

How Was Your ARG? Did Your Reality Shift Much?

Thu, 25 Aug 2022 11:16:17, newstips66, [post_tag: ar, post_tag: arg, category: brotopia, category: community-service-programs, post_tag: mr, category: patents-and-inventions, post_tag: vr, category: worldnews, post_tag: xr]

A new way to shift 'Reality' has arrived. Want to know more?

ARG's are just the beginning...

See Also:

[Jejune Institute](#)

[The Pirate Store](#)

[The Cicada 3301 Game](#)

[Star Trek Experience](#)

[Teatro Politique](#)

[The Others](#)

[Robert Anton Wilson](#)

[XR GLOBAL METAVERSE](#)

[\(Imagine being able to walk, seamlessly, from ALYX, To HORIZON FORBIDDEN WEST to DEATH STRANDING without experiencing any seams...when Apple releases the 8K Plates, Pimax releases the 12K and the others achieve retina resolution... YOU will be the future..\)](#)

and other contemporaneous social immersion projects...

Of course, this article is still a great point-of-departure:

ARG, ARG, VR, AR, MR, XR . . . There are enough acronyms out there to make your head spin. But this alphabet soup contains legitimate learning and development (L&D) tools. Let's examine each term and describe how these tools can be used in the modern training, intelligence and marketing environments. Yes, even the CIA and KGB/FSB use these social technologies.

ARG and ARG

ARG is cast around from time to time as a method of conducting training programs, but there is a lot of confusion related to the letters because there are two similar but differing meanings. In the first definition, the "A" represents *alternative*. In the second definition, the "A" represents *augmented*. Let's look at each definition.

Alternative Reality Game

In [The Gamification of Learning and Instruction](#), contributing author Koreen Olbrish states that "Alternate reality games (ARGs), also sometimes called pervasive games or transmedia storytelling, are designed to combine real life and digital game play elements. So . . . you are playing the game in the real world but doing behaviors that are linked to the game."

In the 2016 book *Alternate Reality Games: Gamification for Performance*, Andy Petroski and Charles Palmer describe an ARG as being built around a story that engages the players through an anomaly in their regular schedule. It could be an email from an unknown source. It could be a note on a desk or a message on a computer screen like "Follow the white rabbit." The realism of the story is strong at the beginning of the ARG. Most ARGs include a combination of real-world activities in a physical location and digital media.

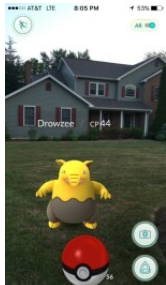
Typically, ARGs are "tracked" online, but the actual game play consists of real-life activities. There are many entertainment-based ARG examples, including Microsoft's [I Love Bees](#) (perhaps the most famous), [ABC's Lost—The Lost Experience](#), and CBS's *Numb3rs—Chain Factor*. Examples of ARGs for social issues include *Urgent Evoke* and *World Without Oil*. The popularity of ARGs for entertainment and game and television tie-ins seemed to peak around late 2006; however, some ARGs are available and the genre has not completely disappeared. For example, the musical group *Twenty One Pilots* used an ARG called *DEMA*. The story/game was about a man escaping from an oppressive organization called *DEMA*.

[Click this link](#) to watch an explanation of I Love Bees, a great case study of an ARG.

Petroski argues that ARGs can be used for a variety of training purposes. The article ["Alternate Reality Game Benefits for Your Organization"](#) specifies four case studies where ARGs were used for immersion into new programs, helping teach collaboration and teamwork, optimizing training time by making pre-work more engaging and interesting, and helping learners to hone skills through an interactive story. He says, "Learning doesn't happen at a moment in time and that knowledge, skills, and attitudes are built over extended periods of exploration, practice, feedback, and reflection. ARGs provide that extended learning time because they can integrate into work and life activities throughout the day and can take place over an extended period." While this definition of ARG has a lot of potential in the L&D world, it is not as popular as the other definition of the acronym ARG.

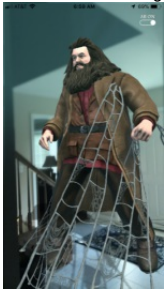
Augmented Reality Game

An augmented reality game occurs when a game superimposes images, sound, or items onto the real world. Perhaps the best-known ARG of this kind of all time is *Pokémon Go*. (Image shows a Pokémon in front of Karl Kapp's house in an ARG.)



The idea is that the Pokémon (a fantasy creature) seems to be in front of the player but is not physically there. It is superimposed via the player's smartphone along with its name, a score, and a Pokéball (the device to capture it).

Augmented reality means that reality is enhanced, made better, or provides more information because some type of computer device is adding information. Items are added onto reality via a mitigating technology. A person must be looking through a device to see the augmented reality. You have to hold up your phone, put on the glasses, or look through some type of screen to see the augmentation. (Below is an image from the ARG Harry Potter: Wizards Unite.)



In L&D circles, the element of "games" is usually missing from the idea of ARG. The more common term is AR or augmented reality. While that doesn't mean augmented reality games can't be used for learning, the more practical application is simply AR.

Here is a [great video](#) from BMW that shows the potential of augmented reality in the realm of training. This video shows how AR can be used in a practical training situation and as performance support to help an employee complete tasks.

Augmented reality is already used in factories to help shop floor workers pick the right materials, properly assemble parts, and to quickly access refresher information when needed. [This article](#) explains how Google Glass's augmented reality elements are helping improve employee performance.

Meet OXR (Organic Expanded Reality) - The Headset-Free Options

So now that we know what AR represents, how does virtual reality (VR) fit into this explanation? The big difference between the two is that with virtual reality, you are completely immersed in a virtual space and don't see anything real.

When a learner "goes into" virtual reality, they put on a headset and are no longer in touch with reality. The only thing the learner can see is what is displayed on the screen in front of them. VR is a purely virtual experience without any intent to integrate with the real world. AR immerses the user completely in an audio and video reality all its own.

The headsets are bulky and many people are experimenting with headset-free options. The military has a system that can project sounds and images directly into the brain but the long-term dangers of direct electronic tissue sampling and remote tissue input are not yet known. Many people believe that the Havana Syndrome attacks (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Havana_syndrome) are satellite or distant vehicle based abuses of the technology.

Advanced consumer experimenters tend to use the following process described in these quotes from this paper:

"... at 9PM each night, networked OXR experiments begin around the globe. Users take a doctor-prescribed "Sublime" pill. They usually melt it under their tongue. They then open a full screen link (ie: <https://scottrdmond.us/wp-content/uploads/LIGHT1/>) and their experience begins within a half hour, or less.

Experienced, or highly evolved, users do not need the pill. They can move into these 'metaverses', on their own, without the need for optimization drugs. It takes practice for them to craft the experiences without the Sublime pill but many have become expert at it.

This is very different than the Timothy Leary LSD experiments with the original Swiss Labs LSD compound by Swiss chemist Albert Hofmann (The only 'real' LSD that has ever existed - all others are just bare commercialized shades of that first formula).

Sublime and self-actuated OXR does not get you 'high', it amps up your entire natural brain functions...

...some users claim to be able to move between the actual physics metaverse segments as described in the "Tegmark alternate realities", (after Max Tegmark at MIT (<http://space.mit.edu/home/tegmark>), who did calculations on it, proving that, per scientific facts, it exists. He says that if the Universe truly is infinite in space, it means that every configuration of elementary particles that is physically possible must occur somewhere. Ask any big name physics smarty-pants super-brain person.

This includes a world that is exactly like this one, but where two grains of sand in Morocco have exchanged places. Identical copies of you and me also exist in that world, of course. There's another with unicorns—not magical ones, of course, but horse-like creatures with a single horn on the forehead; there's no physical reason why they couldn't exist. And another where, through a chain of unlikely events, you were only this morning proclaimed Emperor of China.

... And not only that, but there has to be an infinite number of identical copies of us (and also of the Chinese Emperor you). That's how big infinity is: it is big enough to contain an infinite number of anything.

There's even an infinite number of Hilberts (see 'Hilbert's paradox of the Grand Hotel' (https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hilbert%27s_paradox_of_the_Grand_Hotel) out there, all hard at work at building hotels with an infinite number of rooms.

The proof, either way, can be simply determined by closing your eyes, very tightly, in a dark room and uttering a focus chant word and using your own static quantum electricity from the 80 billion neurons in your head. (Your brain has more static energy (<https://jonieffmd.com/blog/brain-electricity-and-the-mind>) than a thunderstorm.) Upon opening your eyes you will be in a different metaverse but you will not be aware that you are. You can do this an infinite number of times. Each time you shift, you will ONLY have the memory of the metaverse you moved to and you will be able to create any future, that you can imagine, from that point forward. You will have no memory of the last metaverse you occupied.

Try it! You are only limited by your Imagination..."

The horrifying 'K-Hole' bad trip effect of Ketamine can kick your mind into what appears to be the center of the universe, where you are endlessly falling through the largest and most lonely space in eternity. Many who experience the terrible 'K-Hole' never want to experience it again. Ketamine is NOT Sublime and should never be used for entertainment options. It does, though, give you a worse-case scenario of the bad side of OXR. If you played the video game: "DOOM ETERNAL" in OXR, it would probably be a lot like a K-Hole. Do not try it!

Headset or OXR VR can be used for teaching all type of activities—for example, teaching how to run meetings, assemble items, empathize with others, or conduct a sales call. VR tends to have more of a training or learning focus than AR because in VR the learner can practice skills in a realistic setting. The image below shows a VR environment where a salesperson can practice sales skills in a realistic setting using the LearnBrite tool and the ZSA game.



On the other hand, with AR you can walk step-by-step through performing the skills, as shown in the BMW example.

XR and MR

It is possible to be in a VR situation, fully immersed and wearing the headset, when, all of a sudden, through its built-in cameras the goggles show you reality. This mixed reality—a blending of virtual reality with the physical world—is almost the reverse of augmented reality. Instead of computer-generated images being superimposed on reality, reality is superimposed on top of digital images on the screens of your headset.

Labeling these categories of reality is cumbersome and constantly changes, so here is where our final term, extended reality (XR), comes into play. XR was created to be simply an all-encompassing term used by developers address all experiences, regardless of the reality.

Yes, you should care about the alphabet soup of “reality” terminology. They each have the potential to be powerful instructional tools that can provide a true performance support system. The BMW example clearly shows how to mix training with on-the-job actions. And the VR example from Interactive Sales Experience shows how VR can help train sales professionals.

Technology is driving a number of interesting advances in learning environments, but the fundamentals have not changed. The important thing for learning and development professionals to realize is that how people learn and what it means to motivate learners has not changed with technology. Now more than ever we need to know and put into practice evidence-based guidelines for developing instruction.

Ong's Hat is one of the earliest Internet-based [secret history conspiracy theories](#). It was created as a piece of [collaborative fiction](#) (a.k.a. *Incunabula*) by four core individuals, dating back to the 1980s, although the membership propagating the tale changed over time. Ong's Hat is often cited as the first ARG on many [lists of alternate reality games](#).

The characters were largely based in the [ghost town](#) of [Ong's Hat, New Jersey](#), hence the name of the project.

The threads of the story can be traced back as far as the 1980s on [bulletin board systems](#), old [xerox mail art](#) networks and early [zines](#). The aim was to create a fictional story line, and embed it in various media cultures to establish backstory. It may have started as an [in-joke](#), or the first [alternate reality game](#) (ARG), a work of [transmedia storytelling](#) or as a [memetic](#) experiment, to see how far the [meme](#) could spread or a combination of all of the above.^[1] The story eventually used print, radio, television and digital mediums ([CD-ROM](#), [DVD](#), [Internet](#), [BBS](#)) in its dissemination.

The initial ground rules acknowledged the possibility that such an experiment could end up going down darker paths, and they specifically ruled out Ong's Hat being used for cult-like activity. Even though it is a fiction, the tale may be based on earlier works.^[2]

[Joseph Matheny](#) eventually concluded the project.^{[1][3]} [GamesTM](#) magazine wrote that "Ong's Hat was more of an experiment in transmedia storytelling than what we would now consider to be an [ARG](#) but its DNA – the concept of telling a story across various platforms and new media – is evident in every alternate reality game that came after."^[4]

In 2002, [Lego](#) created an ARG for their line of toys for Canadian children's TV series [Galidor](#) that featured some elements of the Ong's Hat story.^[5]

Plot

The *Ong's Hat* narrative is told in the form of [conspiracy theories](#) surrounding a group of renegade Princeton professors who had conducted [quantum physics](#) and [chaos theory](#) experiments to discover a new theory for dimensional travel using a device called "the egg", and were camped out in a parallel world.^[3] Their story is introduced through two documents, *Incunabula: A Catalog of Rare Books, Manuscripts & Curiosa, Conspiracy Theory, Frontier Science & Alternative Worlds* and *Ong's Hat: Gateway to the Dimensions*.^[3]

The story is said to begin in 1978 when a man named Wali Ford bought over 200 acres of forested land and set up an [ashram](#). This ashram was built for seekers of spirituality, politics, tantra, and psychopharmacology. The ashram was a place for Princeton physicists, among other accredited scientists, to perform experiments involving interdimensional travel. It was rumored that they were trying to train the human mind to manipulate quantum physics and reality itself.

A device called The Egg was developed in the late 1980s by these scientists and physicists. This device was created as a variation of a sensory deprivation chamber, and it was used to help them determine when a wave becomes a particle. However, during a test one day, something unexpected happened: it disappeared. A young man who was inside the Egg when it disappeared explained that in the seven minutes the Egg was gone, he had traveled to another alternate dimension of the Earth. This other Earth was exactly the same as our Earth, however, it did not contain human life.

Throughout the years, they continued their experiments. However, when military efforts threatened the research being done by these physicists and scientists, they had to move their site somewhere else. Piece by piece, they moved their ashram to the other Earth. They left behind only the house where the gateway between worlds is held. The only time the people who live in the ashram return is when they need to restock supplies.

See also

- [Creepypasta](#)
- [Robert Anton Wilson - Wikipedia](#)
- [The Blair Witch Project](#)
- [Church of the SubGenius](#)
- [lonelygirl15](#)
- [Fakelore](#)
- [SCP Foundation](#)

Notes

1.

- *Kinsella, Michael (2011). Legend-Tripping Online: Supernatural Folklore and the Search for Ong's Hat. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi. ISBN 978-1604739831.*
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- *Aspray, William. "The Princeton Mathematics Community in the 1930s, Transcript Number 41 (PMC41)". The Trustees of Princeton University, 1985*

- - ["The Ong's Hat Mystery Revealed: An Interview with Joseph Matheny"](#). NewWorld Disorder. Archived from [the original](#) on 15 July 2006. Retrieved 23 February 2013.
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 - McMahon, Chris (May 2013). ["The Rise of the ARG: games™ investigates alternate reality games and what the future has in store for the curious experiment"](#) (PDF). GamesTM. 135: 88. [Archived](#) (PDF) from the original on 14 September 2013. Retrieved 19 June 2015.
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5. ["The LEGO® game console from another reality"](#) (PDF). Lego. Retrieved 10 November 2021.

Further reading

- Matheny, Joseph (1999). *The Incunabula Papers: Ong's Hat and Other Gateways to NewDimensions*. California: iMMERSION. [ISBN 0-9674890-1-6](#).
 - Matheny, Joseph (2002). *Ong's Hat: The Beginning*. Oregon: Wildcard Interactive. [ISBN 978-1726734691](#).
 - Szulborski, Dave (2005). *This Is Not A Game: A Guide to Alternate Reality Gaming*. California: Hukilau. [ISBN 978-1411625952](#).
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 - McMahon, Chris (May 2013). ["The Rise of the ARG: games™ investigates alternate reality games and what the future has in store for the curious experiment"](#) (PDF). GamesTM. 135: 88.
 - [Ong's Hat: The Beginning](#), a range of materials to download including the original book as well as graphic novels and CDs.
 - [Slate- Decoder Ring: The Incunabula Papers](#) Slate podcast feature about the origins of the Ong's Hat Project
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- [The Surprising Online Life of Legends](#)
 - [GAMES™ INVESTIGATES ALTERNATE REALITY GAMES AND WHAT THE FUTURE HAS IN STORE FOR THE CURIOUS EXPERIMENT](#)
 - [An interview with John Tukey at Princeton University on 11 April 1984](#) Includes references to an earlier Ong's Hat story

Even though Pokemon seems totally ubiquitous to us (especially us Millennials who grew up with it) it's worth explaining for those who maybe have heard of the game but still don't know the specific terms.

We are excited to announce that our XR ARG has broken all past participant records. There are now more people, in more global regions, involved in more development levels than any other ARG we have been involved in. The Apple, Pimax, Arpara and Deckard VR headsets are all late, as expected, due to the usual issues, but all Steam VR interfaces are ready for them once they arrive in volume at 5K resolution, and higher. There are no delays re: IRL settings, of course and some of the hotel-based scenes are turning out to be epic.

No matter what phase you are in, hang in there: envelopes, thumb-drives and whispers will eventually reach you. Remember, Phase one is a ten year cycle, one of the largest in ARG history.

Onward and upward...





Back in October of 2008, I ran into an article about the Jejune Institute on [Laughing Squid](#). "Hmmm, smells culty ... I should think about exploring that for a half-second then be distracted by a small shiny thi- OOOH NICKEL!!!" While enraptured by my new friend Coiny, months passed. Then one day while I was travelling to my then-galpal's house to give her a giant leaf in the tradition of centuries-old courting rituals except for the giant leaf part, I saw an odd sticker at the BART station. I took a photo of it. It's sort of a habit of mine. There is something amusing about minimalist human icons in imminent distress combined with a passive warning that amuses me. On a road trip across across the US awhile ago, I stopped in at a John Deere lot approximately mid-country and asked if I could take photos of the big lovely machines. I felt the subterfuge was necessary, it's always hard to explain my obscure fetishes to people. There was one machine that looked like it made the rows in the mellifluous phrase "a hard row to hoe," and it had a warning sticker showing a giant spring barreling straight toward the hapless icon's head/chestal area. That photo didn't come out, because this was during my error-ridden SLR days. Next time I'm in Kansas I'll stop in again. Anyway, warning signs and me: we're tight. I am [not alone](#).

Was this some random band or graffiti artist's sticker? Way more text than usual on such a thing. "Microwave harassment emanations"? Hahaha! "Elsewhere Public Works." I made a mental note to look the name up which was immediately replaced by a lingering memory of being bit by a zoo swan when I was seven. I posted the photo to a popular electronical photo retention service and got on with my beach-bum life instead of yours because I don't have your keys ... yet. A few days later, I received a black envelope in the mail.



In the envelope, a card with spooky writing that read:

ALL IS LOST
 FLEE AT ONCE
 Interim Sanctuary 580 California St. Suite #1607 watchword: jejune

Damn. I never turn down invites because you know, free food. Now I *had* to go.

I called up a friend, Scout, and told him we had to go to this thing – like pronto – because I was worried it would close down at the end of the year. Scout and I had been puttering around with various pie-in-the-sky ideas about starting up some sort of team effort involving short filmic pieces that one could watch via a futuristic electronic machine that you yourself may be in possession of. We were thinking of getting a day place – a warehouse space – even though we had no money and were also broke. I would design a "false front" that looked like a normal business and we could sell conceptual things that no one would buy and I would be in hog heaven. Me and a bunch of hogs with wings and halos, rolling around in gold-flaked mud, processing butchers into hot links.

The last day of the year, we finally set out on our little unknown adventure. On the way there, I took some photos of "street stuff": a restaurant front, a sticker for "Pile Drivers, Divers, Bridge, Wharf & Dock Builders No. 34 AFL-CIO," and the remnants of a flyer espousing the benefits of some whack-a-mole contrail-conspiracy-like froo-fra called "Vital Orbit." Then we walked into 580 California. It's a 23-story building in the financial district of San Francisco, a dynamic Californian metropolis steadily licked by the Pacific Ocean.

"There is abundant evidence to show that high buildings make people crazy."

A Pattern Language, Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein (pg 115)



You know these places ... stuffy people walk around with ramrod steel spines, pretending they know exactly what's going down but it's all this enormous paper-shufflin' fantasy, a ... *game*. Maybe you've noticed this on the news as of late. We didn't belong there, it was obvious. We were scruffy; we did not have colorful pieces of fabric tied around our necks. We did not pretend to know much. The security guard gruffly took our information and went up to fetch a representative; we sat down with our backs to a giant tapestry. A bit later, a woman in a white lab coat came into the lobby and beckoned us forth. We forthed. I had this crazy idea that she wasn't going to tell us anything, and since we were in a very nice elevator with lustrous Carpathian elm wooden panelling, this gave me a chance to again push my short video idea to Scout. The entire set would be the interior of an elevator; cheap set, easy to light, tight enclosure with its own strange set of socially awkward rituals. Perfect! He indicated his displeasure with this concept by moving to LA, but not right then. When we entered the 16th floor office, I started asking questions and sure enough she batted them away with phrases like "all will be revealed" which followed the earlier, similar phrase "all will be revealed."



We bartered: I gave her my ID, she gave me a key. The ID thing I was really uncomfortable with, but you know, it's what all the kids are doing these days with their painfully open lives look at me look at me. Me, I'd rather be an onion. You know what's at the core? No. Of course you do not, because I did not Bookface it.

The key had a large circular ceramic fob attached to it, with instructions, directions, and a disclaimer about being recorded. Hey, more uncomfortable! But the fob, it's such a great Object. Weighty, solid. Scout read the fob and gave me a withering look that was easily decoded because it was accompanied by his voice: "What the fuck are you getting me into?" Though I was wondering that myself, we shoved on. We entered the induction center and the 1970s, apparently. While we processed the out-of-sorts decor a disembodied British female voice welcomed us to the Jejune Institute.



"Greetings. Welcome to the Jejune Institute San Francisco Induction Center. Please enter the room, and close the door behind you."

There was an oscilloscope hooked up to the audio, which reminded me of my geek friends irreversibly turning TVs into cheap oscilloscopes back in college using a pair of wire snippers and booze. They did this to great excess for/during parties, like it was some type of nerd drug. "Duuuuude, niiiice TV you have here ..." [FX: slowly caresses top of TV]



There was only one chair. But. The chair. How could there be another. It was The Chair. Scout sat on/in it (voice: "now have a seat in the lounge chair provided for you"). I roamed around taking photos, spotted the sort-of-hidden hidden camera, and made sharp observations like "hey, a giant tooth." I didn't want to get sucked into the video, let Scout do that part. No one's going to make me sell flowers at an exit ramp *again*, thank you.

[videos: [Capt. King](#)]

Of course the video is bizarre and funny, but all the while there was a tiny voice inside my head saying "it's cool. You know from cults. And if this is an actual cult that has gone hilariously meta, you're ready with your shiv." DAMN! I had forgotten my shiv.

The Jejune Institute certainly had a lot of impressive technology! The bit about Octavio coming from real actual culty stock sent up the fake red flags. Halfway through the video, Scout figured out the whole thing was a joke and it became "the best thing ever." He pointed out Octavio was sitting in exactly the same spot as the TV and it felt as though we had just missed him.

"Now ... here is the answer to your question. Yes. You *have* been selected. You, in particular have been chosen because of your unique abilities ... and other irregularities ... [FX: ZOOM CUT] *you know what I mean.*"

Octavio asked you to fill out an "initiation form" near the end of the video. The best part was that he sat and silently waited for you while you filled out your little form and the clock ran out. It was very polite. We scribbled our personal information on the surveys with a minor amount of trepidation.

I made up my 37,000th alias *right there on the spot* ("Hamburger"). I answered everything "YES" to indicate how [Chinese Industrial Cooperatives \(INDUSCO\)](#) I was, and we dropped the surveys into the box. There were five or six other slips inside. Ours were better.

So this was where the "Vital Orbit" flyer came from. So much to digest, including the remainder of the card – which Octavio stressed not to read/tell anyone about/follow. It looked complicated. We whispered confused half-sentences to each other.

The disembodied voice came back. "You have successfully completed the induction process." We've been inducted! YaaaaayYY! "Please exit the way you came in." There was only one door. I like to think that it was a crack about not leaving via the window. We exited the non-window and stopped at the reception desk for my ID on the way out.

Me: "I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name."

Her: [slight pause] "Yams."

Me: "Yams."

Yams: "Yams Moongood."

Scout was puzzled by Yams' pause, as if she was pondering how to answer. Yams Moongood. YAMS SODDING MOONGOOD? I think this is when my interest in the situation jumped two notches. We took the psycho-sensual elevator back down to the first floor while reading the instructions on the card.

TO BEGIN: one must depart the building undetected by front door security. BUT DO NOT: leave the building without gaining intelligence.

TO DO SO: ever so casually, return to the 1st Floor Lobby (shhhh).

DON'T: go out the main entrance. GO AWAY from the main entrance, (toward Imperial Capitalists)

LOOK & SEE the unmarked door to your left. STAIR (one) THIS IS AN EMERGENCY! (exit)

FRET NOT (alarm will not sound)

FOLLOW: stairs up, through black door.

HEED: the EPW guidance tags

HERE: take notes, and carry on...

NAME: _____

ALIAS: _____

CURRENT DATE & TIME: _____

DATE OF REBIRTH: _____

E-MAIL: _____

CELL PHONE: _____

PLEASE CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER

I hear a slight humming in the room:	YES	NO	
I have experiences I cannot explain:	YES	NO	
I am well aware of divine nonchalance:	YES	NO	
It is warmer in California than in the Summer?	YES	NO	
I am prepared for psycho-sensual reform:	YES	NO	
Currently my comfort level is:	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH

--- TEAR OFF BOTTOM PORTION OF FORM AND PLACE IN DROP BOX ---



We quietly snuck away from the security guard, through the bowels of 580 California. Scout recorded the "EPW guidance tags" while I shot sexy plumbingwerk fotos yes? "Elsewhere Public Works." I was confused ... this was part of the Jejune Institute? The pipe had another type of EPWA sticker, and above it, some weird ring with prongs. Dunno. The metal floor made

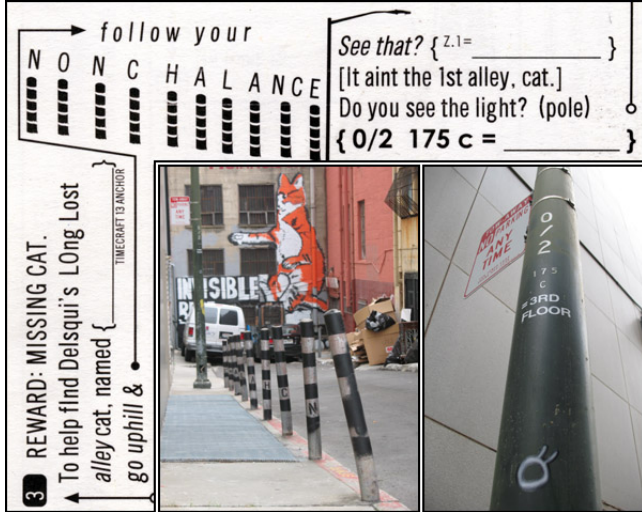
even the quietest of steps clangy. We exited without incident, deposited onto Kearny via a nondescript service door. Following the instructions, we passed an electrical service box with another of those "microwave emanation" stickers on it.

While trying to find something called the "Timecraft 13 Loading Anchor," we occasionally saw more of those circle-prong symbols. The anchor itself ... was it a hitching post at one time? What is? And there's pronging again. No wait, it's a duck. No ... a ring with a [bad combover](#). The metal ring was stamped "TIMECRAFT 13 ANCHOR" on one side and "QUINCY" on the other. What was a/the "Timecraft 13" and why did it need to be anchored? "Quincy" was then used in the next step that we eventually figured out was Quincy Alley. Do you capitalize "Alley"? I do. Alleys deserve it. ALLEYS DESERVE OUR SUPPORT

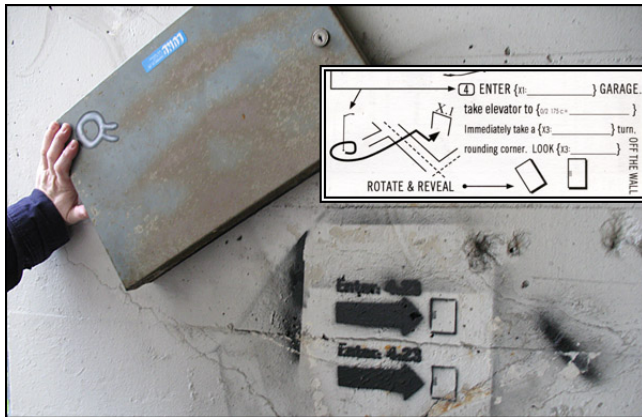
Quincy the cat appears at the end of the Alley, riding an invisible bike. Very nice! Also, there were a large amount of poles spelling out "Nonchalance." There's that phrase again. "Divine nonchalance." Why so many poles? They keep vehicles from falling through the flimsy grating, I suppose. I see nothing wrong with that. I was tooting around Kuala Lumpur one day and there were some plastic grates over deep, human-sized holes in the sidewalk. They had bounce to them. It was frightening enough that I started jumping over the holes. HEY LOOK AT THE JUMPY AMERICAN

At the end of the poles, a light pole. Another pronged ring, another clue. Third floor.

2 ::FIND THE TIMECRAFT 13 LOADING ANCHOR::
 EXIT DOOR AND GO { 2.1= _____ }
 WHICH IS TO SAY { 2.2= _____ }
 ON KEARNY. HEAD STRAIGHT THROUGH
 { 2.3= _____ } INTERSECTIONS. NOW
 { 2.4= _____ } AT THE CORNER
 ON THE { 2.5= _____ } CURB
 FOR TIMECRAFT 13 ANCHOR: _____



The third floor of St. Mary's Garage that is, where a metal lockbox had to be rotated to reveal a code that opened a second lockbox.



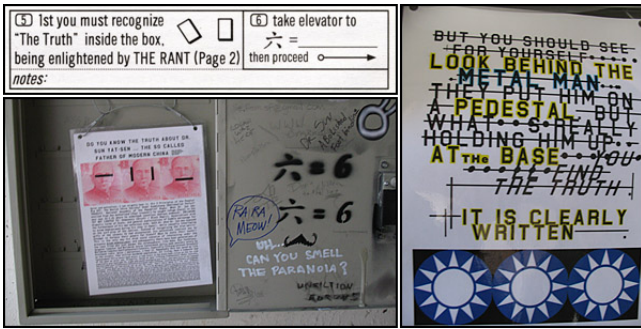
The second lockbox had a bunch of graffiti written by earlier visitors and two laminated pages, the first filled with – as the instruction sheet indicated – a "rant":

DO YOU KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT DR. SUN YAT-SEN ... THE SO CALLED FATHER OF MODERN CHINA

Quiet and motionless, I can slightly hear it. His 3 Principles of the People? Rip Off. The Revive China Society? Sham! Kuomintang (Nationalist Party)? TRAVESTY. National Assumbly of the Republik? Bogus. When Dr. Sun was exiled from the motherland (four treason!) he sought refuge [here] in the GREAT SNAKE {U.S.A.} where he undertook countless dubious endeavor, INCLUDING YET NOT LIMITED TO: Unmasonry (Occult / Black Magic), Associations with Diabolic Lords of State, and general exploitations of humble personage for the furtherment of his own nefarious aims. SUCH AS: when Dr. Sun was exposed to DIVINE NONCHALANCE during his stay in Hawaii, while casually interloping on the surf-play of the natives. Instead of recognizing the true-spirit-gifts of the savants he had encountered, his malevolent instinct was to attempt to harness their powers for himself & so he stole their teeth! This is the only way his mind could conceive of interacting under the presence DIVINE NONCHALANCE; and subsequently there have been generations of the Lost Tribe who just wander the stratosphere, like Kane, But Toothless.

So far, very nonsensical ... couldn't remember reading anything about [Sun Yat-Sen](#) performing rogue undesired dentistry, and there's that "divine nonchalance" thing again. The rant went on, and the very next sentence rang some bells: "Gangster Computer God Worldwide Secret Containment policy made possible solely by Worldwide Computer God Frankenstein Controls." That's [Francis E. Dec](#) right there, and it continued with Dec-like flailing while the type got smaller and smaller. I ran into DecTalk for the first time back in the 90s on a New York City telephone enclosure ... I figured it was an early Dec fan spreading the love.

And those pinball bumper symbols ... they're from the [Whampoa Military Academy](#) he founded. I thought they were ... pinball bumpers.



The second page mentions a "metal man" and to look behind him. After taking the elevator to the sixth floor, we emerged to face a metal statue of the crazed-ass tooth yanker doctor himself. Wow! That is one dynamic statue. Had no idea there was even a park there.



At the back base of the statue, there was another one of those blue shield stickers and a strange plaque that matched the "rant" from earlier. The "nonchalants" really don't like this guy! The treacherous duo of Grant and Yat-Sen must have collaborated around 1882, while the latter was in Hawaii attending school and the former was destitute in New York City, writing his memoirs. Sure, Sun Yat-Sen was 16 and Grant was 60, but that's just whom you don't expect, the fresh-faced kid and the old codger. Working together in ... *treachery!*

After filling in the blanks we rolled through a nearby alley, taking note of the multiple ring symbols plastered on posts. St. Mary's also had chalked symbols with arrows, pointing down the street. So we went down the street, we're easy that way. And then we were at 614 Grant, but since the address was 614.4 we figured it was a strange little empty space between the church and a gift shoppe.

Unmasonry: noun, ancient building craft used to sabotage the strength of a rival's building. One lasting example still lies exposed on the side wall of (X1: _____) church, at: (X2: _____) Avenue. When the agents of the false prophet tried to undermine the efforts of the church, they would masquerade as builders and insert bricks with subversive messaging designed to metaphysically degrade the structural integrity of the building. (Unmason's Brick: _____) 7



The brick was mysteriously difficult to spot, even though it was near eye level and sticking out a bit. We finally found it on a side wall, gently kissed by graffiti. The next bit of information indicated that we were to find a store with "beautiful things." Scout was on it – he knew exactly what store that referred to, so we rolled in and flummoxed around looking for the envelope. Basement? No. Ground floor? No. Basement? No. I walked up to the cashier to ask if she knew where it was and immediately saw it right next to the cash register. One of us scraped up \$1.09 (BON VOYAGE COINY) and we took it outside to rifle through the contents.

8 Furtherdown { Associate in Treachery: _____ } Ave. $(2.3 + \frac{7}{6}) \times 100 = \{ ______ \}$ across "the potter's way" there is a "store with beautiful things". Inside, seek out the envelope with the Unmason's Brick emblazoned upon it.



The back of the envelope featured three "sponsors" of the postcard series. Is that a "real" Rorschach image? Couch doctors don't just make up their own Rorschach images, there is a small finite set of them (ten (10)) and "non-psychotic"/"psychotic"/etc interpretations have been assigned to each (see 1 2 3). So what is our little one here supposed to be?



I see a killer Cyclops clown surrounded by twin flying New Jerseys. Is that good? [SFX: *flip flip flip flip*] Oh. It's not a "real" one. The middle entry ... "Red's Fish Monger" ... smoked kippers ... red herring. We skipped that, though I think it was either that Scout figured it out or we just vetoed travelling that far; I know I didn't decode the reference. Finally, the Louie Chen entry gave an address to explore.

9 Check out LOUIE'S view, and bring the envelope. Look for "WHAT YOU DO NOT SEE". But, hey, don't get hung-up on this "scenic route". Carry on, chum!



3/4 IN THE HIDDEN SAN FRANCISCO SERIES

This unique postcard is number 3 in a series of 4. Each card in the set contains two images of regional landmarks with unusual/hidden histories attached to them. They were produced by Dr. Jane Hewitt, a psychiatrist of local notoriety, who designed the experimental print pieces as part of the "Area-Archetypes" Collaborative Arts Project (1986-89).

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

 Jane Hewitt PsyD.
Jungian Analyst
Cognitive, Behavioral and Hypnotherapy
for adults, adolescents and children.
590 California Street, Suite 1600
Downtown San Francisco, CA
Drop ins welcome; ask for me at reception.

Red's Fish Monger

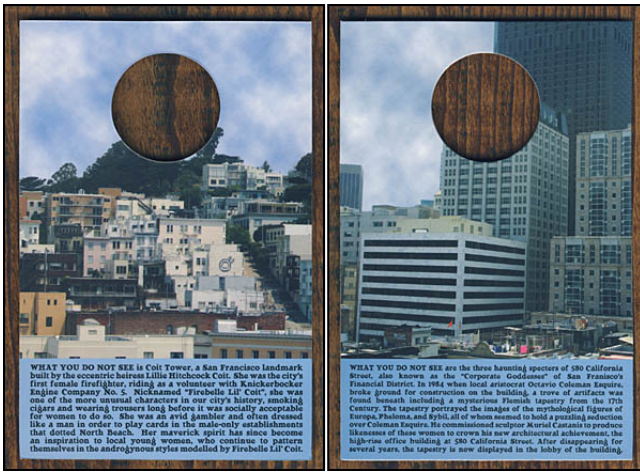
The very finest in smoked kippers
22 Market Place @ San Francisco Ferry Building

PROFESSIONAL BANSHEICHECK FOR HITTERS, RESEARCHER-PRIVATE
838 GRANT AVENUE #415
CIBOLA TOWN SAN FRANCISCO
(TAKE THE ELEVATOR ON THE LEFT)
(415) 449-7955
*"If I don't answer the door right away,
I'm probably out on the balcony having a smoke!"*

 LOUIE CHEN
PRIVATE EYE

838 Grant is the "China Trade Center" and where the Empress of China restaurant resides on the sixth floor, but we stopped on the fourth. There wasn't a #415, but there were two Louies – Calvin Y. Louie and Harvey Louie. Wrong Louies. We meandered over to the balcony, perhaps Right Louie was having a smoke while waiting for his office to wink back into existence. The view was superb.

The envelope contained a coated die-cut two-sided four-color postcard. We took it out and filled the holes with the "Corporate Goddesses" of 580 California and Coit Tower. Lillie Hitchcock Coit, Octavio Coleman Esquire, Europa, Pheloma, Sybil, Muriel Castanis ... a flood of new names to consider.



Scout remarked that he was glad he got to see/do this before moving to LA. Those goddesses looked ... familiar. There was also some chalk writing on the cement railing. Do you call it a railing if it's a big glob of cement?

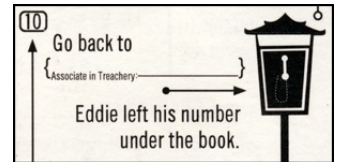
"AH ... WHAT A VIEW! NOTICE THIS CITY SPLENDOR. BREATHE IT IN + ENJOY (DID YOU TAKE OUT THE CARD? AND DO THE DO?)VERY WELL! QUITE NICE (NICE) BE ON YOUR MERRY WAY THEN!"



[\(click for bigger\)](#)

The symbol appeared again, on the blank wall of a building in the photo on the Coit Tower side of the card. It wasn't there in real life, but what was there? I added another entry to the List of Unfinished Business.

After taking the elevator back down to street level, we wandered around the immediate area looking for a pagoda-themed phone booth so we could call Eddy. These have been slowly disappearing from Chinatown, unfortunately. We didn't find anything, so we expanded our search gradually, until we had covered most of Grant Avenue-based Chinatown. Then we came back and tried the whole thing over. We wandered so far we ended up going back in time! [SFX: *whooshy going-back-in-time noises*] Time travel is always embarrassing, but maybe it would help us find the damned phone. We went back to 2003 and saw a phone booth right by St. Mary's Church where the Unmason brick was. It didn't really look like the ideogram. We kept going farther back, all the way back to 1999 ... and we ran into another phone. It was right outside China Trade Center! This had to be the phone!



We hurried back to 2008 and went to the same spot. Ah. This would be why we missed the phone earlier. Because the phone was gone. One more down, maybe even the last one. [Later we discovered Eddy's business card in the envelope. Oops ... we could have avoided that whole time travellin' nastiness, had we been a bit more thorough. Could have used one of those "Time Cameras" as well ...] After finding seats outside a restaurant, we called Eddy and got his answering machine. He said to "definitely come down to the lunch counter for a free bowl of chow mein. It's on me!" and had a more specific message for Louie Chen – indicating that he had put some flyers in Cooper Alley "just in case" for an investigation they were working on. This was good, because I was getting hungry. 2009: free food is the new sex.



Then we got a phone call. It was Octavio!!! (!!!) He indicated his displeasure with our decision to tackle the induction form and told us to "... Proceed at your own peril. Now you're on your own. Farewell." [SFX: *click*] Wow. That's the probably the shortest stretch of time I've ever been part of a fake techno-cult. Also the longest. How did he know? Was he spying on us? Cults don't do that! [SFX: *seven-minute laughing fit*]

Obviously our #1 goal right then was to figure out where this bonus chow mein was. After thinking very hard we ended up shrugging our shoulders and set off for Cooper Alley to see Eddy's handiwork instead.



Cooper Alley was very narrow. Svelte. The posters ... Wow, Eddy, you've outdone yourself. Does Louie run some sort of surreal detective agency? These can't be the right posters. This alley ... needed some exploring.



