3  
Bryant Park  
STUD: Masculine Architecture

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

Let us say a few initial words about the complex nature of carnivalesque laughter. It is, first of all, a festive laughter. Therefore, it is not an individual reaction to some isolated “comic” event. Carnival laughter is the laughter of all the people. Second, it is universal in scope; it is directed at all and everyone, including the carnival’s participants. The entire world is seen in its droll aspect, in its gay relativity. Third, this laughter is ambivalent: it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives. Such is the nature of carnivalesque laughter.

Bakhtin 1968 p11-12

Bakhtin’s celebration of the carnival draws from its ability to open a space outside the official authority of the city and its administrators. It is the celebration of the “low” and vulgar with its raucous laughter and common language. The marketplace, the site of the carnivalesque, is neither a public building (the church or guild hall) or a private home, positing it as a place that is in-between the customs, ceremonies, conventions, and civilities associated with either. For this reason, beginning with a quote about the laughter associated with the place, romanticized as it is, helps situate the carnival and market as a place decidedly uncommon. The marketplace is simultaneously local (specific towns having specific fairs differentiated by goods, spectacles, occasions associated with local patrons and saints) and international or intercontinental (drawing goods, traders, customs, and oddities from other nations and continents). As such, despite occurring within the cities geographic boundaries Bakhtin argues that the festival remains explicitly outside its normal capacities, institutions, and authorities. The boundaries (spatial and temporal) of the festival advanced the perception of separateness.

Figure 13.1  
Bartholemew Fair  
Hogarth  
Burke p 147



play is the perception of looseness, we must include that perception is perspectival, constructed

In addition to goods that could only be purchased infrequently, stage companies would perform and compete with peep shows, acrobats, prizefighters, and a host of other entertainers for the crowd's attention, and more importantly money. The marketplace was not only an economic apparatus, but a festivity as well. To simply focus on the politically subversive nature of the carnival would deny the very practices that it subverted (the disruption of rank and class). Bakhtin's search for a pure outside hides the inception and attraction of the marketplace. The marketplace was at the intersection of morality and economy where no easy balance was to be found, where Victorian etiquette and common vulgarity encountered each other. While Bakhtin assumes that the carnival presented a pure outside, the economic imperatives which prepared the ground for the exotic display of objects and oddities constitute the reason why the upper and middle and upper classes submitted to "the collective gaiety of the people" with all the baseness and vulgarity attributed to it. The carnival/festival/marketplace cannot therefore be accorded as a pure outside, but a highly paradoxical and contradictory position.

The vehicle for Bakhtin's analysis of the carnival stems at one point historically, and at another, literally. Using Rabelais, a French Renaissance writer, Bakhtin's project is to resituate the use of humor and play within the context of the fair itself, instead of how his contemporaries had analyzed it, through the lense contemporary literary criticism. The difference between the two positions is the manner in which popular and folk humor weren't separated from the world in which they played (as in satire where the author is distanced to mock and deride) but participant in it (to which the opening description of laughter alludes). By resituating the reading of Rabelais within Rabelais own time, Bahtkin avoids the misinterpretation that Rabelais is simply mocking and deriding, but also gay and triumphant, that his playing is ambivalent. Bakhtin notes the reception Rabelais contemporaries afforded him:

They could percieve the oneness of Rabelais' world. They could realize the essential relationship and the links holding together its elements, which in the seventeenth century were to appear heterogenous and in the eighteenth completely incompatible.

Bakhtin 1968 p61

These incompatibilities were specifically the conditions that opened up the marketplace and carnival as a space outside official authority, the mixture of social (bodily and vulgar) and economic (efficient and functional) being the most defamiliarizng. In comparing the feast of the carnival and those state or feudal (official) feasts, Bakhtin contrasts the conditions under which the two operated.

through our bodies, histories, and habits, by the way we approach the thing. Universalizing play



Figure 13.2  
Bartholemew Fair Detail  
Hogarth



Figure 5.3  
Bryant Park  
STUD: Masculine Architecture



Figure 13.3  
Rabelais  
Songes Drolatiques  
Prescott p 151

As opposed to the official feast, one might say that carnival celebrated temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal. It was hostile to all that was immortalized and completed... Rank was especially evident during official feasts; everyone was expected to appear in the full regalia of his calling, rank and merits, and to take the place corresponding to his position... This is why the tone of the official feast was monolithically serious and why the element of laughter was alien to it. The nature of human festivity was betrayed and distorted. But this true festive character was indestructible; it had to be tolerated and even legalized outside the official sphere and had to be turned over to the popular sphere of the marketplace.

Bakhtin 1968 9-10

The official feast was a cleansed version of the festival feast (such as the Feast of the Fools) and served to sanction, even reaffirm, the status quo that the carnival served to usurp. The carnival was a celebration of all things temporary, tied to death and birth, the images of the carnival would intentionally mix these "incompatibilities" to destabilize all those things supposed to be complete and transcendent with all the presupposed seriousness attached to them.

No dogma, no authoritarianism, no narrow-minded seriousness can coexist with Rabelaisian images; these images are opposed to all that is finished and polished, to all pomposity, to every ready-made solution in the sphere of thought and world outlook... The grotesque image reflects a phenomenon in transformation, an as yet unfinished metamorphosis, of death and birth, growth and becoming. The relation to time is one determining trait to the grotesque image... They remain ambivalent and contradictory; they are ugly, monstrous, hideous from the point of view of "classic" aesthetics, that is, the aesthetics of the ready-made and completed.

Bakhtin 1968 p3

All of the grotesque were tolerated, but only within the popular sphere, only in the marketplace. There, they were outside of the official sphere, and the critical commentary of their play was ambivalent enough to escape the connotation of outright opposition, but disarming in their particular mixtures.

Here we return to Bakhtin's central insight: that play... is rarely mere play: it articulates the cultural and political meanings, and any simple elision of the 'real' politics with the 'serious' consigns the subordinate classes to contesting the state and class power within the problematic which has positioned them as ignorant, vulgar, and uninitiated - as low.

Stallybrass and White 1986 p43

As such, playing in the fair afforded a political criticism specifically by not being categorized as politically critical, but situated within the

is a suspicious venture, one avoided in this thesis.

realm of the political-economy of the marketplace. Play was rarely mere play. What is the particularity of the plays that were so disarming to the official authorities of class and rank? The boundaries and forms of play are difficult to define, as with the laughter, it is directed at all, it is encompassing.

The nature of the carnivalesque spectacle is indicative of this play. While there were specific spectacles, organized in conjunction with the market, these spectacles were not isolated within the confines of booths. The overriding spectacle of the crowd subsumed each isolated spectacle. The spectacle, like the laughter was universal, where spectators were also players within. The spectacles themselves were not without particularly unsettling characteristics.