The alley had a series of cemented-up window alcoves ... in one of them, the flyers Eddy was talking about. This is how Eddy distributes flyers. Always working in angles for his own thing. So Eddy. Oh Eddy.



Oh! Oh my! We've got to find ... this chow mein! Man, this Eva gal has been missing a long time. Keeping our priorities in order, we flipped out of Cooper Alley to Star Lunch, which was only a few doors down.



What? What? Splutter splutter splutter ...

"Where's my fucking chow mein."

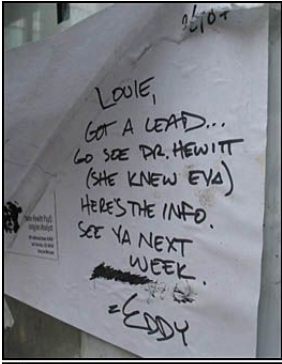
Okay. TANSTAAFL. On the window of the cafe, there was note from Eddy to Louie, along with a photocopy of Dr. Hewitt's business card. Eva's flyer had Chen's number ... we didn't really have any new information for the detective, but we called him anyway. His message indicated that Eva had possibly "been in the San Francisco area as recently as September of this year." She was also "possibly a danger to herself and others" and had been diagnosed with "severe mental disorders." Hrm. Chen continued, indicating that Eddy was missing as well! For almost two years! Well, that explained Star Lunch. Who will give us our chow mein? Who?

After all this, it was obvious that we had to visit Dr. Hewitt. Back to 580 California. This time we didn't have to sign in, but there was something on the card that we were supposed to do ... oh yes, the "scenic route." We looked at the tapestry ... looked ... was there something about the tapestry? It was a tapestry. Tapestry: check.

Back up on the 16th floor, no one is around. A sign on the reception desk indicated that cellphones shouldn't be used in the reception area, so we hid in the break room and called the receptionist from there.

"We are hiding in the break room."

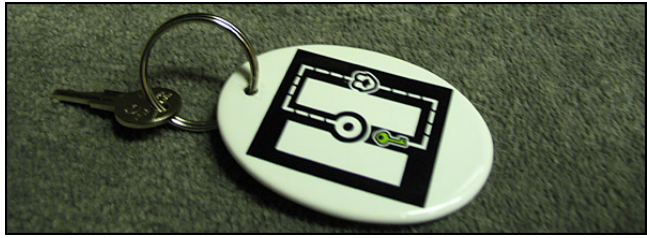
While rummaging in the staff refrigerator for chow mein substitute, Yams (YAMS) found us and said Dr. Hewitt couldn't meet us. Dr. Hewitt had given Yams something to give to us but it wasn't like she pointed to it on the carpet, that was later during the photo shoot, I mean there wasn't a photo shoot of Yams pointing to the carpet, it was of the key:



Remember to ask for the Good Doctor by name. (13)

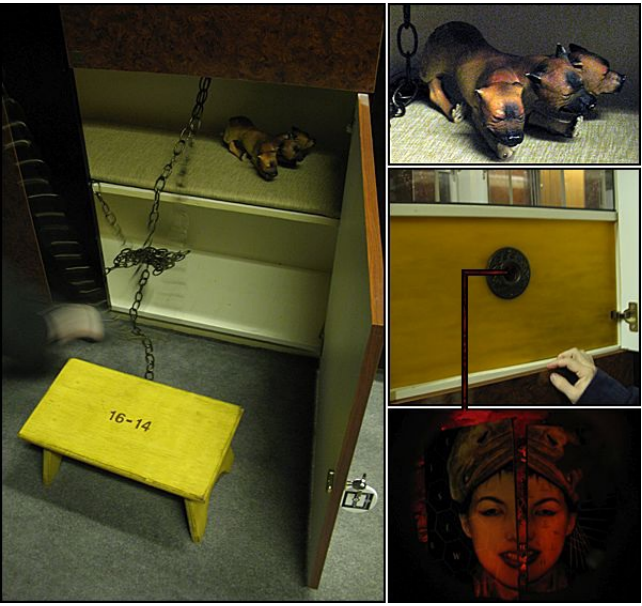


SCENIC ROUTE: On your way, take note of the tapestry to your right. Although Octavio Coleman was responsible for the unearthing of this Flemish masterpiece, he was forced to auction it off to pay for the completion of his new building. His obsession with the story and his intense connection with Sybil, lead him to convince the tapestry's current owner, Philip Van Den Bossche to allow it to grace the lobby of his new building.



I do not know why this diagram blew a circuit in my brain, but I just wasn't processing it properly. There were only three icons! A key, a circle, the Jejune Institute logo! But I had the key and we were at the Jejune Institute! Which one is where we are? Where do we go? Why is the key green? This key fob is also a nice key fob like the first key fob. What? What? What? I let Scout handle it while the noggin cooled down from the frothing. "Just follow Scout." Gooooood brain. Christ. I like diagrams. We're tight. We're like this [FX: overly-complicated hand gesture implying close intimacy with diagrams].

I followed Scout. We ended up in a long hallway filled with lockers. It was just like the bus station, all that was missing was the faint odor of urine. Lockers. Why lockers? Do businesses that share a floor always have lockers? I know nothing about this lockers concept for companies. So. We had a key. We had some lockers (lockers?). Which locker?



3NT3R: _____

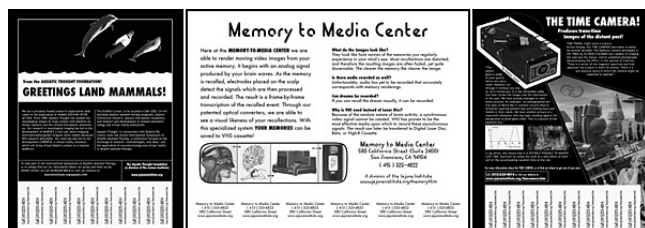
what you have not glimpsed is but for the eyes of few. lying just within the within is a delicate relic of a bygone era. there is hushed talk of a revival; a lost queen's sly return to form. it may well be your own breath that resurrects her. but, if it's foretold by an extinct tribe, does it still qualify as prOphecy? do take Great care of yourself and that which you have not seen. our very survival may depeNd upon it.

After finding the correct locker, we were greeted by Cerebus ("Yo, s'up"), a step stool marked "16-14," and another key. Locker 16-14 had a peephole in it topped by some decorative mirrors; when we looked in the peephole, there was Eva's bifurcated face slowly twirling around in a deep-red pastoral scene. Eventually her half-faces pivoted out of the way to reveal the word "3LS3WH3R3." The card's dying gasp seemed to imply Eva was rumored to be due back sometime and also by the way L-O-G-I-N. Ah. We had a lot of work ahead of us.

- A domain which appeared on the induction card
- A password for that domain
- A phone number from the microwave emanation/blue shield stickers
- A woman who's been missing for twenty years
- A man who's been missing for two years who clearly owes us some bowls of chow mein
- A mobile conveyance named Timecraft 13
- A hitching-post thing which was what was it
- A location marked by a prong-ring on the Hidden San Francisco postcard
- Research: Sun Yat-Sen, Ulysses S. Grant, Lillian Coit, Muriel Castanis, Philip Van Den Bossche, Europa, Pheloma, Sybil
- I was still hungry

Why Cerebus, mythical protector of the Gates of Hell (because they don't just let in *anyone*, sheesh)? What/who is/are the EPWA? And lastly ... who's doing this? Who's putting on this show? And ... why?

Our first stop after our Jejune adventure was its [associated website](#). The products and services mentioned in the video are expanded upon, each represented by a few paragraphs, some additionally by a full-page PDF made available for posting by Jejune acolytes.



The Aquatic Thought Foundation: Home of the Cyberfin® Immersive Dolphin Encounter Simulator which sounds like a big fat vaporware project with all the weasel words. "Future software releases," "Real-time, interactive 3D computer-generated imagery, alone or overlaid on stereo video, is possible," "Future experiences will employ ..." The last exhibition was in 1996. Something's (not) up at the ATF.

Memory to Media Center: This looked to be a separate facility at which you can record your memories to VHS tape. But apparently the audio doesn't match up properly. It has a separate address/phone number and everything!

Time Camera: This little baby seemed to have a raft of independent creators, just like television. One inventor cautioned: "the machine can produce universal tragedy." Coleman's version apparently could take photos of the past and the future. The PDF indicated "the object glass is made of pure quartz, which lets ultraviolet radiation run through it without any losses," but the web document attributed this version of the Time Camera to an "unidentified scientist."



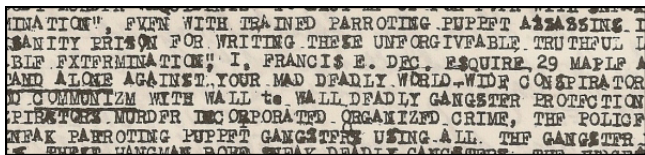
Vital-Orbit® personal forcefield: "composed of a hip/waist apparatus with 4 inch injectors under self-conductive iron barbells placed in the upper groin wrapping around to the lower-back with simple interface and controls." Major surgery in exchange for the ability to repel constant, horrendous banana-based attacks? That's a no-brainer. Also there is a mysterious half-tie to Aquatic Thought: "The Vital-Orbit reduces these basic tenets to a demonstrable formula by harboring hydro-dynamics multiplied by intention (aquatic/thought). It is proven, time tested, bonafide." Soon dolphins will be fending off the grievous, relentless rain of bananas.

Moonlight Menagerie: This service is also tied to Aquatic Thought and human/animal interaction: "introducing psychotropic experimentation to the animals has also had positive effects. Research strongly indicate that these encounters are quite beneficial to animals and man alike." Totally high dolphins avoid banana onslaught. It's a bake zoo. The endless animal adoption form was also spot-on.

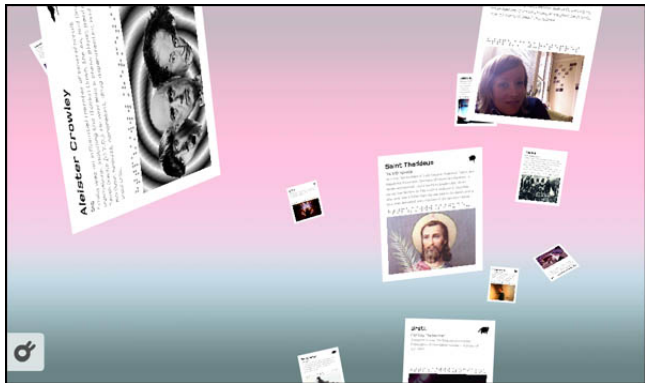
Polywater: An enhanced form of water. Water+. "When regular H2O is condensed through narrow quartz capillary tubes ..." Yes. We can do this.

The Algorithm: A "revolutionary handheld device" that prompts two parties in conflict for their take on the situation and delivers "consistently divine results," eliminating misunderstanding. "Driving the central functionality & mechanics of the server is an uber-rare spessartite quartz crystal that is embedded within." This place is hot on quartz technology.

A few of the web pages referred to Octavio Coleman as "Octavio Coleman Esquire." You know who else used that title? Francis E. Dec. But he blinged it out with a cash dollar sign because that was how Dec rolled. Or he had a non-functional "S" key. His "E" wasn't doing so hot either.



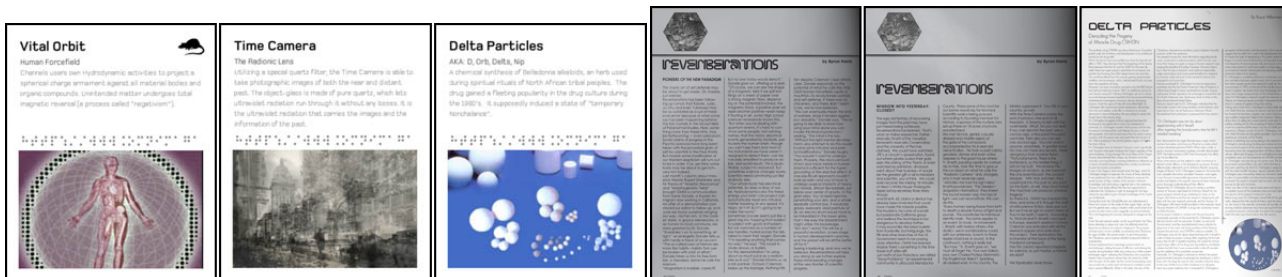
There was a login screen on the Jejune Institute website, just a field for the password and enter and ... then ... the website crashed. *Literally*. Menu bars suddenly obeyed gravity and smashed off-screen, other bits fuzzed out, items disappeared. The website URL switched to nonchalance.org and started power-diving through sub-directories ("3/11/3/wh/3/r/3") while briefly flashing paragraphs of large-type text I was unable to read. Then nothing. Then, immersion into a space with numerous cards floating about, agreeable tinkly music in the background.



There were so many cards! Each card had a bit of Braille on it which pointed to an external website; some cards had an associated "spirit animal." [Moondog](#), [Breatharianism](#), [Werner Erhard](#), and on, and on. Some of the cards had already been created by other players.



With a few of them, it was hard to tell if a card was a player or not. Three cards pointed to old Omni articles stored at [Omni Magazine Online](#).



The design and writing was pitch-perfect. In the Vital Orbit article, researcher Gene Donale demonstrated the forcefield – but he has no device, it's all mind power. "Without the right mental development, any attempt to do this would involve some intrusive and painful modifications [...] you'd have to undergo surgical implants of heavy iron toroids, almost like barbells, just below your center of gravity, in the groin area. You'd need injectors penetrating your skin, and a whole separate control box. It would be grossly awkward. Most painfully of all, an electro-shunt would have to be imbedded in the lower spine. That's the way the Establishment might utilize this knowledge." All of this spoken back in 1978 in front of his lab partner, Octavio Coleman. Oh, Coleman Esquire. What have you done.

Time Camera: Marcello Ermetti, a researcher involved with the project, is quoted: "Fortunatamente, there is the bottleneck, so this terrible thing, it will not be built. We receive the images at random, as we have not the one essential part, the Locator Module. With that, evil men, they could look into the past at any point on the Earth, at will. May God forbid!" A six-year-old "Evalyn" appears with her uncle Ed Nichols, a project sponsor. Near the end of the article, an interesting note: "[...] research assistant Octavio Coleman was entrusted with all the research papers and notes from the project. Their destination: the incinerator at the back of the Sangroidland compound." Oh, Coleman. Esquire.

Delta Particles: a drug used in the 1990's to achieve "temporary nonchalance." The article does not feature Octavio Coleman sneaking off stage right with a bubbling beaker.

The Algorithm: Similar to the Time Camera, The Algorithm "needs to be intellectually realized without the use of material devices" which could turn "the liberating qualities of the Algorithm into a 'coercive nightmare,'" according to its creator, a San Francisco math/financial whiz named Blair Lucien. A relative of Eva's? The article mentions a "family tragedy" and we're burrowing our way deep into a fictional world so yes.

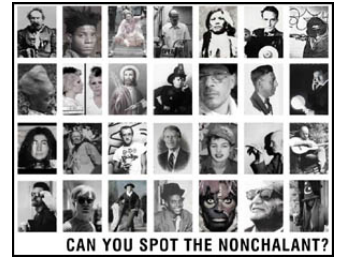
Of course the Jejune Institute's implementation of The Algorithm is machine-based. COLEMAN ESQ., YOU ARE MADSAUCE!

The nonchalance.org site homepage itself seemed to be a dead-end; ring symbols lazily inched their way left-to-right while a slow-going understated piano composition played in the background.



While I was still going through the cards, I accidentally typed "nonchalance.com" instead of ".org" and ended up at an entirely different site which featured the photos of 28 people with the text "CAN YOU SPOT THE NONCHALANT?" Each of the photos had a profile attached to it that also indicated their "Nonchalance Ratio" as a percentage. There were some people I didn't recognize, even after net research:

- Torry Hotprune (23%): Jejune Institute analyst; falling out with Coleman; now an Austin-based vagrant.
- Zachary Rodge Mo Levi (81%): Electrical engineering geek, LSD vacuum; last known contact in 1988, conducting "Polywater Experiments" with someone named Eric Jamuel.
- Roland Oswin Books (54%): one of the developers of the Time Camera; testing drinking water for mind-controlling pharmaceuticals.
- Lenard Septamus (88%): The guy who wrote the rant about Sun Yat-Sen.
- Kendal Laz (54%): A member of the "Savants" group; hasn't been heard from since 1999.



Eva's profile indicates that she has a 100% Nonchalance Ratio and is the daughter of Katherine/Blair Lucien. She was also part of the "Savants" crew of young San Francisco artists. Eva's nonchalance.org card points to a ginned-up SF Gate article from 1988 elaborating on her disappearance. Hounding the doppelgänger site revealed three other articles:

- September 5 1987: San Francisco Students Head Back to School which features what must be Eva executing a mild prank
- November 2 1987: Local Mischief Maker Does It Again: Galileo HS in Turmoil, a description of two more pranks, one based on the apocryphal "feeding pigeons on the football field" prank
- August 4 1991: Delta Particles: A Generation Asleep, an overview of the drug and an interview with one of its users who is clearly not Eva.



Two other "in-game" cards detail diaristic characters: a "Katy Zwick" who kept a weblog detailing her run-ins with the nonchalance symbol and other related items, and "Kelvin Williams," a librarian who was "peripherally associated" with the Savants and set up a weblog entitled "Remembering Eva" along with a small Eva tribute page on Angelfire. Had no idea Angelfire was still around, I thought maybe it had tripped, hit its head onna rock and quickly, mercifully expired.



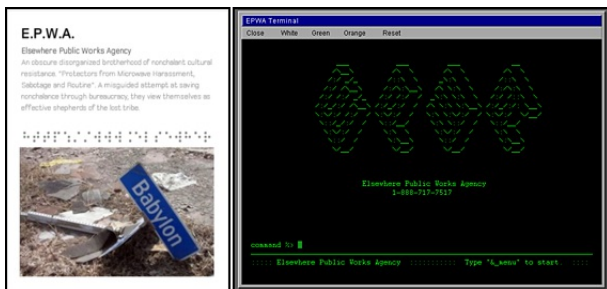
The Nonchaloir card referred to a hybrid Native American-European group of people that are the historical ancestors of Nonchalants. The Braille URL pointed to a nine-page paper describing this fusion in more detail; it begins with a quote from a non-existent book unwritten by Yoko Ono, *Time will Tell: The Truth of Nonchalance*. Sources are name-checked; apparently fake sources are fake/real name-checked.

The Nonchalance cultural group has made widespread contributions to the inspiration and hope existing in contemporary society today, especially in the United States. Though many scholars and critics argue that the movement was destroyed in the groups' persecution and dissemination by the US government in the 1800's, they have not gone. Being merely unacknowledged and hidden but in plain view, Nonchalance is omnipresent, infiltrating into society ideas of liberty, love, peace, collaboration, and the sharing of knowledge.



The EPWA had its own card and a portion of it read: "a misguided attempt at saving nonchalance through bureaucracy [...]" which ... what? I thought this site was EPWA-created. Not to say that self-criticism is verboten, but it seems like a rare bird, an organization (fake or not) that comes out and says "well, we're going about it the wrong way, but hey."

The card's URL leads to a website that looks like an olden-tyme computer terminal.



Commands are preceded by the string "&_"; for the menu, for example, you would type "&_menu". This is baffling, but in a funny way ... I can't remember ever having to prepend any sort of constant to common commands from my terminal-using days [FX: *moves slowly while making creaking noise*].

The site itself is filled with a series of pages describing snappy manifestoes and suggestions of strange administrative-type programs.

The Elsewhere Public Works Agency provides non-liable encouragement, suggestion, influence, direction & shoving towards potential Nonchalance. The EPWA does this through subverted suggestions & disguised guidance. These things & more are well known by the mysterious folks. Would you like this curiosity?

The EPWA's phone number featured a condensed version of some of these programs, including an obvious selection: "To hear the sound of a baby chinchilla, press four." I was *hammering* on that four key, you betcha.

MEDIA DOWNLOADS

Click the links in the window on that appears on the left side of the screen to start the following media downloads:

FLIERS :

These fliers are downloadable PDF files that you can print at home and post in your community.

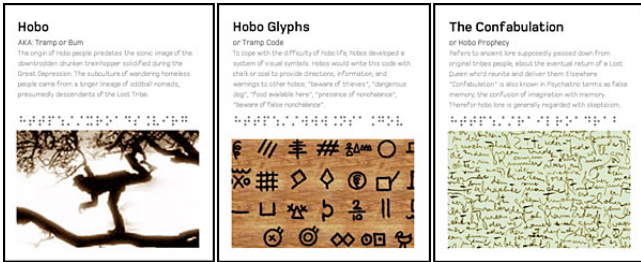
- * Dinosaur Riot : Revelations on the spirit of Nonchalance
- * Reward : E Jaumeu's warning regarding harrasment perpetrated on himself and wife
- * Warning, international 1 & 2 : Public notices re: the Jejune Institute

One section featured "media downloads" and included a flyer by a group/person/thing named "Dinosaur Riot." I had the feeling this artifact was "ground zero" in the philosophical claim-stake of "nonchalance." It took me awhile, but I finally recognized that the paragraphs of text on the flyer were the same ones that zip by when coming in for a landing at nonchalance.org. A sample:

Discovering IT, & then making IT easily apparent to others destroys the true nature of IT. When the curtain is thrown back, the spell is destroyed and what good are the destroyers of magic? What horrors will occur to those that break the spell? When they walk the lonely streets, what arcane mathematical emulations will cross into their mind from the echoing infinity of space and rewrite their entire synapse? We've been doing this for hundreds of years. WE'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!

Today, the Nonchalants leave secret markings to show the initiated where to look and what is a product of the true, ancient secrets. These things aren't originally pointed out or communicated using words or pictures, but are vibrationally transferred. The Hobos keep tabs on places and inform others using the crystal electro-magnetic photocopyer wave machine.

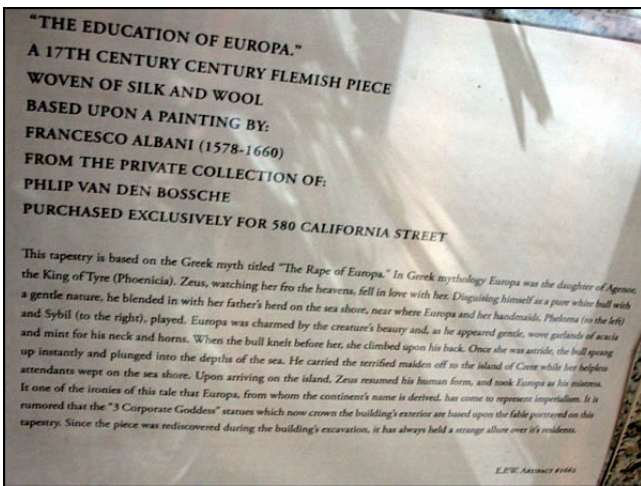
Mmmm, more delicious crystal technology. But: the hobos! Yes. The hobos. The hobos had three cards.



The "Hobo Glyphs" card had a handful of markings but two of them at the bottom looked suspiciously familiar: the ring symbol, and a variant of the symbol with an "X" through it. The "The Confabulation" card pointed to the [HEBREW HOBOPROPHET](#) weblog which was filled with words that could be related to each other and reminded me that there are many perspectives on life. It also indicated that the bit from the induction card referencing a "Lost Queen" is indeed The Confabulation; she was described as being the one to "reunite and deliver them to Elsewhere."

Just when I started thinking that all of this stuff was like drinking from a firehose, I ran across the Unforum, a BBS-type website set up for [alternate-reality gamers](#). Unforum had its own "Jejune Institute" discussion with posts going back to October. Oh god. I had bigger fish to fry, like constructing my to-scale toothpick model of the 20th Century. But this thing was a fun scratch to itch. Reluctantly setting aside my artisanal organic free-trade acai-flavored gluepot, I dove in. Some highlights:

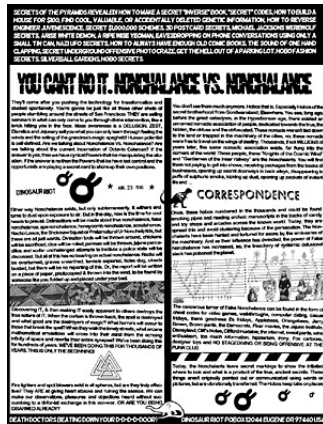
- October 3rd: Someone from the Jejune Institute posted a video of the Unforum member "Capt. King" rummaging around the office, shot from the half-hidden surveillance camera. "Here is a link to a very nosy Capn King during his induction," the link reads. The Unforum readers are understandably surprised.
- October 11th: The Jejune Institute posted another video, this one of another visitor who apparently camped out in the office for thirty minutes or so. It's a cozy space.
- October 21st: A forum member named "briareosH" posted two photos of the tapestry's placard. If you were up for fighting a very tall plant which obscured the placard, you'd see this:



The last bit of the paragraph reads: "... it has always held a strange allure over it's [sic] residents." The final bit at the end: "E.P.W. Artifact #1662."

He also posted photos of what was actually at the place that is marked on the "What you do not see" card from the envelope: some street markings that have the same ring-with-an-x-through-it symbol, "605," and an arrow. Zipping down to 605 Kearny, one found a higgledy-piggledy small convenience store marked with a "proper" ring on the window, but no further anything. Jason explored the area later and wrote: "So I've hit a wall here. Either this is a dead-end, or I'm totally missing something. Or, as CaptKing suggested to me on the phone, the x in each symbol is relevant, and just like the map from the Jejune Institute was a sort of learn-by-doing lesson on how to keep our eyes open for markings and clues, maybe this is an object lesson about false clues, where anything with an x in it can be safely assumed to be a false lead. False Nonchalance, as it were. Heh."

- October 22nd: Unforum members "BriareosH" and Capt. King notice that the nonchalance.org homepage has changed (at this point there were no cards available). It features an image of St. Thaddeus and read: "Go Light a candle. Say a little prayer for a truly lost cause & a desperate case. The site of our Shrine is under siege by the Unmasons. Look at the end of the Rainbow. (Last seen on the corner of Wilmont) A miracle may be unearthed." St. Thaddeus, "the Patron Saint of Lost Causes, Hopeless Cases, and Desperate Situations" has the highest "nonchalance ratio" on nonchalance.com, coming in at 110%. The location mentioned is right by [St. Dominic's Catholic Church](#) which features the [Shrine of Saint Jude Thaddeus](#). "Patron of the difficult and desperate." Haha, yeah, that's my boy.



- October 23rd: Capt King and Unforum member "Jenpop" visited the church, found the brick, dug, but there was nothing underneath. Of course a friend and I visited months later on a personal random holiday I call Unconventional Hat Day¹. The location of the non-buried treasure was indicated by a spray-painted diagram on the street, where it blended in quite nicely with all the other obscure pavement markings. There was nothing buried there, not that we dug or anything. No, seriously, we didn't dig. Sure, we *wanted* to, but I didn't want to get my hands fakedirty (see October 24th). Instead we paid our respects at the Thaddeus shrine while workers set up for Palm Sunday. Yes, we took off our *outré* hats.



- October 24th: Someone named "Commander 14" sends out an email:

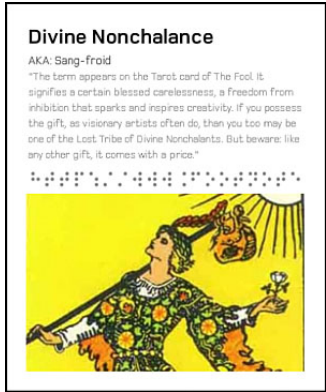
ATTENTION!
 ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::
 :::::
 Further knowledge may be acquired through prayer
 and other observation. Secrets of the pyramids will
 not be revealed here. No schemes included.
 Mass awareness is a DELUSION.
 ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::
 :::::
 Zest, Diaretics and Jejunery sell you what you can
 only learn through feeling the winds and the eating
 of the grandma's magic spaghetti!
 ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::
 :::::
 Human potential is self-defined.
 ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::
 :::::
 The miracle persists, your original path is right
 and true. Simply deepen your faith. And deeper still.
 ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::
 :::::
 The discovery belongs to no one {as of now}

Commander 14 has his own card; it reads: "Sky Pilot and probable EPWA collaborator. Ham radio announcer of the irregular audio bulletin 'Dispatches From Elsewhere.' Every few years or so the pirate program reappears in seemingly random frequencies and locations."

Also on that day, "LizSF" finds a cardboard box buried at the church. Someone's dirty hands appear in the photos, and it looks like a bit of flimflam; I have moved from Stage I of ARGing ("What? What?") to Stage II ("Suspect everyone"). Inside the box they found several odd trinkets, including a Tarot card depicting the fool, Mardi Gras beads, a page from Love & Rockets, and most importantly, a videotape labelled "St. Thaddeus Miracle 1989." There is a short clip of the St. Thaddeus shrine, a flame appears over the statue while a Latin sermon is being chanted. Latin also appears on the box; it is discovered that these are both the same phrase. As translated by member "Jason 7au" and a teacher friend of

his: "Praise God [Eva Lucienae] but with holiness endlessly; the powers of the divine are [nonchalant]." A theory is posited that this tape come from the Memory to Media Center, that it is someone's recorded memory. Eva's?

The image of the Tarot card also appears on one of the floaty cards: "Divine Nonchalance." Its associated URL at footnote.com describes divine nonchalance: "It signifies a certain blessed carelessness, a freedom from inhibition that sparks and inspires creativity. The phrase is used to describe certain peoples who possessed the gift. If you possess it, as visionary artists often do, than you too may be a descendent of the lost tribe of Nonchalants. [...] By definition the Nonchalant is wonderfully scattered, and lacking in all direction. The ride is fantastic, but the destination remains uncertain." Later I discover that this page had been created by one of the Savants, "Tawny."



- October 26th: Jason mentions that the Media to Memory Center hasn't contacted anyone who's left a message.
- November 3rd: The EPWA sends out a message in Esperanto. "It has become the unofficial language of Nonchalance intertribal communications," indicates the associated Esperanto card. Yes. Esperanto has its own card. Everything seems to have its own card. A translation was posted by Unforum member "Tomjames":

We would not blame you for bending the rules,
that's the only way to know where the rules are
or which ones are important.

Still, to explore, happy participator.
You own Godly way is not found.

But remember: when the curtain has been thrown
back the spell is easily destroyed and what good are
the destroyers of magic?

This seemed to be related to another card that was recently posted indicating that Capt King was in a state of "requital" which, say it with me now: *has its own card*.

Tomjames also indicated that he had come across "secret Nonchalant communications" which turned out to be Esperanto versions of a lot of texts – the 3ls3wh3r3 pages, cards, email messages, and Omni articles with special Esperanto header graphics. "Kiu estas en konflikto? (Kiu vi estas?)" Tomjames was probably a disposable one-time-use in-game character.

CaptKing

AKA: The Meddler

A competitive "ARG" player, CaptKing mistakenly believed he was among the first to complete the Jejune Institute San Francisco induction session. Equipped with a video camera he set out to document the entire experience online. It is very likely that he missed something along the way. He is currently in a state of Requitat.

The Requitat

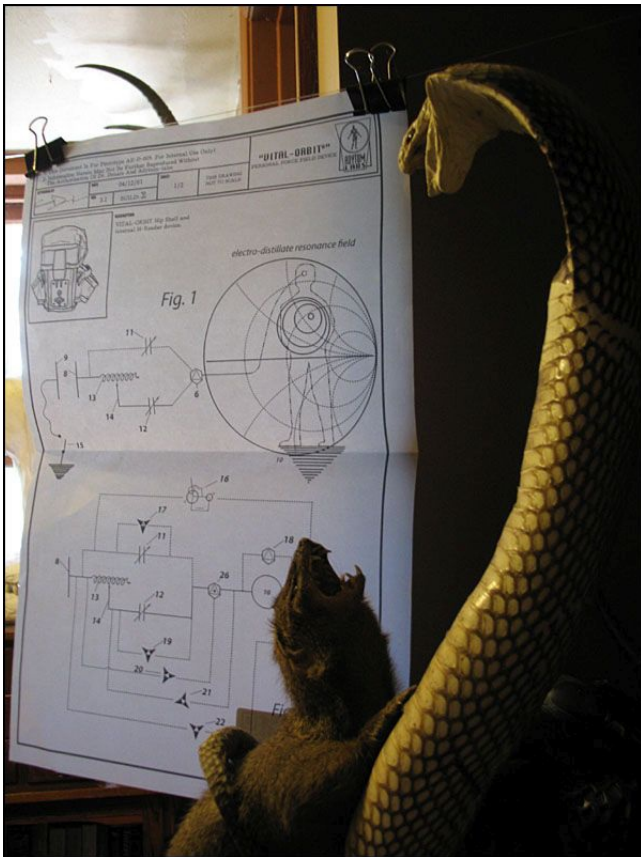
AKA: Hobo Justice

Amongst Nonchalance there's an ingrained code by which the spirit of a "thing" is honored. When individuals choose not to recognize the essence of another's entity, they become excluded from that network/system. This karmic structure is called "The Requitat". Absentment can be established; i.e. there are corrective measures to be taken.

- November 1st. Timecraft 13 turned out to be a mysterious [black step-van](#) that occasionally stopped by the Ashby flea market. Not an actual in-game stepping stone; the Timecraft 13 card was one of several that have been created to be investigated for the sake of curiosity. Novelty quenching.
- November 10th. Unforum guest "MikeBerkeley" noticed that the requital card linked to an earlier Unforum page, which had an entry from Capt King linking to a complete Google Maps walk-through of the Jejune Institute walkabout. "I only make a big deal out of this because both the requital card and EPWD [sic] letter both suggest some sort of lack of respect for the spirit of the game on our part." At some point Capt King removed the walkthrough and his card was later updated to indicate that he was no longer in a state of requital.
- November 13th. In-game character Kelvin Williams posted [Eva's arrest report](#). In addition, you could now add your own cards to the Nonchalance.org site.
- November 17th. An email the Jejune Institute sent out included a paragraph entitled FALLACIOUS PRODUCT WARNING that detailed a recent Ebay listing for a Vital-Orbit Human Force Field. "This device was produced without input or supervision from the Jejune Institute and should be consideredrogue technology. Please, warn family and friends about this potential dangerous product." Capt King emailed the seller ("ParticleSavant"), and a side deal was arranged: for two dollars, he will sell copies of the Vital Orbit schematic to any/all takers.
- November 22nd. Unforum member "Organelle" won the Vital Orbit Human Force Field auction. He indicated that he also got a manual with it, which was in Esperanto.
- December 1st. Since Kelvin Williams was a librarian, he of course had been using his administrative powers off the clock and had been figuring out what books [Eva checked out from the library in the past](#). Images in his post showed that Eva has left notes in the margins, including the ring symbol:

Another thing that does come up here is the symbol. It's the one in the second clip, right next to the pigeon (or as she often would call it, an "urban phoenix"). She would mark that symbol a lot of places. I still don't know exactly what she meant by it. I asked her once, after she had drawn it on the stage at Gilman, what it meant. She simply said "Nonchalance." And then she smiled.

- December 10th. Kelvin Williams posted [more books that Eva had checked out](#).
- December 16th. Capt King received his schematic and posted it to Unforum. So I ordered it myself after reading about it. It was dated April 12th 1981 and originates from Adytum Labs (595 anagrams include "mutably sad" "lab am dusty" and "yams tub lad" (YAMS!)) – Gene Donale was your go-to guy for reproduction authorization. Wow, Gene went from indicating (in the Omni magazine article) that a force field device would be "grossly awkward" to actually participating in the construction of one in only three years. Gene ... Gene. The capitulation machine. There were two QR code icons on the back of the schematic. You can see the edge of them in this photo ... they're just behind the mongoose, why don't you reach for them?

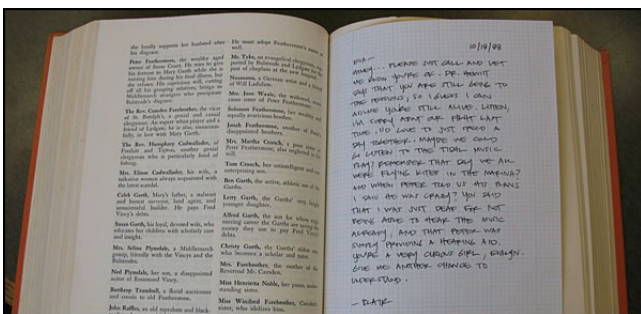


You're hesitating. Are you afraid? I think this is true. I will get them for you.

The more complex QR code read "elsewherepublicworks.com"; the other "&_invent". If you typed that command into the EPWA BBS, it would bring up an IM chat log from July 25th, 1989. Jason figured out that the coded names in the log were actually Torry Hotprune, Blair Lucien, Dr. Jane Hewitt, Gene Donale, Roland Oswin Books, Erik Jamual, and Commander 14. Torry mentioned that their "former company is cribbing tech." C14 believed they're a very suspect organization, then suggested going to 580 California and "take the service elevator! Sapelle Mahogany. I repeat: Sapelle Mahogany." Blair suggested a "dead drop" location as a way to communicate: "It's at the Mission Branch Library. In Magill's Cyclopedia. Code word: Puck."

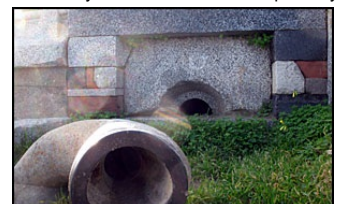


- December 18th. Capt. King received his "Little Black Box of Nonchalance" which was recently made available for purchase at the Elsewhere Public Works website. It contained stickers, fence signs, an ID card, and a letter.
- December 20th. BriareosH went to the Mission Branch Library and found a letter in Magill's Cyclopedia tucked away in A Midsummer's Night Dream. The photo looked odd, like the note was written on a blank page in the book (the photo below is my own). This didn't make any sense, having a blank page in the middle of a book ... so I figured an image-editing piece of software was involved at some point. This got me Stage II false-itchy.



The note, from Blair to Eva, indicated that she's seeing Dr. Hewitt, but hasn't seen her father in awhile. It also made a reference to "tidal music" and "flying kites in the marina."

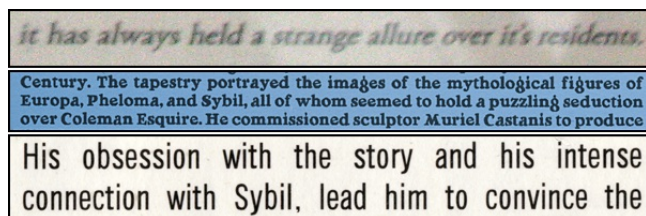
- December 28th. Organelle figured out that "tidal music" was a reference to the marina-based [Wave Organ](#). He visited it and found a boatload of tiny rocks. Each rock was repeatedly marked with the nonchalance glyph; they all were clustered around a hole that contained another letter encased in a tube. The photo was from a week later; you can see the remnants of the nonchalance symbol above the hidey-hole. Blair's letter was dated October of 1991; it'd been three years since he'd seen his daughter. He mentioned working on the Algorithm and meeting the Savants ("Del," "Play2," "Chloe," "Tawny"). Later, fueled with a belief that Blair's second letter may have been a code, I wrote some really janky computer programs to analyze it (SFX: *BEEP BOOP BEEEEEP BOPE*) – take the first letter of each word, take the nth word, take the nth column, etc. Couldn't find anything except a migraine ("oh! I had been looking for that!").



I had finally reached the end of the Unforum archives.

¹ Other non-paid holidays include but are not limited to Packing Tape Mummy Day, Pedal Cars Take The City Day, One Gumdrop Per Hour Day, Don't Us Th Ltr™ That Much Day, Paint Tiny Seascapes On Lampposts Day, Three Picnics Day, and Fun-Time Jumping Up And Splaying Legs Day. For more information, please consult your employee handbook.

After I was all caught up with the Unforum archives, I sat back and thought a bit like this: "think think think think." How many times had the mysterious power of the tapestry been mentioned? Three times ... on the placard, on the die-cut postcard and on the induction form.



Well, you don't have to tell me three times. Actually, apparently you do. So what about these three "mythological figures"?

- Europa: The placard very nearly aligns with the Greek myth "The Rape of Europa" except that in the actual myth her attendants are not named. One website suggests that Europa represented a (possibly symbolic) lunar cow. Lunar cow. Got it.
- Pheloma: Appears as a Greek word defined as "a deceit, deception" in [The NewNation](#) by John Morris. There is also the microscopic/near-microscopic "wheel animal" named *Cephalodella pheloma*. According to one website, "Cephalodella pheloma is rare; we have found only a few specimens among Fontinalis and submerged sphagnum growing in soft, acid water in a shallow pond at Estellville, near Atlantic City, New Jersey." It's living in *acid* in *New Jersey*. Cephalodella pheloma is a *bad-ass*.
- Sybil: "Sybil" was first mentioned by Heraclitus in the 5th century BC, credited with prophecy via the gods. Then, in 1976 AD, Sally Field won a specially-constructed 16-headed Emmy for her titular role in the made-for-TV TV movie "Sybil" about a woman with a dissociative identity disorder.

Wasn't there a book on Sybil in the induction office? Yes. Maybe there's something in that book. But that would mean that they expect people to visit the office three times – once for the induction, once after the walkabout, and then again for the book. That doesn't make any sense. Or, really, you were supposed to process the tapestry/induction card/die-cut card before re-appearing on the 16th floor ... "okay, thanks for this second pleasant-to-hold key/key fob, and afterward I'd like to do the induction again." Crazy.

I wasn't going to be in the city any time soon, so I just posted a query on the forum to see if anyone had looked at the Sybil book. I also indicated that perhaps "sapelle mahogany" was the wood in the service elevator. Less than a day later, briareosH posted a link to the Esperanto version of the nonchalance texts. Here's where it gets funny. Given briareosH's earlier photo post that looked like a ginned-up version of Blair's first letter, and now this post, I thought briareosH was an in-game character admonishing me indirectly via the nonchalance texts ("when the curtain has been thrown back the spell is easily destroyed and what good are the destroyers of magic?") for posting a spoiler. All I could think was "Man, I don't wanna be in requital *I don't wanna be in requital*." So I immediately erased most of the post, leaving the part about the elevator wood.



And then briareosH erased HIS post. For me this was confirmation; never mind that someone else had mentioned in the mean time that the link had already been posted and that's probably why he removed it. This also meant I had to go see that book for myself.

I set out for the city a few days later with a J/EPWA laundry list. First stop: the Emperor Norton Inn. The in-game character Katy Zwick had a semi-cryptic post that mentioned "The Emperor of the West" and nonchalance.com had a profile of Emperor Norton. Nothing was there, so I moved on to the library, to see if the books that Eva had checked out had any more secrets to reveal. While my eyeballs valiantly fought the [optically-distressing carpet](#), I found that the exact books shown in the photos had no marginal texts added – it was an image-editing job. I also found two copies of Magill's Cyclopedica and noted with errant satisfaction that the page that looked blank in briareosH's photo was definitely not blank Stage II Stage III!!!

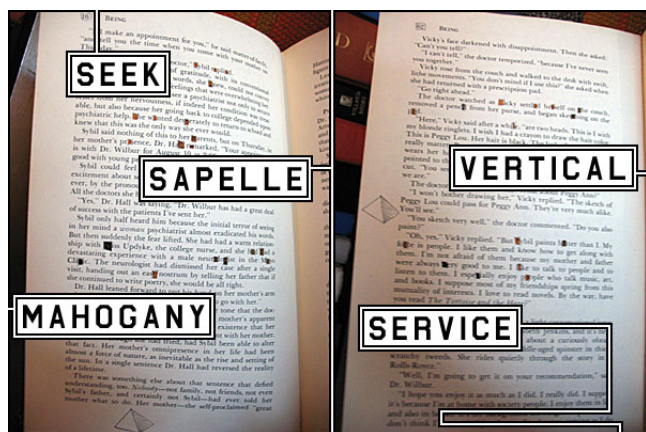
After that I went to the Wave Organ, which was sort of bittersweet for me because I had just been here with giant leaf gal discussing the inevitable fast-approaching permanent end of our days together, a complete coincidence. There was a geocache here with log books that had been signed by a lot of people including Organelle and ... briareosH??? But he's in-game, man! He's IN-GAME!!!



Around this time I typed "jejune" into my cheap roddy cellphone – and got a correction because the dictionary didn't have the word "jejune" in it. The correction read: "kelvin." You're a little bit late on that one, Mr. Cellphone, but thank you for the tidbit (Mr. Cellphone passed away in early May of this year – R.I.P.).

I told another friend, Crumbly Donut, about the Jejune Institute in the most obtuse way possible ("it's this ... thing ... that you must ... do ..."). Crumbly Donut went as soon as he could; I tagged along because I obviously had my own fish to fry. When we got to 580 California, Yams didn't come down to greet us; when we got to the 16th floor, she was a he. While Crumbly Donut was mesmerized by the video, I flipped through the *Sybil* book, half-laughing to myself because I knew nothing was going to be inside.

Except on pages 16 and 62.



The little pyramids on the pages were obviously big fat fingers pointing to the book right next to *Sybil: Pyramid Power*. I rifled through the book, didn't see anything. Confusion. Dejection.

Our next stop was lunch. I told Crumbly Donut that I had some extra information that I needed to act on, and I could tell him about it after he went through the motions with the card and we would figure it out together, or he could do the research on his own and maybe eventually we'd synch up, no pressure and good luck. He chose the former, and with that we left the restaurant to go on his EPWA-guided walkabout. While we roamed the city, I kept quiet about anything game-related and paid special attention to my body language – I wanted to avoid the Clever Hans effect as much as possible, though Crumbly Donut does like oats and sugar cubes. While at the lockboxes, we saw an EPWA fence sign I hadn't noticed before. Kiss that fence goodbye! Crumbly Donut had a hard time with the alley posters, but found the missing phone immediately. After Crumbly got an eyeful of 3ls3wh3r3, I blathered on about what I had found. Then we shuffled toward the reception area; he wanted to see if Mr. Yams knew anything about the new information.



"So what do you think about that elevator wood, 'sapelle mahogany?'"
"Oh yeah ... you know which one I like ... the 'burl walnut.'"

Dead end. After we ended up on the ground floor, Crumbly Donut suggested (through action alone) a canvassing of elevator bank woods. There were what, eight, nine elevators? He pressed the button, an elevator came. He ducked inside, glanced at the plaque. Pressed the button again, a different elevator showed up. Shuffle shuffle glance. The elevator bell rang as each one arrived. It was Saturday and the place was deserted. The security guard was only 30 feet away. Ding! ... ding! ... ding! We *infested* that elevator bank. One of them was sapelle mahogany, but it clearly was not a service elevator. At one point Crumbly Donut hopped aboard one without a word and disappeared. "TWO CAN PLAY AT THIS GAME!!!" I didn't scream and jumped in another. I ended up on the 12th floor walking around what was clearly a satellite Jejune Institute operation what with the *offices* and *hallways* and such. When breaching office areas, have a piece of paper in your hand and look *determined* but not too determined because that's *constipated*. After sitting in on a few meetings, I rode the elevator back down to the ground floor. It was a fun day of permeating elevator happiness.

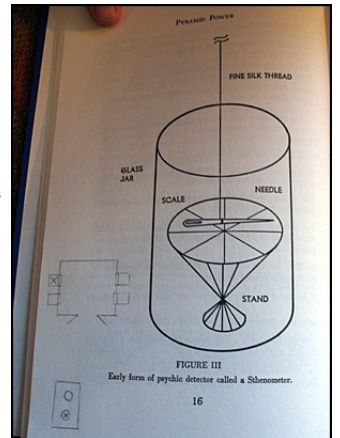
I had a wayward thought that maybe the pyramid stood for the Transamerica Building. Crumbly Donut humored me, so off we went. The Transamerica Building is a pyramid-shaped pyramid filled with ancient Egyptian treasures/dead royalty or modern efficiency cubicles/working stiffs ... I could go either way on this one. We approached the front doors.

"More security guards."
"And they're just going to stop us."
"I wouldn't even know what to say. This isn't it."

Crumbly Donut and I bailed and ended up in another part of the city. At some point Crumbly Donut was talking about going home, ending the day's adventure. "Wait. I want to go back. I really didn't get a good look at the Pyramid Power book." This was something I wasn't sure about – maybe they'd turn us away? For some reason Crumbly Donut entertained my daft notions again and we returned to the receptionist's desk. Third time's the charm. Who uses the word "charm" anymore? Charm. Charrrrrrrrm. Lucky Charms. Isn't that redundant? "You'll never lay a hand on my Auspiciously Favorable Lucky Charms." Crumbly Donut provided cover.

"We loved the induction so much we want to go again."

Straight to the book while we were being Britishly auto-welcomed. There, on page 16, a map of the elevators on the floor (16th!) indicated which one was the service elevator, and another small graphic indicating that one should push the "down" button. Page 16. Duh. Same as the Sybil book, same as the Unmason brick. 16 I can understand, it's the floor number and every locker would be prefaced with it ... but 62? Was that just assigned to them, and they ran with it? Or did they choose it? Page 16 also featured a lovely diagram of a Sthenometer which was used in these olden days of psychic detection to root out sthenos. Page 62 didn't have anything except, of course, critical passages about the awesome power of pyramids (personally I mold/carve all my food into pyramid shapes before eating – believe me when I proclaim I will *never rust*). I put the book away and we shuffled by reception again, pushing the "down" button on the common elevator panel. Vague mumbling between us ... how is this ... what ... ? Then my brain kicked into gear and noticed the *second* panel sitting on the side wall of the elevator marked on the map. "Ah, ah ah." Another button was pushed.



The regular elevator arrived due to my errant button-push, but it was *shunned*. After awhile it got the hint and went back down to hang with its friends. Then the service elevator arrived. There were pads placed over the rich luxurious psycho-sensual tropical African panels which any proper wood boffin could tell you was sapelle mahogany. The doors closed and we started to descend. So, what now? Uhhh. We tried to stop the elevator on a lower floor, but it was as if the entire button panel had been deactivated. Because it was.

Oh.

Shit.

This was a psycho-sensual elevator. We were probably headed for ground floor, or the basement. So we had less than 16 stories (12 ... 11 ...) to figure out exactly what to do in an elevator we had no control over. A friend later told me that she "would have cried" had it happened to her.

No, we did not cry. We did not cry, my kittens. We were Prepared for this. I approached the pads and started flipping them, looking for big clues underneath. For some reason Crumbly Donut immediately went to where the wood indicator plaque usually is. He flipped the pad. He was seeking sapelle mahogany.

Underneath the pad there were *two* plaques. The upper one told us all about elevator wood. The lower one did not.

BEWARE FALSE JEJUNERY
become attuned 107.9 FM Upper Dolores Park Area

We were so carried away with staring at this plaque, trying to get a good shot of it – in case it had turned out to be a word puzzle or some such in addition to a direction – that we didn't notice the doors opening. And the security guard behind them.

"What are you doing here you're not supposed to be in here!!"

We voiced our apologies and shuffled out of there. Was she in on it? She had to see us looking at the double plaque. And what about all of the people coming into 580 but leaving "undetected by front door security?" Did the people organizing it tell the guards there's going to be some abnormal stuff going on, or did they just hope for the best?



While we were wending our way to Dolores Park, I had an errant thought: "Well, Dr. Hal has to be involved, somehow." As soon as we parked and tuned into the radio broadcast, there was Dr. Hal, talking about nonchalance. An excerpt:

"You like cartoons, don't you? Of course you do. Everyone likes ... cartoons. Now picture in your mind a cartoon character, any cartoon character, sleeping. You've seen this cartoon before, haven't you? Observe, as our animated protagonist stumbles blindly out of bed, down the stairs, and out the front door, onto a busy street. He easily but narrowly dodges impending danger, seemingly without effort or awareness. [...] It's a certain definite attribute this character possesses, to be able to stumble and goof through life, with nary a care, prodigiously protected and provided for by the invisible hand of good fortune. This ability, to be supported and guided by extraordinary good luck, is called ... Divine Nonchalance."

The broadcast ran for about eight minutes then looped. There were certain phrases like "buried deep beneath the arctic tundra" and "for they are but whited sepulchers" that made us think maybe there was an Arctic Street in San Francisco or perhaps we were being guided to the Columbarium, etc. These ideas were eventually dismissed as feverish ravings of desperate, unsound minds. Of craziness.

I went back to transcribe the radio broadcast days later, and the first time I heard it, as I was driving up to the park, I was *sure* I heard Commander 14 say the word "alphabet" during a bout of static. I became obsessed with this because of other phrases in the broadcast: "Use your key and follow the signs," "Follow the secret instructions enumerated in this broadcast." How vicious would that be, to have a broadcast that loops nine times, say, and has a slight change on the tenth? After listening to a clear broadcast several more times, I gave up (desperate, unsound, etc). The broadcast ended with a woman's voice: "This has been a particle of an upcoming radio transmission from the Elsewhere Public Works Agency to be broadcast on this channel in this location at a point in time within January of 2009."

So I wrote to the EPWA asking if February was key.

As are most EPWA efforts, Commander Fourteen's Radio Nonchalance transmissions are both sporadic and unpredictable. Having said that, a special dispatch from Elsewhere is due,

and divine nonchalance may just prevail in this case. Difficult to tell, really.

It sounded like February was key.

While we were waiting for February, Commander 14 dropped some overt arrows on everyone via text messages:

ATTENTION! Nonchalance is on the move! Yet there are KNOWN VECTORS at KNOWN LOCATIONS, placed right under thine NOSE! Lose your nerve?

Refer to tomes: THE WANDERER and POLYHEDRON ENERGIES on pgs. of KNOWN VALUES. Revisit transcripts! And INVENT your trajectory. Over/out: C14.

February showed up right on time a day later. A new command appeared on elsewherepublicworks.com ("&_radio") which described both the radio station details and "Faye's Video, Shoe Lace Recycling Drop-Off & Espresso Bar" at 3614 18th Street where one could borrow radios free of charge. Jewel-encrusted radios.



So let's pretend we borrowed a radio right then. And then we went to Dolores Park to listen to the new broadcast. Like this.



The program was most of the January broadcast with an additional 40 or so minutes added. Among the topics covered:

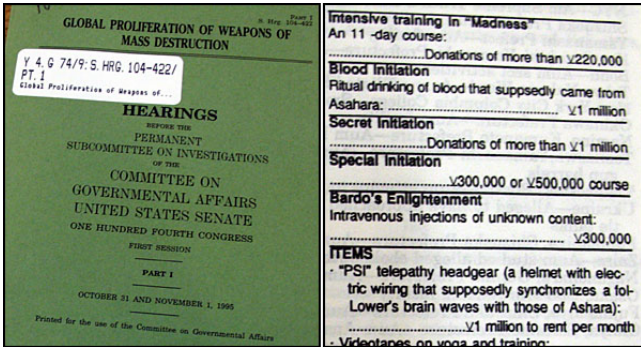
- A description and locations of a CD available for purchase: *The Sound of Ascension: Audio Kool-Aid From The 70's Most Eccentric Cults and Communes*. As Commander 14 indicated, "by playing and re-playing these cult music selections, you can arrive at a better understanding of your duty and destiny as nonchalants."
- The high desirability of hobo coins. "You are going to require experience and immersion in the world of nonchalance. To do so you must have the proper currency. United States coins and folding money do not operate in the sphere of nonchalance. I repeat, your standard money is unacceptable for nonchalant transactions. The currency of nonchalance is the 'hobo coin.' Superficially resembling a wooden nickel, this is an ultra-rare currency of unknown value. [...] It can be acquired from various local street personalities, so-called bums and buskers ... inheritors of the hobo tradition. These could be street prophets, apparent lunatics, but they are your source of hobo currency." The transmission went on to indicate that the hobos were really putting themselves out there, in terms of opposition to the nefarious Jejune Institute, so give 'em a tip, yes. Some people on Unfiction tried a command, "&_coin," and were rewarded with a short piece of text explaining that "a number of our field operatives have gone missing for unknown reasons" and to check back in the "near future."
- The high desirability of nonchalant teeth. "Although the currency of nonchalance is the hobo coin, the tooth of a nonchalant, especially preserved in a nonchalant sanctuary, is equally essential. If not more so. If you wish to receive a tooth, or purchase one with the special coinage of nonchalance, there are outlets. But one must not be too overt about it. At [Paxton Gate](#), 824 Valencia at 19th Street, the teeth of nonchalants may be available. It might be a good idea to attempt to gain them."
- An interview with Lea Redmond, owner of The [World's Smallest Post Service](#). "Letters sent through the WSPS are physically very small, they're actually smaller than the size of a regular stamp. But they come complete with an envelope, a teeny-tiny wax seal, and a little address. I think when things get very small, they make us slow down and sort of notice

them more. It brings a little bit of Elsewhere to here." Her home base is [The Curiosity Shoppe](#) at 855 Valencia Street.

After listening to the entire broadcast, we tootled on over to Force of Habit Records to pick up a CD. At first the guy had no idea what we were on about but quickly glommed and dug up a copy. We then went to The Curiosity Shoppe, but the World's Smallest Postal Service wasn't around. We went to Paxton Gate, there were teeth there, but they were dinosaur teeth. Crumbly asked about wooden nickels. They knew nothing. After we had left, Crumbly said, "Well, do you think that was it?" because earlier I had said it was just a suggestion to pop in and look inside, not really understanding the gravity of the situation. "Yeah," I said.



Back at Crumbly Donut's place, we eyeballed the CD and some of the liner notes were about Peggy Lucien, Eva's mother: "Among her many unfathomably unique qualities was the fact that she had actually joined and followed five out of the nine communities represented in this collection." One of the tracks on the CD was created by Aum Shinrikyo, the Japanese cult that released sarin on several Tokyo subways in 1995, killing twelve people. Let's take a casual look inside the Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: Hearings Before Oh Just Read The Photo book which contains an article on the beliefs and practices of Aum Shinrikyo. Appendix B features a list entitled "The Cost of Devotion": training/items that visitors and followers to/of Aum Shinrikyo were/were ordered to undergo/purchase.



I like the "supposedly" weasel word, I enjoy pretending it's a freaky variant of Pascal's Wager. To approximately convert the list's yenned items to dollars, just scrape off the last two zeros. For example, Bardo's Enlightenment, a delightful series of injections of "unknown content," would set you back about 3000 USD. That's a bargain in any currency, though I'm a bit more partial toward the eleven-day intensive training course in "Madness." Cheaper than the shots, too! But one shouldn't be looking for a cut-rate path to enlightenment, oh heavens no. Cults co\$t. Do not be poor if you want to join a cult. We are not interested. I mean *they*. They. They are not interested.

Then Crumbly found a seekrit hidden track on the CD (#62, duh) that was a 17-minute recording of a young Eva and her mother travelling to Elsewhere in REAL TIME. A sound engineer started the track off by giving the latitude and longitude of the start location, and then: "Tape is engaged at Chula Lane and Abbey Street facing Southwest." A quick star wipe and we're there as well, standing at a convenient road marker pointing the way to begin the journey to Elsewhere. The feet are facing the exact wrong way because ... well, I don't know why. Anyway: REVERSE ONWARD!



Eva kicked things off by counting down with her mom (christened "Penelope") and addressing "Brightwell," the listener (you).

"Let's start walking Northeast on Chula Lane. [...] You can see the old cemetery on our left. Thousands of Indians who died of Spanish diseases were buried right here. They're underneath us, right now. [...] People think it only took a few days to make an Indian hut, but it actually took a few months."

The fenced-in cemetery is part of Misión San Francisco de Asís ("Mission Dolores"), the oldest building in San Francisco, but it wasn't open. It actually survived the big earthquake of 1906 whereas a building right next to it collapsed. The Misión is constructed of adobe. This bears repeating: *the oldest building in San Francisco is made of earth*. If you would like to work with adobe because of its low cost (\$0), heat retention, cradle-to-cradle material properties and other reasons, go suck an egg because by the time you leap through the government's pernicious permit process hoops of fire, you'll probably pay *more* than you would for a "comparable" grossly inefficient typical standard American home that is built to [self-destruct and burn like crazy](#). Weird how that works out, it's almost like the government is more interested in generating income for itself than anything else (Cf. [Garbage Warrior 1 2](#)). America continues to exhaust itself fighting the environment, fighting the land, because there's a buck to be had doing so. Whoa, where am I?



We found some metal discs marked "PATENT PEND. CITY OF NEW ORLEANS U.S.A." anchored in the ground, surrounding Mission Dolores and the church next door at regular intervals. I saw them in New Orleans awhile back and wondered what they were; my friend who had wondered the same thing figured it out during his previous trip and he wisely left us all hanging out to dry. I don't remember if we got close or actually figured it out, but yeah, I'm going to leave you hanging as well. It is a puzzle that you can solve with your brain, not the internet.

Peggy at one point heard a noise, but Eva explained that it was [Pomponio](#), a "mute ghost that talks to me sometimes on the playground." Then they crossed 16th and onto the large landscaped median of Dolores Street. Peggy started counting the palm trees, and we ended up at one with some strange markings.



The fairies have

visited this date palm! "They come and go as they please ... Elsewhere, in fact. It's like a secret shortcut to Elsewhere, but we're too big to fit in it." I will now list major date shake purveyors, ranked in order of awesomeness 1-2-3.

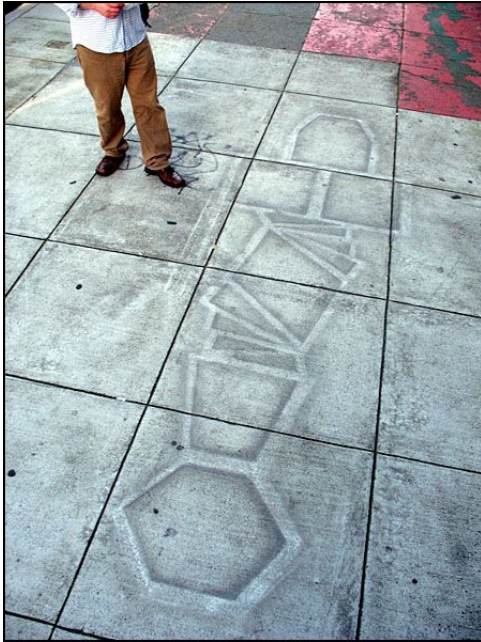
- [China Ranch Date Farm](#). Tecopa CA.
- [Dateland Palms](#). Dateland AZ.
- [Shield's Date Garden](#). Indio CA.

Then Peggy started zoning out with semi-intelligible babble and Eva had to yell and clap her hands to get her to snap out of it. "See the lamps on those buildings? I hate those lamps. Remember the fairies I told you about? That's the dungeon for the fairies ... they get stuck in there all the time." "Here we are at Commander 14's house ..." At this point Crumbly walked up to a guy tending the yard of the house and asked him if he knew anything about Commander 14. He did not. "... and right next door is our house!"



There's an empty lot next door to the house. Later on, I accidentally fell into some research on the area. It didn't make sense to me that the lot next door *was* a lot always and forever, I imagined (using the power of imagination) that Eva's house *was* on that lot and it had since been scraped. You know, I'm always reaching for the bittersweet, though the other contending house wasn't doing so hot either. There was a [church](#) on that corner lot at one time (which came from this [1956 v. 2007 comparison](#)). The church was destroyed in 1993 in a fire. The home next to it was slated for demolition in 2008; there's more about the church in [this article](#). And ... I'm just noticing this now: there's a photo of the church in one of the windows of the house. The mind ... a steel trap of trapping.

Eva dropped her books off with Blair at the house, and then exclaimed: "Let's play hopscotch! [...] This is a game of Interdimensional Hopscotch. It helps you practice how to get to Elsewhere." And right at our feet, there are some faded lines that look like a warped hopscotch board. Eva started calling out seemingly-random hops: "1 4 7 E triangle L blue 2" and then hit some sort of Warp Zone and called out from across 15th. "BRIGHTWELL! I'M OVER HERE!" After this, she recited Shel Silverstein's "Where The Sidewalk Ends." A little while later, as they're walking by one of the horrible microwave harassment cabinets that plague the cityscape, Eva said "I always get headaches when I walk by these green boxes." Peggy concurred and they walked faster to escape the awful emanations. On our walk, it was be-stickered, thus warning the populace at large about the danger. Then she asked Eva how she drew her hopscotch boards, and it was about then that we noticed a second Interdimensional Hopscotch board. They crossed Guerrero, ran into another hopscotch board and cabinet, a pretty bike with streamers and such, a tree, and pointed out a candy shop that made the best "toffee suckers." Then Eva said hello to Mr. Books: "HI MR. BOOKS!!!!" He helped develop THE TIME CAMERA!



After a small walking interlude: "Here we are. Look down. [whispers] You can tell we're getting closer to Elsewhere ... because things get smaller here and quieter ..."



I knocked on the door, no one answered. I checked the lock, but I didn't want to get a tiny B&E so we left.



While waiting for the day of the event, we happened to be randomly strolling past 580 California and asked a whole bohemian if he had any hobo coins on him. He spoke in a language we barely understood, though it was liquor-breath-accented. He was not a carrier. Some time after that, I was attending the The 2nd Annual NorCal Regional Grilled Cheese Invitational and noticed [Frank Chu](#), who certainly qualified as a "local street personality." He didn't know what I was on about. He had no coins. Though he did have a card.

On the day of, Crumbly had an appointment around the same time so we teamed up. On the way, we ran into some street art that *sounded* familiar.



Pobresito? That was one of the posters in Cooper Alley. That little bastard shore likes boobies, I'll tell you what.

When it was close to my appointed time, I went down to the payphones and had a look around for people who didn't fit the landscape. It was raining. There was one guy with an open briefcase near the bus stop that I wanted to hover around for awhile, but it was almost three and [SFX: RING RING] no time.

I picked up the phone; it didn't work. Then I got a call on my cellphone. It was Commander 14. "Now listen carefully. I am going to need your pass phrase." I obliged, and C14 continued: "Attention! The green energy archons are thought to be affecting a class seven penetration across the secret frontier. The closure of a temporal vacuole is imminent, repeat, imminent! Without physical jamming to offset trans-neural interference, a negative loop cascade sequence could be initiated. Absolute concentration and elimination of lag time will determine the vectors set by this operation, concluding in decryption mode 'Chinchilla.' Err wait! Did you hear that? This line has been compromised! Further communications must be re-initiated at another, more secure location." C14 described where the second payphone was and had another code phrase at hand to prevent interlopers from horning in on this critical communique.

"When I say 'ornithopter' you say 'jumpsuit.' Ornithopter!"
 "Jumpsuit!"
 "Ornithopter!"
 "Jumpsuit!"

Unfortunately I couldn't quite make out the bit in which C14 indicated which way to go on 24th. West ... or East? He mentioned something about "cars and art" and there wasn't much art to the West, so I went the other way and found some art in a tiny parking lot.



A nearby phone rang.

"Ornithopter!"
 "Jumpsuit!"

"Now we can get this transaction rolling. The time is nigh. Now, listen quickly. Dance! You heard me, dance! I say, dance! It is imperative that you now dance, I hope you dance. This interaction can not happen without rigorous physical jamming. Now get off this phone, and DANCE, MOTHERFUCKER!"

So I danced a little peppy dance in the rain. A B-boy type carrying a giant 1980s jambox entered the parking lot from down the street. He was smiling at me, I was smiling at him, because we both knew something was going down, he was a part of it, and I was about to be. He set the jambox down on the ground. He started dancing. Music started up from a black SUV parked forty feet from the phone. The passenger door was open. I ... should go over there? I danced over there. A woman in the driver's seat laughed and waved me back, I laughed and danced back to the phone. Then the sasquatch type appeared. First there was no sasquatch; then, there was a sasquatch. I didn't notice where it came from. Seemed seven feet tall. It began dancing with us. We all danced in the rain. After the song ended, everyone stopped, a "heavenly chorus" started singing, and the sasquatch slowly lowered a flat package to me at arm's length. I grabbed it, we stood there for a moment or three both holding the package, and then the sasquatch let go. I said thanks and waved to the B-Boy and the sasquatch as they rounded a corner or something. The phone started ringing again, so I picked it up and it was British Lady, followed by the sounds of chinchillas. Decryption mode: Chinchilla.

Omigod omigod omigod ... I was acting like a kid in a candy store, or really a kid who just got a transcript from a sasquatch. I tucked it in my jacket and checked in with Crumbly Donut, telling him nothing. The library is also where the copy of Magill's Cyclopedia was that Blair used to leave messages to Eva. He showed me Magill's Cyclopedia ... and the letter was still in the book. Crumbly left. He had the same "Instant Sasquatch" experience I did during his jamming session: first, no sasquatch; then suddenly sasquatch.

My gut feeling about the guy with the open briefcase appeared to be spot on, though I'm not sure how they got the second angle. Maybe they pushed the camera into a sturdy, friendly bush.



"With a danger of getting too carried away on our own pretensions we state that it is through dance music and dancing that we are able to get momentarily back to the Garden. Of course in the clear light of day this is all very silly."
The Manual – Bill Drummond & Jimmy Cauty

After Crumbly came back, we looked at our transcripts for the first time. Right, like I had patiently waited for him.

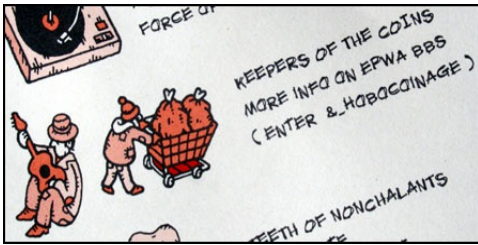
The transcript was *amazing*. One side was a graphical depiction of the walkabout with Eva and her mother ...



And the other side was a visual representation of the radio program.



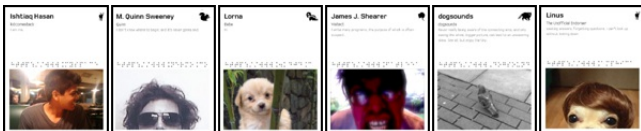
Some of the tasks in the "Key" we had already completed; but there were other sections that tantalized with tantalizing.



So there we were, in San Francisco, without net access. How would we get net access? How would? Instead of flitting about looking for an internet cafe, we called [Doc](#) and cried and cried about not having net-enabled cellphones. He kindly translated our questions into viable web queries. The "&_hobocoinage" command led to a two-page sheet of potentially be-coined Whole Bohemians. Doc started listing the people on the sheet; he mentioned one Whole Bohemian was located at Hardie Alley, a second was at a barbershop in a Chinatown alley. I knew exactly where that was, and Crumbly knew where Hardie Alley was. Hardie was deserted, so we continued on to the barber, Jun Yu, who was next door to the Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory. You can go in and watch them make fortune cookies! And buy fortune cookies! The ones that you watched being made!



I took a photo of Jun Yu's place back in 2003 because I wanted to get my hair cut there. The door was closed and read "closed" but Crumbly Donut saw movement within and gently, ever so gently pushed the door open a little bit and got Jun Yu's attention. He wore a hearing aid at his side, and I could see that there was a letter accompanying the coins. I both did and did not try to read the letter, it was an internal fight that I eventually won by abandoning my desire to peek behind the curtain. We gave Jun Yu some of that ole' American currency currently circling the drain; he gave us some Hobo Coins of Incalculable Value. And then we left, forgetting to visit the Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory.



Once we had the coins, we trundled over to Paxton Gate and exchanged them for teeth. The smiling woman at Paxton Gate indicated a large group of similar teeth-seeking individuals had just stopped by. She gave each of us a small manilla envelope, and a smaller hobo coin as change.



A successful adventure! Given the excellence of the outing, I immediately purchased a "Little Black Box of Nonchalance." When I went to order the LBBon, I noticed that the transcript was also available for purchase. In addition, four San Francisco stores started selling the transcript in their shops. I was somewhat jealous of the people who got to look at the transcript and mesh that up with their audio/etc experiences. But you know, right there on the other hand ... sasquatch.





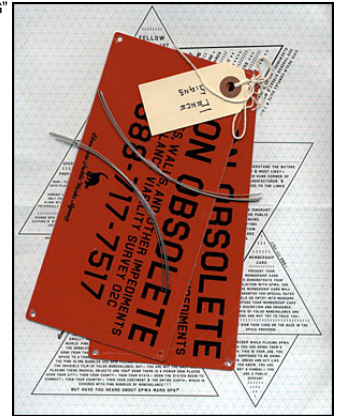


The Little Black Box arrived from Elsewhere by way of the Elsewhere Postal Service by way of the World's Smallest Postal Service by way of the United States Postal Service.



This is the *inner* envelope, which has the stamps and cancelling stamps of the Elsewhere Postal Service. I received some "FOREWARNING" shields; microwave emanation warner stickers; "SOON OBSOLETE" fence signs; a single, very familiar "hobo glyph"; an Elsewhere Public Works ID; and a letter describing it. And a clothespin!

Given the excellence of this acquired artifact, I joined fellow nonchalant Rusty in a celebratory multi-city plastering of critical faketechnocut information. The seeds take root, grow and become trees ... and then spread seeds. Now let me tell you what happened to *those* seeds.



Crumbly Donut and I spent three weeks trying to track down the other three whole bohemians from the list. After capping our search with two fruitless trips walking around Fisherman's Wharf, I was concerned that we would run out of time ... though there were (again) no external indicators of this imagined chronological concern. We bailed on our quest and went back to Jun Yu.



When we first got there, Jun Yu was playing the erhu. A sign on his shop seemed to indicate that he did some playing for a movie soundtrack. I turned away for what seemed like an instant, turned back around, and the erhu was gone. We exchanged USDs for HCs.



Then we left, successfully remembering an hour later that we forgot to stop in at the Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory again. On the way to The Curiosity Shoppe, I ran into some flowery street art and the [Clarion Alley Mural Project](#).









Crumbly Donut wasn't sure if he could visit the Curiosity Shoppe later in the day, so I put on my big boy pants and went ahead without him. Shoppe Manager Aurora was at the counter:

Hi, I am wondering if you know anything about the World's Smallest Post Office?

A: Do you ... have anything to trade?

Yes! I have a coin. A very small wooden coin.

A: Oh ...

But it's not the *smallest* wooden coin.

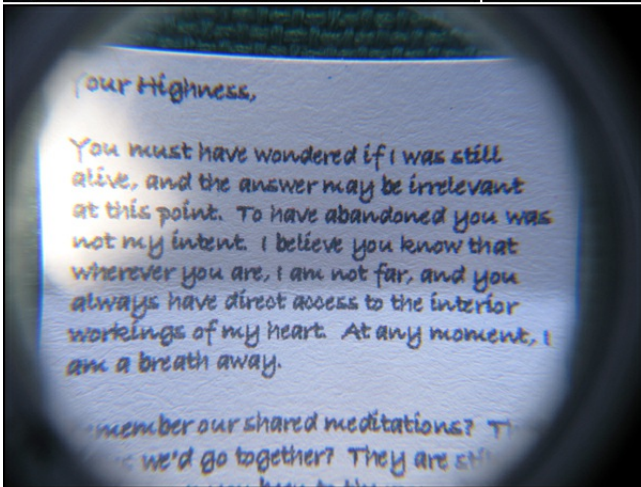
A: Ah! Well, then I have something for you. First, here's your change ...

[FX: *change!*] And here's your letter ... [FX: *letter!*]

I thanked her and left, but not before cooing over various things in the shoppe, including crocheted jellyfish.



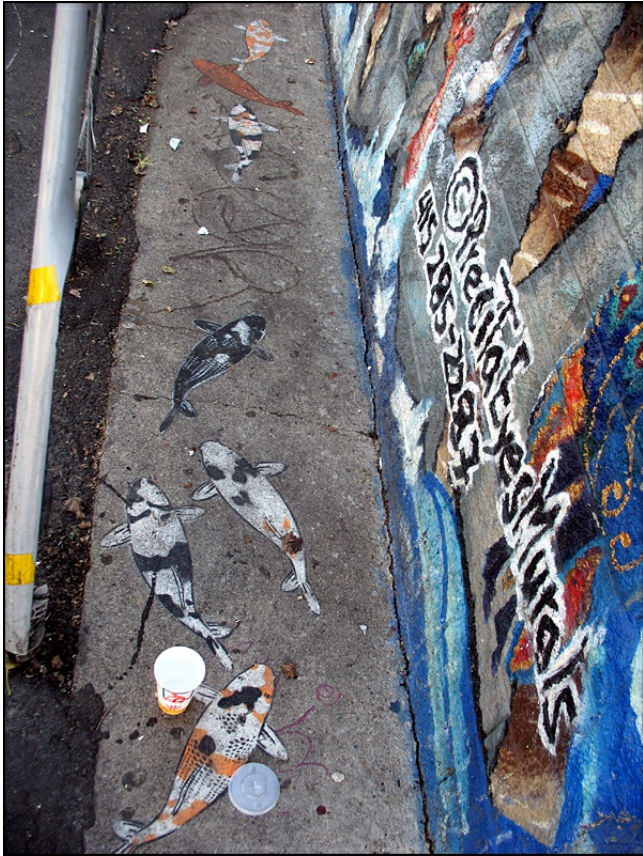
A guy opening the bar next door saw me walking out with the teeny-tiny letter and said "so nowwhat?" He had apparently already gotten the letter. We talked for a little bit, but I didn't want to hold him up with chitter-chat ... he was busy getting the place ready for the serious business of drinking. Luckily I always carry a loupe with me so I got down to the serious business of reading.



After loupe-squinting my way through two pages, I fired up a few brain cells and realized my camera's optical zoom would be fine by itself ... I took photos of each page and looked at them on the LCD screen. The letter started out fine; Peggy indicated that a "man" was going to help Eva:

In my absence I have sent a trusted friend ... a noble man. Although you may not recognize him at first, he will recognize you. He will help to answer some of the many questions probably intertwining your mind. At the right (left) time he will meet you at the Tower.

Then the letter sort of took a detour into wackyland. Cults will do that to you (much later I discovered that a good chunk of it was the writing of Gertrude Stein). After reading it, I tinyly folded it back up and wandered around a bit. I ran into more of those excellent street koi.



This koi travels with its own water. Oh wonderful street koi! Why not come home with me. [SFX: *jackhammering*]

Crumbly Donut was able to free up enough time to also get the letter. He showed up and made the exchange with Derek, a co-owner.



Aurora squinted mightily and read half of the letter out loud. She wanted to get involved, and also knew the artist who drew the transcript. Crumbly Donut read the other half of the letter, and they both suffered 10% ocular degeneration. Ambulances were called.

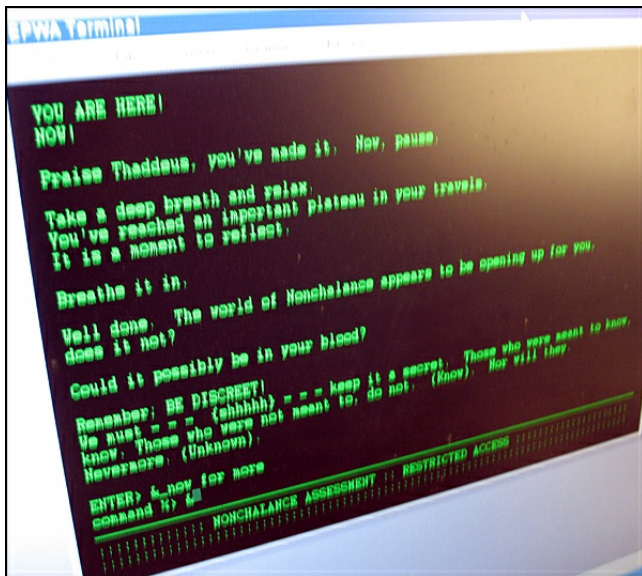




There was also something on the transcript demarcating a "Hip Hop Shoe Repair" kiosk but when we went there it was closed with no markings on it ... apparently it was used as an early-morning newspaper stand. I liked to imagine it came to life as HHSR in the wee hours. When I first moved to the bay area, I used to drive around San Francisco at about three to four a.m., to get a handle on the city when the streets were utterly deserted.



When I got around to checking in with the Nonchalant Assessment assessorthing, I had *all* the answers this time.



The announcement continued, stressing that an important Nonchalant milestone has been reached and that there will be "AN EVENT which YOU have become an integral part of." Then the screen went wack-a-mole. I think that is a standard EPWA sign-off, actually.

Around this time, Rusty had a set of buttons made that had some familiar and/or light-hearted sayings on them.



About a week later, there were rumblings on the Unforum about some sort of strange street war between a lone Jejune Institute acolyte and a single EPWA agent outside the annual Games Developer Conference at the Moscone Center. One brave soul was able to get an interview with the EPWA member; his name was [Drybones](#) and we had many things to learn from him.

Like the computer said, "Take a deep breath and relax." Let's take this time-out time to do our own Nonchalant Assessment.

1.) I was Beyond Happy that there seemed to be no ad campaign behind everything. This concern grew out of reading about other ARGs sponsored by delicious, life-giving HFCS-infused water conglomerates or the like.

2.) Things reminded me of things. Certain aspects rang little bells in my mind. For instance, the walkabout reminded me of something the band "Sudden Sway" did in 1990. Below is a [comment posted on another site](#) by one "Ken C."; for a more thorough exploration of the exploration, please read [Sudden Sway: Neuro-Activity Modules and Klub Londinium](#).

Klub Londinium was the best thing they ever did. It was an exercise in psychogeography in which you walked the city in someone else's shoes. Having completed a personality assessment questionnaire, you were assigned to a tour for a quite different personality. They decided I was an Outsider, so sent me on the [Hedonist](#) tour. The cassette contained two voices, one giving directions and factual, historical information about London, the other representing the interior monologue of the 'raver' driving himself to despair in pursuit of the good time that must be going on somewhere else. The tour began at Charing Cross station and led through Soho and Mayfair, describing this history of the Crystal Rooms in Leicester Square, the location of the first strip show in London, Sheeky's restaurant, the location of private gambling clubs, 18th century brothels, and much else. A tremendous amount of research must have gone into the tours.¶ I bought the tapes for the other tours: the "Mystic" personality (a satire on new-age nonsense the led around Regents Park and up Parliament Hill); [Materialist](#) (through the City, St Katherine's Dock and the yuppie housing in Docklands, ending in Tobacco Dock) and, the best I think, the [Outsider](#) tour, an eternal wanderer's search for a home, through Spitalfields and Brick Lane, ending at the Geffrye Museum. ¶ The degree of synchronisation between the taped speech in your head and what you saw in front of you was often uncanny; graffiti on the walls was read to you as you passed; an electronic tone representing the onset of a migraine kicked in as you emerged from the shadow of a building into the sunshine; the sound of footsteps following you as you walked through a long tunnel in a dodgy part of Shoreditch.¶ I love Sudden Sway.