And an Essex doctor commented on the fair at Prittlewell in 1826: 'The fair is a very decent one. An exhibition on our right of a Giant, Giantess, an Albiness, a native of Baffins Bay and a Dwarf- very respectable. We had a learned Pig and Punch on our left and in front some Theatrical Exhibition. All in very good order' (Malcolmson 1973: 20-1}. In fact the doctor's account is troubled by his fear of the subversions to which such juxtapositions might lead. If a world of learned pigs could be 'very decent', 'very respectable' with '[all] in very good order', the emphatic 'verys' testify by antithesis to the strain to which decency, respectability and order were put by the spectacle. Stallybass and White 1986 p40

The mixing of proper etiquette and the vulgarity of pigs and giants upset any elision of class structure in the same way that the fair's mixing of social and economic concerns compounded any simply reading of the fair as purely economic. These mixings suspended the roles attributed by class and rank, affording an openness to the play that Bakhtin attributes the enabling of an ambivalent critique.

And while these mixings were for a while part and parcel of the fair during the Renaissance, much conceptual and material labor went into separating these combinations in favor of a purely functioning market. The marketplace was separated from the carnival, with the establishment of pleasure gardens other arenas which intended to make clear the separations which the mixings of the carnival transgressed.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1988. *Rabelais and His World*. Cambridge: MIT Press.  
Carroll, Lewis. 1937. *The Complete Work of Lewis Carroll*. New York: Random House.

Prescott, Anne Lake, *Imagining Rabelais in Renaissance England*, Yale University Press, 1998.

Stallybrass, Peter and White, Allon, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*. Cornell University Press, 1986.

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Figure 14.6  
Chris Cunningham and Bjork  
*All is Full of Love*



"Don't grunt", said Alice; "that's not at all a proper way of expressing yourself!". Illustration by John Tenniel to Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1865.

Figure 13.4  
Illustration by John Tenniel for Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1865.

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

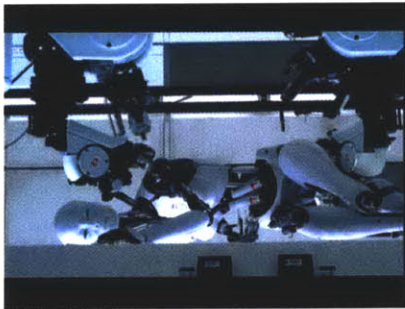
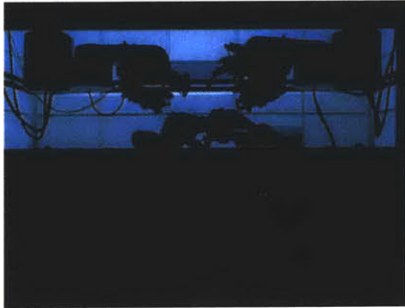


Figure 15.1  
Intricacy  
Greg Lynn



Similar to Jonathan Swift's satire "A Modest Proposition," Chris Cunningham's video "All Is Full of Love" presents a subversive message in the guise of a clean, proper aesthetic. The disjuncture between imagery and content, the strangeness of this rupture, is difficult to disentangle for the poetics of the music. What exactly, then, is strange or subversive about the video?

In the video, a robot in the form of Bjork awakens and is meticulously cared for by a supplemental machines that clean, solder, and affix skin to her. The robot is confronted by another robot, a similarly styled Bjork, already standing and reaching out to her. The video ends with the two embracing.

The first strangeness is the motive of these sentient machines. In previous popular media, when machines become cognizant it is for the purpose of war and domination, to free themselves from the slavery of their human masters, such as Terminator of The Matrix. As computers were developed in service of the war (cryptology and ballistics), it was, perhaps, obvious that they be attributed warlike tendencies. But as computers become more social, as we utilize them more in order to find friends and lovers, would it be any less obvious to imbue them with an erotic sensibility. So the first strangeness emerges from the position of the sentient machine as nurturing and erotic rather than imperial and warlike.

The second strangeness is the fact that the robot finds love in another robot of the same gender. If this sentient computer, this intricate machine, is formed within the highly exacting and precise tolerances we attribute to them, "what then causes this aberration?" As the erotic has been separated from the functional, as sex is no longer a biological [re]productive act, what is the ground for this strangeness? The functional productive capacity of sex has been evacuated leaving only the social and bodily (the arena of play). Without a utilitarian foundation for sex, what constitutes a normal sexuality that these sentient machines deviate from? And, without a norm (moral functional or otherwise framed), what is there to be tolerant of?

If play has the capacity to articulate the very constructedness of meanings then the play of these two robots articulates the new position of the computer in our social world as well as the biological foundation of what might be considered a natural sexuality.

It would be equally suspicious to universally denounce tolerance. As safety is a condition, a pre-



You'll be given love  
 You'll be taken care of  
 you'll be given love  
 you have to trust it

maybe not from the sources  
 you have poured yours  
 maybe not from the direction  
 you are staring at

twist your head around  
 it's all around you  
 all is full of love  
 all around you

all is full of love  
 you just aint receiving  
 all is full of love  
 your phone is off the hook  
 all is full of love  
 your doors are shut  
 all is full of love

Bjork: All is Full of Love

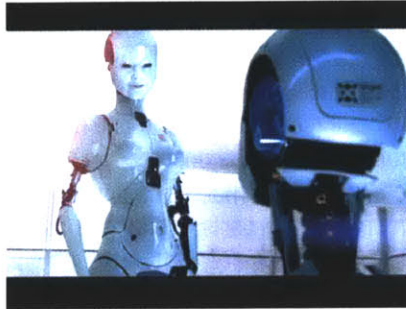


Figure 14.1-6  
 Bjork and Chris Cunningham  
 All is Full of Love

Bjork, "All is Full of Love." Homogenic. Elektra/Asylum. September 23, 1997. Music Video Dir. Chris Cunningham.

supposition, to play, when there is no safety, there is no place to play, when differences are so

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

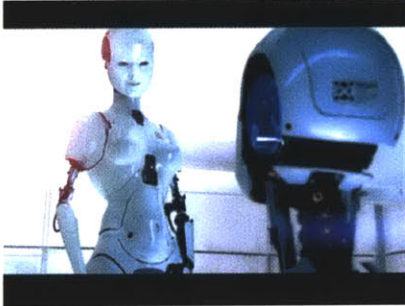


Figure 14.4  
Bjork and Chris Cunningham  
All is Full of Love



Figure 15.1  
Intricacy  
Greg Lynn

Figure 15.2  
Intricacy  
Greg Lynn

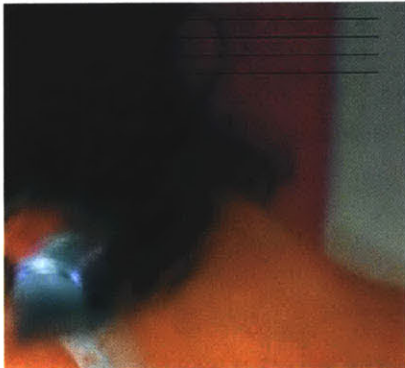


Figure 16.1  
DoCoMo Cellphone Ad  
Erotic Technologies

Facilitated by emerging digital technologies of design/fabrication Greg Lynn's exhibition "Intricacy" examines the potential of these new design practices to render a new form of connectionism. Intricacy is held in contrast of the modular and hierarchical, where the fetishized detail of minimalism is the only recourse to scale. Intricacy's connectionism is composed of small-scale diverse elements, the structure and arrangements of the parts irreducible to the structure of the whole. In this sense, detail is everywhere, ubiquitously distributed across the surface connecting components of various scales.