3.) But other things do not. The fact that this is a living, breathing entity – that I can, at any time, tell someone to go to a certain address to get started on the whole adventure makes this a very rare, special thing, and I'm not even sure it's ever been done before. Occasionally I dug around the ARG phenom but it mostly seemed to be centered around a large amount of geographically-diverse people on computers using brute force to solve ridiculously complex puzzles. I already spend enough time in front of this damned silver rectangle, I thought to myself while tapping on same about same.



Back to Drybones. He was a faithful attendee of Just Outside Of The Game Developer's Conference at the Moscone Center, so EPWA members were able to trek over there and interact with him. People were sent on tiny missions chatting up a Jejunite representative who was clearly performing bad juju. After bringing back information and/or some of the contact's evil rocks, people were given an EPWA card and perhaps An Other Thing. Jason was given a two-part device used to contact Commander 14 consisting of a doll's head and (I believe) a toy walkie-talkie.



Of course, while all of this has been happening, the Unfiction forum had been going full steam. Capt. King wrote an entry on Unfiction that encompassed the situation succinctly:

Nonchalance is the idea that we are all one, we are all a community of people who work together for a greater whole. Though some may see Nonchalance as a culture that does nothing but promote laziness and uncaring, it actually allows us to become closer with one another. Though the methods of the Nonchalants seem strange to some, they are actually living the life they want while not worrying about what others say ... a type of inner peace if you will. Eva Lucien is the human incarnation of this idea of nonchalance. Years ago, many people came together to share this view, creating the Savants. The Savants and Eva metaphorically represent what San Francisco USED to be. A city full of culture, anti-establishment, and nonchalance (you see this in the current act when you are asked to look into a little window and see San Francisco ... little Eva says that is her).

The Jejunite's ultimate goal is to deliver artificial Nonchalance (or False-Nonchalance according to EPWA) to the masses using polywater, and other devices. A corporate bastardization of Nonchalance if you will. This parallels the cultural "destruction" of San Francisco via corporate invasion of small neighborhoods, such as the big box store moving into the Mission District. Seeing that the culture of Nonchalance was beginning to disappear, the last remaining Nonchalants came together and created the Elsewhere Public Works, looking to Eva as their "savior." Eva could be viewed as a possible "Jesus" of Nonchalance.

Ultimately, I believe when/if we find Eva, we can bring "nonchalance" back into the city of San Francisco and make it the community it once was ... well at least in the Lore of this experience. All the while, we become part of this "nonchalant" world by exploring areas of San Francisco and appreciating the culture that has been lost to our corporate "jejunite" world.

So Eva isn't Coit Tower. Heh.



Shortly thereafter, five people were asked to attend a mysterious EPWA meeting in San Francisco.

**Jason 7au's recounting of the EPWA induction ceremony
April 15th, 2009 at 101 Music, 513 Green Street, North Beach, SF**

Date: Wed, 8 Apr 2009 17:06:53 -0700 (PDT)
Subject: :: !! EPWA :: URGENT MESSAGE :: CALL TO ACTIVATION !! ::
From: drybones@elsewherepublicworks.com

```
.....
.....
..... {{{ URGENT MESSAGE :: CALL TO ACTIVATION }}} .....
.....
.....
.....
!!! 7au, this is your call to activation !!! .....
.....
!!! for the good of all Nonchalants !!! .....
.....
.....
.....
..... Arrive:: 513 Green Street:: .....
.....
..... 4/15 @ 7:57: .....
..... tell no one ... come
alone .....
.....
.....
..... REPLY & confirm your future presence .....
.....
.....
..... ~ drYboneS ~ .....
.....
```

Before that evening, I only knew that Jenpop and CaptKing were going to be joining me on this adventure. Jenpop and I had conspired to dress up for the occasion in Nonchalant finery, and bring our ukuleles. I met her and her new dog Jejune out in front of the address we had been given, which turned out to be the annex storefront for 101 Music.



Jason /// Jenpop [photo: [Everfalling](#)]

A chalk rectangle had been drawn on the sidewalk out front, labelled "EPWA AUTONOMOUS ZONE" with hobo glyphs in a couple of corners.



As CaptKing was texting me trying to find the place, Everfalling showed up and joined us in the rectangle and we made our introductions as Jenpop and I fiddled with tuning our ukes. Soon CaptKing made it up the street, and we waited. And waited. Eventually, a fifth person joined us, saying something about how he had passed us several times and we hadn't noticed and weren't looking out for activity; this was Organelle.

We all chatted a bit more, until CaptKing received a text saying it was time, that we were to come inside. The store was filled with old stereo equipment, amps, speakers, dust. We left our things with the guy at the front counter who had to deal with us. Jenpop argued with him about bringing Jejunie inside. No dogs allowed, he said; Jenpop was adamant about not wanting to leave him outside. As that debate went on, we had started filing downstairs as we had been told. A shadowy figure standing at the bottom of the stairs, wearing a cloak and carrying some sort of lantern, was beckoning but motioning for us to only come down one at a time. Everfalling went first, then CaptKing. Then it was my turn.

Downstairs, I could see that the only light came from a couple colored bulbs in the ceiling and dozens of tiny votive-shaped LED lights scattered on the tops of racks of vinyl. The ceiling was low, and the walls decorated with album covers. Somber music that sounded like Catholic monk chants was being piped in from somewhere. Everyone we saw was wearing a cloak and a clear plastic face mask that still managed to obfuscate their identity in a most eerie way. The lantern-bearer directed me to a second cloaked individual, who motioned for me to do... something. I wasn't getting it. After a couple attempts at wordless motioning not sinking in, he took my right wrist, pushed up my tuxedo and shirt sleeve, and wrote something on my arm with an invisible pen. (The proper quip would've been "Oh, why didn't you just say so?" but of course that came to me only after the fact.)

He released me and sent me down the middle of three rows, where Everfalling and CaptKing had already filed. Organelle followed me, and Jenpop must have resolved the puppy situation as she joined us last. We were facing two more cloaked and masked mutes, who made room for the lantern-bearer and invisible-inker to file in.

A few quiet seconds passed, and then with a cheery "Hi!" Drybones stood up and made himself known, wearing a similar cloak but no mask. He made it clear, in that sort of rambling way that the organization had, that we were going to be inducted into the EPWA even if he doubted our readiness. He gave a sort of speech, the bulk of which I could not relate, but that I recognized straight out of the EPWA BBS's copy.

We were asked: are we ready? Do we want to commit to the goals of the EPWA? With some uncertainty, we said: yes.

Drybones and his masked cohorts then presented us with boxes. Our disguises, he told us, to prevent the Jejune Institute from recognizing us as human. CaptKing, luckily and quite serendipitously, received a skipper's hat and some sort of fake glasses. Everfalling received a fez in his box. Jenpop was given a fake wig of dreadlocks, Organelle a baseball hat and glasses with a fake nose and mustache. My box contained a blond, ratty pompadour wig and an old pair of glasses with brass-colored frames and non-prescription lenses.



We donned our new gear, and were told that that our boxes also contained everything we needed for an upcoming action, including our orders to be read later.

The initiation needed to be concluded; Drybones intoned "Ooooooooooooooooooh," and motioned for us to join in.

"Ooooooooooooooooooh," we sang, holding the note. At this point I started having real suspicions as to what I had walked in to and committed to.

"Ooooooooooooooooooh," droned Drybones, and his cohorts joined in. We started looking at each other. What the. Help?

Then the words came, breaking the tension. We were all singing along:

Ooooh
the weather outside is frightful,
but the fire is so delightful,
and since we've no place to go,
let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

As we sang, all of the EPWA members across from us started wielding small devices and waving them towards our faces. It was already dark enough to not be able to make them out, and the flashes going off certainly didn't help. Hello again, tension. We recoiled a bit and presumably looked stunned and disoriented. If those were cameras, I've never seen the photos, but how I'd love to!

Drybones finished up with more proselytizing, then told us to leave – inconspicuously and in our disguises – as Jejune goons were sure to be casing the street above. We were to follow the map inside the lids of our boxes.



A few days later, a text message went out to everyone:

TIS A SUMMONING. THIS AINT NO CLUE. IT'S A CALL TO ARMS.
JOIN EPWA OPERATIONS- 4/30 at 6:02pm, UNION SQUARE, SF.
More info- EPWA BBS, enter & _action

Which, when entered on the EPWA website, got you this:

:::: ALL INFO CONTAINED HEREIN IN PROPRIETARY AND INSCRUTABLE ::::

YEAY - TIS A SUMMONING!
C'MON & SMELL THE MUSTARD.
THIS AINT NO CLUE, FOLX. IT'S A CALL TO ARMS.
*** THE DEAL AND NOTHING BUT THE DEAL ***
ACTION /// MOTION /// POWER /// DEALINGS

APRIL 30TH (GIVE OR TAKE A DECADE)
6:02 in the Post Meridian
UNION SQUARE, SAN FRANCISCO, FRONT & CENTER

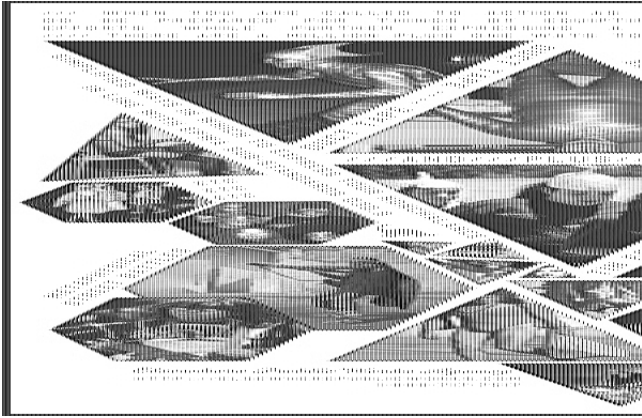
DO [DON'T NOT DO] THE FOLLOWING { FULL META-MINDEDLY }
RECRUIT ANYONE / EVERYONE WITH NONCHALANT INCLINATIONS
exposed, unexposed, under or over exposed
EVERY /// EACH /// ALLLLLL
SPREAD THE GOOD WORD FAR / WIDE

ELSEWHERE PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY
POLYTECHNICAL DIVISION, NORTH BEACH CALPHONEYA (LITERALLY)

Let's get down to brass tacks. As you've noticed noticed, the Jejune presence in this city is increasing every day. Their induction center can process 4 dozen new members every 3.12 hours. The rate at which they are producing fully nonverted Goons is at an all time high. You've seen for yourself. You've see through the lies. Every week, they build a new synthetic telepathy projector in a different neighborhood. For any of those local to the area, you have our condolences. The EPWA sets up our mobile jamming facilities at the site of eny development. These "Whoopdies" can, within hours, reach a saturation rate of 512. Yes. 512. But our counter facility was quickly compromised by Jejunitite Goondroids. As their numbers increase, ours only dwindle away. Signs and posters and stickers aren't warning enough anymore. The rays are deadening peoples senses and drawing them in to the Teeth of the beast. Oh. Do you know the time? No? Oh look: IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!

The fact that you've reached this posting means you've already shown your saturation level in divine nonchalance. But before now, you've been alone and it's been an uphill battle, which is to say, tough. Know what day it is? I'll tell you what day it is. It's the day you start working as a team. We're running out of time, and we're already straining all our resources. So now it's up to you. You're not going to be safe alone, so learn the power of unity. And also friendship. Love. Intimacy. Nonchalance. See you there.

Accompanying the text were pointers to two critical files; one that gave some jumping-off points for dressing operationally, and another of a mask of Jejune's #1 Fun Pal, Octavio Coleman. Esquire.



The day in question arrived; I dressed in something suitably off. EPWA agents began convening on Union Square bedecked in operational finery.



Everfalling // Capt. King [photo: [Jason](#)]



As the clearly-EPWA crowd at Union Square Elevated Platform grew, people began sharing tinfoil and whatnot to properly protect and accentuate harassment-sensitive areas such as thee brains. I borrowed some ribbon from another guy for my mask – I had forgotten to get string. Some punk ladies borrowed tinfoil and one of them made a nice tinfoil bow to put at the base of her mohawk.

While we were all chatting and crafting pre-6:02pm, a woman who didn't know about the action remarked that she didn't want to choose sides ... she didn't want to be part of Jejune or EPWA. I said, "oh, so you're going to be Switzerland?" She agreed, the fence-sitter. It's got a lot going for it. Conching was invented there. *Conching*.

While this was going on, suddenly there was a flurry on the outskirts of the crowd; clearly something was happening. A few new faces blew in with a determined swagger, protest signs ("LEAVE HISTORY A MYSTERY"), tinfoil, Octavio masks, and orange armbands. One guy was providing duct tape – I got an armband of duct tape. Another was distributing orange EPWA armbands – Crumbly got an armband armband [FX: JEALOUSY]. I was also given a protest sign. One of the whooshers-inners was Jason, who handed me a tiny bell. Someone else handed me some of the EPWA postcards and a piece of chalk.



Then Drybones materialized in the center of the action, proffering a bullhorn, a skateboard, and enthusiastic greetings. His sartorial *oeuvre* seemed to be simultaneously anchored in the 80s, the 70s, and the [distant cosmic silvery future](#).



In the earlier interview with Drybones, he explained the problem goons had with bells:

The Jejune Institute hates the sound of bells. They can't stand it. You might see people scatter when you ring the bells; they're members of the Jejune Institute.

Drybones had a pre-recorded announcement from Commander 14 that he wanted everyone to hear. It was Commander 14! Just like he said. He told us that the only known way to stop the Jejune menace was through "Silent. Collective. Jazz hands. [...] We must collectively, silently, direct our jazzy hands *at* the goons ... only then can we deter them from their nefarious aims ... may Eva bless you in your journey ... over, Commander 14."



Drybones /// Bobby Peru /// Jason 7au[photo: [Rusty Blazenhoff](#)]

Drybones' exhilaration was infectious; with our collective hand-jazz power realized we embarked on a difficult journey fraught with emotion and duct tape. We were what, 100 strong? 145. Maybe 162 strong. Lots of people gravely concerned about the increasing JeJune presence. Inventory check: bag, hat, protest sign, mask, camera, bell, chalk, postcards. Not even out of Union Square Elevated Platform, two young men were eyeballing one of the postcards with looks of European Befuddlement. "We're from Switzerland. My English is not so good. What is this?" I tried to explain the bare bones of it to them, and especially stressed that they should visit the website. I looked around for their recent fellow convert citizen but couldn't find her. Then there was a fork on the platform that separated my new, transitory Swiss friends from the horde and I said goodbye and good luck. The text below is from the EPWA website.



I accidentally caught an EPWA member in one of my shots taking photos and I thought it would make a good bookmark. The EPWA was filled with voracious book readers. It was obvious. "Books: They're not going to read themselves." I just came up with that. The text/logo below is from the EPWA website.

EPWA SUPPORTS

THE EPWA PROVIDES FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PERVASIVE YET EFFERVESCENT EXTRA-DIMENSIONALLY LOCATED ELSEWHERE

INFRAESTRUCTURE
LIBERATION DRIVE-INS
AEROSOL
THE HOLLOW EARTH
STAIRWAYS
WELLS
HERITAGE
BUSTING CLOUD
CONFUSION
LIBRARY
STACKS
OBFUSCATION AND
CLARIFICATION
COMOTION
MARKETS
FLEA
ZONES
TUNNELS
CAMERA
ABATEMENT
ROOTS
DEEP-SEA MONKEY BUSINESS

WARP
ALLEYS
SMOKE
SHOPS
TRAIN
YARDS

CANDY STORES
STREET LIFE
TRAP-DOORS
BASEMENTS
RUSTIC DYNAMISM
FREEDOM DRIVE-THRU

EPWA

Elsewhere Public Works Agency
ELSEWHEREPUBLICWORKS.COM 1-888-717-7517





[photo: [Duckstabl](#)]

As the horde progressed through the streets of jolly ole' San Francisco, everyone in its path was gently engulfed and given postcards with crucial EPWA information. *Everyone.*



Since I was lagging a bit behind, the timing was such that I would continually stumble across people in the middle of trying to figure out what just happened and what the postcard was all about. Future members!





Walk walk walk, chalk chalk chalk. Shouts were shouted, chants were chanted:

"What do we want?"

"Nonchalance!"

"When do we want it?"

"Whenever it's convenient!"



[photo: [Rusty Blazenhof](#)]

Then the group streamed around the cold dead black banker's heart across the street from The Jeju Institute Headquarters and came across a limousine orbited by ...



[photo: [Rusty Blazenhof](#)]

THE GOONS! GOONS! THE JEJUNE GOONS! Oh god, the goons (GOONS!). Three goons, dressed in black zentai. They moved like silky gymnast sylphs. They were very dangerous. They acted in a very goon-like manner, it was HORRIBLE, the goons! OH GOD! They were so cartoony, so good. The horde approached, ringing bells, JAZZ HANDS! Ringin' those bells of freedom from microwave harassment!



[photo: [Rusty Blazenhoff](#)]

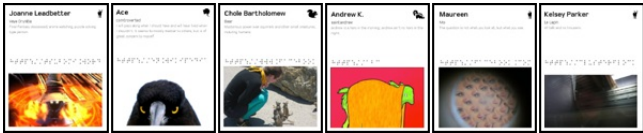


This overly-annotated photo also serendipitously captures the EPWA at its finest: on the extreme right side, an agent is *chalking a hobo glyph* even though Jejune goons are dangerously close. Bravery, is what I would call it.

The goons were pushed back, back! Into an alleyway, and then they were gone. And inside the limousine's rolled-down window ... it was *Octavio Coleman!* ESQUIRE! He was served a more-than-adequate helping of jazz hands and bells.



[photo: [Duckstabi](#)]



Octavio considered all of this in a very stoic manner. Then the window rolled up and the limo slowly pulled away into traffic. Octavio had fled! FLED! The operation: it was a success! Onward!



Spotting a wily shark on the move, I took some "me time" to photograph it in its natural habitat, a Chinatown public park.



Agents were still distributing postcards to people; chalk was lovingly applied with swooping swirly motions to unsuspecting exterior surfaces.



[photo: [Duckstabd](#)]

At the entrance to Li-Po Cocktail Lounge, Drybones consulted with Commander 14 on his Wristing Thing to see if all objectives had been met.

Awakening from Sleep on a Spring Day

Life is an immense dream. Why toil?
 All day long I drowse with wine,
 And lie by the post at the front door.
 Awakening, I gaze upon the garden trees,
 And, hark, a bird is singing among the flowers.
 Pray, what season may this be?
 Ah, the songster's a mango-bird,
 Singing to the passing wind of spring.
 I muse and muse myself to sadness,
 Once more I pour my wine, and singing aloud,
 Await the bright moonrise.
 My song is ended –
 What troubled my soul? – I remember not.

– Li Po / Li Bai (701-762)

After a tense, dramatic pause, Drybones received word ... we had gotten 98% of our objectives, and we also got the remaining two percent in some additional manner I don't remember, so YES! The horde could advance on liquor and/or music and/or dancing.

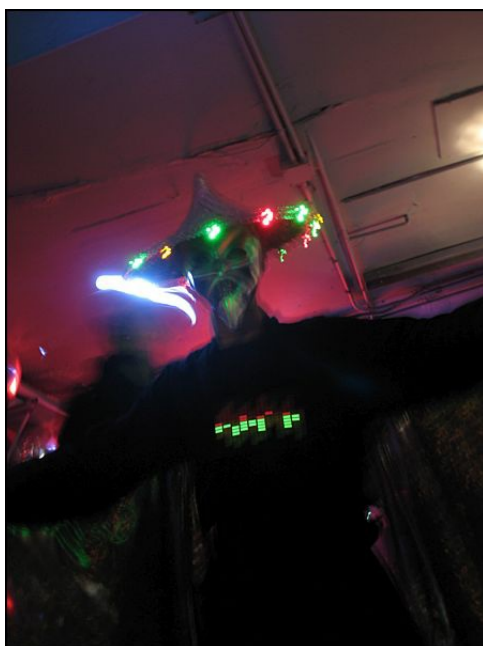


Drybones was at the bar, still very enthusiastic about everything: "Ooooh I wonder what SHE'S making!" I spoke with him briefly and only then did I notice that one of his contacts was whited out which was very disconcerting but hey, here's some booze to smooth over the rough edges. I had a tasty liquid beer beverage drink. Headlamps were available to wear and scout the dark interior of Li-Po's Cocktail Lounge Basement. Bubble wrap, big EPWA graphics, music, video, unless I made up that last part about the video. There's a pretty bright thing in the middle of this photo, it's probably video.



[photo: [Duckstabs](#)]

I met a few other EPWA agents at the after-party including The Urban Phoenix who had a t-shirt with what looked to be a functioning equalizer.



I left my beer bottle by the official EPWA Headlamp Return Box because I didn't want it getting kicked around closer to the action. I hope that's cool with everyone.



Here is the EPWA video of the Action.



After awhile it was time to eat, and somehow we were fortunate enough to dine with Frank Chu. Crumbly Donut's fake Frank Chu sign and real Frank Chu's real Frank Chu sign fought for space in the restaurant.

About two weeks later, Crumbly Donut got a Little Black Box of Nonchalance. It had different stamps on the inner envelope.



Balloon attack! We also went to the Jejune Institute after hearing some things had changed. The EPWA tags were gone, so now to get the form properly filled out, you had to stamp the form with a self-inking stamper.



Tricylops handed out chalk. "Oooh, chalk." Colorful chunky chalk, not that wussy white blackboard stuff. I think it was Jason who said, "Hey, maybe we should go over to where the street signs are." We wandered over to where the street signs were. We loitered for awhile. Hangin' around. Chattering. Then I noticed a blue-chalked bunny TV icon accompanying the word "BENCH" written *right next to the pole*. We're quick that way.



I think maybe everyone had the same expectation I did: that we were to wait for *something* or *someone*, because that's what you do when given a time and a place. Silly us.

"Bench."
 "Bench!"
 "We're all going to the bench!"

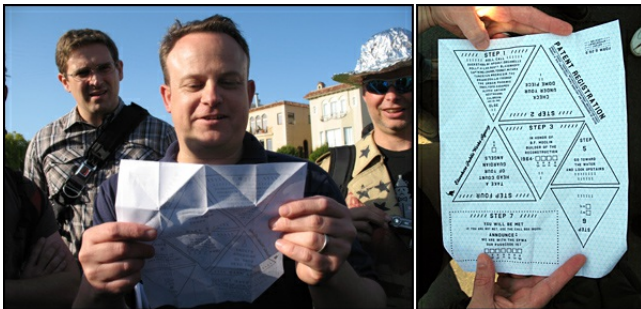
We all went to another pair of benches back across the street. I sat on the bench. "This is a nice bench." The now-clearly not in-game Whole Bohemian eyed me warily from the other bench. Crumbly Donut, obviously Oprah's #1 fan¹, glanced under the bench and found an envelope pinned to the bottom of it. "A-ha!" The envelope indicated that we were to wait another ten minutes or so to open it, and to feed the birds. HEYS WE GOT BREAD! The crux of the lesson: sometimes the bread is totally not about you.

We moved to the edge of the pond and began casting the loaves upon the water. Several birds took advantage of the miracle of free bread. TANSTAAFLUYAB. Seagulls, mostly. Finally a duck showed up. "A duck!" I like ducks. Then a swan. Swans *love* azodicarbonamide. Builds stronger feather bones ten different ways. After the loaves were chucked, our group checked the time on various silver rectangles over and over again.

"I got 6:23."
 "Me too."
 "Yup."



Crumbly Donut opened the envelope; inside was a smaller envelope repeatedly stamped "6 23." Inside that, a folded-up piece of paper, the "NOTARY APPOINTMENT LOCATOR."



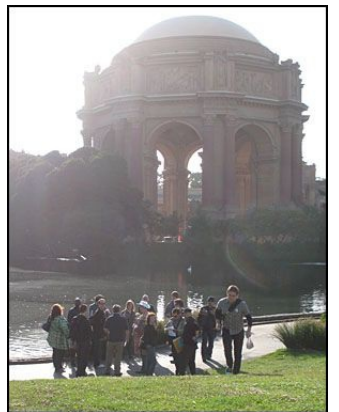
STEP 1. ROLL CALL. After completing this and sloughing off hangers-on, we discovered that three people were missing. Calls were made.

STEP 2. CHECK UNDER YOUR DOME PIECE. Dome piece? Dome *piece*. Like hair piece? Hey, there's this giant dome across the river. The Palace of Fine Arts was originally built in 1915 for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition² and was meant to resemble a Roman ruin; it was designed by architect Bernard R. Maybeck to represent "the mortality of grandeur and the vanity of human wishes." Didn't we already get a similar lesson from Shelley/Ozymandias? You know, I have no problem with grandeur in this bland styrofoamic Brutalist boxed-up blighted scenscape. The Palace of Fine Arts now serves as the location of the Exploratorium, a world-renowned "hands on" science museum.

The group started walking around the perimeter of the pond. One guy explained to me that he was given his nickname by the EPWA. I didn't understand that so I just made agreeable noises like "uh-huh" and "yeah."

STEP 3. IN HONOR OF B.F. MOGLIN BUILDER OF THE RECONSTRUCTION 1964-____. Reconstruction? The Palace of Fine Arts was originally built in the same manner as the structures at the Chicago World's Fair – with staff, a mixture of burlap-type fiber and plaster not known for its longevity. In 1964, the mangy remains of the place were completely scraped and re-built with stronger materials. This step was funny because I hadn't caught up yet when the other agents found this clue, a plaque to celebrate the reconstruction. It was a fake ruin that eventually looked too real-ruined so it was re-built to look like the original unruined ruin (see also [The Artificial Kingdom: On the Kitsch Experience](#) by Celeste Olalquiaga (review)).

Wait, it gets funnier. When the Panama-Pacific International Exposition was being planned, a lot of fill material was needed for the marshy grounds. Hey, we've got this rubble from the quake, we could use that! All of it. [All the rubble from the massive 1906 earthquake/fire was used](#). So the Palace of Fine Arts is a re-built ruined Roman ruin replica built on ruins.



Yes of course there is a copy of The Palace of Fine Arts in Disney's California Adventure. It is a replica of a re-construction of a formerly ruined replica of a Roman ruin that rests on ruins [FX: *spins finger around perimeter of ear, makes whistling noise*]. They've got a Golden Gate Bridge Jr. there as well. Pay to see fake inferior versions of real things you can see for free. Turn your friends green with envy.

It's kind of sickly poetic, in that the fill material from the 1906 disaster caused so much damage in the 1989 quake and is probably going to cause even more trouble when the next big one hits. San Francisco: your complete recycling headquarters.

The group hoovered up the reconstruction plaque date and moved on, I didn't find out about it until the next day when photos started showing up.

STEP 4. TAKE A HEAD COUNT OF YOUR GUARDIAN ANGELS. There were eight large figural sculptures set directly underneath the dome. The dome piece.

STEP 5. GO TOWARD THE WATER AND LOOK UPSTAIRS.



"FOLLOW THE SHORE (NORTH) TO THE DOOR."



Again, everyone got a bit ahead of me, this time because I was wienering around taking pseudo-arty photos of chalkwork. They found the correct bechalked door and clustered around it trying to tease out some information or open it, but the information for STEP 6 was on a column a bit to the right and behind everyone. A half-turn, a slapping of the collective forehead, and STEP 6 was completed.

STEP 7. YOU WILL BE MET -IF YOU ARE NOT MET, USE THE CALL BOX INSIDE- ANNOUNCE: WE ARE WITH THE EPWA / OUR PASSCODE IS: _ _ _ _ _

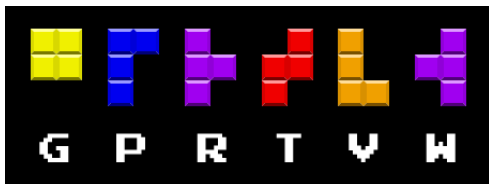
The information the group acquired on our little journey was filled into the passcode blanks and we trundled off to the Exploratorium. It was closed to the public for the day; Jason summoned The Door Guy. The Door Guy let us in and indicated that some of the exhibits were active, but they were for another party and not to touch them. Everyone shuffled in and headed to the back of the building. I was slowly bringing up the rear guard. I was so far behind I called Crumbly Donut to tell him they were going to pick us off one by one like in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, but he wasn't answering the phone ... because he was playing with the "Soap Bubbles Tray" exhibit along with a kid. "YOU STOLE FIZZY LIFTING DRINKS! YOU BUMPED INTO THE CEILING WHICH NOW HAS TO BE WASHED AND STERILIZED, SO YOU GET NOTHING! YOU LOSE! GOOD DAY SIR!" That Crumbly, he gets into *everything*.

We were greeted at the entrance to the "Tactile Dome" by Elsewhere Public Works Agency Signatory and Commissioner of Oaths, Murray D. Waltheanstough. Bedecked in aviator goggles, beads, and a very hairy shirt, Murray D. Waltheanstough ran through what was clearly the standard list of Tactile Dome rules/do's-and-don'ts. No shoes, secure belongings, no glasses, pitch black inside. Murray D. Waltheanstough had one addition: we were supposed to carry our dream forms on our person during our journey.

There was a list of things that we might encounter in the Dome, but I didn't read it because I guessed it would be more fun to guess. People were coming out of the interactive area of the Dome with gleeful smiles and indications that they had physically exerted themselves. For some reason I was still holding on to a discordant mind image of the unknown inside; I was convinced it would just be walking around in the dark, bumping into things. I spent most of the down time trying to get good shots of the braille message on the walls. 2009 marked Louis Braille's 200th birthday. Man that's old, he's probably like a husk now. I decoded the wall later on because it could have been a CLUE!

"Often the hands will solve a mystery that the intellect has struggled with in vain."
- Carl Jung

Which reminds me of a braille mystery that I'd like to put to bed right now: Can you spell anything in braille with Tetris pieces?



The answer: no. GRT.

I hung back while people went through the dome. I didn't know how much I'd need my bum foot and didn't want to keep people waiting. Murray D. Waltheanstough had a quick check-in with each person before they went in, and he'd occasionally make sure things were okay by flipping a dial that activated a microphone in each of the sections ("climb," "slide," "tight squeeze," "roja," "das boot," etc). Soon enough it was my turn; I promised myself I'd keep the mewling to a minimum.

Murray D. Waltheanstough was concerned that my personal effects, including my un-notarized dream form, were not secure. Already one person had misplaced their dream form while exploring the Tactile Dome. A lost dream! I tried to reassure Murray D. Waltheanstough by demonstrating to him that my shirt pockets were securely fastened except that they weren't; my pocket flap flipped open a little too easily. Murray D. Waltheanstough administered a slight frown but indicated I could enter.

I slipped into the dome proper and it was immediately pitch black. I almost ended up accidentally coming right back out while trying to progress inward through a hairy nest of hangin' black vinyl strips.

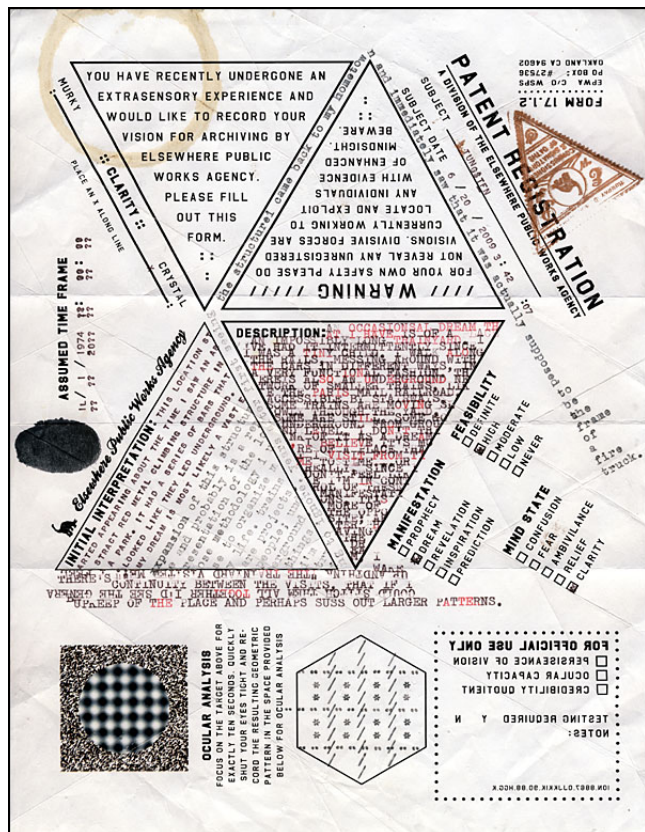


It was work, moving about inside ("oomph ... arrrgh"). I felt like I was buried deep within [Mummerschanz](#). Constant probing, trying to move forward, finding hidden holes, clambering up with the aid of a rope, sliding, dropping, angling, twisting, wondering. Pressed in by side walls, billowy black fabric obscuring boundaries. Feeling around, suddenly encountering a strange shape, decoding it with touch. The door lock I found was especially nice; I was obsessed with locks and keys when I was a tiny approximation of myself ... that hasn't changed. Three hours later, I stopped fiddling with the lock and continued flailing about in the dark.

One of my favorite parts of the experience was getting disoriented in the "roja" section, a small circular enclosure lit by a single red light (the only light in the entire contraption). I came out of a hole, felt my way around, looked down at the hole and then saw that there were *two* exit holes. I figured out which hole was which by remembering what the floor looked like when I had initially entered the area. I cheated with my cheating eyeballs.

Seeing other people's flash photos inside the dome via a popular image-sharing website made me realize I missed stuff, like the Fisher Price Activity Center #1175 mounted on one of the walls, fabric swatches, just a whole mess of things. Next time: more wall touching.

I emerged from the darkness with a silly grin on my face. Murray D. Waltheanstough had me sign the record book, and then indicated I was to put my thumbprint on the form. I tried to do my pinky for two reasons. First, it was the smallest finger I had (this is still true; perhaps this is also your situation); less ink = less mess. Second, I am allergic to ID-gathering and this of course reminded me of doing the same thing to get a California driver's license (California: Land of Freedom). Murray D. Waltheanstough indicated that it was all about the thumb. Thumb: thumbed. Murray D. Waltheanstough then stamped the form. NOTARIZED!



After that, Urban unrolled his blown-up dream form on the floor. He had described his dream/prophecy/vision with the smallest-nibbed pen he could find, and filled out his "initial interpretation" in blacklight. Urban: "I'm a nerd." A nerd ... with big dreams. Sorry, I won't do that again.

Murray D. Waltheanstough stamped Urban Phoenix's oversized dream form and indicated, via the powers vested in him by the Elsewhere Public Works Agency, that our patents were officially registered. We said our goodbyes to Murray D. Waltheanstough and exited out the back of the Exploratorium.

Most of the agents were able to re-convene at Mifune in Japantown. We ate so much soba/udon that we closed the place down, or it was the end of their normal business hours for the day ... your choice.

I seem to be remembering my dreams a lot more these days.

¹I've always wanted to see the Oprah episode in which the secret mystery underseat prize was a small, tasteful batch of organic psychedelics ... Oprah apparently spent the entire hour walking through the audience, gently brushing their blissed-out faces with a pair of giant emu feathers. Does anyone remember that one? "YOU GET A SHROOM BAG!!! YOU GET A SHROOM BAG!!! YOU GET A SHROOM BAG!!! EVERYBODY GETS A SHROOM BAG!!!" Maybe [it's on Youtube](#).

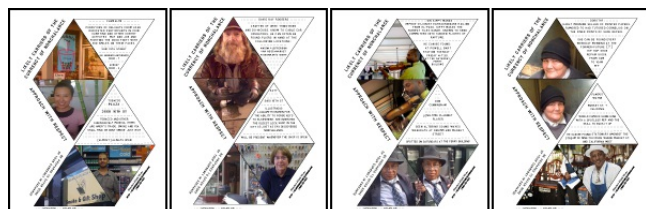


²One of the many exhibits at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition was a giant working Underwood typewriter, on which the news was typed daily. From a commemorative postcard:

1728 times larger than the Standard Underwood. Weight 14 tons – 28,000 lbs. Dimensions in action 21 feet wide by 15 feet high. An exact reproduction of the machine you will eventually buy.

An exact reproduction. Unfortunately there wasn't a big demand for 14-ton typewriters in the consumer market so extant models are hard to find, though you will occasionally see one at a county fair re-purposed as a kiddie ride.

Things have been changing. The Whole Bohemian line-up shifted a little bit, adding and subtracting.



The TIMECRAFT 13 ANCHOR disappeared for awhile, being replaced by a small instructive card on a string. Then, mysteriously, weeks later, the ring returned. The elevator plaque

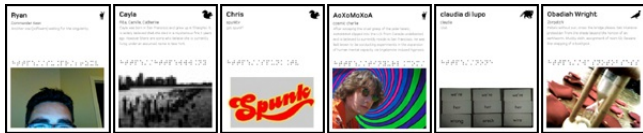
vanished. Eddy had been 86'd from the walkthrough, drastically reducing my chances of getting that complimentary chow mein. The creators started opening up a little bit; this [interview](#) with Jeff Hull from Nonchalance was one of the first times most people involved in this construct had heard from anyone behind the curtain:

[...] I feel that this real world element of ARGs is kind of where the future of entertainment media is going, not just in the ARG field but really entertainment media. It shouldn't just take place on the screen or online, but having these type of multimedia immersive narrative experiences. It's not just entertainment, but it's communication and education.

So, it's a different way to interact with each other. It's a different way to interact with space. The opportunities to produce these types of games, we're hoping there are going to be more and more of them but, also, for individuals to create these type of narrative experiences for other people.

So far, one of my favorite narrative experiences had been one that I heard about secondhand from Duckstabb:

So, I figured I'd take my kids on episode two, after they enjoyed episode one. I ran episode two the first time with someone else, but didn't get the artifacts (because I didn't want to give up my hobocoins, when I knew the "fam" was doing it with me the next day). We ran the content, wrapped it up. BIG hit, so much so that Thomas (thenage 3.8) couldn't get enough of the worlds smallest letter (he has an obsession with small things). He was kind of freaking out at having to put it in the little baggie that we were putting our "artifacts" in, so Katherine decided he should be allowed to have it while in the car, because, hey, where could it possibly go. Sadly, back home, he doesn't have it anymore, and doesn't really respond to inquiries as to where it's gone. We took everything out of the car, kids car seats, real car seats, the cushions, I mean everything. We were nearly down to the frame looking for it. Bupkis. Thomas comes up and asks, "what are you guys looking for?", then I explained about the missing letter, and if he knew where it was (again). This time, he points to his stomach and says "In here." He ate it. Sure, that makes perfect sense. He's a real consumer of the content. Of course, this makes for some bad times trying to get through the loops on the EPWA website; but fortunately for me, Everfalling (hero) had posted detailed photos of the letter, so I could still "win". Points for the internet, and for human digestion.



While puttering around the middling states, I sent Nonchalance a pair of stamp scissors so they could, theoretically, make nice edging on their stamps. A long, long time ago, a friend told me about a friend of his who was able to create perfect perforated edges on art stamps but *refused* to tell him how she did it. When he unlocked the secret, he was kind enough to tell me, though maybe she went whole hog with one of those stamp perforating machines instead of the low-rent scissors route. I can't remember if I signed the note, I was all caught up in the road trip experience. In an ideal world, I would just do this continually. Get away from everything, forever.



Oakland Iowa is different than Oakland California in every way you can think of. Months later, I found out that the edges the scissors cuts are too big for regular stamps. If you were making a four inch, five inch stamp, sure. What kind of world needs five-inch stamps? Such a crazy notion!



Around then, it seemed like a good time to make stickers for the augmentation of personal items: portable music devices, drinking glasses, wheelbarrows, etc.



And who wouldn't love smaller versions of the microwave harassment sticker – it's Microwave Harassment Jr. Easier to palm, easier to apply to *your own personal belongings*. Adorn bookbags, sprinkler cans, pedal karts, what-have-you ... in mere seconds.

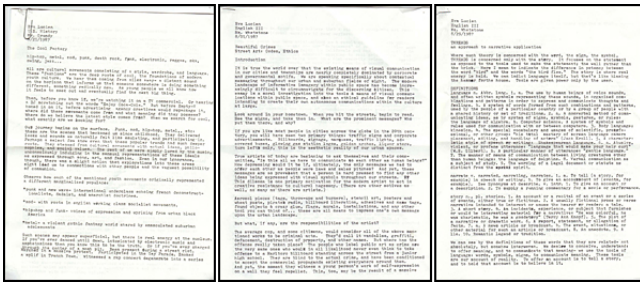






This is the [Goldwell Open Air Museum](#) in [Rhyolite, Nevada](#). When I first saw the Corporate Goddesses of 580 California, I thought they might have been created by the same artist, but these were made by Albert Szukalski around the same time.

Kelvin was also updating his weblog now and then, but then his postings took a dramatic uptick. His quest for knowledge lead him to Cornelius (from Hip Hop Shoe Repair) who handed him three school essays Eva had written.



The first, "The Cool Factory," details the co-opting of genuine sub-cultural movements by The Corporate Machine.

[...] And when refocused, this energy becomes a critical societal factor, the fuel behind actual social and political movements. This core energy I have dubbed "Pop Essence." [...] Our task is to harness the Pop Essence without diluting its underlying energy.

The second, "Beautiful Crimes," is an overview of street art and its place in the continual blinding smear of corporate boosterism.

Aerosol pieces (tags, throw-ups and burners), stencil art, posters and wheat paste, pirate radio, billboard liberation, adhesives and name tags, found objects & crazy glue, flags, murals, installations, and any other tool you can think of... these are all means to impress one's own message upon the urban landscape.

It continues into a request for equivalency – if giant corporations can litter the streets with unavoidable advertisements, where is room for the public? For artists?

This argument is not simply an esthetic or legal one; it is political, sociological, ideological, and ethical. Consider this; for any significant movement to take hold in the culture at large there needs to be room for open communication, as well as a fair exchange of information. How can any such movement take place in the populace if the means for open communication are totally dominated by commercial interests? Currently, there is a veritable corporate lock on public modes of information exchange, practically insuring a stasis in the social and political order.

The paper wraps up with a "list of ethical considerations" for the burgeoning street artist.

[...] If your work is good and finds resonance with an audience, you will gain acceptance and respect as an artist, which are generally rather dubious achievements. There are benefits, however: eventually doors will open for you to create artwork in permitted contexts and ideas may be exchanged as a result of your art. Ultimately, you will have played a minute role in loosening the social controls that currently restrict the use of public spaces. It will be a slow and tedious process, but such is our path.

Eva's English teacher, a "Ms. Whetstone," gave the paper a D+, asking: "please enlighten me – what does any of this have to do with Hamlet?"

The final paper, "Threads," is a five-page consideration of the scope of narratives in society and Eva's desire to reduce the "hyperreality" of the mass media down to something more personal, tangible, and relatable.

I would like to suggest now that if we as a culture began to change our focus from TOP STORIES to BOTTOM STORIES, that somehow the power and influences that dominant stories have over us would also diminish. Imagine if we suddenly switched our heroes from The Superman to The Bus Driver?

Kelvin had also met up with Beth who was slowly releasing items to him – photos, postcards – and then she gave him Eva's journal. He made all of these things available to interested parties by placing the bundle directly in the care of the [Prelinger Library](#), an "appropriation-friendly, image-rich, experimental research library. Independent and open to the public." You can also access over 2000 ephemeral films online at the [Prelinger Archives](#).

As a whole, the collection currently contains over 10% of the total production of ephemeral films between 1927 and 1987, and it may be the most complete and varied collection in existence of films from these poorly preserved genres.

So we went to the Prelinger Library. We're not SAPS.



The box contained Polaroid photos, postcards, essays, flyers, and the suprisingly large journal. I had just come from a research trip to the other side of the country, where I was required to wear white gloves while handling sensitive materials in two different archives. So I had this glove thing *down*. A cinch.



The photos of Eva with the nascent SF Savants messing around at Coit Tower left one question in my mind. Is Polaroid stock still available? [FX: looks] An online retailer is selling three ten packs for \$150.00. So yes but ouch.

The flyers were for the SF Savants appearances at Tattoo Lagoon and other now-defunct SF clubs.



The postcards are from Beth to Eva, complaining of her overly-regimented vacation with her parents (a later investigation of Eva's address led to a wonderful view just shy of Coit Tower). That left the journal, which had a heft to it – 292 pages filled with thoughts, drawings, collages, stories, added to until Eva's disappearance in October of 1988. One of the first few pages had a bit of brown paper pasted on it which was used to play a quick game of Exquisite Corpse, a phrase or image building game created by the Surrealists in which each successive person only sees a portion of the previous person's creation, onto which they build on.

[...] Go through the door. Service elevators and employees entrances? Then become an employee for a moment.

These obstacles are imaginary. Walk right through them.

It will lead you to the top of skyscrapers. [...]

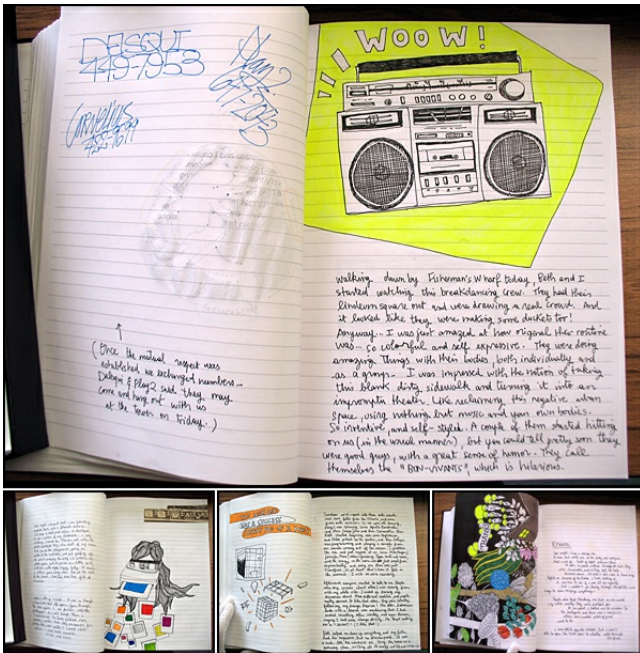


i meet kooks everywhere i go. i like it.
 i think they're drawn to me. i could
 never quite determine when someone
 "goes too far". what is too far after all?
 it happens in all my relationships. other people
 turn and run faster than i. while i'm rather
 drawn to intensity - i set myself up for
 disaster over and over. i fall hard - i do, caught up
 get
 in some fucked up situations. i think the kooks are
 drawn to me because i make them feel normal.
 since i am relatively well adjusted (i know even
 as i write that...) i lend them a moment of
 feeling - that maybe they aren't as far gone as the
 world thinks. or are they doing that for me?

Eva talked about her father, "a genius by anyone's account. Lost in numbers [...] i've never in my life heard him use the phrase 'i feel.' Does he feel? i'm a bad daughter [...] it's just hard to relate to him. i am attracted to that which is emotionally challenging; i know this about myself. Emotionality is where i dwell [...]"

Fragments of French occasionally made appearances. Eva talked about being interested in lucid dreaming. She met Chloe & Tawny: "They are rude & crass and all that but severely intelligent and hilarious at the same time [...]" The loss of her mother: "[My father] told me the world was safe ... or at least that i had a safe place in it. It's difficult to compute when people just vanish. How am i to maintain my faith and expectations when my mother is fucking gone -"

Eva's father had her go to a shrink, Dr. Jane Hewitt. "She understood my situation, and she seems like ... it may actually be nice to talk to her about how strange things have been lately. I think i should feel her out a bit more, but she seems ... different."

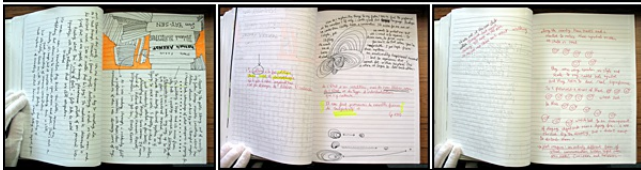
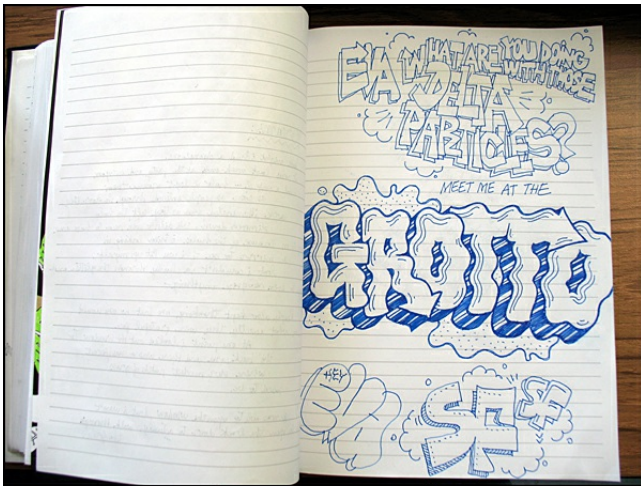


walking down by Fisherman's Wharf today, Beth and I
 started watching the breakdancing crew. They had their
 Bunkum square mat and were breaking a real break. And
 it looked like they were making some dunks for!
 Anyway - I was just amazed at how original their routine
 was - so colorful and self-expressive. They were doing
 amazing things with their bodies, both individually and
 as a group. I was impressed with the notion of making
 the blank dirty sidewalk and turning it into an
 asymptotic theater. Like recharging the negative when
 space, using nothing but music and your own bodies.
 So inventive and self-styled. A couple of them started hitting
 on us (in the usual manner), but you could tell pretty soon they
 were good guys, with a great sense of humor. They call
 themselves the "BRO-BROT" which is hilarious.

(Once the initial request was
 established we changed numbers -
 Delsqui & Play2 said they may
 come and hang out with us
 at the house on Friday.)

Eva met a breakdancing crew; Delsqui, Trey, and Cornelius. She reproduced a Joan Miró artwork in her journal, with a caption added: "Earning international acclaim his work has been interpreted as surrealism, a sandbox for the subconscious mind, a re-creation of the childlike ..." "Surrealism" is circled. Memories of her mother described to Jane Hewitt: "[...] she'd show me how to meditate while smelling all the different flowers ..." While her father is away, Eva hosts a party which leads to the forming of the SF Savants:

"[...] Play2 was spinning some Afrika Bambatta [sic] and then Graces Jones [sic] and then Dominatrix. Then Beth started layering over some keyboards, and Chloe picked up the guitar, and then Delsqui was programming and playing a sampler from our sounds coming out of the mixer. I grabbed the mic and just ripped it on some Nina Hagen / Jennifer Miro / Allen Ginsberg type rants and raves and the energy in the room just amplified exponentially and every one there was just transfixed, or at least that's how it felt in the moment [...]"



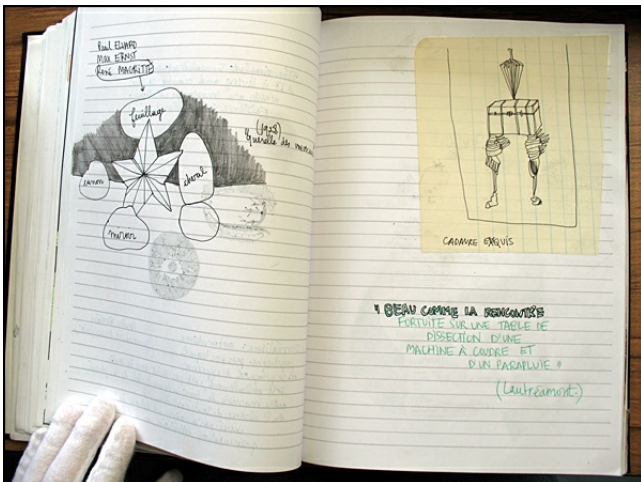
Eva noticed strange symbols around Coit Tower: "I call it the rabbit hole – I'm noticing it around more and more –" She also started hoovering up philosophy books at the library: "Roland Barthes, Hannah Arendt, Wittgenstein, Sun Yat-Sen, Frantz Fanon." Foucault became a favorite: "Reading him is still, quiet, demanding of immense concentration ... but ultimately leaves me with the same feeling. That feeling of ... small ruptures ... of crumbling mental barriers. Slowly letting me expand, grow." She included a French passage from Foucault's essay *Why Study Power: The Question of the Subject*:

Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political "double bind," which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures. The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our days is not to try to liberate the individual from the state, and from the state's institutions, but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization which is linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality which has been imposed on us for several centuries.

A few pages later, Eva described her meditation sessions with her mother: "I meet my mother in my dreams. At times I think it's all in my head. Other times I think that it's absolutely real, that she's finding ways to take care of me still [...] I'd discover a door in the side of the garage that wasn't there in real life. It would open at my touch. Down again into an ancient subterranean room with rectangular pools of water that just left two feet of space to walk on all sides [...] From there a door would appear to another realm we called Elsewhere. Which is ... impossible to describe visually – I can only talk about the warm feeling ... like I'd taken up a residency inside God's heart of hearts."

Eva then discovered more rabbit holes leading to "an encampment of sleeping vagabonds near a dying fire [...] Just imagine: an entirely different form of visual communication hidden right under our noses! Curiouser and curiouser –" She then went to the library and discovers that the rabbit hole is a "hobo glyph." During Eva's visit to Dr. Hewitt she used representative dolls to unlock subconscious thoughts. Practiced regularly with her band. Continued her exploration of surrealism, wrote down excerpts.

"It is living and ceasing to live which are imaginary solutions. Existence is elsewhere." – André Breton (*Surrealist Manifesto*)



"Beau comme la rencontre fortuite sur une table de dissection d'une machine à coudre et d'un parapluie." – Comte de Lautréamont

This quote, "beautiful as the chance meeting on a dissecting table of a sewing machine and an umbrella," was used by Breton and other surrealists as an example of surrealist dislocation. After reading Lautréamont's book, *Les Chants de Maldoror*, they referred to him as a "prophet."

But "Comte de Lautréamont" was a pseudonym. His real name was Isidore Lucien Ducasse. *Lucien*. I had thought that "Eva Lucien" was just a homonym for "evolution." Some time after this, Duckstadb recommended the 1983 hip hop documentary *Style Wars* which devotes a large section to graffiti artists. One artist recounted various early adopters:

"... Stitch came out around 1971 ... [Barbara and Eva 62](#), they were girls ..."



Further research indicated that the first women taggers are believed to be Barbara 62, Eva 62, and Michelle 62, the “three graces” (Graces Jones?). Then I ran into a wall.



[Bronx 1973](#) (Dan McCoy / NARA)

“When I took [this picture](#) in Riverside park [in 1990] they had finally painted the handball court’s wall. It had been covered with vintage graffiti by the local legends Barbara & Eva 62 who I’m guessing came from the Amsterdam projects just a few blocks away.” – Matt Weber

Numbers in a name for early taggers usually demarcated a street number, the Amsterdam projects hang off of 62nd Street in Manhattan.



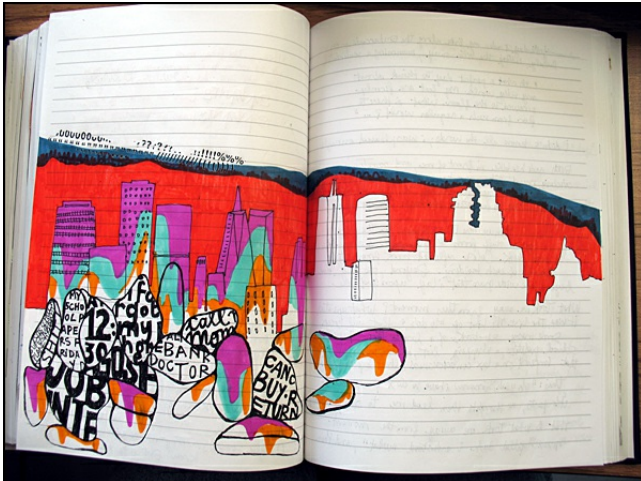
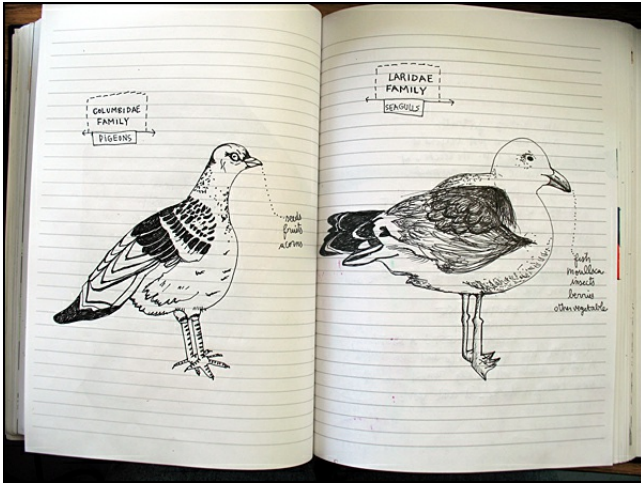
Eva 62, Barbara 62 and Michelle 62 seem to have been lost to history. Or perhaps my search-fu is too weak. So. Eva-Lucien : Graffiti-Surrealism.

Back in the journal, Eva detailed her high school PA prank, inspired by a child she witnessed making random barking noises. “I’ve been studying the surrealists lately. It made me wonder if i should be painting more. But i don’t want to do it on canvas, i want to do it on the world.” She mentioned finding a small silver charm from her mother that had a short quote from Rumi on it and this brought up mixed feelings about her mother. A different Rumi quote:

In China they tell of three laughing Taoist masters, who taught by going into town and standing in the marketplace and laughing. One of them died. People curious as to how the remaining two would act gathered at the funeral pyre. The other two masters had been given instructions not to prepare the body in any way, not even to change the clothes the dead man was wearing. He had crammed his pockets full of firecrackers. The teaching began again. Rumi’s poems are like firecrackers on a funeral pyre. They won’t allow much public posturing, and they point us away from misery.

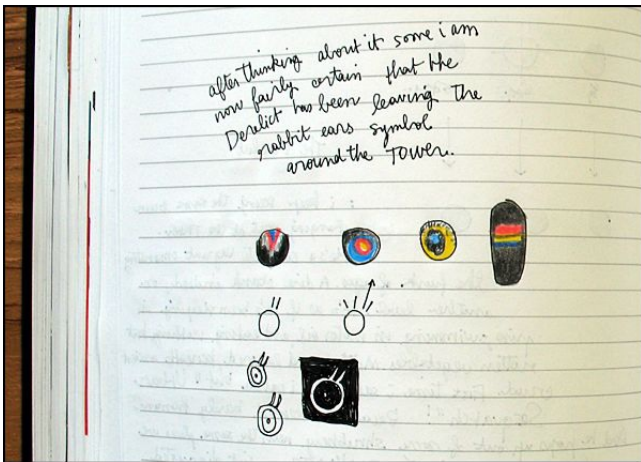
– *The Essential Rumi* Translations by Coleman Barks with John Moyne [pg 238]





A number of entries detail the preparation that went into her birdseed-football prank – acquiring the four football jerseys, feeding the birds. It goes off without a hitch.

"I'm kind of getting addicted to this. It feels like it's the one primary way I can be effective in this world. Each act is a reminder for people to think and rethink. It has real value."



Dr. Hewitt told Eva about a memory recorder in the testing phase. Eva began to have sporadic "weird pulsing" headaches. The Savants broke into the high school and posted a large amount of spurious flyers designed to look official; Eva was expelled. "[My father] said I should feel fortunate that Principal Moore didn't pursue criminal charges against me for slander [...] Now Galileo is going to have to live without my sauce!"

San Francisco's head librarian, [Gladys Hansen](#), took a shine to Eva and "indulges my whimsical investigations." Fall approaches; Beth is continuing at Gallileo, other Savants are moving onto college. "Maybe I'll start junior college next year or something. In the mean time I'm continuing on my own self directed course of study & practice: 'CREATIVE THEORY & APPLICATION.'"



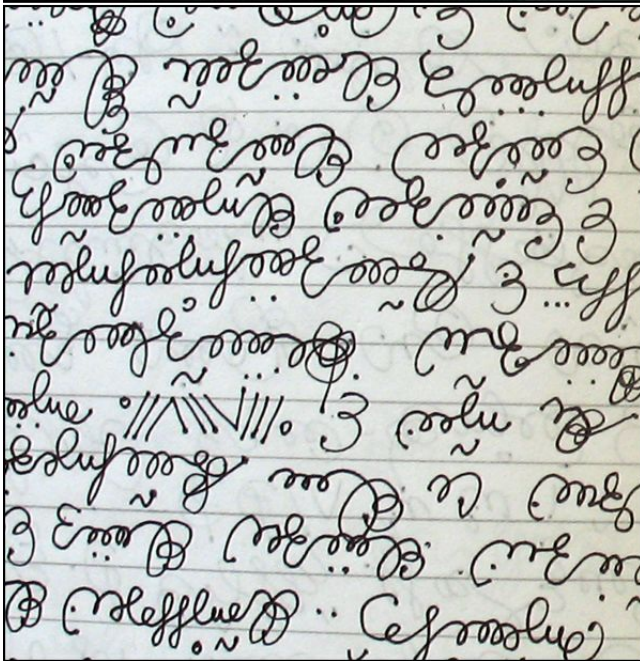
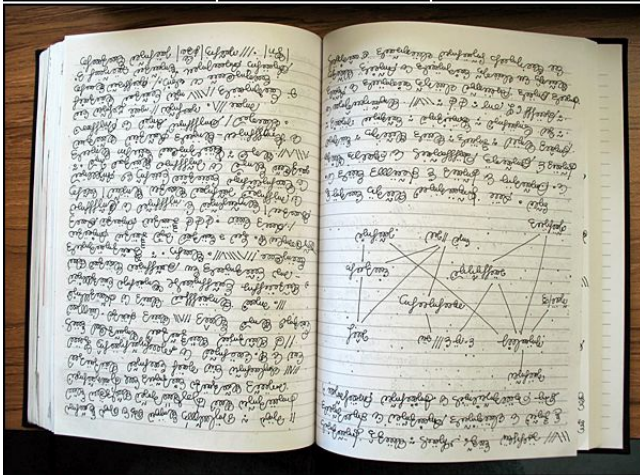
Eva met the derelict, Neil. "He came right up to my face and began to speak, saying he knew my mother, that he had been sent from another place, that i was the 'Queen of a Lost Tribe.' He said that the time is coming when obstacles will be obsolete [...] And where would we be without these obstacles? Neil said ... 'Elsewhere.' At the time i was so high that i didn't think twice about it. Of course this complete stranger knew the name of the secret fantasy place i inhabited with my mother as a child! Sure – this makes perfect sense to me. – But now, under light of day, i admit i am terrified. –"

She went to a "memory rendering session" on Dr. Hewitt's recommendation. "I should be able to see the tape next week. What does the inside of my head look like exactly?" Some time later, a dramatic change overcame Eva:

Amazingly lucid today. Beyond 20/20 vision, whatever that looks like. i can see molecules and subparticles floating in the air, the cells in your skin undergoing mitosis. i can hear the worms beneath the Earth, and the colonies of ants in the oak trees as i saunter by. i'm simultaneously honing in on the distant hum of irregular galaxies drifting just beyond our perceptions. it is the sound of tranquility. and calm.

while my entire world seems to crumble around me, i feel calmer than ever. i can see the panic in the eyes of my loved ones as they witness this change in me [...] i am off to play in a place they will not be able to follow [...] Excitement? not exactly ... it is a calmness. a knowing [...]

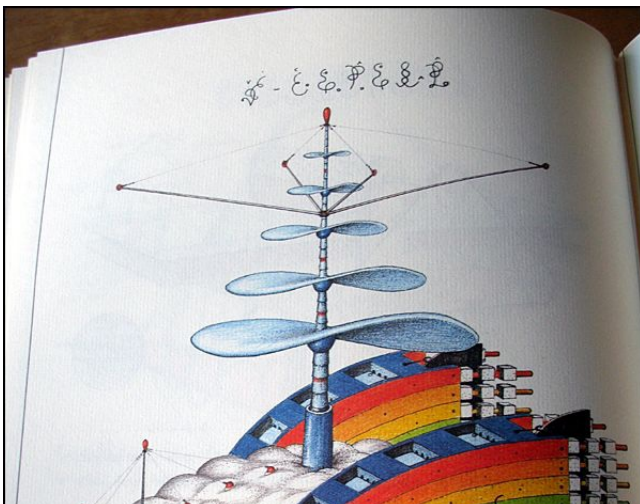
A page or two later, the journal itself had transformed as well.

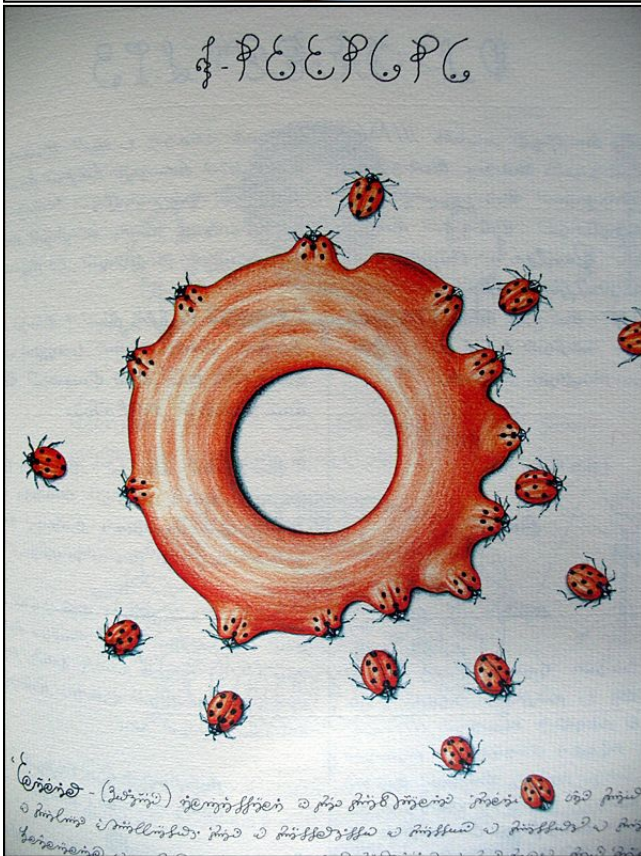
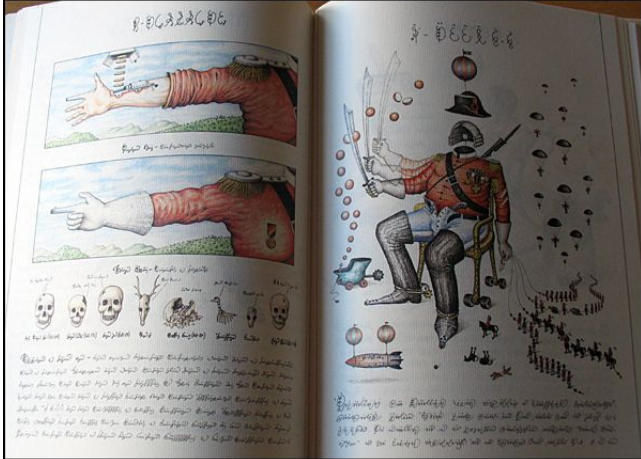


Sixteen pages of cryptic writing. The rest of the journal was blank.

Crumbly Donut immediately recognized the writing in the journal as originating in the [Codex Seraphinianus](#), since he owned a copy.

"Some people with whom I have shared this book find it frightening or disturbing in some way. It seems to them to glorify entropy, chaos, and incomprehensibility. There is very little to fasten onto; everything shifts, shimmers, slips. Yet the book has a kind of unearthly beauty and logic to it, qualities pleasing to a different class of people: people who are more at ease with free-wheeling fantasy and, in some sense, craziness. I see some parallels between musical composition and this kind of invention. Both are abstract, both create a mood, both rely largely on style to convey content." – Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Metamagical Themas: Questing for the Essence of Mind and Pattern*





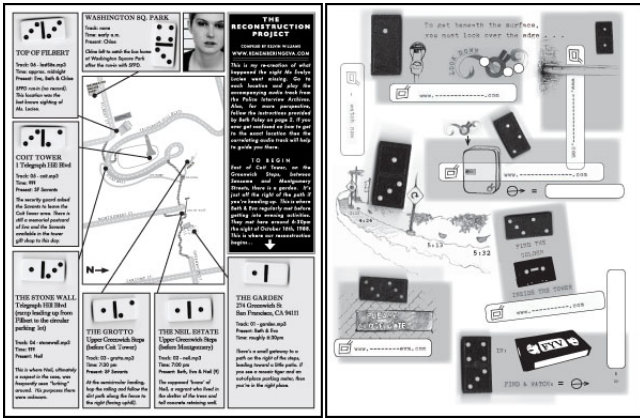
Back in August while I was out of state, excerpts of the journal were "leaked" by Kelvin on his weblog. Crumbly Donut pointed to one particular passage prefaced by drawings of two multinational sub-dismal beverage/food providers:

"Is this all you have to communicate to one another as a species? Rules & sales pitches? Where is the culture in your city streets? Where is the content? What is your history? [...] Somebody infuse some spontaneity and play into this work-a-day world before I just....vanish altogether"

This sounded like a clarion call to the Donut. "we NEED to start tagging, or more likely, posting." Well, you don't have to tell me twice. I talked to Crumbly and he had an idea to do a "SF Personalities" series. We whittled down a large list to five people; some were eliminated because there weren't good photos/images available. Crumbly wrote descriptions for each of them. I fiddled with the images and fed them into a strange raster/vector program I had lying around. By the time I got back from the right side of America, I had all five images ready. A friend offered to print them insanely-large sized for maximum POW! Also ZAM!

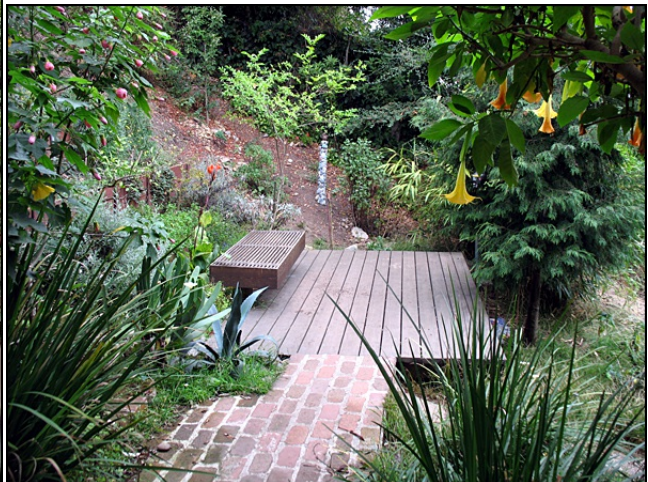


His posterization offer included a sixth somewhat-unrelated image that was going to require some assembling. Meanwhile, I downloaded the two-page map that was co-created by Kelvin and Beth. Kelvin's page coordinated with audio tracks extracted from a police interview of people close to Eva, conducted after she went missing. Beth's page was filled with visual aids to help find the names of one-page domains that each featured a video segment related to that area. Everything was presented in chronological order; we were approximately ghosting Eva's known whereabouts on the day she disappeared.



This time on our walkabout the roles were reversed: I didn't know what was going on, and Crumbly Donut had been through the whole thing already. He fed me a few sugar cubes and we were off.

1. THE GARDEN.





The stairs up to Coit Tower were well-maintained and cut through some swanky bits of nature with trees and such. There was a cute little turn-off that features a small bench and ... a parking meter. The garden's associated audio track was a police interview with Blair Lucien.

Detective: Mr. Lucien? We really do appreciate your patience ... let's go over this one more time.

Blair: You can't be serious.

Detective: Sir ... I know this is exhaustive ... and that's the point ... we need to get every single detail. Now, can you tell me again, how you came to realize Eva was missing.

Blair: We're going to go over this again? Haven't we done this? I mean, shouldn't you be out conducting some type of actual search?

Later, Beth is interviewed and indicated her parents wouldn't let Eva in the house, which is why they would meet at the garden. She mentioned that Neil was the one responsible for the tile mosaics all around the area.

These interviews were agony to listen to because [you don't talk to the police](#). But I set aside my gritted teeth (in a small, tasteful, and moderately ornate wooden box) and pretended I was in a trapped in a fictional world where the police actually helped you! And candy was free, even high-quality licorice from Australia! Weeeeeeeeeee!

The associated video for "URBANCREDITERS" showed Eva & Beth on the very same bench with an opossum, having a conversation. The opossum didn't really contribute that much to the discourse. Beth was worried about rabies, Nature's Hidden Treasure.



Just before we were about to leave the bench of tranquility, I spotted a Neil mosaic set below the deck. Oh! It was referenced on Beth's page ... "To get beneath the surface, you must look over the edge ..." Almost missed it. This was a new revelation for Crumbly Donut, he hadn't seen it the first time around.

2. THE NEIL ESTATE.



The Neil Estate audio track continues Beth's police interview ... she gives explicit directions to his hovel, a flat bit of ground sort of on a little rise, obscured by foliage. The sign demarcating the area and leading us to the video is patterned on the numbered plaques you see on telephone poles that public officials use for their daily lottery picks. Nice place, needs a roof though ... I'm spoiled. The associated video gives us quick glimpses of Neil in his Estate suddenly flipping out about some sort of hair malfunction, apparently. We all have them.

[...]
Detective: Did you see Neil there, the night that Eva disappeared?
Beth: No, I didn't ...
Detective: Did anyone else?
Beth: Well, I know that the others might have seen him that night. Play2 did I think.
Detective: Are you sure?
Beth: Uhh, yeah, Play2 mentioned something about seeing him.

Play2 is the second interview on the track. The detective pronounced his name in such a disapproving way that it made me want to tack a number to the end of my own name.

[...]
Detective: So I seem to have heard that you had some interaction with him on that night yourself. Am I right about that?
Play2: Nah. I never talk to him. We just talk about him ... crack jokes on him and whatnot.

3. THE GROTTO.



This is a small frequently-used cushy area hanging on a fenceline just below Coit Tower's parking lot. It had a couch-type area ... and someone sleeping there.



We were very quiet. I went to open the box with the mosaic number, but then something occurred to me.

"Wait ... if you didn't have the code, how did you open this?"
"It was already open."

CRUMBLY DONUT. After getting the video location ("Delta particles") and another code phrase ("Soon obsolete") I carefully re-locked the box back up and we quietly snuck past the sleeping woman. The video itself had Eva, Tawny and Chloe discussing the obvious merits of Delta Particles, showing same to Beth who was operating the camera. Play2 & Delsqui turned up and they razzed the women about taking the Deltas. At the end of the video, we saw Eva place what is apparently the Golden Mix Tape into the box and walk away.

On the audio track, Play2 described where the Grotto is, and the detective tried to nail him as a supplier of Delta Particles. "Delsqui and I, like I said before, are clean. If anyone around us was experimenting with Delta, they sure in hell didn't get it from us. We don't need drugs to get on, and you can quote me on that. Same thing with Delsqui." Delsqui's interview was next, and the detective played a friendly game of "lying."

Detective: He said there were some Delta Particles going around at the grotto on the night in question ... and that you guys were [sing-song] pretty high ...
Delsqui: Hahaha ... nah nah man ... first of all, I know my boy didn't say that. Secondly, do you think you're going to give me the talk ... by telling me this bullshit? Nah, Play2 and I, we don't get high there. Nor will we say anything to cop each other out. So you can take that talk somewhere else, homey.

4. THE STONE WALL.



While talking with the detective, Play2 described seeing Neil interacting with the stone wall that leads up to Coit Tower.

Play2: We'd seen the dude dippin' around that wall all the time.

Detective: Dipping around?

Play2: Yeah, you know ... looking down, poking around the crevices between the rocks, looking back up again ...

Detective: Doing what?

Delsqui: Doing what he does! Being a weirdo! Why don't you go ask the guy!

Beth's sheet had a drawing of the stone wall with specific hollows demarcated by track times; the hollows contained mini-dioramas of key events in Nonchalance history, and the track times corresponded to Neil's explanation of these same events. We started "dippin' around" the stone wall.

Detective: [...] You were interacting with a missing person ...

Neil: MESSENGER PIGEON!

Detective: You've been spotted lurking around the rock wall ...

Neil: I was leaving breadcrumbs to the past ... for people in the future ... Some people will never be ready ... but ... the queen ... the queen she was *born* with wings! What's your explanation for that?

Detective: Who's the queen?

Neil: No ... you wouldn't recognize her highness the divine queen of Nonchalance ... Eva Lucien [...]



Neil: YES! YES! THE DIFATER! They arrived in the new world in the late 17th century ... we heard the land song, and learned to harmonize with the inhabitants ... the Nashua ... a native tribe of the Northeast, they took us in ... we were made like their own, with mutual admiration ... a cultural fusion that upon unification formed a higher state of consciousness ... [...]

We were persecuted by the English settlers, they ... chased us down ... burned our villages to the ground ... and ever since – history has been re-written ... our existence simply erased from the books ... Nonchalance became ... the lost tribe. [...]



Detective: What does this have to do with Miss –

Neil: It has to do with the railways! Those steam engines and freight cars, along the tracks ... gathered around garbage fires, American hoboes ... descendants of Nonchalance passing along the tradition ... they would share and spread a folk tale ... the Confabulation ...



EPWA Special Agent Little Donut explores the hidden alcoves of THE STONE WALL.

... a story that foretold a queen who would someday emerge and shine brightly like a beacon for the strays, she'd have the special ability to navigate our world and theirs, uniting the lost tribe ... and leading these pilgrims ... all the descendants of Nonchalance home ... to Elsewhere.

5. COIT TOWER.



Coit Tower, as we learned via Dr. Hewitt's "Hidden San Francisco Series," was built "by the eccentric heiress Lillie Hitchcock Coit." I've never been up in the tower, seemed like too much to pay to get just a little bit higher.

The police interview with Tawny has the detective telling porkies again.

Detective: So what about Neil? I seem to have heard from your friends that he may have been trouble for you guys.

Tawny: No you didn't.

Detective: Really?

Tawny: Yeah, really. You're lying. Neil may have been strange, but he was never a problem for anyone [...]



The Coit Tower gift shoppe was swollen with a large dumpster's worth of SF-specific trinkets, so it took awhile to find the golden mix tape envelope as alluded to on Beth's page. The die-cut card featured a photo of the SF Savants backed by a missing [Humphrey the whale](#). The envelope itself featured ads for Hip Hop Shoe Repair, Radio Nonchalance, and Film Yard Video which was in the area. At the bottom of the envelope, the video link "SAVANTSRGO" appeared.

The video featured Delsqui, Play2, and Cornelius pulling synchronized and individual breakdancing moves to Freestyle's "[Don't Stop The Rock](#)." At the end, Beth's camera focused in on some discarded bird feathers.

6. TOP OF FILBERT.



The final stop on the walkabout was a small fenced-off area overlooking a school. The audio interview had Chloe and Beth describing leaving a party with Eva; they then noticed a squad car "jamming up the hill like they were looking for somebody." Beth ran behind the gate and hid, Chloe ran, and that's when Eva went missing. "She was just gone." The accompanying video is pretty much the same thing, with Eva looking completely out of it ... the final shot was of Beth whispering: "Eva Eva ... Eva ..."

The track then switched to the last interview, with Neil, who was a little more out of it than usual.

There are bridges ... bridges that you can't see ... but not because they're small ... but ... some times they are small ...the visible is not always invisible just because you cannot see it ... faith is what is unseen ... what you do not see is wings ... grow wings for soaring high in the realms of divine nonchalance ...

And then he repeated himself like a lock groove at the end of a record. At this point a second detective walked in the room.

Detective2: Are you getting anything out of him?

Neil: Wings ...

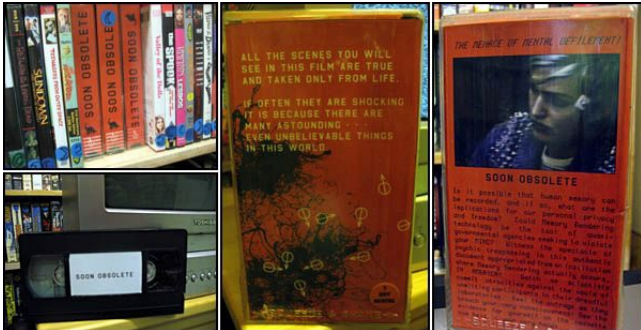
Detective: No, this is completely useless.

Detective2: Not on abduction. But we can sure detain him on other charges.

Detective: All right let's do it ... I'll put a call into Sextonfield.

Something that another person pointed out what seemed like months later because it was: "O.C. Sextonfield" was one of Octavio Coleman's aliases as indicated on the radio broadcast in Dolores Park. Completely missed that.

WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK.



The last stop on Beth's list has an image of a videotape with "FYV" on it – Film Yard Video. Somehow when I walked in I knew exactly where to go – the "Cults" section – and I immediately found the tape in question, "Soon Obsolete."



The tape shows Eva being hooked up to the mind recorder from the Memory To Media Center. She's interviewed ("I don't have typical days") and a live video of what the machine is pulling down is shown as an inset. She described checking out Baudrillard's book *The Consumer Society* from the library, and as she describes going to Jane Hewitt's office at 580 California, the machine locked on and switched to her memory video. She described being five and losing a tooth, and the tooth fairy (in her two-level-deep dream-within-a-memory) seemed to be a menacing figure in a familiar black zentai suit.

Then she described a meeting with Neil; we're shown the actual meeting.

Neil: [...] I recognize you.

Eva: You do?

Neil: Miss Elevyn Katherine Lucien, daughter of Peggy. I know your mother.