To illustrate this notion of intricacy Greg Lynn employs the works of Roxy Paine, Tom Friedman, James Rosenquist, and Chris Cunningham. These objects are representative of a new sensibility, not simply a new aesthetic, augured by technologies that combine conception and fabrication. These technologies operate on exceedingly narrow tolerances, ensuring a coincidence between the digital design and material manufacture of the objects.



"Rather than using the computer for its expedience and potential to realize forms and spaces that would otherwise be too complicated, messy, or convoluted to produce, these works make a claim towards elegance, rigor, expertise, and, I dare say, beauty."

Bound to this beauty is eroticism, an eroticism born out of subtlety and difference inherent to intricacy. Different from machines of repetition and asexual, identical reproduction, the intricate machine's "elegance" is in its differentiated production, in its anexact yet rigorous form. Far

firmly entrenched, when danger and physical violence are eminent, there can be no play. The



Figure 15.3  
Intricacy: Greg Lynn  
Roxy Paine

from the arithmetic curve that disciplined previous mechanized production, and the repetitious production from which it was born, the anexact yet rigorous form conditioned by digital manufacturing techniques enables this intricate morphology of differentiation.

And while Lynn denies this is simply an aesthetic proposition, including as well the spatial and organizational logics of intricacy, the bias of his work remains representational with its focus on surface and morphology. The new social and organizational connectionism, the complexity in which he invokes Venturi's Complexity and Contradiction, remains only an expression of the connectionism, pliancy, and flexibility conditioned by contemporary social practices and technologies.

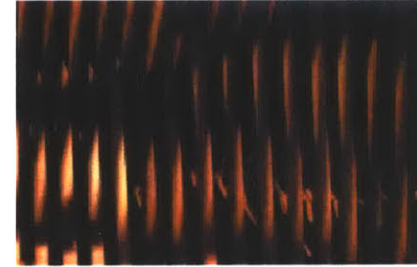


Figure 18.1  
SHoP  
Versioning

Figure 15.4  
Intricacy: Greg Lynn  
Chris Cunningham

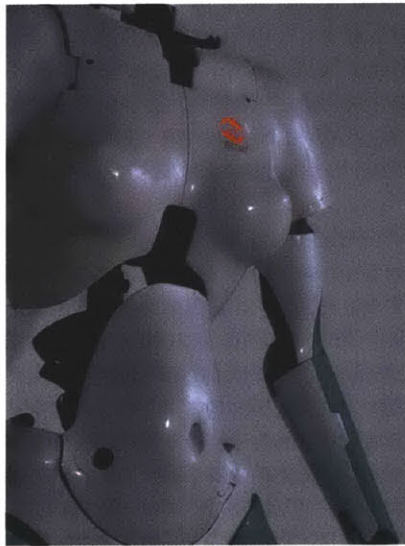


Figure 2.2  
George Ebling  
Moulding Headlamp Shells

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Lynn, Greg. *Intricacy*. Philadelphia: Insitute of Contemporary Art. 2003.

problem with tolerance is when it becomes the only recourse to difference.

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b



Figure 16.1  
DoCoMo Cellphone Ad



Figure 14.6  
Chris Cunningham and Bjork  
All is Full of Love

It may be strange to compare cosmopolitan Tokyo teens with a tribe of any sort, but the particular combination of nomadicity and social collectivity that mobile text messaging has enabled makes their relationship a strikingly parallel. The impact, what mobile texting has enabled, on the Tokyo teen is related to its pervasiveness and subversiveness and is situated by Tokyo's population density, the structure of the Japanese family, and the perception of particular technologies. The overall significance of which is the transformation of how these teenagers communicate and gather, the way they socialize.

In Tokyo, teens generally live with their parents through college due to the expense associated with maintaining their own residence. In order to stay in contact with friends, Japanese teens had to use the family's telephone. There is generally only one landline phone in a residence due to the obtrusive cost, about 600 USD. The landline, as the exclusive means of contacting people outside the family, served as a means for parents to surveil their children's communications with friends and acquaintances.

The mobile phone, and text messaging, became a channel for communication outside the explicit control of parents and other family members. Being able to contact friends while in transit, or inside the home silently with text messaging, without the interference of (or without interfering with) family members created a remarkably different arena for communication. Where it was inappropriate to call the house of a friend at a late hour before, it is now possible to call or text them directly without disturbing the family. Where the topic of conversation may have been inappropriate within the audible range of the family phone, it is now possible to bring the phone to a private place or respond silently by text.

The reason for the penetration of text messaging, where the user types in short messages on their phone (hence the thumb tribe) is attributable to the relative cheapness, silentness, and mobility in comparison to the land line. Texting also allows for asynchronous communication, where one user can send a message and the receiver can reply when appropriate. It also allows a virtual presence of members when not physically in attendance. Where previous communication methods necessitated clear meeting times and locations, the mobile phone and texting have softened that clarity, allowing for general times and places, malleable in response to this virtual presence.

In effect, by creating a space of communication outside the explicit control of the family and softening the rigidness of time and space for meeting, the mobile phone and text messaging have undermined the traditionally strict negotiations of socializing with friends and peers.

Within the confines of the home, the teenager is relegated to the role of the child, and under the surveillance of their parents is held in compliance to that singular identity. Within the family, the role of the child sets up a appropriate code of conduct, a specific manner in which the teen is allowed to act, and all actions under the authority of the family.



Figure 20.1  
New Orleans near Frenchman Street  
Communication outside sanctioned  
channels

Interviewer: Do you call friends on their home or mobile phone?

Student: If it is a boy, I will call their mobile. If they have one, I will call their mobile. If it is a girl, I will call their home. If it is a girl, well, I'm a girl right? So if I call they think I am just a regular friend. But if it is a boy, his family might tease him, and I've made a friend very uncomfortable in the past because of this. I've also been told some nasty things by a parent. I was totally pissed off when a parent of a boy told me off like I wasn't a proper girl. So since then, I don't use the home phone.

Ito 6

Compared to before, now you don't have to call a home phone and can call someone direct. Before, when you wanted to talk to someone, you had to call their home phone and ask the father, mother, brother or someone to get the person. Yeah, people say it is a hassle. I didn't feel like it's so much of a hassle. The thing for me is that I call late at night, so I felt kind of bad about that. If it's a mobile, at night, or whatever time of day it is, you're not bothering anyone.

Ito 6

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Ito, Mizuko. 2001. "Mobile Phones, Japanese Youth, and the Re-Placement of Social Contact," Society for the Social Studies of Science Meeting, Boston. <<http://www.itofishercom/PEOPLE/mito/Ito.4S2001.mobile.pdf>>

Lonsdale, Sarah. 2000. Japanese Design. London: Carlton Books.

Rheingold, Martin, 2002. Smartmobs: The Next Social Revolution. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing.

Figure 16.2  
Cell Phone Mascot  
Lonsdale 149



But it is a negotiation between the habit and the uncomfortable where play becomes potent.

## 17 Appadurai and Imaginary Landscapes

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

The new global cultural economy has to be understood as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models (even those that might account for multiple centers and peripheries)... I propose that an elementary framework for exploring such disjunctures is to look at the relationship between five dimensions of global cultural flow which can be termed: (a) ethnoscares; (b) mediascares; (c) technoscares; (d) finanscares; and (e) ideoscares.(2) I use terms with the common suffix scare to indicate first of all that these are not objectively given relations which look the same from every angle of vision, but rather that they are deeply perspectival constructs, inflected very much by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors: nation-states, multinationals, diasporic communities, as well as sub-national grouping and movements (whether religious, political or economic), and even intimate face-to-face groups, such as villages, neighborhoods and families. Indeed, the individual actor is the last locus of this perspectival set of landscapes, for these landscapes are eventually navigated by agents who both experience and constitute larger formations, in part by their own sense of what these landscapes offer.

Appadurai p1

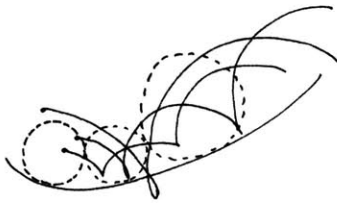


Figure 19.2  
Chemnitz Stadium  
Cecil Balmond

Appadurai's conception of these imaginary landscapes gives organization to the "complex, overlapping, disjunctive order" of the global cultural economy. The specific reason for identifying Appadurai's model is that it organizes cultural phenomena as a stratified system governed by the manner in which these scapes combine. These landscapes are considered as always present, varying in intensity and velocity across time and space, across the globe. This does not give the landscapes an objective or entirely external reality, but are considered populated by different people and institutions which perceive the landscape according to their position in it, making the landscape contingent on its perception and activation. Furthermore, each of these landscapes is in constant interaction with others, not isolated from or contained, but interfering, mixing, and combining with others. These scapes are constituted by the global flows of people, technology, money, imagery and ideology. This is how Appadurai identifies local conditions of these global flows. Whether or not this list can be seen as conclusive, holding all the movements of ideas and people that constitute a location, is less relevant than the model that it proposes. By defining flows that vary in intensity and interaction as the means of taxonomy rather than temporal periodization or spatial bounding?: Appadurai puts the very notion of categorization in jeopardy. The imaginary landscapes are identified only in aid of describing how they interact with other scapes. The idea of local, both in time is space, is constituted by the way that all of these

Where it is not yet out of the ordinary, not yet out of line, but is neither depicted by the ordinary

flows combine. The specificity of their combination is dependent on the directionality of flows, the relative intensity of the flows (in relation to other scapes), and the increase or decrease of intensity in time (in relation to its history).

These mixtures of people, money, technology, media, and ideology are increasingly mobile, increasingly fluid, producing imagined fantasies and real migrations in historically unprecedented proportions and distances. "As men and women from villages in India think not just of moving to Poona or Madras, but of moving to Dubai and Houston, and refugees from Sri Lanka find themselves in South India as well as in Canada" simple models of the core and periphery fail to account for the fundamental differences in migration patterns, both in motive and magnitude. Migrant workers are no longer the migrant farmers, but highly skilled professionals moving across the globe. Money is no longer moving from high to low in investment and returned with interest in a mechanical colonial model of capital. There are complex and subtle mixtures of these scapes that are both the products of and vehicles for

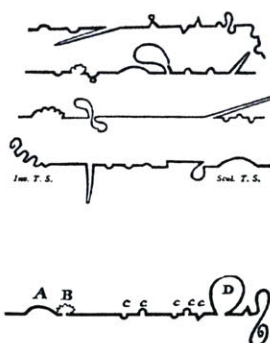
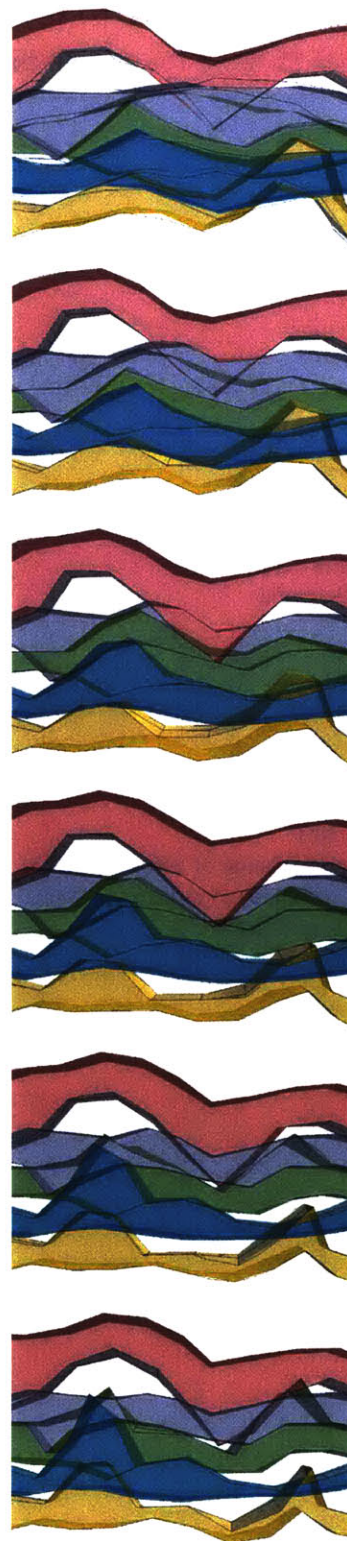