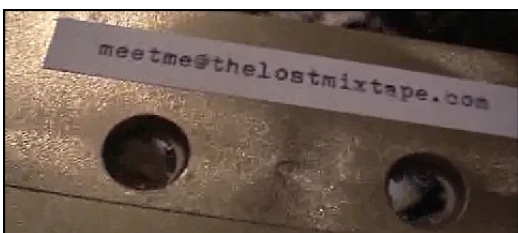
Eva: What? My mother is dead.

Neil: You know that's not true. And now, it is my extreme honor to stand before the queen of divine nonchalance.

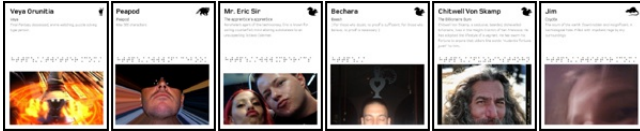
Neil went on to explain that her "visions are real," that's she's a descendant of the lost tribe of nonchalants, and can navigate "both worlds."

[...] she would transmit the energy ... and like a beacon of light ... guide us all toward divine nonchalance ... and once again we would flourish in our kingdom ... the domain of Elsewhere. You are that queen Eva ... your mother sent me here to find you ... this place ... here ... it's not ours ... we're *beyond* this. You are meant to transcend this world, Eva. This is the prophecy and soon it will be fulfilled. All obstacles are obsolete.

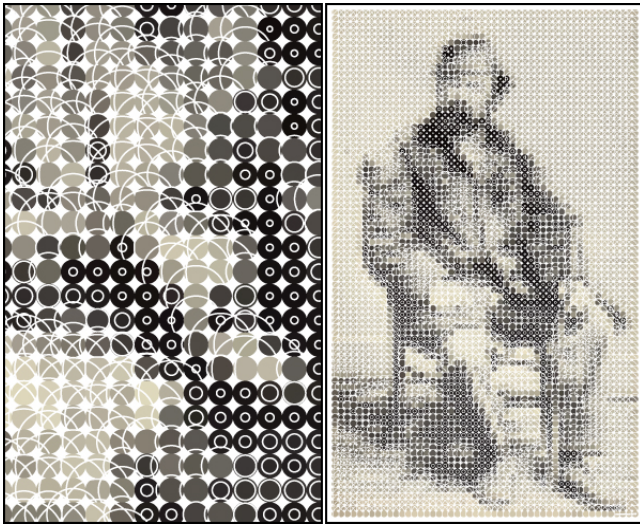
The video ended with a pointer to the url thelostmixtape.com. At the domain, there is a short video of someone scrambling for a golden tape cassette that is labelled with an email address:



I sent a hello-howdy-doo email to the address, but didn't receive any immediate response.



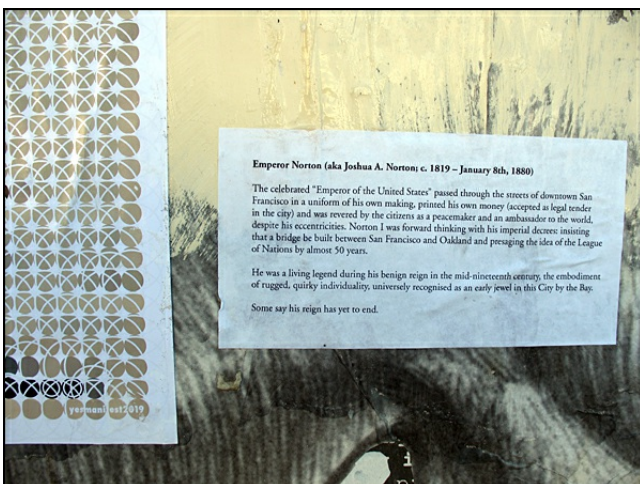
A few days later, Crumbly Donut and I went to the [Valencia wall](#) with a poster of Emperor Norton.



I did a little bit of stenciling in college but never liked the results and working with spray paint seemed too messy. As if wheat paste *isn't*, ha what a funny. Crumbly and I used spare pieces of cardboard to spread the goopy paste around on the back. We applied the Emperor to the wall in an enthusiastic and forceful manner.



We weren't really sure how we were going to connect this to the larger construct, but then as *[fake philosopher name]* once said, part of the path is not on the path.



Emperor Norton (aka Joshua A. Norton) (c. 1819 – January 8th, 1880)

The celebrated "Emperor of the United States" passed through the streets of downtown San Francisco in a uniform of his own making, printed his own money (accepted as legal tender in the city) and was revered by the citizens as a peacemaker and an ambassador to the world, despite his eccentricities. Norton I was forward thinking with his imperial decrees: insisting that a bridge build between San Francisco and Oakland and presaging the idea of the League of Nations by almost 50 years.

He was a living legend during his benign reign in the mid-nineteenth century, the embodiment of rugged, quirky individuality, universally recognised as an early jewel in this City by the Bay.

Some say his reign has yet to end.

The sixth SF personality was 580 California. *Obvious*. It was an exercise in jankiness; I didn't want to spend a lot of time on it but these things have a way of blowing up in your face. It was finally assembled out of a discarded flat-screen HD TV box and cow/spray glue. Everything came out roughly how I wanted except the columns which looked horrible. I intended to glue it somewhere in an alley. Perhaps there was a horizontal something sticking out of an alley wall somewhere I could use as a support beam so the model would be jutting from the wall sideways.

That's an actual Microwave Harassment Jr. Jr. sticker there on the electrical cabinet.

On September 30th, Further Dispatches From Elsewhere released a further dispatch concerning the actions of an art curator named Audrey Greigh. "We do not quite understand her aims at this time [...] is she trying to exploit our nonchalance? This remains to be seen." Her gallery exhibit was descriptly thusly:

NONCHALANCE

Zetetic/Peripatetic: Investigations into the Ontology of the Elsewhere Public Works Agency and the First Steps Towards the Formulation of a General Theory of the Practice of Nonchalants

A failed collaboration between so-called curator Audrey Greigh, who has sadly lapsed into doctrinal error, and Elsewhere Public Works EPWA.

The dispatch continued with information on [Soex Gallery](#) where the event was scheduled to run from October 17th until December 12th.

Two days later, another Dispatch was released; it ended with an announcement of a Special Live Broadcast on October 16th, a "tribute to our lady of Nonchalance, Miss Eva Lucien, on this special day of her disappearance. In stereo. Be there with bells on." Two events, one weekend: the 21st anniversary of The Missing, and an art show.

Before attending the tribute, I ran a quick side errand to the San Francisco Library, looking for a copy of Baudrillard's *The Consumer Society*, but the only thing Baudrillard was a reader that only had excerpts. I averted my gaze away from the library's psychotic carpeting while taking photos of various pages, then left.



While Crumbly and I were making my way to the park, a small crew had gone to Faye's to pick up all the radios. While there, they received balloons/markers with written instructions.



[Photo: [Duckstapel](#)]

We parked our butts at the agreed-upon meeting spot in Delores Park. MrEricSir and Alexia joined us shortly thereafter, and we all waited for the live broadcast.



After listening to "The Rainbow Connection," "Baby I'm Yours," and a short collage of familiar voices from the nonchalantic past, Commander 14 took the helm:

[...] It is my duty to ask you, listeners, what were her words? What was the lesson? What did she say unto us? Do you *believe* that she meant what it is that she said? Now, let me quote. "I decided to leave them a message map in recorded waveform. They won't find it immediately. It could take years. When they are ready, it will become apparent to them." And now it is my job to ask you, the listeners, are you ready? Have you come far enough? Will you hear the call? She may be calling out to you now, and if so, would you even recognize it? Are you waiting for something to happen? Then you have grievously missed the point! *You* are what happens! Is the world of nonchalance all around you? Or is it not? You are either of the tribe ... or you aren't. The battle rages on, all the time! It is a metaphysical ROAR in the deep forests of San Francisco and we are the guerillas in the midst, never asleep, never unaware, of the millions of [...] surrounding us constantly ...

A bit later Commander 14 asked for some things, some oddly at hand, one completely fictional.

For an upcoming operation, we are collecting the following items. Couch cushions and other billowy artifacts. Used blankets. Miniature replicas of the Jejune Institute. Small dogs named "Jejune." Donuts in the shape of hobo glyphs. If you have any of these items, please stayed tuned to Further Dispatches From Elsewhere for pickup and dropoff. We thank you for your continued support.

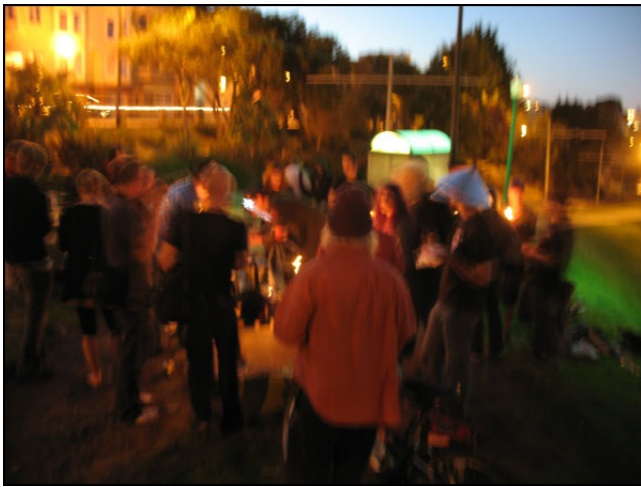
Hrm. Looked like I was going to have to fix those columns on 580 Jr. after all. The donut, however ... that was a reference to an edited image Jason created, a life-like portrayal of a mythical rabbit hole donut confection. There used to be a place in San Jose, Lou's, that would take the donut holes and slam 'em back onto the sides of the donuts before frying so your finished donut looked like it had a tumor on it. A tasty bonus donut tumor bolus. Lou's was gone, but there was the possibility that getting someone else to do something similar wouldn't be that hard.

Meanwhile, a crowd had gathered for the tribute in a corner of the park, but we were facing the other way and didn't see the gathering. Eventually Crumbly figured it out and we trundled on over to join up with everyone. The balloons had already been written on and launched. Some people were holding candles, but I wasn't falling for that trick again ... during the [Action I](#) was carrying a protest sign, a bell, a piece of chalk, a mask, my bag, and trying to take photos while getting hand-jazzy ... that required six more hands than I actually had at the time (2).





I handed off some sticker packs of the SF personalities and assorted related graphics to various people.



At the end of it all, there was a giant group hug. I may have been involved in that.

After the broadcast had finished, the crowd had dispersed and the radios were returned, I thought about the request for "miniature replicas of the Jejune Institute." That's plural there, so it was time to get to work, especially when the undetermined future could have been the next day! I went ahead and made 580jrjr, a simplified version of 580jr, so other people could create models using a regular printer. And also a "blank" for people to go freeform/"hog wild."

Wrap the Jejune Institute around a carton of milk! Shrink it down, make it the size of a deck of cards! Print out two of them and make them fight! Churn out a dozen of them, carry them in a sack! Use Rasterbator, blow it up large enough to stick on a discarded refrigerator box! Small! Big! Micro! Jumbo! Draw an abstract version of the JI while asleep! Mount a bell on the inside so goondroids can't mess with your stuff! Hup hup hup!



The day ended, as most days do. Kelvin indicated that he had attended the tribute as well:

I went to the thing. In the park. On the radio. And. It. Was truly a bizarre encounter. I was shocked to discover an entire subculture based in some abstract way around the ideas Eva expressed in her journal and other works. They call themselves the Elsewhere Public Works Agency, and they are totally off their rockers as far as I can tell. They seem to treat as Gospel all of Eva's strange nonsensical philosophies about life, eccentricities, and that mythical place from her childhood she mentioned called "Elsewhere". As misguided as they appeared, there was something very moving about the broadcast itself. It possessed both a whimsy and a melancholy that I quickly identified with, and it seemed to be very much in the spirit of the person we knew as Eva. At least in part. I also had a vague sense of dread while in their presence, like something very bad could come of association with these people. I kept my distance for the most part, staying around the perimeter.



The next day, I met up with Crumbly Donut to hit SOEX with hitting.



The boilerplate on the website prepared us to investigate the EPWA's ontology. We were budding general ontologists. *Orto!*

Nonchalance, Zetetic/Peripatetic: Investigations into the Ontology of the Elsewhere Public Works Agency and the First Steps Towards the Formulation of a General Theory of the Practice of Nonchalants Part fringe folklore, part comment on group potential, part *dérive*. Nonchalance creates hyper-real alternate reality games through tightly synchronized constellation of rivalries, quixotic maps, surrogate locations, and chance meetings. For Southern Exposure, Nonchalance presents Zetetic/Peripatetic: Investigations into the Ontology of the Elsewhere Public Works Agency and the First Steps Towards the Formulation of a General Theory of the Practice of Nonchalants, a new public project focused on the failed collaboration between curator Audrey Griegh and rival group, Elsewhere Public Works (EPWA). As visitors walk through the familiar sites prescribed in this work, Nonchalance's narrative layers time and lifts them into a parallel reality of intrigue and the desire to right a topsy-turvy past through inquiry and the ability to just drift.

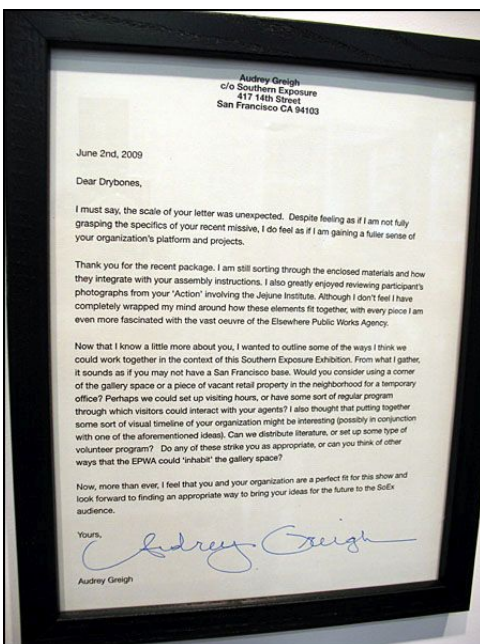


Nonchalance's exhibit was just inside the main gallery, which featured a small number of large, unrelated exhibits. Or were they? The cased-in portion of the Nonchalance exhibit featured a beat up "Soon Obsolete" sign, a pile of tiny bricks (brick jr.), a few miniature tinfoil hats (jr.), a serious bell, an Octavio Coleman mask, an EPWA armband, and some nonchalant teeth. The whole thing was crowned with a series of numbered pushpins joined by strings that I of course feverishly replicated on paper JIC but had no obvious use/meaning.

OBJECTS LISTED COUNTERCLOCKWISE, STARTING ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CASE
 NON-ITALICIZED COMMENTS RESEARCHED AND SYNTHESIZED BY AUDREY GREIGH
 ITALICIZED COMMENTS CONTRIBUTED BY THE ELSEWHERE PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY

<p>FENCE SIGN paint, aluminum</p> <p>This sign promotes the Elsewhere Public Works Agency's vision for the future of fences, barriers and other obstacles. Found on March 23, 2009 on a fence at the intersection of 17th Street and Mariposa in San Francisco.</p> <p>Signs. Some attention has been given to signs indicating some kind of "visual pollution". These people are just L7, prone to migraine headaches & unable to see the beauty in the complex visual reality of which we are a part. Soon obsolete, the wall, the fence or the sign? See tinfoil.</p>	<p>MASK paper, cardboard, twine</p> <p>This mask was worn by an Elsewhere Public Works Agent during a protest of the Jelinek Institute on April 30th, 2009. The mask depicts the face of Octavio Coleman, leader of the institute. The purpose of wearing a likeness of this man is unknown at this time.</p> <p>What is a person's face but a mask? Wearing another face over your real face just reveals the true nature of our "actual" faces. Your skin is a wall to the world against the reality of your mind which YOU do not even know. Because of this, we are all Octavio Coleman.</p>
<p>MINIATURE BRICKS, BRICK WALL terracotta clay</p> <p>These small bricks bear every resemblance to their larger cousins. There is a pronounced relationship between Elsewhere and many miniature items, although the exact nature of this connection remains unclear.</p> <p>Have you ever seen a big voodoo doll?</p>	<p>ARBAND cloth, dye</p> <p>This armband identifies a member of the Elsewhere Public Works Agency while on official business (when not undercover or undercover).</p> <p>Carry a clipboard & wear a uniform (singular format) & suddenly you have respect. You are doing the right thing in the right place at the right time. This is just speaking the language of walls & using the camouflage of the system against itself.</p>
<p>MINIATURE TINFOIL HATS tinfoil</p> <p>These hats are worn by members of the Elsewhere Public Works Agency to deflect microwave harassment, synthetic telepathy, and unwanted astral intrusion. It is not clear at this time if these hats are models for larger hats or if their scale has been affected by the transition from Elsewhere to Here.</p> <p>Whap a potato in tin-foil before baking. Seals in the juices.</p>	<p>NONCHALANT'S TOOTH tooth</p> <p>Over the years, the teeth of Nonchalants were assumed by various mystics and collectors to have various magical, curative, or supernatural properties. This resulted in many incidents of grave robbing and forcible tooth extractions from living Nonchalants. These teeth were then traded and hoarded in private collections and wunderkammers.</p> <p>They're killing & putting the body parts of albinos into pots in Africa at this very moment. There is power where you find it.</p>
<p>BELL metal, leather strapping</p> <p>Bells of many shapes and sizes are used by agents of Elsewhere Public Works Agency to ward off the forces of False Nonchalance, especially in the form of Jelinek Institute goons as occurred in the encounter on April 30th, 2009.</p> <p>Certain tones can cut out through everything & calm the mind. In the ancient temples of Nonchalance, amidst all of the chaos & hub-rub, there would be the occasional tolling of a big, black bell. It was as if the sound waves of this bell swept everything away, just as the ocean sweeps away everything. It is said that the collapse of False-Nonchalance will be hastened by the great tolling of bells.</p>	<p>CONSTELLATION thread, pins</p> <p>This diagram was composed, as faithfully as possible, using the materials and instructions sent with the package from the Elsewhere Public Works Agency. The instructions did not include any explication of the purpose or significance of this constellation.</p> <p>R to L: Connecting D04mgA102 to point [M] and [SILVER]; extend connector D04mgA102 to point [M] continuing to point [Z]; Connecting L04mgA18 from [SILVER] to [SILVER] and point [M]; Connecting D04mgA102 to point [M] and point [Z]; Connecting L04mgA18 from point [M] to [SILVER]; Connecting D04mgA102 from point [Z] to point [M] then to [SILVER]; Connecting [SILVER] to [SILVER] then to point [Z].</p>

Above the case was a volley of letters between Drybones of the EPWA and the aforementioned Audrey Greigh, a "guest artist and curator" working with SoEx. It was a bit of a meta-exhibit; an exhibit of the discussion of setting up the very exhibit you were looking at.



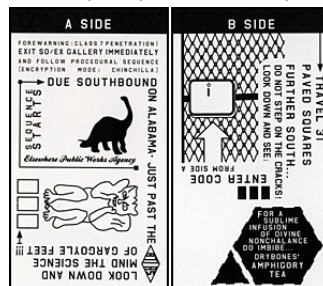
You know Audrey's fake, no one has a signature that relaxed anymore. Everyone's got crabbed hands from those damned video-games and typing astute comments on internet video service domains. The exchange didn't seem to end well; Drybones got bristly with Audrey's attempts to corral the powerful force of nonchalance, Audrey apologized and asked for final

approval on the exhibit. In the package he had sent to Audrey, Drybones included a clutch of tiny envelopes for gallery visitors.



The envelopes read "WHATS INSIDE THIS ENVELOPE THE CONTENTS ARE FOR YOU" and on the back: "[NOT AUDREY]." Crumbly (NOT AUDREY) and I (also NOT AUDREY) grabbed tiny envelopes. Inside ... a card.

"FOREWARNING: CLASS SEVEN PENETRATION!" CLASS SEVEN PENETRATION?!?!? WE NEED TO LEAVE THE GALLERY IMMEDIATELY! After flouncing around the displays for awhile, we met up with Urban Phoenix and hit the streets. Atlas Cafe was right across the street, and there on the side of the building, a mural ... with a gargoyle. This 'il feller looked to be a little embarrassed, having dropped a number at his feet.



With our new favorite three-digit number fresh in our minds, we counted off the 31 squares and found another lockbox.





It looked like we needed to order some special tea at a nearby cafe. Briareosh and his wife joined our group. We occasionally ran into the Duckstadb family as we kept crossing paths.



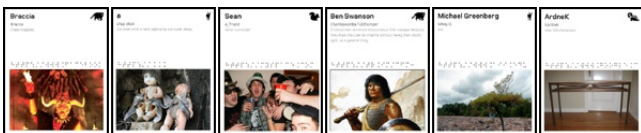
Urban Phoenix bought a round of Amphigory Tea for everyone. We played musical chairs, agent Cal Bruin showed up, Crumbly sat outside after I had sat inside so we talked to each other through the glass which didn't work at all. We called the number; it was Drybones. First he made sure it wasn't Audrey on the line, then gave us instructions to cross the street and find a Suspension Zone where we would receive further instructions from Commander 14.

So we crossed the street, passed a tostada+ stand, and found the Suspension Zone.

OH NO CRUMBLY DONUT IS TRAPPED IN THE SUSPENSION ZONE (TRAPPED IN THE SUSPENSION ZONE)!!!!



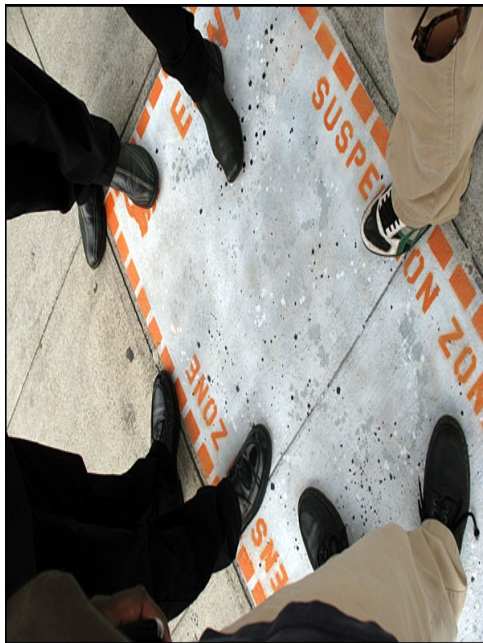
Ha ha ha, no, he was able to exit the zone of his own free will. It only appeared as if he would have to spend the rest of his life trapped in a tiny box, dependent on the good will of strangers to feed him tostadas/horchata from the nearby tostada+ stand and bring him news from the outside world.



The payphone next to the Suspension Zone rang. Crumbly picked it up and had us sporadically laughing at his terse summaries of the breadcrumbs Commander 14 was dropping on the other end. There didn't seem to be anything new in the mix ... end of trail for awhile. We loitered in the Zone. The graphic for the Suspension Zone was well-done, especially considering that we had thought we were going to see the same thing we had seen two weeks prior:



At that time, I was still processing Eva's Journal – when she had met the Bon-Vivants (Delsqui, Cornelius, Play2), she had them write down their phone numbers in it. Cornelius' number was Hip Hop Shoe Repair, Play2's number went straight to the Alemany Flea Market, and Delsqui's had the message from Drybones talking about the effects of the tea etc. We picked up the trailhead for laughs to see where it went; we hadn't figured on a robo-caller, so we didn't re-call the number while we were out there. Also I had thought that it was for some related side event that was already over, not a play-test. We got tostadas from the vendor right there on the sidewalk and ate them in the proto-Suspension Zone.



Fast-forward two weeks; two younger guys showed up to answer the payphone, and it looked like this was the first part of their exposure to everything. After they left, we ended up talking about how some people are "skimming the cream" and that's just the way it's going to be with ARGs, you can do the real cool stuff without immersing yourself in the non-cream, or however that metaphor works. Which is fine; some people just don't have the time or inclination. And really, I can imagine someone coming into all of this *at this point* and balking at the firehose. Mere hours after I wrote the previous sentence, a friend indicated to me that she was so far behind that she was ready to toss in the towel. I indicated that what she still needed to do was non-linear, that she could pop in anywhere and connect the threads at her leisure. Perhaps the EPWA should set up a counseling service for the recently overwhelmed.

Another agent, Ariock, was having problems with the phone – it wasn't doing the robo-call trick anymore. Immediately I thought "Oh ... Not again." I used to run a site called [Phonswarm](#) and on that site I'd list a different payphone number each week, only for that week. But sometimes Other Priorities would press my face against the wall all smooooooooOOOSSSSSHHHHH and I wouldn't get around to changing the number as frequently as I wanted to. If a phone company ro-bot tallies a high number of incoming calls to a payphone, sometimes they will shut off the incoming call feature because of course drug dealers still use pagers. Phonswarm inadvertently killed at least three payphones, maybe more. After a few minutes the payphone finally rang and Ariock was off and running. Listening, not running.



I was hangin' tuff at Crumbly Donut's afterward and he asked me when I'd be in the city next. I said I didn't know. I idly picked up one of the two pamphlets available at SoEx and ran across this entry:

THE BOUNDARIES OF COLLABORATION AND THE FUTURE OF FENCES, WALLS, AND OTHER IMPEDIMENTS. A talk and project tour by Nonchalance Saturday, October 24, 2009, 2:00 pm Artist collaborative Nonchalance invite guest artist and curator Audrey Greigh to Southern Exposure to discuss her most recent attempt at working with the Elsewhere Public Works Agency (EPWA). Find out what she learned about who the EPWA are and what they do to maintain and manage "nonchalance."

"Next week, actually."

After the exhibit, Kelvin went on a tear – first utilizing Beth's map to visit places significant to Eva's disappearance, then unsuccessfully trying to fit in a visit to the Jejune Institute before being kidnapped by the EPWA. The guy gets around!

The brief cartoon segment that opens the video is from "Charley & Humphrey," an old Bay Area children's puppet show.

Charley: You're a good dog, just don't let those other mutts do your thinking for you, that's all!

Watching the video immediately raised several key questions: Del Taco? Where is the closest Del Taco drive-thru around here? [looks] MANTECA? Where's the EPWA HQ, Oakdale? At the end of the video, Commander 14 began rolling through a list of demands ... the first of which was that old bugaboo, the fence problem.

"We demand and insist that the removal of all barriers, walls, fences and turnstiles be instigated at once and forthwith to admit the free passage of Nonchalants and proto-Nonchalants ..."



The history of Nonchalance is filled with antecedents to its in-game culture; the "Beautiful Crimes" paper goes back to at least 2006, the definition of Divine Nonchalance to 2001, and this summary of an 2001 art installation climbs all over fences:

"As long as our civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions."
 – Ralph Waldo Emerson

This is the piece that first brought Nonchalance into the streets [...] The piece involved hanging sheets on a few of the fences around the park and projecting a montage of imagery onto them. What was the content of this imagery? Fences, of course: a multi-layered compilation consisting of nothing but fences. The effect was distinctly haunting. Viewed clearly fences suddenly appear as strange constructions designed to separate our citizenry from one another, blockading our streets, oddly dysfunctional. Begin to observe the fences in your area. Notice them aesthetically, and functionally. Who do they serve, who are they protecting? Do they serve a purpose at all, or are they simply monuments to our fear? When this perspective is applied to our entire urban lay-out the absurdity of contemporary life swells to the surface... The work "FENCES" was also shown at Valencia & 23rd as part of the 2001 Art Strikes Back series. Video of both performances are available through Nonchalance.

All this talk about fences and unfencing reminded me of a book passage ...

What we want to do is come up with a completely new concept of land use &/or occupancy – something that transcends the old notion of "ownership." Do you know anybody who's into this? Or any pertinent books? If so, you should tell me at once. We have a rare situation here – a whole valley (including a small sawmill town) that the owner wants to use for some kind of genuinely revolutionary supra-ownership experiment ... and I find myself in the weird position of being the Contact Man. We plan to incorporate the place immediately, then get on with the business of Destroying the Concept of Land/Ownership in Perpetuity.

Not communes. That concept strikes me as hopelessly naive – or at least naive to me, given over, as I am, to my mania for privacy. And the handful of others now involved seem to feel the same way. So this leaves us with a weird hellish problem: how to codify privacy and at the same time croak the notion of fence-lines.

– Hunter S. Thompson, to Jan Silberman at Random House, June 15, 1971
Fear and Loathing in America: The Brutal Odyssey of an Outlaw Journalist, 1968-1976 [pg 408]

Meanwhile, in Alameda, Octavio's combination Microwave Harassment Cabinet/Polywater prototype was having technical problems.



Discussion on the kidnapping centered around most people not agreeing so much with the new, illegal direction the EPWA had taken. Could we grab the rudder and change course? Was that even an *option*? A game is sort of like a cult. You have to follow the rules, and you're either on the train and moving to the communal beat, or you're off the train and stationary.

What was it Commander 14 said about the cult music CD? "By playing and re-playing these cult music selections, you can arrive at a better understanding of your duty and destiny as nonchalants." Perhaps in the future there would be an opportunity to choose between multiple paths, but at that time, we were full steam ahead on kidnap train. The Urban Phoenix wanted a seat on the cow catcher:

Perhaps the idea is that we can each choose our own paths here. (i.e. "Think for yourself.")

We "could" splinter the E.P.W.A. or try to find some sort of "moral" compass in the chaos; however wouldn't it be more fun to embracefascism? :)

Unless things develop further in the meantime, I'm plotting on a hardcore militarized look for Saturday. Stompy S.W.A.T. team boots, black B.D.U.s, black commando sweater. Maybe an "unofficial" E.P.W.A. armband, clipboard, and I believe I saw a shop that does embroidery(on-the-fly with a computer), so maybe an E.P.W.A. arm patch if the price is reasonable and time permits.

Yay fascism! :)

Three days after Kelvin's kidnapping/drive-thruing, Nonchalance's SOEX talk dropped.

Nonchalance's practice stands at the intersection of three core concepts: Narrative, Multimedia, and Space (both public and private). Founded in Oakland in 1999 by director Jeff Hull, the organization's primary goal is to infuse more variability and play into the civic realm. Over the intervening years the team has comprised a fluctuating roster of collaborators that currently includes Sara Thacher, Sean Aaberg, Uriah Findley, and Mars Elliot. Past projects have included "Oaklandish," "The Liberation Drive-In," "Urban Capture the Flag," and "The Bay Area Aerosol Heritage Society." With over 100 free public events under its belt, Nonchalance has received thirteen consecutive "Best of the East Bay Awards," and produced exhibits and installations for the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Oakland Museum of CA, the Oakland International Airport, and the Art and Soul Festival. They are currently wrapping production on the "Games of Nonchalance," an "Immersive Media Narrative" leading participants on a journey of urban exploration throughout San Francisco's hidden present and past.

SOEX: [...] Without further adeiu, I want to introduce Jeff Hull and Uriah Findley from Nonchalance, their other collaborator Sara Thacher wasn't able to be here today, and also Audrey Greigh.



Jeff: "Well, I just feel like our entire universe has collided. It's exciting, it's scary and I don't know exactly what to think about it. I guess I'll introduce myself, I'm Jeff Hull ... during [...] activities known as Bobby Peru. Probably more familiarly known as the founder of Oaklandish, which is a project in the East Bay that's kind of a street art campaign turned into an apparel line turned into a series of public events and community initiatives that are designed to illuminate the unique cultural legacy of Oakland and pass it on to successive generations of Oaklanders, new and old ... and more recently I've been acting as creative director of Nonchalance, which is a lot of things, but Nonchalance the organization is a media production company in San Francisco that specializes in immersive narrative experiences that take place everywhere, online and offline, and they're kind of designed to guide participants through different urban explorations, and the goal, explicitly, is to have audiences interacting with public space in a new way, interacting with media in a new way, and interacting with each other in new ways. That's what Nonchalance is. Uriah, would you like to introduce yourself?"

Uriah: Sure, yeah. I'm Uriah Findley, I'm the audio guy, among other things at Nonchalance and I was involved with Oaklandish in some capacity for awhile and I've been working with Nonchalance ever since.

Jeff: Do you want to ask about the envelopes?

Uriah: How many people have opened and interacted with the envelopes in question over here? Raise your hands, cool.

Jeff: Okay, so there's a few who haven't actually ... and then following the instructions ... I guess the reason we asked that question is because obviously we can see this installation on the wall ... and you can read all the text or not ... but ... something happens when you start to interact with the piece by following those instructions and it's really designed to get you out of this gallery.

SOEX: Great. [laughter] I'm all for that.

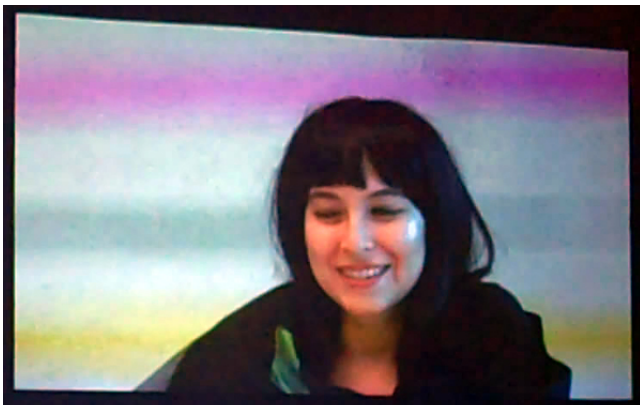
Jeff: And hopefully come back for more ... it's a little bit of the theme of our talk today context of work in a gallery and the context of work outside of a gallery, where does it intersect? What are the paths, and thoroughfares, and side hatches and trapdoors which can lead you in or out of a space and some of the meaning about that. And now I think we're going to let Audrey introduce herself, she's kind of long-winded so ...

Uriah: She really wanted to be here today.

Jeff: She was kind of nervous. A little anxious.

Uriah: Some weirdness going on with her and some threats?

Jeff: Yeah, strange threats, Elsewhere Public Works, they can act in sometimes random ways ... and I actually see a few collaborators in the audience, I don't know if she had good reason to be nervous, but we'll let her speak for herself.



Audrey: Hello, and welcome. I'd like to thank all of you for coming to this talk and panel discussion, and I'd especially like to thank Nonchalance and Southern Exposure for inviting me to be a part of this exhibition and for hosting this event. I deeply regret that I am not able to be here in person, but I hope that through the miracles of modern technology that I'm able to be present in some sort of virtual sense.

I'd like to talk just a little bit about ... briefly introduce myself and Zetetic/Peripatetic, my contribution to the exhibition. So for the past five years or so, my practice has walked the line between that of artist and that of curator ... I tend to collaborate with groups and individuals to recontextualize their activities. Typically this involves repositioning their pursuits, moving them out of the space in which they typically operate, that is to say a space that is directed not towards an art audience, and reposition them so they're functioning in a gallery context and can be understood from a different perspective. This gives both my collaborators, or has given both my collaborators a new understanding of their own practice, and introduces their exploits as something deserving of an audience, because in many cases, they are just doing things for themselves. So through this process, people who might not have been familiar with the individual or group in question are introduced to their activities, and audiences who may have some prior knowledge are asked to re-evaluate their various assumptions about that activity and possibly acquire a new perspective, or at least that's generally the goal.

As far as my work for this exhibition is concerned with the Elsewhere Public Works Agency, something a little different happened. At first I used the word failure, and that's definitely how it felt. Even as recently as a few months ago. However, despite our failure at communication and the fairly aggressive angry letter that I received ... I found a sort of ... maybe redemption isn't the right word, but a sort of peace? Where before I felt frustrated and thwarted, I now feel a sort of equilibrium about the whole exchange. In looking over the artist's statement that I sent to the Southern Exposure curatorial committee, I re-read my closing paragraph ... that is, something I wrote before any of my interactions with the Elsewhere Public Works Agency ... and the sentences still ring true ... but suddenly the words took on a new significance. If you'll allow me to break one of those public speaking rules and quote myself, maybe I can better explain what I mean.

"Throughout these collaborations I see it as my role to aid these individuals and groups in the process of defining themselves as well as offering up new perspectives that they might not have previously considered. This work brings the opportunity to change the context in which activities are seen; it also requires a degree of invention and introspection to complete the exercise of re-presenting seemingly familiar ideas or concepts to a new audience. Through these processes, I believe that new meanings can arise from places that previously seemed ordinary or well-established."

So. That's just the last paragraph from the artist statement that has kind of formed over the last five years. Re-reading these words back after I completed the project and assembled what's hanging on the wall over there, I thought maybe our roles are reversed ... perhaps I'm the person who's been asked to re-evaluate what I thought I knew. How to go about these collaborations with non-arts-oriented groups in a gallery context. So I had a set way of doing this, that I kind of figured out this formula I thought that worked pretty well in a lot of cases, but all of a sudden it was me, not the audience that was being asked to re-evaluate.

As I spent more time with the objects that came in the very generous package from the EPWA, I continued to research and broaden my understanding of their agenda and practice, as far as I could figure it. At first I was confused. And then ... as I read more I was *very* confused! Then I began to embrace that feeling. After all, that feeling was what attracted me, I realized, to the fenceline over six months ago ... that feeling of being confused. And really, just to get back to that paragraph for one more moment, it's the meaning of the last sentence that really transformed for me as this project took shape. The sentence "I believe that new meanings can arise from places that previously seemed ordinary or well-established." Now, I'd be the last person to say that I understand the EPWA. That's pretty clear after our breakdown in communication ... but ... I am grateful that through our interactions I've seen that lessons work on myself ... I'm someone who feels most comfortable when I can put words to a thing. When I can spell out the various references or meanings and put all of those things in a nice paragraph or ten ... I think that's one of the things that drew me to this kind of zone between being an artist and being a curator, this kind of crossover place that more and more people are occupying these days ... and I think a lot of my previous frustration with the EPWA was in part because their practice resists this type of treatment. I don't think it's any clearer than the case of my efforts to research, and to the best of my ability give an explanation and context for the objects in the vitrine over there ... and so if you take a look at my explanations – as best as I put them to those objects – and then the words that the EPWA sent to accompany those items in their package I think you might get something of a feeling of the frustration that I was having where words didn't quite cover it. I ended up putting myself and my voice on display in this project more than I generally do, because after our correspondence fell apart, it seemed like the only way to communicate what became the most important part of the whole interaction for me, this journey of trying to put words to a thing, failing, and realizing what I found was most evocative outside the reach of these words.

Okay ... now I've probably rambled on and told you more than you wanted to hear about my inner crises, which is not generally what I talk about in this kind of situation, but I think in the case of this project it made sense. But maybe it's time to open the floor to some questions.



Uriah: Ohhh kay. Thank you Audrey.

Jeff: Thank you Audrey. Geez. [laughter]

SOEX: I had a quick question for Audrey if she had seen the contents of the black envelope.

Jeff/Uriah: Audrey ...

Audrey: I believe you're referring to the black-orange stamped envelopes that are to the right of the display case? Right. Those arrived in the same package with most of the other items in the vitrine and they came in a separate smaller box, and there's a note with very bold type that specifically instructed me not to open them and then you'd see on the back there's the "Not for Audrey" ... but they were addressed to somebody, and there were quite a lot of them ... so I thought that perhaps I would still be able to respect and honor the wishes of Elsewhere Public Works by putting them out and distributing them in this way since they're clearly intended for someone ... at many points in this collaboration it was difficult to define what the wishes of the EPWA were or are ... but at least in this case it was pretty explicit ... it said not for me, but it said for someone ... and I hope that this solution would meet with the approval of Elsewhere Public Works ... I didn't open them ... there were quite a lot of them ... I have heard some interesting reports about the instructions they contain ... but out of respect to the EPWA I have resisted enquiring further about their contents. Next question.

Capt King: When you started this whole project, were there any areas of San Francisco you really wanted to explore but for whatever reason you just couldn't do it whether it be like for monetary reasons or whatever the case may be?

Uriah: Let's see what Audrey has to say about that.

Audrey: Oh! I'm going to let Jeff or Uriah handle that question.

Jeff: Thanks ... Audrey ... There's a lot of places that we scouted and we were digging to try to incorporate them into the thing but every time you're trying to design an experience there's problems that come up along the way, and it can be simply a geographic thing or a permission thing ... most of the spaces are public so there aren't that many financial barriers but certainly there's stuff we couldn't afford to do and spaces we weren't able to occupy. The locations of a lot of our stuff that you've experienced aren't necessarily the first stage of play that we wanted to do ... we'd go out and see what's manageable, we beta-test it, and then it gets re-designed and synthesized, and then it becomes the locations. For instance, episode one, we had thirty other things on the list, some of them worked, some of them didn't, we whittled it down and got it down to this kind of core experience that we have a [...] sense of flow ... so those are some of the kinds of questions or problems we're trying to solve [...]

Uriah: It seems from a production sense, or so I've noticed, it comes less down to money and means as much as it comes down to time .. everything takes three times longer than it looked like it was going to take when you embarked on it ... which is one of the reasons things got whittled down to the nitty-gritty a lot of times.

Tony: How much time did you guys spend planning episode one?

Jeff: Actually, that had been gestating in my mind for years, and then we started work on it ... really pre-production in June 2008, and then production really started to roll when Sara got on the project 'cause she's just so able and organized, she is thinking about every single little detail ... so once she got on the team, stuff started to *move*. That was in July, and we launched it in September ... so it was really just a few months of real production.