Figure 4.1  
Plot Diagrams for Tristram Shandy  
Laurence Sterne

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Arjun Appadurai, Arjun (1990) .Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. Public Culture vol 2, no 2, pp 1-24.



nor the line. As such, I'm not particularly interested in the surprisingly new, but the inconspicuous-

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

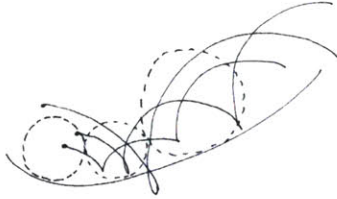


Figure 19.2  
Chemnitz Stadium  
Cecil Balmond

Figure 18.1  
Surface translation of SHoP's MoMA/  
P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center Warm  
Up 2000 installation.  
SHoP p7

While digital technologies are at face value zero tolerance technologies (as there is no degradation in the process of reproduction) what is their potential for variation? If zero tolerance assures not simply approximation but sameness, how can pliancy, mutability, the very possibility of change be introduced? It appears that as long as digital technologies are employed in a manner that mimics mechanical reproduction, these technologies operating as a tool refining the exactness of production, they hold little potential for play. That is, as long as they are held simply as instrumental (as a gear in machine) without affecting design practices, without proposing that they are



fundamentally different from mechanical production, they suggest only the potential to prescribe a more exact solution.

Perhaps, if we approach these technologies as one consideration within the design process, capable of interacting and informing other considerations as well as being informed by them, their latent potential for variation could propose an active rather than instrumental role in design practices.

To this end, SHoP's notion of versioning could prove useful.

Versioning relies on the use of recombinant geometries that allow external influences to affect a system without losing the precision of numerical control or the ability to translate these geometries using available construction technology.

ously different. If something is identifiably different, then it may either be combated or assimilated



Versioning subscribes to the allegory of the highway, a designed artifact without a model or original source, but a lexicon of formal types that are combined for different performative values.

No base prototype exists, nor is there an image based set of relations underlying the design. Instead, design decisions are based on an organizational strategy capable of responding to the effects of speed, turning radius, gradients, congestion and the landscape, to create a fluid behavior of variable movement.

In difference to the mechanical technology that begins with the diagram (the model, the original source) versioning takes up a combination of constructible forms and compounds them in order to arrive at a material organization judged not by its approximation to a pre-given "good" but to a variable performative value (as the highway may function in one way at one point, and lanes and exits may be added or subtracted as necessary). As such, versioning abides not simply a technological device, but incorporates the technological into its paradigm. Biasing the pragmatics of procedure and outcome, and thus affect the construction process, versioning puts onus on the architect to form new collaborative partnerships with producers and engineers, articulating a new possibility for the discipline of architecture to cross over with software as well as civil engineers. Therefore, it is not simply the object produced which is put under performative scrutiny, but also the discipline of design itself.

As the design process is informed by the pragmatics of its intervention (constructive, social, economic) and takes its cues from them, shifts and constrictions in the scope of the work serve for a parametric conscription of technology. The design process attempts to find effective combinations of forms and systems to be exploited and deployed, constructing a vocabulary based on combinations of forms and effects. Where parametric or performative design processes take up the varying particularities of its situated deployment as opportunistically enabling to script the intervention specifically, linear design processes can be seen as more directly related to problem solving (beginning with a problem and moving towards an optimal solution) and must consider those same variations as hostile environmental changes (particularities viewed as aberrations from the norm necessitating corrective measures if not outright rejection of the model as a whole).

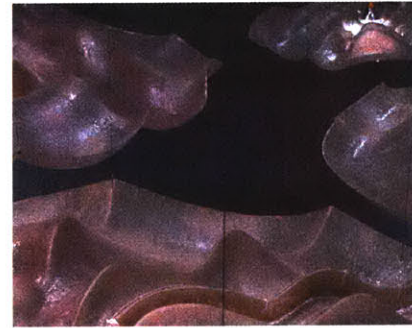


Figure 15.1  
Intricacy  
Greg Lynn

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SHoP/Sharpley Holden Pasquarelli. 2002. Versioning. UK: Academy Editions.

(as in the case of the homeless and punk rock respectively.) Play takes up the very logics of the

## 19 Cecil Balmond: The Chemnitz Solution

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

In thinking about play in structural systems, imagine two systems operating simultaneously. At one point the first system responds to particular forces (tension or compression) and the second system may act to stiffen the whole, and at another point, the two switch with the former stiffening the whole while the latter taking up forces. One example of this sensibility might be drawing an ellipse, where the two foci operate continuously informing the form, taking different levels of priority across the shape. The point of play in structural systems is not simply their mobility, but their indeterminacy. Mobility may be a symptom of indeterminacy, but it is not an exclusive factor.

Cecil Balmond's design for the roof structure of a stadium in Chemnitz provides a potent illustration of indeterminacy. He conceived of the structure as a series of arcs traced by a disc with a hole punched in it as it turned across a boundary. This light structure was driven by the image of a cloud, and he questions, "is not a cloud a bundle of turnings?"

Figure 19.1  
Chemnitz Solution  
Balmond p156-7

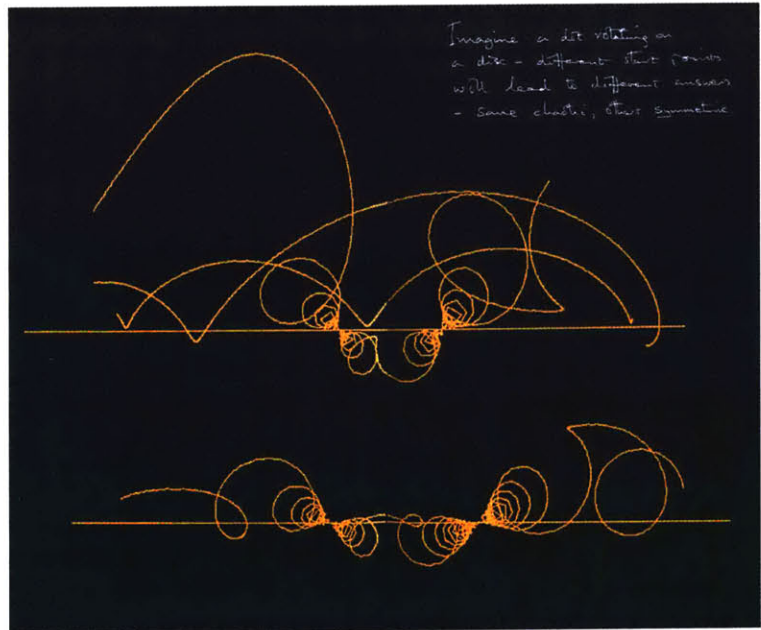


Figure 19.2  
Chemnitz Solution  
Balmond p 152-3



sanctioned world and builds new meanings inside them, not separated as a mode of critique but

These turnings, in the instance of the cloud, are governed by the logics of air conduction and convection, dew points, winds, and a host of other considerations. The indeterminacy of the cloud is not the absence of logics or effects, but in the particular compounded combinations and recombinations of those logics.

Reframing Balmond's designs for the roof in this light suggests a way in which the systems played with each other such that their symbiosis would yield not one solution, but a topography of solutions that could be informed by other considerations such as light, circulation, particular opportunities for where the structure could touch down. Just as the logics of the cloud do not resolve in one cloud, or even one type of cloud, the Chemnitz solution provides the considerations for its physical instance without singularizing what that instance is. In other words, Balmond's topography is a performative rather than prescriptive solution. Performative because across the topography of solutions, under different evaluations of how the structure performs (more or less places to touch down, tighter or looser weave, different support skins) one instance might be more viable than another. Had the solution been prescriptive, proposing only one instance, it would necessarily be modified and refined as the work progressed, or simply tossed out.

Now imagine the disc moving away from the straight line, around the edge of the site boundary.

Overlapping arcs of different radii materialise, but the centre aperture does not get defined.

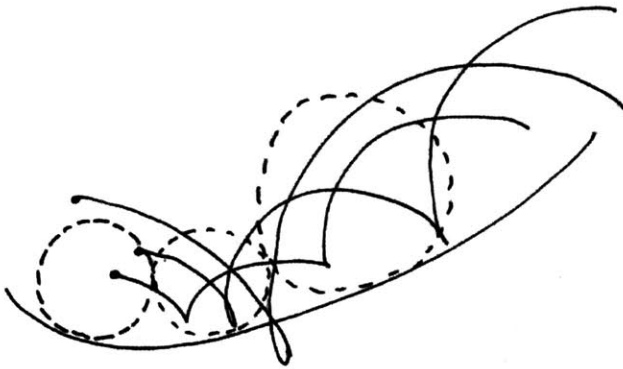
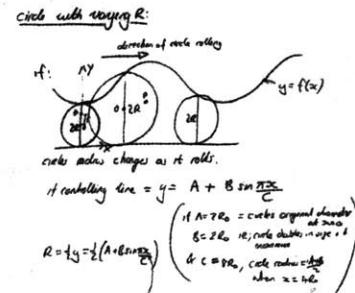


Figure 19.3  
Chemnitz Solution  
Balmond p 159

Figure 19.4  
Chemnitz Solution  
Balmond p 162



Balmond, Cecil. 2002. Informal. USA: Prestel.

within them, inextricable from them.

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b

A few blocks away from the tourist dominated commodities and activities of Bourbon Street, exists a space outside of the exaggerated propositions of "New Orleans". This space isn't cornered off with fences and posts. This space isn't constituted by Puritans who find the drinking and lewdness offensive. It's evidence is not obvious. If the demarcations were clear, if its identity were commodifiable "authentic New Orleans" it would be subsumed into the New Orleans Package. With its silence, it remains adjacent, but assuredly not part of those embellished marketing identities. There are, at most, traces of this difference. While the publications of the Bourbon Street's identity reach across the nation, and across the world, these traces mark a space and time outside that of the tourist package.

Figure 20.1-4  
New Orleans near Frenchman Street  
photos by author





Figure 16.1  
DoCoMo Cellphone Ad  
Unsanctioned Communication

Play articulates the very “constructedness” of our world, of our ideas of nature and society, public

## 21 William James: things in the making

2a 4a 4b 5b 6c 7a 10g 6a 1a 2 4b



Figure 11.1  
Children Playing S. Maria Maggiore  
Experiencing Architecture

The import of the difference between pragmatism and rationalism is now in sight throughout its whole extent. The essential contrast is that for rationalism reality is ready-made and complete from all eternity, while for pragmatism it is still in the making, and awaits part of its complexion from the future. On the one side the universe is absolutely secure, on the other it is still pursuing its adventures.

William James: Pragmatism

How does one keep things in play? If play involves a particular attitude towards looseness, one that biases indeterminacy and incompleteness, how can a designer (architect and urban) attend to that looseness? The world, of course, is populated by things; buildings, streets, peoples, cars, doors, mailboxes, subways, etc. All these things have meanings; emotional, functional, memorial, etc. What kind of looseness can be attributed to things, those things that populate the world around us, and what difference is that looseness making?

Pragmatism responds to this problematic with the notion of “things in the making”. The looseness of things in the making can be described by the manner in which these things are defined and given meaning, by those who design and those who appropriate. Things in the making are contrasted against those things ready made, objects closed off from participation where all significant determinations and effects are inscribed within the thing. An off the shelf object or experience.

We are surrounded by things, so how can we find them incomplete, or in James’s terms what separates those things ready made and those in the making? When something is incomplete, or indeterminate, it is not meant that these things are physically incomplete in the sense that they are missing parts or not yet manufactured (as the Fordist mode of production has shown the diagram encloses the system by prescribing all aspects of the production process, in effect completing the object before its manufacture). The type of indeterminacy things in the making abide is an incompleteness that affords the opportunity to redefine the meaning of the thing. This redefinition of the thing is not hallucinatory nor is it simply a projection of the self into the object, affection or otherwise. The redefinition is not semantic, as in changing the scripted definition of the thing, but tacit in the way that the thing’s use or occupancy reinscribes a different meaning than those officially prescribed, particular and inextricable from its activity.

Playing does this, not by an exterior or contrived set of rules, but by taking up the logics of the thing and subverting them to the occupants own ends. This redefinition of the thing in the making is not that of official re-appropriation, as the case of Hagia Sofia. This more or less and private, sacred and profane, but this articulation is different from criticism or opposition. In

constitutes a re-made object, as there is no indeterminacy in the action. The claiming of Hagai Sofia is quite determinate.

Playing is the antithesis of the ready made. Playing takes time, much as things in the making “await part of its complexion from the future. The ready made object is [al]ready made and negates time, it waits for nothing. *Playing withholds judgement*, for it is still in the making. The ready made object is prescribed with meanings and values and therefore the judgement is inscribed in it. Once something is already made, it is dead. It may serve its purpose but holds no potential outside of that purpose. The ready made object is the descendent of the prescriptive diagram. Playing keeps things in the making by setting up expectations without predictions, by rendering a whole range of potentials then interrogating them for their performative effects, the difference each might make.