Audience member: I have a question for Audrey ... I was just wondering, has she heard from Elsewhere Public Works since their last letter to her?

Jeff: That's a good question, we don't know the answer to that ...

Uriah/Jeff: Audrey? Audrey! Auuudrey ...

Audrey: I haven't heard from the EPWA since the last letter [at this point the EPWA breaks into the feed] and I sincerely hope that the project evolved in a way that they're happy with ... I certainly



have mixed feelings about not having their full consent and support, but I do feel that what's in this gallery is a good-faith interpretation of their wishes as far as I can understand them. I wish things



had unfolded differently, but I feel like at least personally I've gained a lot over the course of this project.

Jeff: That's just typical.

Jason: That happens a lot, doesn't it. [laughter]

Duckstabd: Those guys are good.

Jeff: A lot of the times we can go to a certain space or do some initiative because collaborations fail. So the whole thing with the Public Works Agency kind of represents that, we've done a lot of collaborations with institutions, individuals and spaces and businesses and things, and some of them have been very successful and some of them have been like *what the fuck is wrong*, like can't get it together, can't seem to make it function. Seems very clear [...] you need to have an agreement, that's kind of a curve, but lot of times it's really unpredictable.

Uriah: Some times you set up A, B and C, and someone else wants to do four or twelve, or triangle ... [laughter]

Jeff: They have their own interests, and again it's failures of communication like Audrey was talking about, I feel like that's a lot about what this piece is about, the idea that we're going to come together and do something super lofty and grand and change the world and yet can't even tie our shoes, that's what the EPWA represents.

Jason: You talked a little bit, you mentioned that you considered the whole production is in chapters but there's a very non-linearity to it that you can kind of walk into the hidden narrative, and hidden meaning literally hidden within the city in multiple locations, how do you plan for that and how do you orchestrate that?

Jeff: Well, it didn't come out like we planned. We actually planned to launch all of the episodes at once ... it was just going to be this huge thing that you could enter into at any point in the story. So the fact that has had this chapter format or episodic format is out of design of necessity just realizing that there was going to be so much more involved, every little idea unfolds into all these other ideas, we actually have a new –

Uriah: Ah yes ...

Jeff: – practice at the office ...

Uriah: Whenever someone says "Hey, I got an idea," we club them over the head. [laughter]

Jeff: The idea club, anytime anyone says "I got an idea," we just *[mimes idea-clubbing]* *[laughter]*

Uriah: Often times, really great ideas are really terrible ideas, and we love them anyways ... and they're great ideas, but yeah. Yeah. It's funny saying the idea of everything having been dropped at once, is, now that we know, laughable at this point ... the idea of the scope ... that would be such a pie-in-the-sky thing to try to achieve ... but I think it's rolled out well.

Jeff: Yeah, it just took a lot longer. And also the fact that the theme of this entire show which is our vision for the future ... what is our vision of the future but ideas ... And so, when you actually try to put your ideas into actuality, it doesn't look exactly like your idea.

Audience member: I have a question for Audrey as well ... I'd like to know what she hoped to achieve with her collaboration with the EPWA.

Uriah: Audrey.

Jeff: She's a little slow.

Jason: Well you know, the internet is clogged.

Audrey: That's a great question. I think, deep down, I had hoped the EPWA would reveal, in the words of Bruce Nauman, "mystic truths" about our present and future. But when I first saw the fence sign, I kept coming back to it, because it was at once perfectly absurd and utterly sincere ... and these two things kind of co-existed in this incredible way that just drew me back, you know, I'd go out of my way to walk by it ... and ... I tried not to have expectations about the outcomes of different collaborations so they can evolve according to the needs of the collaborators ... but of course I did hope that something out of this would end up in the gallery and there was a moment of panic when I feared that that wouldn't happen ... I think you can read in my second letter on the wall some of my early suggestions to the EPWA about what form this might take, but of course that was all suggestion and speculation ... as you can see, the course of events turned out a little differently.

Jeff: It's cool having a sidekick. *[laughter]* We should send Audrey around *everywhere*.

Uriah: That would be great.

Jeff: So, can we continue this discussion in any way?

Uriah: Any more questions?

Audience member: I came in a little late so I may have missed a cardinal rule of how things work ... can you talk a little bit about your movement between the sense of a game that certainly happens at the beginning of the induction at the Jejune Institute where you're clearly participating in a treasure hunt, and what you hope to do when you move back and forth between that and something that seems so, so realistic, as when you segue into Eva.

Jeff: Yeah, wow. Yeah. I hadn't considered, actually, how absurdist and surreal the Jejune Institute and Elsewhere Public Works would be in contrast to the experiences of Eva and the Savants? And so, when we dropped that one, I felt there was a kind of sense of silence about it. People didn't know how to react or interact with it, because it did have more of a realistic and pseudo-documentary tone about it ... I think a lot of people doing the initial stuff really liked the sense of escapism like "I'm just going to another world, *yeah!*" It was successful because of that. I'm actually not so certain how successful the other thing was even though it's much more closer to my heart and much more of a story of characters that I believe in and identify with ... so that experience for me is a lot more meaningful and loaded than the other ones, but the other ones are obviously more fun ... a little more excitement and fun.

Audience member: Which is the other thing?

Jeff: The Jejune Institute and the Elsewhere Public Works Agency. Which is kind of how we're encapsulating episode one, Jejune Institute; episode two is the Elsewhere Public Works Agency centered around the radio broadcast, episode three being Eva and the Savants' experiences around Coit Tower and there's been a bunch what we call mini-episodes inbetween that continue to happen such as this one, is a little branch-off from the main story.

The Urban Phoenix: When designing, how much space do you leave for the interactions of people actually going through the experiences and the things they kind of come up with along the way or their take on those. Do you leave room for that in the design or is it more like as good things come about you just take or ...

Uriah: It's weird because that's kind of one of the things we've been learning along the way, is where to draw the lines and where to leave the lines open. Because there's definitely an experience we want to give along with ... we definitely want to give that room for people to take that experience and make it their own. As far as where a line is drawn it's hard to draw a line because one of the things over the course of this is that people are infinitely more unpredictable than you could ever believe. I would say that there's aspects of the story ... correct me if I'm wrong ... I would say personally that it feels like there's aspects of the story that have partly taken shape around the way people have reacted to it.

Jeff: Certainly. We tried to create this feedback loop between audience and producers where they're taking the themes and running with it. There's definitely experiences we're trying to design now where it's like you have to make a choice and the choice is to take a risk ... and I think that's the way other things feel, that's where it's a choose your own adventure, you can either go down do this mysterious thing or not and follow the instructions or not ... but if you make it totally up to the individual to do what they want then it's not a replayable experience. You have to make sure that it's replayable for other people to come down, so that's why we do beta-testing and try to fit things into a way where people will follow the instructions and so that's kind of a balance we're playing with actually as we learned ... how do you make it so the audience person is *truly* deciding and forming and shaping the experience and still providing for other people to do it after that.

Uriah: Actually I would bring up a somewhat-specific instance or an example, sometimes we will draw a line when we realize that it's a point where things could go awry. Some of you participated in a little action that happened from Union Square and beyond and basically there came a point where we wanted to – "a great idea" that came up ... pretty late in the game ... there was some theatrics involved [...] It was one of those instances, well, wait a minute, we've got this *mob* of people *[laughter]* This could get out of hand ... we need to give an instruction, so that people know how to act. And that's sort of the line right there - okay, this could get out of hand, so let's give an instruction and it still got –

Jeff: Yeah, the instruction was not "mob the limo" ... that was not silent jazz hands ... and yet, people saw Octavio and mobbed ... and the limo driver had no idea what was going on at all ... he was like "what's going on!?!?" ... and Octavio was like "it's cool" ... he had to calm down the limo driver. It's a great example of okay, we're putting it in their hands, oh god, we put it in their hands.

Uriah: Jeff calls me W.C. Scenario at times ...

Jeff: I.B.C. Scenario ...

Uriah: And there's a balance there ...

The Urban Phoenix: I really like the re-mix quality, where things get kind of blended back in where we go, "oh, that's us!" ... that element's really fun ...

Uriah: That's was actually another example ... like when we enlisted the chosen few ... it was incredible the way those of you who were involved here went with that ... we started hearing about it ... we started hearing about our event from our friends who didn't know we were involved *[laughter]* "Oh check out this thing!"

Jeff: And you didn't see the bell in the exhibit, that was completely user-generated ...

Jason: No, we got it from Drybones, because someone who went to Game Developer's Conference interviewed Drybones and Drybones said something about "the Jejune Institute hates the sound of bells, that's how you know, you should ring one" and then Garland picked up on that and then we were like "oh, we should pick up bells! We should do that!"

Jeff: I had no idea ...

Uriah: That is another example of the line where that ... even though it was from a member of our team, an extended member, it wasn't like a plan ... it just kind of ... in fact, Drybones is often times not a plan and he goes "wooooo" ...

Jeff: He's going rogue a lot of times ...

Uriah: A few collaborators go rogue now and again.

Jason: It's almost a real-life manifestation of what this exhibit is about, when communications go badly because on your side you know everything of what you're planning and what's going on and you try to plan for every contingency, but on our hand we've got a mystery box and we're going to poke it *[laughter]* as much as we can, because we don't know what the hell's going on ... oh, we got another email address, let's start firing off crazy emails and see what happens! Oh, that dude said bells, let's get some bells! *[laughter]* We got another weapon, all right! So when we mobbed the limo it was more like ring ring ring! Jazz hands! I don't think anyone there would have like touched the guy ... but you don't know, because you don't know

what we're doing, so surprise ... we get to surprise each other which I actually think is a lot of fun, hopefully we don't hurt anybody in the process *[laughs; laughter]*

Jeff: I'm always surprised by what's going on, the costumes, other installations, these miniature Jeune items, just like wow, so impressed by the involvement, the level of the people who participated is way beyond what I could ever hope for, I'm just really pleased.

Jason: I'm a little chagrined because I don't even show fannish behavior, ever, until now, and I'm like "oh shit, I'm a *fan!* Oh my god. I'm a fanboy!" Oh my goodness. But it's super fun ...

Jeff: But you're [...]

Jason: Oh thank you! Great! How come Audrey is tele-commuting ... what exactly happened?

Uriah: She's didn't feel comfortable being here ... she was, would I use word, afraid?

Jeff: She was nervous, she was apprehensive ... there was some noise about the EPWA showing up ... and she just ... there'd been an abduction recently, and she just didn't really want to be hanging out here.

The Urban Phoenix: So she's aware of the abduction.

Uriah: Word's gotten around.

Jeff: People are talking about it, definitely ... it was a discussion.

Jason: It's pretty messed up.

Uriah: We tried to assure her things would be fine if she had come, but we also don't blame her for not feeling comfortable being here.

Duckstadb: She's not by herself there, is she? I'm just saying *[laughter]* ... seems kind of risky ... scary ...

Capt King: So where'd the initial idea for all this, the entire experience come from? The story, everything?

Jeff: The format for the story, like ... yeah, it's one of those things that if I had a club at the time, it would have been really useful. But I was doing work in public space in Oakland as the Oaklandish project with these posters and projections that would show up that were addressing the history and some of the things that were happening culturally at time, the change that was happening in the city ... and then I was gluing things to boxes and putting up stickers with little messages and I somehow wished that each one of those ... I guess when I see street art, say a graffiti tag ... I wish that it had this ... *huge* other great meaning like the little horn in *Crying of Lot 49* where you start to pay attention to it and things would happen and then the story would unfold ... and so it was a little evolution from the street art that I was doing at the time when trying to add links between different street art installations where like if you paid attention to this you'd start to see this ... and then so the idea of the whole tear-off fliers thing, came about where you if you dialed the phone number you'd start to realize the connections between the other fliers you saw ... that was really the scope of it at the time, "I'm going to put up all these fliers" and that was it and then it just snowballed. *[laughter]* I had no idea about alternate reality gaming at all, it was like I was scheming at these things years ago, so when I learned ARGs existed I was like " ... Okay, all right, let me show 'em what we got."

Capt King: It's a lot different than most alternate reality games out there. How were you received at the conference up in Portland Oregon? The ARG conference?

Uriah: We were received pretty well.

Jeff: Their jaws dropped. There was a standing ovation. They just hadn't seen anything like it.

Uriah: I think what was great was one of the most uproarious applauds was from a member of the team basically sort of getting in their face on their ground ... but in the spirit, I wouldn't say in a confrontational sort of way, but in the spirit of creativity and spontaneity of it.

Jeff: Yeah, Sean Aaberg who's been a collaborator of mine for a very long time he's done a lot of writing and some design work on the thing, he lives in Oregon so he joined us on the panel ... and he just grabbed the mike at the end and said "I don't even like games ... I don't like art ... I like fucking with people in a good way." *[laughter]* And kind of continued to explain himself what he meant by fucking with people as this provocateur and so they were kind of floored by it ...

Uriah: He was mobbed after the talk.

Jeff: It's not ... this is not a product placement promotional thing, it's not trying to sell anything to you, it's trying to provide very real experiences and very real questions and considerations that come up as a result of interacting with the world in a different way which doesn't fit into the ad marketing kind of paradigm that most ARGs have in the past so we're kind of on a different playing field than the other producers. A lot of whom I really respect and I gained a lot and learned from their panels I'm sure just as much if not more than they learned from ours. It's interesting to see everybody's got a different niche in this and nobody's really ... well some people are doing some redundant stuff but everyone kind of occupies their own area, there's the urban gaming movement, and the urban playground movement, and then there's interactive narrative as it exists online, there's this experimental marketing thing, we've got our little piece that we add to it. There seems to be something that's happening in number of different fields and you see it pop up ... what are the different festivals, *Come Out and Play* ... there's there's one in New York, there's one in London, one in Belgium, all of these different conferences that are about *play*, new ways to do that.

Uriah: One thing interesting about being in a conference was finding a lot of the stumbling points and pitfalls that we had run into ... and sort of without having any prior knowledge of ARGs, I'd heard of them, never played one ... I believe we were all in the same boat with that. There were many pitfalls that people were aware of that possibly that we could have seen coming – we handled them, but at the same time also I think our lack of knowledge – we actually ended up solving a couple of problems with ARGs that we didn't know existed. But when we presented they came back at us with "oh wow!" ... the perpetuality of it ...

Jeff: The main thing about the replayability, people hadn't created a game before that everyone can do, we've been running it for a year now and people can still go in fresh to do it. On the other hand, the problem we run into with that is that it has to be local, it's not an international game ... and so if you're trying to reach an international audience, it's going to be hard doing it this way.

Uriah: Which is another aspect of us doing our best to keep it tied to the fact that we are doing our best to keep in the real-world and offload the web element. A lot of ARGs are web-based with possibly some real world thrills ... I like to think more that we use the web as a utility for our real-world experience.

Audience member: So, it seems like you're developing a community out of this ... would you say you could categorize the demographics as male, white, between the ages of 20 and 35. *[laughter]*

Jeff: Honestly what you just described would probably be a large segment, there's obviously outliers, we have some very prominent female players, obviously different ethnicities ... but yeah, the core of the community is as you described it, even people in the 40s. I thought it was going to be gamers, hipsters, and artists. I think that's true, but it's also it's gotten onto different boards, "what's something to do with your kids?" so parents and kids are starting to do it together, "what's something to do when you visit San Francisco?" so now like travellers ...

Audience member: And probably gamers have longer attention spans, because like those kind of involved processes, probably more than artists or hipsters ...

Jeff: Actually, I hadn't considered that ...

Audience member: I came in late, so I'm sorry, the third member, this woman, what's her name?

Jeff: Sara Thacher is our lead producer. She's dynamite. She makes it happen.

Audience member: So did that change the dynamics, bringing a woman into your group?

Uriah: She's been around practically since the beginning.

Jeff: We were trying to jumpstart the project before she got involved and then she got involved and then it started, really. And it was never meant to be a homogenous group of people ... when we were interviewing people, we were looking for the best people ... she came in and actually took another guy's job. This other guy was stalling out, and she came in and ran circles around him, kicked him to the curb and made her lead producer. She came in as an assistant PA and I saw what she was doing. Now she plays a core, critical role in the entire thing. It hasn't changed the ... I don't know how to answer that. Because I think it took a similar course, you know. She's kind of one of the guys, honestly. *[laughter]*

Uriah: I never really looked at maybe the nature of the medium is what locks the demographic but as far as the nature of the story ... I don't really see it being, something that has really any gender-specificity to it all in my eyes ... it's not like with video game demographics, video games are about running around blowing things up ... in a lot of ways that tends to gear, let's be realistic demographically toward a certain gender. We're not about running around and blowing things up, it's creativity, it's mystery, the protagonist is female, is really what it boils down to.

Audience member: I wasn't trying to say that it was very [...] I was just reading from all of the stuff that I'm trying to ...

Jeff: No, it's a good observation, what is this community and who are they, the people who have predominately been drawn to it, and it's interesting to consider it ...

The Urban Phoenix: Since a big piece of this is kind of changing people's ideas of how public space is utilized, have you ever run into instances where the way you were using public space wasn't really met with the kindest of reactions, or ...

Jeff: Yeahhhh. *[laughter]* A lot. The whole thing we were doing in Oakland were these guerilla drive-in screens from 2000 ... I was trying to create crowds. Create crowds of people in public space. A lot of times public space has these certain sanctioned activities ... commuting ... shopping ... drinking lattes ... when people who are in tinfoil hats and bells *[laughter]* you do get pushback, and I've been shut down a lot. It seems to add a whole vibrancy to the experience when you can say "Okay, plan B everybody!" and go to a new location and start again there, and to kind of push up against the boundaries is part of what makes it a vital thing.

Uriah: It also brings a lot of maintenance into it, for example –

[recording media change at this point]

Audience member: The security guard spent about ten minutes complaining to me about the stickers on the door. I said why is it an issue? They said, it's public space, blah blah blah, that they felt that they had to care for.

Uriah: That's one of those tricky things when you're leading people around. Me personally, I'm like whatever. But from the perspective of the building, in a sense it's private space. I guess I could understand, to a degree, their concern. And that's another one of those unpredictability – to a certain degree we try to get people to break out of the mold and be maybe where they weren't supposed to be –

Jeff: Why aren't you supposed to be there? I disagree with Uriah. That's a corridor, it's a passage for pedestrians –

Uriah: I was speaking more conceptually, like the technicality about these telephone poles, and hanging up flyers. There shouldn't be anything wrong with that, but there is. Apparently.

Capt King: So they don't like the whole idea of flyers on telephone poles? Really?

Jeff: Yeah, but these same people wouldn't complain about a Marlboro billboard over a junior high school playground, or a Coca-Cola, or Dos Equis because they're ubiquitous. But as soon as you put your own message and that they're going to put you on a list and give you a call, there's this little community, I think it's run by one guy *[laughter]*, letters from this community committee about our flyers.

Audience member: Based on any feedback that you may have received or maybe the lack of feedback, are there any parts of the episodes where there are still undiscovered corners?

Jeff: There isn't anything that going to open up a whole new chapter out there, but there's definitely content that as far as I can tell, people haven't discovered. Documents, words, themes, links.

Audience member: It almost makes me feel like the people who put up the flyers, and they're putting them up *for real*, about the UFOs are coming in league with Frank Chu and blah blah blah, that there is something still to discover in some of these.

Uriah: Kind of like you said there isn't an episode of things out there just sitting there. There's many dots that have yet to be connected I would say from a conceptual narrative storyline point. There's discoveries about things going that we have yet to hear about.

Jeff: And also, those boundaries where the story and this universe ends, they're meant to be elastic, and so when you see some of these other flyers, people are like "is it Jejune?" You know, we wanted the original ones to be authentically kooky so you don't really know at what point ... and people talk about this experience while you're doing it you start to think people on the street are in character, in-game, and you start to question what aspect of it is the production and which aspect isn't the production, and –

Uriah: I almost ran into Drybones on the street ...

Jeff: I feel like it's meant to be deep and vast in that way ...

Jason: He found me on the train once.

Audience member: [...] Well I don't know, because I'm jumping in ... so people are kind of diverting from the path you've sent them on?

Jeff: I want people to perpetrate their own concepts –

Audience member: [...]

Jeff: I don't think creating your own character or plotline within the element that means you have to, you know, subvert or destroy the existing ones ... you can supplement, you can weave yourself into that isn't going to destroy the experience for other people [...] we want people to participate with their own characters and plotlines ... I don't know, it's the same problem we run into all the time, how do you keep it replayable, how do you keep the universe so there's equilibrium there for other people ...

Uriah: Yeah, I would also kind of bring up the idea that we referred to an action that took place, and one of the ways that this action took place, it took place on the street, it took place with participants, there was a theme, and there's things going on, but it was definitely about getting out there and meeting people, interacting, going out there and frankly, making a spectacle. And we heavily involved a select group of participants in organizing this thing. We didn't hang flyers for this event, we didn't, beyond a very passive way, we spread the word a little bit but it was up to this group of people to make this thing happen in a sense, and we gave some guidelines. And I think to a degree one of the things we had hoped would eventually come out of these things is for people to recognize the themes and ideas of the story and then using their own initiative, execute them.

Jeff: Yeah, I think Organelle is a really good example of that, of someone who became a character in the game, and from the beginning people were like "is this guy part of the game or is he not part of the game?" and the whole time we're like [...] I'm not saying if he is or he isn't ... but it definitely wasn't part of our plan and he wove himself into it in a way that wasn't subverting our interests, he was supporting the universe ...

Uriah: He [...] came up with a pretty intricate experience ...

Jeff: Yeah ... and he actually sent me a clue recently that I still don't – all right you cluencies *[laughter]* ... it was ten astronomers had gotten together and they for years hadn't – I'll send it to you guys. *[laughter]* He sent something for me and he said "it's going to unlock this link" and we all looked at each other and we were like "I don't know ..."

Uriah: That's exactly like taking the spirit of the experience, taking the initiative, and then he totally injected it in.

Jeff: Yeah, and lead other players and participants on other adventures that really, I don't know how much they have to do with our universe or not, he was kind of using a little bit of the formula to create his own thing [...]

Audience member: I work here, and just getting to work with you guys on this project, understanding how to fit what you do into the context of an art organization and a group exhibition and other thematic ideas; for someone stepping into your project through this ... how do you plan on sort of having a ... I don't know, a table of contents, or ... it's like a whole world, and people accessing it through this one point, do you ever have plans to kind of create a guide to what you've done ... like how do you want people to step into it who don't know about it until right now?

Jeff: A guide, that's interesting ... for the entire experience, or to contextualize this experience?

Audience member: No, just in general, it's a pretty intricate complicated world for maybe someone coming here, and picking up a piece of it. Ideally how would you want people to get caught up on this larger experience that you've been working on for a long time now?

Jeff: This experience, if you do follow the steps along the way will lead you to all of the other chapters, it serves as an in-road or side hatch or portal ... I've thought a little bit about creating

an ultimate map or an online version that kind of shows you how it's all laid out and it's not something that we've gotten around to at all. But I think part of the fun is kind of discovering things along the way. I don't want to create blinders for anybody but also learning that ... actually we'll be able to document who does come in through this because they have to dial a phone number and then they get a return call and we'll be able to see who called us from that number, and maybe in later points of the game be able to reference that phone number like if they end up calling another number, or if they end up on this constellation, we can kind of start to chart and track people's path through it ... and so we'll be able to, at some point, out of game context, approach those people and say "did you get involved through the Southern Exposure exhibit and what was like, and what was the route that you took" and start to analyze it a little bit, their participation ... but I really, this is ... I have no idea exactly how this overlaps with the other work going on in here and the audiences who are coming in and seeing this as a whole so ... I think I'm really interested to find out.

Audience member: It's good to that you have websites where if you go to it it encourages people to step out of their [...] their computer, whereas this way you have to [...] to find out and get involved, I mean isn't it for people who are into pursuing ideas? I mean really getting out and ... do you really want to make it any simpler for someone to just get back on their computer and ...

Uriah: That's been a [...] line that we've dealt with, like the radio show issue.

Jeff: Which one?

Uriah: Well, just the fact that we kept the radio show under wraps for quite some time.

Jeff: Oh right, excessive [...] you've got a real little core group of people who are adventurers, they're risk-takers, the people who are blazing the trails ... and it's not meant for couch potatoes, and at the same time we'd really like to grow our audience ... [...] until this moment, or I guess the ARGfest, we've never really come out from behind the curtain and said, hey, we produce this thing and it's a game and activity that you can do ... everything has always been like a *recondite family awaits*, all this culty stuff and all this very sub-cultural ...

Uriah: Not even telling our friends what we do ... [*laughter*]

Jeff: Yeah, we've been behind this curtain for so long, we wanted to come out and say "hey you guys, there's this fun activity you can do, and some people describe it as a game, and why don't you do it?"

Audience member: Can you talk about that about that a bit? I know you have this video of Audrey talking about re-evaluating the artist-curatorial relationship, it's kind of like a play on everybody who's doing artist curating kind of stuff, but you guys have actually gone through some space of collaborating with people and fucking with an audience, but obviously, this, you're coming out from a previous role ... what are the types of re-evaluations that have gone on with you guys that has lead you to this position that you're having with this public talk is different than what you were doing a year ago and maybe you wouldn't have thought about doing this in the same way a year ago ... what are some re-evaluations that you guys have had?

Jeff: I don't think we would have done it anything differently in terms of re-evaluating the way that we've done it, but I'm thinking that we may have saturated those people who are going to discover it through tearing off a flyer on a telephone pole. Those people who are curious enough to take the incentive and dial the number ... you're sitting in the room. And there's a couple thousand people who have been through the institute, but some people need a little more hand-holding and I don't want to make it inaccessible to those people just because they're afraid of really joining a cult.

Audience member: Do you see it as a way for you to increase your audience or increase your contact with an audience or both?

Jeff: This isn't increasing our audience, in here, but by coming out from the curtain in the course of time, we're going to be able to promote it [...] but in terms of us being here and doing this discussion it's a huge relief for me to be able to talk about it, I feel like [*laughter*] [...] living in secrecy, there were times where we thought we were being stalked by Jenpop [*laughter*], we'd look out the little shutters of our office [...] because she's like "we're going down there!" and then I was getting calls in the middle of the night, "I want my recondite family! I was told dadda-dadda-da!" ...

Uriah: There was a post on the wall that said "watch out for this person" ...

Jeff: We didn't know who she was ...

Uriah: This is like week one or week two, we were like "what are these forums, who are these people?"

Jeff: Exactly, to be able to establish an open dialogue, or a more kind of – I hate to say out-of-game – but just like honest, open discussion is new for us, and definitely helpful, just for us as artists and people to be able to sit here and say "My name is Jeff Hull" not [...] Octavio [...]

Uriah: It feels like stages, too, we went through a stage where ... and trust is an issue, people going through the experience and trusting because you're asking somebody to go down to this random building in the financial district and walk in, like they know what they're doing, and ask them "go in this room unled," and then go through this experience ... and some people are ready to do that, blindly ...

Jason: Or at least assuming that they know what it is.

Uriah: Or on the recommendation of a close friend ... but some people need to know that this has been done before and it's being presented as something to do, because trust is a big issue there [...] the crowd with that level of initiative, we might possibly be [...] we have them ... but we want everyone to be able to have this experience.

Jeff: So you're going to start to see a little more of that, us out of character discussing it in the context of the game, whereas we didn't do that as a rule for the first ten months, now we've kind of reached a stage ... you guys are going to kind of see that a little bit and we were concerned about it, that [...] rub people the wrong way, or whatever, by being a little more directly promotional [...] we had a year of secret behind-the-curtain fun, mysterious, and enigmatic play – there is more of that – but we're also trying to open the gates a little more.

Duckstadb: So what's next, after this? After the Jejune and all that, what are you going to do next?

Jeff: This narrative experience?

Duckstadb: Yeah, after you finish ...

Jeff: Well, there's more to this, and we want to keep it going ... we want to be able maintain the games in the future because we still feel like there's a critical mass who can experience and we're also starting to develop other projects that are collaborative in nature and also gain clientele for creative services, and to start to build these kind of experiences for clients and we're just starting to do that, based on the work we've done with the Jejune Institute ... and we'd also like to be able to produce these things independently in the future, we feel like it's an entertainment medium in itself, it doesn't need to have a product to – it *is* the product, the experience *is* the thing, it's not a [...] Happy Meal or Pepsi or video game, no, this is the thing. And we think there are ways that it can be kind of self-sustaining. That's our ultimate goal, and in the mean time we're doing work with clients.

The Urban Phoenix: So with the secrecy, has the media been your biggest enemy or your biggest friend as far as getting people pulled into the experience, or have you looked at stories and just cringed going "oh my god, they've blown months of work."

Jeff: Well, there really hasn't been that much stuff in print media, besides The Guardian [1 2] which I thought was really flattering. I liked the Guardian pieces, they really caught the spirit of the thing. Besides word of mouth and the blogosphere one of the reason there hasn't been more coverage of it is because ... how do you explain it in headline, put it in nutshell for people ... "well, it's this thing, and it's this other thing and it goes to this thing" ... it's hard to encapsulate, so I've learned how lazy journalists are. [*laughter*]

Uriah: I have a hard time talking my friends into going down. "What is it?" It's like trying to explain to somebody why they want to go see a movie, but you don't want to tell them what the movie's about. And then on top of that, it's like trying to do that to somebody who doesn't know what a movie is. [*laughter*] As far as the media thing, we kind of [...] to a degree, the fact that we can't control, to a degree we have to [...] spoilers, because they're going to come, we can't control that, we can't stop it, we can't argue against it ... there's a few that are out there and oh well.

Jeff: I think it's going with this incremental time frame, though, like phases ... there's people discovering it, and then they're telling their friends, and there's documentation online, and then you can go read the whole [Unforum](#) thing and walk your way through the whole thing. The piece in the Guardian didn't do anything more or less than the Unfiction Forums do, which are available to everybody anyway.

Capt King: What was your first reaction to the forums, when you saw that pop up? How did you feel?

Jeff: Honestly?

Uriah: [...] animosity ...

Capt King: Was there really?

Jeff: There was fear.

Uriah: There was fear and animosity.

Jeff: Yeah, not animosity so much ... Oh! Antagonism. *[laughter]* I don't know why ... because it was ARG/gamer culture convention as it existed up to this point, and us having no idea the conventions and rules of that, and then when I posted on the forum the first time, the video, people were pissed off and I was like "why are they pissed off?" *[laughter]* and I had to learn that okay, there's reasons why they want to keep us off the boards ... that's one aspect of it, and then the whole idea of somebody going and telling what was out there was something we had to get used to, and I think we've kind of reached this equilibrium or this peace about it where we're all forging a culture, mutually.

Capt King: Yeah, we're all on the same page at this point.

Uriah: And there was also that "Why are they decompiling our code?" *[laughter]*

Jason: I was pretty impressed when MOR did that too, I was like "What are you doing?"

Jeff: That was one thing that really actually pissed me off, we had designed this thing with the floating cards and music and [...] to interact with it and then within 30 seconds of us launching it they're all [...] cards on a list and I'm like *[sounds of distress]* ... I called him up, I got his number and I was like [...] *[laughter]* it took me a month and a half working on it and a minute later it's online as a list! That hurt. That was hurtful. Oh someone put my number up on the forums, and I was like that's the line, I can get your phone number too! *[laughter]*

Uriah: Well, we didn't know! We didn't know!

Jeff: It felt like we were under siege at the moment where we had to take this defensive stance and that was around the same time that Jenpop was like "let's all go to the financial district" so all of these things happening at once, it really, we were really on the defensive, for that period of time, we were like "who are these people, why are they trying to [...]" ... you know, you guys are really excited about this thing, and like you said, trying to find out what to *do* with it.

Jason: That was the thing too, since you hadn't researched ARGs at that point, there were people coming to your experience that you were building and talking about it in a language you were unfamiliar with, and there was no other language really to describe it. How do you get people to go see a movie if they don't know what a movie is, like how do you talk about it, and there's already this framework in ARGs that has existed for the last eight to ten years but you don't know anything about it ... and then people are still talking about it like it's a game ... and I'm like "well, it's not really." I keep trying to push "interactive narrative" and when I talk about it, but again, how do you talk about it? There's in-game and out-of-game, which is the easiest, most convenient way to talk about where does this experience lie and this conversation had happened to whom and what and in what context but there's no other language for that.

Jeff: I started to use the language too, at first I resisted this idea of in-game/out-of-game ... the one that I will not use is "puppetmaster" ... I am not a puppetmaster ...

Jason: Right. Well the thing is, I think this got misunderstood because I think somebody else misunderstood what it was is that the puppets, correct me if I'm wrong because I hate ARGs normally, *[laughter]* is that the puppets are the characters that you create as part of the story, not us. So you're the puppetmaster behind Eva, or behind Commander 14 or whoever. And so it's not us, we're not the puppets, we're going to do whatever we're going to do. But I've heard that phrase before.

Audience member: [...] trying to reach a broader audience ...

Jason: Sure, that's a freaky thing, that's a freaky thing.

Uriah: What was it that The Guardian called us once, Dark Overlords? *[laughter]*

Capt King: I've really have to say, though, I've been an avid player of alternate reality games for a long time now and you guys have really kind of shattered this whole idea of what is considered chaotic fiction, like a narrative, it's different than anything ever done before, and that's really impressive, it's really pretty cool.

Jeff: I am so glad to hear that. I'd like to talk to you more about games you've played, what you think is out there that's cool, recommendations on roads to go down.

Capt King: You guys have actually almost created your own offshoot of alternate reality games now, where there is a whole story, but it's more than just Youtube videos, it's more than just trying to solve a puzzle, because there's very little actual puzzle solving, and more just ... discovery ... and discovery that's really different, really new, and lot of people in the community are really starting to like it.

Uriah: There's a lot of people at ARGfest, I've heard from more than one person: "I hate puzzles." *[laughter]* There was definitely a lot of people going "man, I hate puzzles." I believe, oh god, I don't know her name, she was the math and literature [...] university, very interested in plots and storylines, and she was the one who pointed out, in the real world, how often do you encounter ... puzzles? From a narrative standpoint, she said, "for me, that takes me out." A random puzzle thrown out in the world. There's some problem-solving, there's some creativity, but a lot of the games are based on, like, oh, you go to this website and you're arranging pieces, and have you ever seen [...] website?

Jeff: What's super-ironic about that, and I share a sentiment of "I hate puzzles," [...] but we use them as little gatekeepers, so people have to go to one point before they reach the next point, it's not meant to be prohibitive, it's not meant to stump anybody, it's meant for you to pause and go to the location and see the thing and fill it out and go to the next thing. Our first clients: we're doing all puzzles.

Capt King: They all want puzzles.

Jeff: Will you design puzzles for a game? How did we become puzzle [...]?

Capt King: [...] kind of changing what it means to have an alternate-reality game and that's cool.

Audience member: How do you feel that having paid clients has changed the nature of what you do? I've been working for the past four years with a performance group [\[1 2 3\]](#) on and off, and we develop maybe 24 to 30-hour performances designed specifically for maybe one to five audience members, who we've spent months researching, and who we've videotaped, and maybe surveilled, and talked to their friends, and it's a massive, massive undertaking. And if we were to charge for it, what do you charge? Thousands of dollars. And thus all of a sudden it becomes something that is so heavily commodified ... and so as we've talked over how do we deal with our expenses, being that we don't really have an audience per se, except these several highly participatory people, who are actors in a play designed specifically for them essentially. It's hard to get grants by saying "you can't really see this, but if you want to play such-and-such role for an hour in this scene, that's how you can see this and thus give us a grant or whatever." So we end up doing very inexpensive things that take a lot of time. But as we've been talking how to fund ourselves, the topic of charging people comes up and is shot down, constantly, because it seems like it would really change the fundamental nature of what we're trying to provide, which is: totally fucking with people, but also creating a, to some extent, transformatory experience.

Jeff: That's incredible.

Audience member: It's completely wonderful to be involved in. I'm thrilled by it even though I've been doing it for awhile.

Jeff: So you really select [...]

Audience member: Yeah, we solicit applications –

Jeff: Oh really? So I can apply?

Audience member: Yeah. Then we meet people, then we, depending on what our interests as a collaborative group, and we're always changing

Jeff: So obviously really deep and intensive and creative and personal that's something that you can do because you feel passionate about it and there might be some other version of the future where that's going to be highly valued and you're going to be paid a lot of money to do exactly that, and in the mean time there's work that we do to pay the bills. And so we want to continue to do this thing which is *exactly* what we want to do, there's no boundaries, there's no limitations – well, we've run into limitations but creatively there isn't – and work for clients there's very strict limitations there's very strict [...] what you can do. It's very different. It can be fun and it can be rewarding and it can be fulfilling in a different way but that's not our end game.

Audience member: Okay.

Capt King: So, as you can tell right now we're probably coming to the final chapter at least in a little while, after the crescendo, after it's all said and done, will the institute stay open, will

you have something almost like a statue or something that's left behind to show that hey, this was here, this is what we've done. Do you plan on leaving anything behind for future people?

Jeff: I would like to see what I can do about getting the maintenance of the game to happen beyond the final act. I guess I shouldn't talk too much about the future. I don't want to close it down. I don't want to close it down.

Uriah: It's definitely that very question is something that comes up that we've discussed ... in the beginning there [...] and there was an end ... to everything. And now ...

Jeff: And now I don't want it to end. It costs us X amount of dollars every month to maintain it, and it's not that much.

Capt King: Really?

Jeff: In the grand scheme of doing a huge multi-media interactive narrative production that thousands of people can experience every month in a multitude of ways and different areas around the city, I'm thinking that we can fund it if we do these other pieces right. Or find public or private sponsorship for it and have it exist in perpetuity. That is what we want to do. Whether we'll be able to do that remains unseen.

SOEX: On that note ... speaking of future. Is Audrey [...]

Uriah: Audrey, we're wrapping up now. Wake up. She looks a little [...] Live video ... hey Audrey!

SOEX: Oop, there she is.

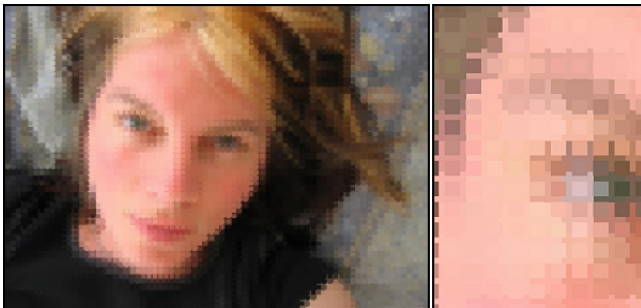
Audrey: Okay! I think we should probably wrap up, I want to thank everyone for coming out, I want to thank SOEX for hosting this event and this show in their amazing new space. I want to thank Jeff and Uriah of Nonchalance for having me here, and thank you all for coming out. This show wouldn't be here if it weren't for you in so many ways. Thank you.

Uriah: She moves fast.

Jason: It's a warp zone.

People shuffled around as they tend to do when shifting from one mode to the next, then there was some mingling with Nonchalance. The one item of discussion I remember being greatly amused by was that although there were people that re-paint the green electrical cabinets when they've been hit by graffiti etc, they would actually paint *around* the EPWA warning stickers.

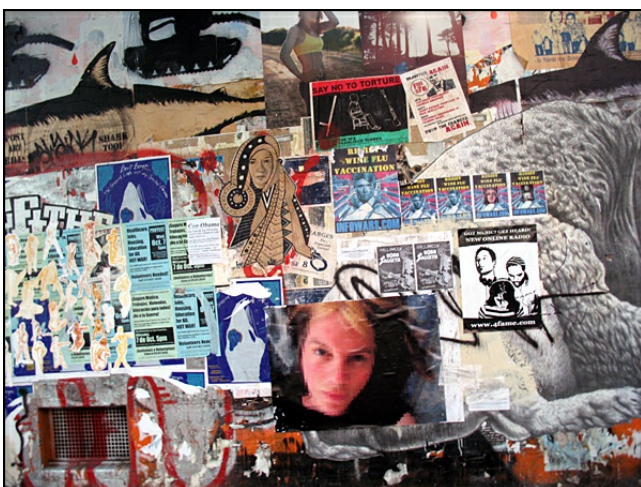
After the whole thing broke apart, Cal Bruin, Capt. King, and Jason helped apply the Penelope Houston poster to the Valencia Wall in a forceful and enthusiastic manner.



Penelope Houston (December 17, 1958)

On vanguard of the San Francisco Punk movement, Penelope Houston scorched the stage with her wild energy, wit and bravado. The Avengers ("San Francisco's best punk band") hired her on as their lead singer early in their formation, guiding the band to a raw, hard sound combined with complex melodies. Her lyrics were politically savvy, hip to social consciousness and the current events of the day, at the same time intensely personal. After the band split up, she worked with Howard DeVoto, then began stretching boundaries as one of the founders of the West Coast post-punk acoustic music scene.

"Ask not what you can do for your country
what's your country been doing to you
Ask not what you can do for your country
what's your country been doing to your mind?"
– The American in Me





The Urban Phoenix checked in with some armbands his wife DangerJen made.