How does pragmatism, with its incessant return to the effect of things, of what difference it a thing makes, open up this world to “pursuing its adventures?” By contending that the world is only as complete and closed off as we are willing to apprehend it, the gap for creative apprehension is widened to destabilize the reactionary and automatic meanings we assume to be coincident or inevitable to the thing itself. And while a Santa Marria Maggiore expounds the meanings of religious icon, tourist snap shot, and urban landmark, it still has room for play. In a simplistic sense, the city is explicitly in the making (buildings are erected and destroyed, people immigrate and emigrate). More though than this physical and demographic mutability is the impetus for its morphology. What keeps the city in the making, what keeps its future in play, is the multiplicity of desires it symbolizes and fosters. The city, above all, must be seen as a place of chance. A chance to find employment, to find love, to find oneself. And while the city must be a safe place to live, that safety is empty without the chance for something more than mere comfort. What is in the making is not just the form of the city, but the chances that the city affords.

*Playing withholds judgement, as Winnicott attempts to do by playing in psychotherapy, withholding his analysis from the patient.*

Figure 10.2  
Orphanage  
Aldo Van Eyck




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James, William.[1907] 1995. Pragmatism. New York: Dover Publications.

play, we are part of the critique, not set outside or distanced, because we are part of constructing

the world around us. This act of self implication is enabling because it shows that everyday we



are, not they are, constructing the world around us. And this is the creative act of construction.

## Constant's New Babylon

Motivated by his participation in COBRA and the Situationist International Constant set out to provide models and images of the city conceived on the radical premise of the realized Marxist Kingdom. Built upon these presuppositions, he ventured into urbanism with the models and drawings of a New Babylon.

As a way of life, homo ludens will demand, firstly, that he responds to his need for playing, for adventure, for mobility, as well as all the conditions that facilitated the free creation of his own life... Homo ludens himself will seek to transform, to recreate, those surroundings, that world, according to his new needs.

Homo ludens (lyrical, the free and creative) is contrasted against homo faber (maker, a utilitarian man) and acts as the basis Constant's new urbanism. By beginning the construction of the city with an image of both those who would populate this new world and the absence of supportive capital, Constant evacuates the oppressive biases of history and economy to re-image mankind and abandon.

Constant's New Babylon is composed of macro and micro scale elements, the macro elements are superstructural elements that organize a system of fixed elements, the micro elements are a series of mobile partitions, made possible by advances of automated technology that afford lightweight, movable spatial dividers. While the superstructural elements stabilize a fixed series of "sectors" the mobility of organized partitions afford occupants the ability to play with their environment, to continually recreate their physical situation. This construction is

Figure C.1  
Constant  
New Babylon  
Zegher and Wigley p 119



I would to examine two attempts to deploy play, as developed within this thesis, in urban design;

complimented by the mobility of helicopters, planes, trains, and cars and new media and telecommunications to afford an entirely unrooted society.

Constant's endeavor was totalitarian in this negation of all things conventional or natural, upending technology in service of these social aims of play, adventure and mobility. These gigantic structures hover over the ground, which is now organized as a plane of transportation from sector to sector, a second new artificial landscape of terraces above.

Given their huge size, the sector interiors depend on the system of distribution of energy needed for lighting, ventilation, and air conditioning, but this 'dependency' implies a freedom from the monotonous alteration of day and night which humanity has sought since the dawn of time.

Nothing, not even the alternation of day and night, was to be external to the construction of a shared reality, to the social life of homo ludens. Everything must be negotiated and constructed in the present.

The frequency of each man's movements and the distances he will cover depend on decisions he will make spontaneously, and which he will be able to renounce just as simultaneously.

All things are inextricable from their immediate construction. They are not biased by a history (as homo ludens must reject the stability of habit), and not preserved for the future (everything must be kept in jeopardy of reconfiguration).

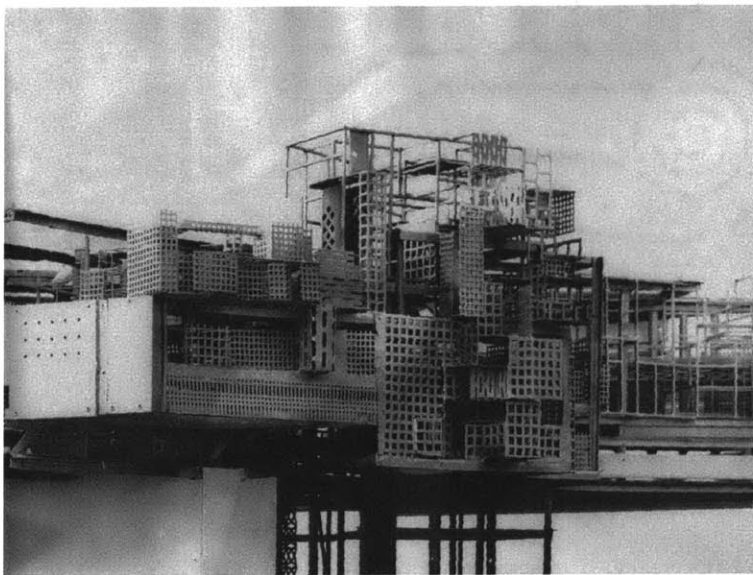


Figure C.2  
Constant  
New Babylon  
Wigley 195

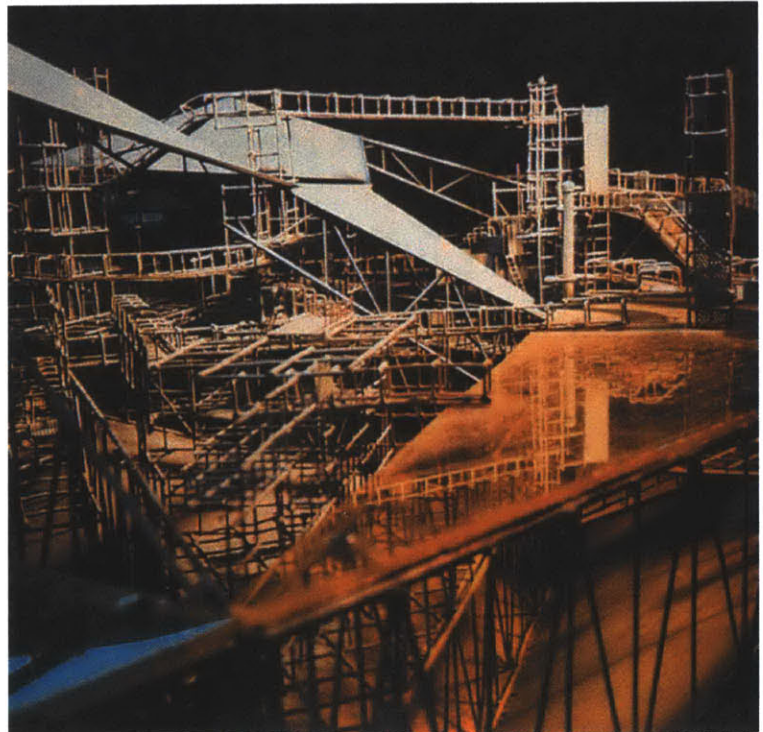
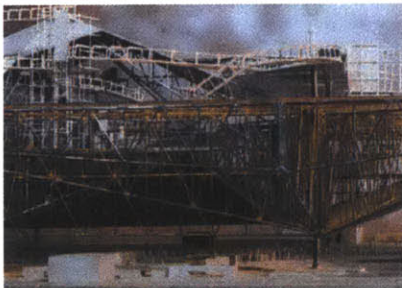
Constant's New Babylon and Christopher Alexander's Pattern Language.

But as we have seen in Santa Maria Maggiore, the queer tactics of the street, Bakhtin's fair, and elsewhere, play must take up the logics at hand, to exist in the midst of and not outside of the dominant and official systems of the city. In this way, play holds the potential to articulate that construction of the world. In Constant's New Babylon everything must be artificial, from the new ground plane to the tempo of night and day, and nothing may make claims to any innate meanings or ends. There can be no official systems or logics to articulate. Once the world is overtly "constructed" there is no joy in articulating its constructedness, in pointing out the strange phantasy that we all participate. There is nothing to "mock and deride" in order to "bury and revive." Its play can articulate nothing, as everything is already constructed.

Figure C.3 (right)  
Constant  
New Babylon  
Wigley 180

Figure C.4-5 (below)  
Constant  
New Babylon  
Wigley 180

In the way that Winnicott ties playing to creative apperception, not creation, the physical manipulation of the world is only accorded a second order significance, not the priority which Constant places on the eternal reconfigurability of everything. As Winnicott poignantly asserts, one must never ask the playing subject "Did you conceive of this or was it presented to you from without?" (is this your allusion or is this simply the way it is?) Creativity and play lie in the gap between finding the world as we are given it and inventing it anew. In New Babylon nothing is found, nothing has a legitimacy in its own right, its artifice is a presupposition.



The first chapter of Christopher Alexander's *A Pattern Language* is entitled *Using This Book*. The next three chapters outline the series of patterns that comprise the language. Each of those chapters is broken down by scale, beginning at the scale of the town, then to buildings, and finishing at the scale of construction.

Each pattern describes a problem which occurs over and over again in our environment, and then describes the core of the solution to that problem, in such a way that you can use this solution a million times over, without ever doing it the same way twice.

Alexander *A Pattern Language* (x)

Each of these patterns is a response, then, to a problem at a particular scale. It is Alexander's intent that each of these patterns operate both at the scale (from town to construction) and nature (as there are patterns of events and patterns of space) of the problem it responds to as well as the others of the pattern language to coordinate to form a coherent, alive whole.

As such, Alexander is not prescribing a solution, but a common language that addresses the environmental performance of the town as a whole. Although the whole is composed of particular morphologies inscribed in the pattern, these patterns are reciprocally inscribed socially in the events and activities of the peoples and communities that inhabit them. This reciprocity, this vitality, is what Alexander referred to as the

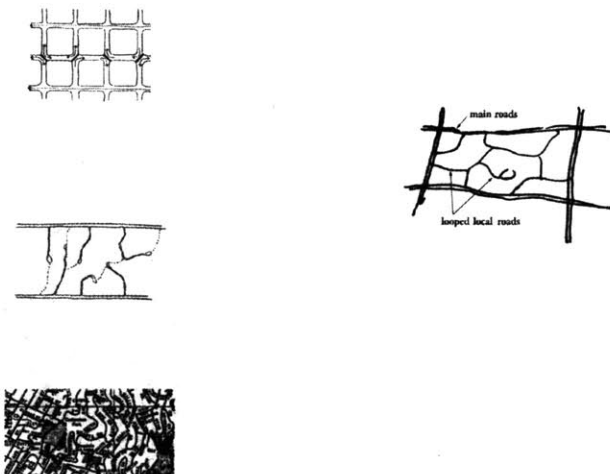


Figure C.6  
Alexander  
Pattern Language  
Alexander p 262-3

timeless way of building. Although one might consider these patterns as overriding or simply instructive Alexander notes:

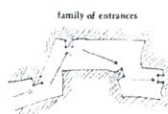
It is never twice the same, because it always takes its shape from the particular place in which it occurs.

Alexander *The Timeless Way of Building* p26

However, *The Pattern Language* is written as a manual for the construction of these patterns, not by designers, but the people that inhabit them. These patterns were to coalesce, to assemble, into a whole devoid of internal contradictions, it's timelessness presupposed by the priority of being whole. This manual of construction intended to provide patterns which by means of thousands of individual actors participating in a common language would form a vibrant whole.

While Alexander's work abides a performative standard in the same vein as Cecil Balmond's performative solution for the Chemnitz Stadium, there are particular differences in their material deployment. What the stadium's solution enabled was the potential to interrogate a series of possible solutions, contained within the structural logic of the bundle of turnings (this being in line with Alexander's *Pattern Language* as the possible solutions to the environmental problems are contained within the structural logic of the pattern language). By shifting what constituted a good performance ( in the case of the stadium, particular places to transfer forces to the ground, a lighter or heavier roof covering, differing beam depths, differnt potentials to inflect in three dimensions) a different particular instance of the stadium's structure would result. However, at one point, the criteria for performance would be decided upon, and the stadium built. This is, however, not the manner in which the town is built, and that makes all the difference.

Figure C.7  
Alexander  
*Pattern Language*  
Alexander p 502-3



What both the pattern language and the bundle of turnings afford is the potential to probe a series of possible solutions and, depending upon the criteria for evaluation, define a “good” performance. While there is a single moment of decision in the case of the stadium, as Alexander notes there are endless series of decisions that create the town. All these decisions, however, are good only to the degree that they contribute to the whole.

And this is why the pattern language is a timeless way of building. The notion of good, the criteria for performance, are set and stabilized by beginning with a particular definition of the whole. Once that whole is decided upon, all subsequent decisions are held in judgement by its rule. The measure of good is defined before any buildings under its language are constructed.

But as the town is an assemblage of these decisions, would it not be possible to constantly re-evaluate the notion of a “good” performance? As interventions are realized and reshape the town, couldn't the performance change, suggesting a different whole? In play, we must understand that the only form of participation isn't solely collaboration, but also competition, transgression, the very ability to articulate how the notion of good is constructed, not just formally, but the way in which we define something as good.

With this notion of performance, tempered by the variability of what may constitute good, we can envisage an urbanism based in play and experiment, by doing what Winnicott advises, and withhold judgement.





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