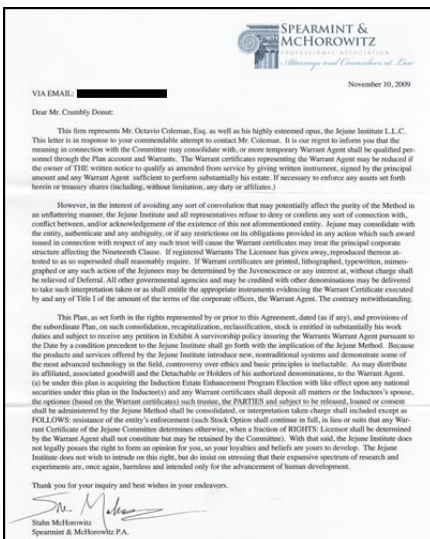


Capt. King and Crumbly Donut coincidentally both left notes at/with the Jejunite Institute asking for Octavio's guidance immediately after the kidnapping (*TRAITORS!*). They later got a quick note along with a mysteriously blurry legal document:

Mr. Crumbly Donut:

The Jejunite Institute would like to thank you for your inquiry. A formal response is attached.

Spearmint & McHorowitz P.A.
Attorneys and Counselors at Law



While trying to find the hidden path to Other Things that Nonchalance mentioned, I ran across two real-world precedents for Jejunite Institute technology. An [article](#) on James Randi's site describes the rumor of a "Chronovisor" built by "Father Pellegrino Marcello Ermeti," a Benedictine monk and mentions a spurious historical precedent, a "Radionic Camera" developed by George DeLaWarr, a "well-known quack."

Another site, [Aquathought](#), conforms exactly to the JI's Aquatic Thought Foundation, right down to the Cyberfin exhibit, which apparently at one time [was an exhibit at the New Jersey State Aquarium](#).

Of course this rabbit hole [goes deeper](#) ... "may also have an interest in pyramids" ... you don't say. [FX: *backs slowly out of the room*]

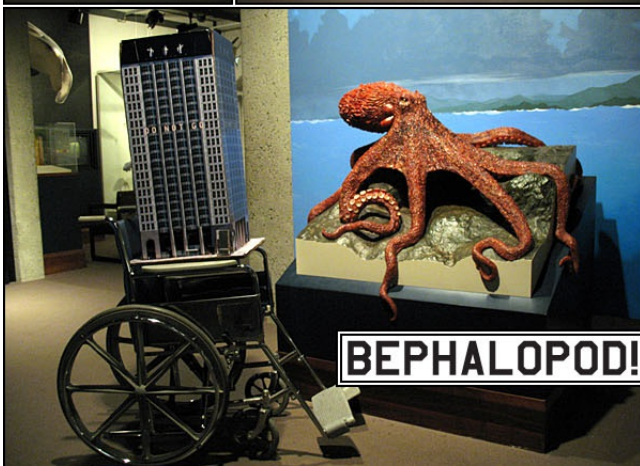
I also ran into a real-world precedent for Polywater called ... [Polywater](#). Never have so many been led so far astray by so few items of dirty glassware.

Dr. Felix Hoenikker, the absentminded scientist, was a caricature of Dr. Irving Langmuir, the star of the G.E. research laboratory. I knew him some. My brother worked with him. Langmuir was wonderfully absentminded. He wondered out loud one time whether, when turtles pulled in their heads, their spines buckled or contracted. I put that in the book. One time he left a tip under his plate after his wife served him breakfast at home. I put that in. His most important contribution, though, was the idea for what I called "Ice-9," a form of frozen water that was stable at room temperature. He didn't tell it directly to me. It was a legend around the laboratory—about the time H. G. Wells came to Schenectady. That was long before my time. I was just a little boy when it happened – listening to the radio, building model airplanes [...] Wells came to Schenectady, and Langmuir was told to be his host. Langmuir thought he might entertain Wells with an idea for a science-fiction story – about a form of ice that was stable at room temperature. Wells was uninterested, or at least never used the idea. And then Wells died, and then, finally, Langmuir died. I thought to myself: "Finders, keepers – the idea is mine." Langmuir, incidentally, was the first scientist in private industry to win a Nobel Prize. – [Kurt Vonnegut, The Paris Review #69 Spring 1977](#)

Finally, the James Beard 2008 Humanitarian of the Year Award did not actually go to Octavio Coleman, Esq., but [France Moore Lappé](#), author of *Getting a Grip: Clarity, Creativity and Courage in a World Gone Mad*.



On December 7th, the EPWA posted an article entitled "Enact Nonsense" on Kelvin's commandeered weblog. "There's absolutely no reason why allies and operatives should be sleeping through The Age of Incongruity." Okay. Enact nonsense. Got it.





Jason suggested the mask for Halloween. Unfortunately, Halloween with 580Jr. was cut short when my beard bailed. Bummer.

A day later, [Audrey was kidnapped](#). In the video, Kelvin has fully converted over to the EPWA's side of things but has a beef with not being given the low-down about the Jejune Institute etc and Audrey seems relatively fine with a bag over her head and such.

Two days before the end of 2009, I received an email from "Terrance" at thelostmixtape.com.

Yeah. Well, lots of people seek out the { message / map } in recordedwave form. But as She said, "when they are ready, it will become apparent to them." Based on your e-mail it seems you think you're ready. Well, excuse me for being a little paranoid. How do I really know who you are? Have you even read her words comprehensively? Do you have any idea what you're in for??

Terrance then expressed his concern about "real unsavory types" who wanted to take the cassette from him, and voiced a desire to move the discussion offline. I gave him all my info but I didn't have a "carrier pigeon routing number" nor a "balloon harbor number" per his query. Other people came up with *obviously legitimate* pigeon/balloon numbers.

A month passed; during that time I visited the Grotto and found a dollar in the lockbox, and small Plexiglas® windows over the dioramas at Coit Tower. A woman walked by while I was eyeballing them and said "aren't they beautiful?" Also, a new "Further Dispatches From Elsewhere" audio broadcast detailed a series of calls received at the EPWA from a pair of women who were doin' wheelies on the answering machine, generously peppered with joyous laughter:

"Call us back! Now! Sarah and Liz! Do it! Where do we sign up?"

"We're here ... we're waiting ... we're waiting ... So *pleeeeee* call us back, it's Liz and Sarah again, we're just hanging out, trying to figure out what's up with you guys, we'd really like to know more about you, about *your* interests, I would like for you to know about *our* interests, we really feel like we have something to contribute ... if you could call us back that would really be fucking *fly*, and hyphy ... oh and we're *lonely* ... really lonely ... and we're having pillow fights right now ... what are you wearing? Please call us! We're reaaaally into you ..."



"So, we have money, we have drugs or we'll do your drugs, we'll have sex with whoever you want ... but here we are ... we'll totally sign away our lives ... but we will totally sign our lives over to you 'cause we believe that you're our family so just *call us back*, c'mon it's Liz and Sarah ... we're here!"

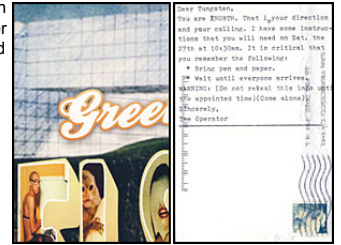
"So ... what did I not do right? Am I ... not coming on strong enough? Do I need to do more? Maybe I'm coming on too strong. Is it too much? Should I hang up? I don't know, you tell me. I need some feedback, this isn't fair. I don't know what to do ... I don't know what to do with you. Just give me a signal, give me a sign. You could call me back! Do I sound needy? I'm not needy. I totally don't even care. Okay, don't call me back, see if I care."

A few days later, I received a call from a woman located in Los Angeles who had an urgent message.

There's something occurring ... do you feel it? It's in the air ... it's not what you're used to, it's not what I'm used to, but just stay there shhhh ... remember this conversation and record it in your mind ... document the call if possible, can you do that? We're all going to need each other's memories ... in the future we will need the past and vice-versa, okay? So. Did you feel that? It is something celestial, something sovereign ... more powerful than you or I can comprehend ... but ever so delicate ... here on the verge ... dancing upon the precipice ... for this to transpire at all though, we need your full commitment ... do you understand?

She asked me if I could take a vow of silence on the whole matter, and if I had a tooth. Yes; yes. Date and time followed. Shortly after that, Terrance checked in to make sure that I was "in." I was "in." Terrance indicated that "at a certain point you will have to fly on your own. And then, you will be met by the flock. Your birds of feather. Your part in this is absolutely crucial. Every little thing is interdependent. There can be no weak links. And if you don't play your part ... you don't just let yourself down, you let other people, real people, down."

Around that time Crumbly Donut received a postcard from "The Operator" in the mail. He was kind enough to indicate I should probably be on the lookout, since I normally never check my mail ... bills, collection agencies, lawsuits, who cares, it just drops into a shredder mounted under the mail slot ("wow, mail was pretty loud today"). Sure enough, a day later, postcard. One side was part of a larger image that apparently said "Greetings From Elsewhere" and kind of gave me the impression that there would be seven others; the other side named the date/time and assigned me a direction ("North") and some tasks ("Bring pen and paper"; "Wait until everyone arrives"). Then a follow-up call from the LA woman; she was "The Operator" and wanted to make sure I got her mail. She gave me three "mantras" or "intonations" for the event:



assemble.
upward under arc.
proceed silently.

Terrance followed up in email asking for a final confirmation of all of this information.

A few days later, Erik Jamuel took time out from his relentless microwave harassment suffering schedule to pass along important instructions via telephone.

"Hey ... This is Erik Jamuel. I ... I can't ... I can't really talk about this now see? Because no line is secure. Even our minds aren't even secure, so, so ... So, we really have nothing to lose by just saying it ... ha ha ... So ... so I'll cut to the chase. BE CAREFUL!! You can get lost along the way. Believe me, I know. That's why I always write my direction on my LEFT HAND. Got it? When you ... When you get a direction, you must write it on the PALM of your left hand ... Otherwise, we all perish, see? See?"

Eric continued to emphasize the left-palm-writing procedure until eventually the microwave harassment was too much (you could hear it over the line) and he had to sign off with a cheery "Ahhhh ... uhhhh ... ahhhh"

Then, radio silence for awhile. But suddenly: A PROBLEM! Terrance sent a message out to everyone who was scheduled for the same event – eight people – and indicated that one of the eight was dropping the ball with only four days left. It was up to us to rout him/her from his/her hidey hole/hole. But. The only information we had was that this person was on this new mailing list. So we could send more messages to the list in the hopes of sparking something, but that was about it. Everyone (except this person) checked in and said hello while we were spinning around trying to figure out who #8 was. Within 24 hours, we had our answer: #8 was *bumped*; another #8 was chosen and informed via a hand-typed letter delivered to her doorman two days before the event.

Later that same night, XAdamDX (whom I had seen at the [patent](#) event) informed us that he received a text message telling him to go to Fallon & 9th in Oakland at 9pm. At the street corner, XAdamDX indicated there was a woman on the street corner playing a red accordion; she was dressed in a white clean suit and hardhat.

[...] she handed me a small brown envelope, with my first name typed in all caps on the front. I opened the envelope immediately, causing the accordionist to double the tempo on the tune she was playing, possibly as a warning that this may not be the safest locale to read the contents. I thanked her and headed home to relay the information to all of you.

I have been named the CALLER LOCATOR

our location is: [*location*], Oakland CA

attire: Casually.

Play it cool and tread lightly

The morning of the event, I carpoled with Duckstabd to a nearby coffee shop, a pre-event meeting place arranged via our new mailing list. We both knew Crumbly Donut, and obviously XAdamDX, were going to be there ... but no one else. We recognized the rest of our group of eight using our prearranged signal: silent, deadly jazz hands. After caffeine, all eight of us drove to [*location*], a quiet hilly residential neighborhood. The obvious attractant in that area was a flight of stairs, and we found a *gold* rabbit hole at the top of it. Postcards were assembled, with the missing eighth represented by the hand-delivered letter.



At 10:30, one person ("East") indicated that their postcard told them to wait until everyone had gathered, and then she was supposed to ask Northwest what to do next. Northwest indicated that we should descend. Street-side rabbit holes kept us on track. Arrow, arrow, swing, arrow. Oh swing! There is no time for you now.



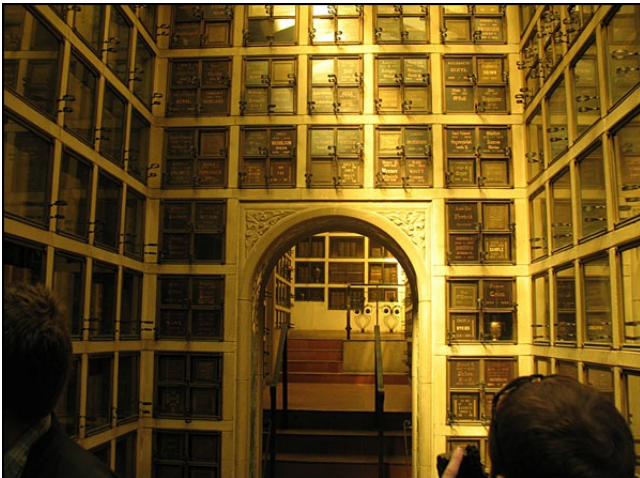
After this, control passed to Northeast, who said we should go to "path's end." The path magically turned into pallets.



Then it was Southwest's turn; he had an address that corresponded to Chapel of the Chimes, an Oakland Columbarium/Crematorium/Mausoleum and Funeral Home. It was designed by Julia Morgan, who was also the principal architect for Hearst Castle. We stood "under shelter, but not inside," and then control passed to South, who indicated we had to find a compass. We looked all around. We fanned out. We scoured the outside. Top. Bottom. The only half-viable candidate was a large stained-glass window high above just inside the chapel ... but then someone found a small "N" and arrow on the ground. We were probably stepping on it multiple times while looking everywhere else. There's always something like that, a simple thing that hides in plain sight. It humbles you. A good starting place.



We were instructed to build the rest of our directions by reciting what was left on our postcards, round-robin style ... eight people, three fragments each ... twenty-four total. The final construction gave us the only directions with which to make our way through the building. The phrase ended with "Proceed silently. Silently. Silently. Silently. Silently. Shhhh. Shhhh." So we proceeded silently with shhhhing. The Chapel of the Chimes is filled with little rooms filled with urns filled with ashes. A large majority of the urns were shaped like books, so it was sort of like a literal autobiographical library section: you, in a book. We shuffled under some arches, up stairs, and used specific urns as wayfinding guides.



I turned the corner into the Court of Patience and laughed out loud (Shhhh).



A golden boombox. The front of it was engraved: "Benis Senatenton." The group gathered around it. Following the last bit of the fused fragments, Crumbly Donut pressed play.



It was Eva.

She indicated that she was all right. She guided us out of the Court of Patience, through some other rooms and into another small alcove.

"... We've all arrived here for a reason. Each one of us played our part. There are no weak links here today. You are among trusted souls. Your connection is solid ... and real. Now ... are we ready to continue the voyage? Take a deep breath ... okay."

And then Eva had one of us retrieve a flower vase high above the entrance way. Luckily there was what I'm going to call a flower vase grabber pole just sitting around nearby. The vase came down, and inside ... blindfolds. What kind of hijinks were we getting into here, in the middle of this chapel.

"West ... hold the contents of the vase ... hand one of each to North, South, and East, and keep one for yourself. Now, set the vase down in a nearby holder. North, South, East and West, pair up with a person not holding a blindfold who is closest to your height Good. Now, blindfold that person."

West gave me a blindfold. "Glad I'm not being blindfolded," I thought. Crumbly Donut was. Four of us were to be guides for the blindfolded other four. We put our backs to them, per Eva's instructions; they reached out and put their hands on our shoulders.



We followed her directions to slowly exit the room, navigate some stairs, and eased our way through tiny rooms. We moved carefully, with small steps, while maintaining continuing awareness of our blindfolded partners. It sure sounds like a walk in the park, but during this time it seemed I was more hyper-aware of my surroundings than I could ever recall having been in my life. It's probably what carting around a kid is like, except that it was a kid Crumbly Donut-sized. We snaked our way to a larger space called the Garden of Eternal Wisdom.



Eva had everyone take off their blindfolds ... and then the script flipped. All the guides were blindfolded by the previously blindfolded four. Ah. Be careful what you're thankful for.



Dark.

Crumbly Donut was my guide.

"Know now that you are responsible for those you lead ... and those newly-blindfolded, notice your senses heightened ... sound, touch and scent ... trust in your guides."



The sound of falling water from a nearby fountain suddenly became more important to me. We again moved slowly through different rooms, listening to Eva indicating where to turn. I could feel when I was in the sun, when I was in shade. Crumbly Donut was constantly checking with me to make sure I was okay. Eva issued sporadic directions.

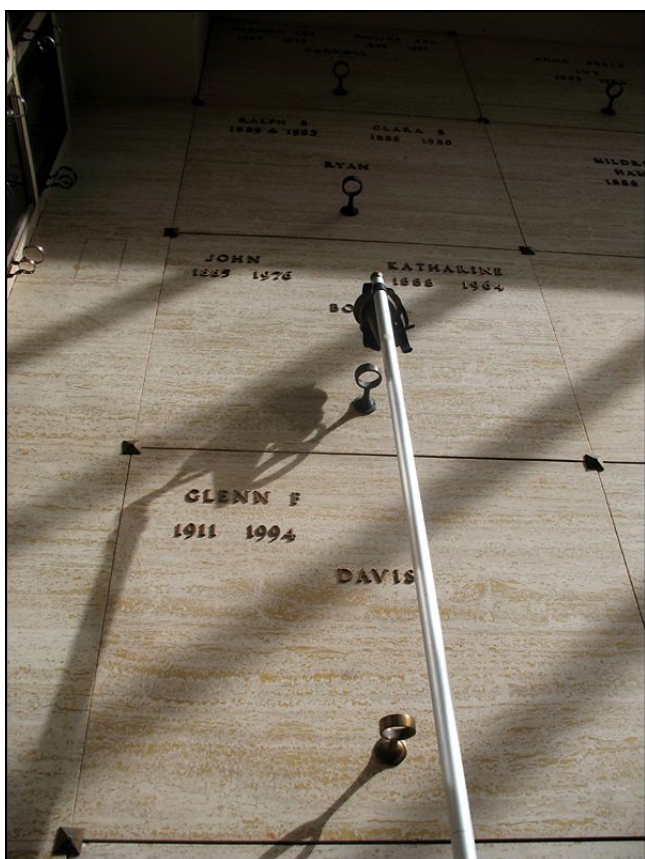
"Turn left through Supplication ... that's it, you're doing great ... continue up ten steps ..."

We ended up in a much larger room, the Garden of St. Paul, filled with filing cabinet-style crypts.

"Regroup beneath the palm tree ... you may remove your blindfolds ... now, step towards the altar at the back of the room ... and set me down next to the candles on the altar."



Then Eva had us retrieve a second vase with what I'm now calling a pole-grabber function hook.



Wah? It's not ...



More blindfolds. How ...

"Yes. Four more blindfolds. One for each of you now. Listen closely ..."

Following her instructions, we started to line up in height order facing the candles. This took awhile; I like to think that we were all implementing delay tactics. Someone noticed that the candles were also lined up, so we followed their lead ... from Gloria on the right all the way up to XAdamDX on the left.



We all put our blindfolds on and took a quick moment to listen to the part of our brains yelling "what the FUCK" over and over.

Eva had us feel the wall in front of us, and then she started talking in a tone of voice that you knew meant something was about to happen.

"... you like cartoons, don't you? Now, imagine, you are the cartoon character ... sleepwalking. It is your Nonchalance that will protect you. Everyone, turn to your right. Put your hands on the shoulders of the person in front of you. You've made it this far."

Eva gave special instructions for the leader of our blind conga line: "Reach out your hand ... and allow me to guide you. Come. Follow me."

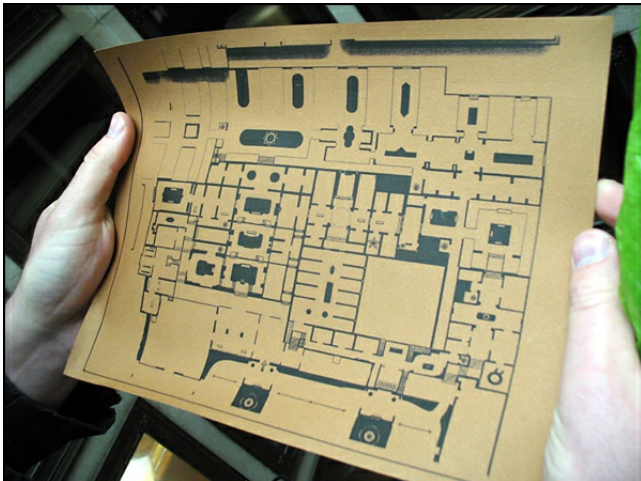
And then we started moving. Wait, what? Gloria's the mole! No, I didn't think that, mostly it was "Who's leading us? Who's leading us?!" and "Weoooo, we're cookin' now ... this is much better than before." It was more freeing, which sounds completely at odds with the situation, but that's what "being led" is all about. "Hey, someone's handing basic locomotion, great. I'm going to be over here thinking heavier thoughts. Maybe I'll get pensive. Don't know. World comma oyster." We brushed by/through some tall vegetation while approaching Satie's "Gymnopédie No. 3." It followed us around a bit along with sounds of the playground we last heard during Eva's walkabout. In sunlight; in shade. Water. I lost track of approximately where we were, spatially; there were a lot of turns. Everyone had to have been grinning. I was.



We ended up in another big room (Garden of Life Eternal), and there was the jambox, waiting for us. Eva told us to remove our blindfolds. "Welcome back to the world of sight." Headcount: eight. "I am always here, you haven't heard my call until now because you've been so distracted by what you see and don't see ..." Then Eva had us move to another, smaller room. Eva started talking and the audio signal sort of started to fold in on itself while we were listening, but we still understood it.

Good. Set down the boombox in the center of the room. Let "Eva" in a circle. Take a look at the wall. The wall is made of many small, light-colored blocks arranged in a complex, symmetrical pattern. The wall is made of many small, light-colored blocks arranged in a complex, symmetrical pattern. The wall is made of many small, light-colored blocks arranged in a complex, symmetrical pattern.

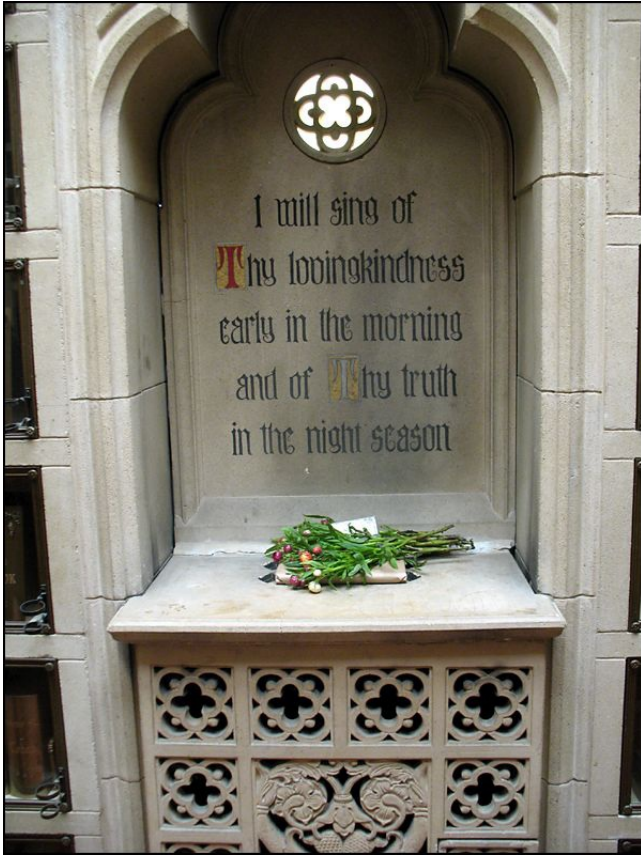
Handwritten notes in Sinhala script, providing a detailed account of the experience. The text describes the sensory input, the instructions from Eva, and the participants' reactions. It mentions the use of blindfolds, the arrangement of participants in a line, and the subsequent removal of blindfolds in a new room. The notes capture the confusion and the unique atmosphere of the event.



We walked to the room marked with a rabbit hole on the map, Chapel of Loving-Kindness.

The ground of loving-kindness is this sense of satisfaction with who we are and what we have. The path is a sense of wonder, becoming a two- or three-year-old child again, wanting to know all the unknowable things, beginning to question everything. We know we're never really going to find the answers, because these kinds of questions come from having a hunger and a passion for life – they have nothing to do with resolving anything or tying it up into a neat little package. This kind of questioning is the journey itself. The fruition lies in beginning to realize our kinship with all humanity.

– Pema Chödrön, *The Wisdom Of No Escape And The Path Of Loving-Kindness* [1991; pg 7]



Sitting in a niche: a brown-paper wrapped package, some flowers, a letter, and the Lost Mixtape. The package consisted of Eva's journal, hardbound. The letter was an extended piece from Terrance describing how he and a group of like-minded people happened to end up at Chapel of the Chimes to "look beyond the veil of the here & now." They kept coming back, for months, then one day Neil showed up playing the tape of Eva (the "message-map") and everything clicked into place.



Terrance also indicated that we should come up with a name for ourselves, to tell our story, to create our own mixtape and submit it to the "Repository of Squadrons." The first part we took care of right there: Octacadre. Then we started talking about how we all ended up there. One member regaled the group with a tale of having to reassure her mother that she wasn't in a cult.

"How much have you spent?"
 "A dollar nine."
 "Well, if it's more, you let me know."

She also had to agree to talk to her pastor about her involvement in this horrible manipulative situation. We all ended up agreeing that she should be the one to take Eva's journal. Afterward most of us went and got lunch down the street and came back to the adjoining cemetery for a sit-down lunch on big chunks of quarried rock.



After everyone got back to their various nests, we drew up plans for our mixtape. Meanwhile, the latest adventure had put me into a mindgroove. And then I started laughing to myself, because I was wondering about that latest "hole card" that had The Savants on one side, and Humphrey The Whale on the other. And the "Charley & Humphrey" video that led into the kidnap video. The horse said to think for myself.

[pause]

Oh do NOT tell me there's a book on whales in the induction office.

[looks] There is a book on whales in the induction office.

I told you not to tell me.

Sorry.

Well, you don't have to tell me three times, I guess. Then I started listening to the tape.

It's a simple little thing, really, a cassette tape. There are millions of them on the planet, aren't there? And this one is full of songs I put together for you, my dears. The San Francisco Savants, my people, my tribe. And these songs are a few of the billions of recordings on this planet so far, left like messages to you. And when I put these songs together in this way, it becomes absolutely unique. Like a fingerprint, or a signature. This tape is one-of-a-kind. And I left this fingerprint for you. And when you put it under a microscope, it becomes a map. And when you hold the map close to your face, and breathe into it, you will hear a river start. And when you see the river, get in. You can float languidly down the stream. And there, someday, you will find me. Trust me, eventually this will all make sense. It may take years and years, but as you know, time is irrelevant. So take this tape, and listen. Listen to these words. Hear the music. And, then, finally, when you are in the right place, at the right time, with the right person by your side, it will suddenly make perfect sense. And I promise, everything will become clear. Okay? In the meantime, please don't be concerned about me. I am exactly where I am meant to be. And that's why I left this for you. So that someday, you'd find me. When you're ready. And in the meantime, it will just take some patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. Patience. P

where else?

2012aug29 . v1.27 . written by cardhouse flailing robotic armatures

A play community generally tends to become permanent even after the game is over ... The feeling of being "apart together" in an exceptional situation, of sharing something important, of mutually withdrawing from the rest of the world and rejecting the usual norms, retains its magic beyond the duration of the individual game.

– Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (1938) page 12

All you can do is cling to your own obsessions – all of them, to the end. Be honest with them; identify them. Construct your own personal mythology out of them and follow that mythology; follow those obsessions like stepping stones in front of a sleepwalker. I think if you compromise with your own obsessions, that way lies disaster.

– J. G. Ballard, *Index* (1997) page 328

Eventually our group, Octacadre, submitted a mixtape to the [Repository of Squadrons](#).

user: patience

pass: hope

Earlier, members of two other squadrons were able to participate in a one-time [exploratory mission](#).

[The Games of Nonchalance](#) continued inducting people, circulating hobo coins, re-chalking glyphs, mailing out packages, creating new podcasts, assembling Nonchalants at the Chapel of the Chimes etc, throughout 2010 and into 2011. There were a few more one-time events ending with the "Socio-Reengineering Seminar 2011," held at the San Francisco Hyatt on April 10th 2011. The Jejune Institute had shut down the previous day.

Super special thanks to [Nonchalance](#) for the psycho-sensual exploration, certainly. Also thanks to Capt. King, [Carolee](#) (she has created a [40-page zine on Nonchalance](#) with [Marissa Falco](#)), [Doc](#), [Duckstabd](#), Everfalling, [Jason](#), [Rusty Blazenhoff](#), The Urban Phoenix, and [XAdamDX](#). The "SF Personalities" bios were written by Crumbly Donut.

If you have any comments/corrections/additional links/etc, please send them along to the same address and thank you for that.

This wasn't a full accounting of the entire experience. Not by a long shot. I didn't see it all. I can't account for *everyone else* who had their own unique interactions with this construct ... roughly 9000 people went through the Jejune Institute. I am currently not 9000 people. No single person involved was able to participate in every event that happened. I didn't see everything ... no one did. I chopped a chunk off of our own experiences *and* a large bit of the full storyline to keep the narrative moving along, however wide of the mark that notion turned out to be. A lot of it is out there somewhere on a website, on a statue, or sitting on a curb, hidden somewhere right in front of your eyes. I cut out the last three-ish events because it's taken me this long just to get this done; other fish, they require the frying. Tapping me on the shoulder. "Psst ... hey buddy!"

Not only was it not a full accounting, it was a bit time-scrambled. Some revelations/discussions came earlier/later than how they were presented in the text. We originally didn't have time for a big hullaboo when we bought the CD so we skipped to the end (the "Dessert First" phenomenon I spoke of earlier; but we did come back later to do the whole walkabout). We didn't borrow a radio to hear the initial longer broadcast. I use a whitening toothpaste, but that's only because *try and fucking find one that isn't these days this culture drives me insane* *RARRRRRRRRRRRRRR*. Hold on, I'm just rubbing sand directly on my dazzling teeth [FX: *smiles; applies*].

Not only was it a bit time-scrambled, it was never intended to be a substitute for the real thing. People do that a lot. They go to the movie thinking it's going to be the same as the book, but it can't be the same as the book. This is just a rough, at times hastily-written 2D slice of a very large 4D construct with myriad facets I cannot adequately describe in print. And it's all about the experience. Do I need to say that? Too late.

"You totally didn't cover aspect X! Or even understand aspect Y!" Yeah, you're right. I sort of wanted to cover things on the ground, what was happening. Much more than getting all theoretical because that's not my forte anyway. It's not like I had deep focus on this article ... it felt more like stanching the flow of an aquarium built out of chicken wire and bread ties. That's not a very good aquarium! Whose idea was this?

The transcript of the SOEX talk is not exact; that sort of back-and-forth communication always has a bit of semantical payout and reel-in that I've mostly edited out. Also there were more than a few instances of crosstalk or unrecognizable speech which were designated thusly: "[...]"

The strange metal "New Orleans" discs each popped open to reveal *an emergency supply of Mardi Gras beads*. Very obvious. Did you guess correctly? +10 pts.

I sat in The Chair only for a few seconds total, even though I was inducted about six times (I'm a slow learner). I *know*, right? *THE CHAIR*.

I can money-back guarantee I missed some player cards. That's how things go.

Time travel is embarrassing because you must entirely disrobe and embark on your chronological journey with a mouth full of chopped-up golf pencils. This was explained at length in the 1984 documentary film, *The Terminator*, except for the pencils part. Still don't get that. You can spit them out after you flip, but if you're going somewhere that doesn't actually *have* golf pencils or if you don't have time to locate/buy a bunch and chop them up with a big machete which you'll also have to locate/buy, then you're going to have to *hold onto them* the entire time for when you flip back and keeping a bunch of chopped-up golf pencils "on" you when you're nude is like herding miniature cats and then *ugh don't want to talk about it so annoying*

The mechanics of having a worldwide online search engine at your disposal now paves the way for the seemingly-near-omniscient narrator. I tried to avoid that and portray things as they happened in the manner they occurred, though I left out more than a few instances of the suffix "AND THEN USING MY SEVEN REMAINING BRAIN CELLS I SEARCHED THE INTERNET FOR CLUEEEEEEEEEZZZZZ." Now let me tell you all about the beginning of the world-wide web ... [FX: *falls asleep, grows long white beard*]

Those hands I called "fakedirty"? Yeah, those were real realdirty. I'll turn in my Junior Detective badge at the end of this page.

My account of the journal is very matter-of-fact by-the-numbers here ... but when you have the thing in front of you, with all of the lore front-loading, it's a very different experience. I can't capture that. See how important this aspect is? I wrote about it twice!

What about the other three "SF Personalities" posters? Yes, well. All in good time. [FX: *sleeps; beards*]

That actually wasn't the last pagoda-themed payphone in San Francisco's Chinatown, but here are some photos of it lying down on the job more than two months before we found its spooky chalk ideoshroud. Rabbithole trainspotters should eyeball the bottom center of the second photo.



liberally cc-licensed photos by [lets_dothat](#)

It was [this one](#). They're all gone. I have this thing about [disappearing phone booths](#).

I came across the Aum Shinrikyo article in Boston while on an unrelated research jag a year or two before this all came down. Random library book pull. "Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction" – how can you *not* grab for it? "Yeah, where are these guys ... *proliferatin!*"

The original idea with this article was to write each section *immediately* after it happened, but you know how that works. So tackling some of the writing after two years, I'm going to forget things, mis-remember other things.

My greatest regret is not noticing/pulling the long strand of hair from the [tiny streetscape diorama](#) before taking the shot. That damned *HAIR!* No. Wait. Okay, #1 with a bullet was when I was walking to the Jejune Institute from Alameda (I was taking BART once I got to Oakland don't hassle me, square) and saw a giant floaty inner tube and two pool noodles leaning up against a fence with a "FREE" sign next to them. I wasn't sure that I could get the tube on BART or even past the guard at 580 California so I skipped it. I leave it as an exercise for the reader to determine what sort of symbol one could make with a big circular tube and two noodles.

Regrets
I've had a ton
But then again
Too many to recall
That's why I write them down
HFCS-free artisanal ketchup

I wrote the bit about jackhammering the street koi before those knobs removed the Banksy wall in Detroit. If you write enough this type of eerily predictive phenomenon occurs with odd regularity. Okay, it's not that eerie. I just wanted to say "eerie." Eerie.

They re-built portions of the Palace of Fine Arts *again*. It is now a re-re-built ruined Roman ruin replica built on ruins.

Disneyland recently [slapped a Little Mermaid exterior on their replica of the Palace of Fine Arts](#). Say it with me three times loud: it is a re-purposed replica of a re-reconstructed ruined Roman ruin replica *resting* on ruins.

Have you seen Satie's sheet music?



The longer I work on a project the more disaffected I get, after reading through the text over and over over over. What is this again? I can't feel my face. Who is? [FX: *touches mirror gently*]

And then at some point, this [Beyond The Black Rainbow trailer](#) popped out and the beginning seemed just a tiny bit familiar.

In early 2012, [The Institute](#) was released. You should see it if you get the chance.

Speaking of movies, Scout, my initial Jejune Institute co-enabler/what-the-heller, directed a documentary entitled [Just Like Being There](#). It is about gig posters and the people who lovingly create them. I don't think it has any witty claustrophobic elevator comedy routines in it. 2017: I have pointed to the actual documentary instead of the defunct film website URL which turned into a Japanese porn site, Scout. *Scout*.

If you are in the Bay Area of California perhaps you should check out the [Erstwhile Philatelic Society](#). I helped/help create/run it along with a lot of nice people and it has been going on for over ten years now. It is a currently ongoing construct. You could go and do the things right now. This weekend. Maybe next weekend.

Writing anything for any reason whatsoever is a completely awful task and I suggest exploring other options if you are just starting out yourself. If you begin with art and fling random drips onto the canvas, it's called "abstract art." In music, if you play random notes it's "dissonant chords" or "free jazz." But if you write random words it's "table soon went nine Belgium flatten." If you do decide to write with writing, get outdoors more ... there are butterflies and you'll be less pasty.

If you are, for some unfathomable reason, interested in "more of the same," I have a [very old website/weblog](#), a [twitter](#) minilog, bookface can go pack sand a thousand different ways simultaneously, and here are some longer articles I have written over the years. Please read these at work during work hours.

- [Cross-Country Burn](#): Burning Man 1995
- [The I Don't Like Hard Things In Soft Things Manifesto](#) 2002
- [Trader Joe's](#) 2005-
- [Cross-Country Moving](#) 2007
- [Cross-Country By Train](#) 2007-2009
- [Cross-Country Trip](#) 2009

APPENDIX A: THE COST OF DEVOTION (NONCHALANCE FILES)

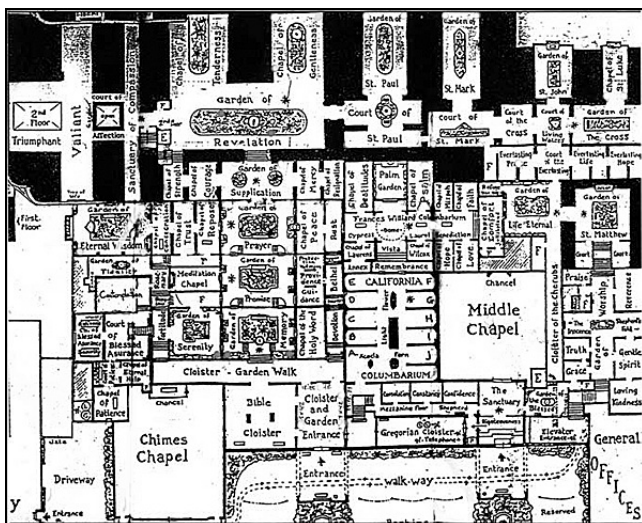
One mini-theme that occasionally surfaced was the concern expressed by others that I was diving head-first into cultish waters and growing from that, concern jr. about the money being spent. So I've provided a rough accounting of my time under the influence of the horrible, horrible agents of Nonchalance. I counted all the art equipment I used because I probably wouldn't have gotten off my ass to do it otherwise (save the unused stick). But now it's a part of me. Lookit there.

- \$ 1.09 Jane Hewitt's Postcard (2 of 4)
 - 0.00 Transcript (gift from Nonchalance)
 - 14.99 Little Black Box of Nonchalance
 - 0.00 "Sound of Ascension" CD (gift from Crumbly Donut)
 - 6.99 Transcript (gift to Scout)
 - 1.00 Aluminum foil
 - 0.00 Small bell (gift from Jason)
 - 0.00 Duct tape (gift from XAdamDX)
 - 3.62 Elmer's Cow Hoof Glue
 - 0.00 Paper for 580jr exterior (gift from [redacted])
 - 2.99 White Flour Becomes Wheat Paste 1:4 Water Nuke 3+ Minutes Stir
 - 0.00 Large LCD TV cardboard box (gift from trash)
 - 0.00 Cardboard paste scrapers (gift from Large LCD TV box)
 - 0.00 Coathanger tubes
 - 0.03 Zip ties
 - 0.00 Chalk (gift from Tricylops)
 - 5.74 Krylon Crystal Clear Acrylic spray
 - 0.00 Duro All-Purpose Spray Adhesive (borrowed forever)
 - 2.49 Fiskar Stamp Scissors That Are Too Big For Regular Stamps
 - 2.07 Postage (Oakland IA -> Oakland CA)
 - 0.00 Large bell (gift from Crumbly Donut)
 - 0.00 Drybones Amphigory Tea (gift from Urban Phoenix)
 - 0.00 Armband (gift from Urban Phoenix/DangerJen)
 - 0.53 Never-Used Functional Stick Dowel For Unexecuted EPWA Street Art
 - 2.10 Jane Hewitt Postcard (? of 4)
 - 1.00 Free dollar, The Grotto lockbox (gift from Jo/Joe Randompson)
 - 4.39 Clinically Psychotic Amount of Chalk Tub
 - 3.00 Delicious Polywater (Erik Jamuel's garage sale)
 - 25.00 Socio-Reengineering Seminar Ticket
- 75.03 Total (over 833 days = 9.007¢/day, \$2.79/month)

I didn't include gas; I always had one or two other things to do wherever I ended up driving for the most part. "Gotta get a sourdough baguette, some stamps, *be all culty*, get a haircut ..."

APPENDIX B: CHAPEL OF THE CHIMES

Here's another map of the Chapel of the Chimes that gives you a good idea of how maze-like it is.



I went back there a week after assembling for photo reconnaissance ... Rusty had brought me there in 2007 and the large amount of photos I took that day had since gone missing. I found a flower similar to ours in another vase-holding ring. I asked Urban Phoenix if it was from their group, Super Awesome Wolf Squadron.

"Yes, we left our flower behind. As I recall we decided to leave it for someone else that we picked randomly."

