

Simulacra Simulation

Jean Baudrillard

Presented by Lindsay Grace November, 2007

“The simulacrum is never what hides the truth – it is the true that hides the fact that there is none

The simulacrum is true”


-Ecclesiastes

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Definitions

The Real

- What exists before simulation and simulacra are constructed.
- The origin



Vornado
Denis Peterson (Hyperreal painter)

The Hyperreal

- Reality's substitute based on a simulated world

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Definitions

Simulation


- A display of actions or process meant to **deceive**

Dissimulation

- A display of actions or processes meant to **conceal** an existence

Simulacrum

- The image of something that imitates a behavior or simulates
- For Baudrillard, it has the power of murdering its predecessor




Site Simulacrum
Photography by Michael Richard

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The Desert of the Real

“Simulation is the generation by models of the real without origin or reality - the hyperreal”

“The real persists here and there, in the remote regions of western existence”

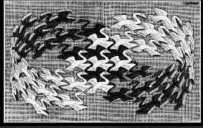


The Transparent Simulacrum of the Feigned Image
Salvador Dali

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The Eras of Simulacra Simulation

1. Liquidation of all Referential
2. Everything is dead and resurrected in advance
 - The era of murder by simulation



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A Model Based Reality

- The **real is reproducible**, because there is no direct relationship between simulation and reality.
- The **real has been destroyed**
 - The signs of the real, replace the real
 - The models supplant reality

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The Dichotomy of Simulation

- **Dissimulate:** pretend not to have what one has (presence)
- **Simulate:** fake what one does have (absence)
- Leaves reality intact
- Destroys reality by blurring its boundaries
- Preserves reference

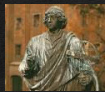
- Sick Child Scenario
- The dilemma of psychosomatics

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Distinguishing the real

• Examples

- Medicine: Psychiatry admits:
 - Objective cause ceased to exist
- The Military system
 - Hesitates to distinguish produced and authentic "symptoms"
 - All crazy people simulate, and this lack of distinction is the worse kind of subversion



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Concepts in Art Philosophy Dissimulation

Multitudes:

If this stand-off exists in cunning dissimulation, between 'Art as Network' and the Ego re-enforcement through 'artist-as-networker' can there be nominated any evidence of a rigorous and affirmative politics of the aesthetic, both fully contemporary, 'modern' and fully 'democratic'?

The Net-work (internet and intranets) . . . functions paradoxically as a 'dissimulation' (to hide, as knowledge, under a false appearance) of interaction and immediacy. A network is in potential a 'reflexive' mega structure, calling itself up from an infinite archival intelligence]

(Redux January 2007)



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Concepts in Art Philosophy Dissimulation

- **Commercial Art:**
 - Produces Dissimulation?
 - Images to placate, mollify, and fulfill?
 - Film?
- **New Media Arts:**
 - Are New Media arts the most significant tools of the simulation world?
 - Consider image cleanup in Photoshop
 - Video game simulation
 - Simulation exceeding reality
 - (the allegory of the murderous post game child)

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Dissimulation in the Everyday

Are these apt examples of dissimulation?

Business

- Brand Management: Same contents, very different experience (Cola Wars, water et al.)

Medicine

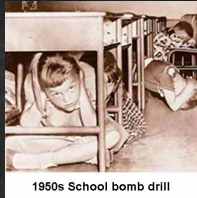
- Virtual cures: hide the symptoms and the disease disappears (e.g. cold and flue medications)



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Simulation in the Everyday

- **Emergency Drills:** fire, attack, etc
 - Consider Cold War America (1950's drills)
 - The terrorist threat
- **Interactive Media**
 - Video game "accomplishments"
 - The terrorist threat
- **Business**
 - Corporate securities value derived from perception
 - Brand Management (commercial arts)



1950s School bomb drill



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Distinguishing the Real: Religion

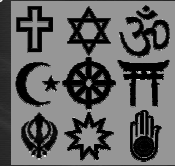
The machinery and icons substituted for the pure and intelligible idea

Iconoclast

- Predicted the Omnipotence of Simulacra
- God as a reflexive simulacrum
- Knowing of the simulacrum drives destruction of images
- The despair that the image didn't conceal anything at all

Iconolaters

- Recognized a game
- Dissimulate the fact there is nothing behind the images



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Murderous Power of Images

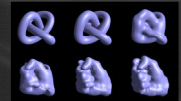
- What if God himself can be simulated, reduced to signs of faith – **the system becomes a giant simulacrum**
- **Creates a recursive simulacrum**



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Phases of Image

- It is the **reflection** of a profound reality
- It masks and **denatures** a profound reality
- It masks the **absence** of a profound reality
- It has **no relation** to any reality whatsoever
- It is its **own pure simulation**



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Rosy-Colored Resurrection

- **Science is murderous**
 - "In order for ethnology to live, its objects must die"
 - "Ethnology . . . liberated from its object, [will] be applied to all living things and make itself invisible . . . That of the simulacrum"
 - "We are all Tasaday Indians"
 - "[Ethnology] is here, everywhere . . . In a world completely catalogued and analyzed"



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Ethnology of the Contemporary

- **Disneyland**
 - "Play of illusion and phantasm"
 - An ethnographic display case, social microcosm, and miniaturized pleasure of America
 - Gadgets magnetize the crowd – from the solitude of the concentration camp parking
 - "Setup to rejuvenate the fiction of the real" (neither true nor false)
 - Stations that feed reality (Los Angeles)
 - Places that embalm and pacify

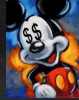


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Ethnology of the Contemporary

Disneyland

- The regeneration of the imaginary, dreams, phantasms, historical
- The hyperreal civilization's prototype
- The result:
 - “People no longer look at each other, there are institutions for that”
 - “They no longer touch each other but there is contactotherapy”
 - “They no longer walk, but they go jogging”



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Ethnology of the West



• Musuemification

- “We require a visible path, a visible continuum, a visible myth of origin”
- Musuemification is destructive – history becomes prey to both science and worms
- We double – taking what existed, destroy it in its discovery and move it into a preservation state



From Jameson The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism

Global Ethnology

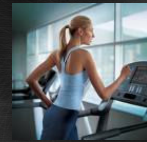
Dubai:
Creation of manufactured reefs



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Resurrections

- “Americans flatter themselves for having brought the population of [Native Americans] back to pre-Conquest levels”
- “Everywhere we live in a world strangely similar to the origin – things are doubled by their own scenario”
- Even the dream is resurrected
- We simulate everyday life



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Watergate

- “Effect of the imaginary concealing that really no more exists outside than inside the limits of the artificial perimeter”
- “Formerly one worked to dissimulate scandal – today one works to conceal that there is none”
- “Watergate is not a scandal . . . because it is what everyone is busy concealing”

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Mobius



- “We are in a logic simulation which no longer has anything to do with a logic of facts and order of reason”
- All is true . . . There is an impossibility of a determined position of power
- Like a mobius strip – too long to traverse
- Proving real through the imaginary, truth through scandal, the law through transgression, ethnology through dispossession

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Mobius

- The proof of the theater through antitheater
- The proof of art through anti-art
- The proof of pedagogy through antipedagogy
- Proof of psychiatry through antipsychiatry

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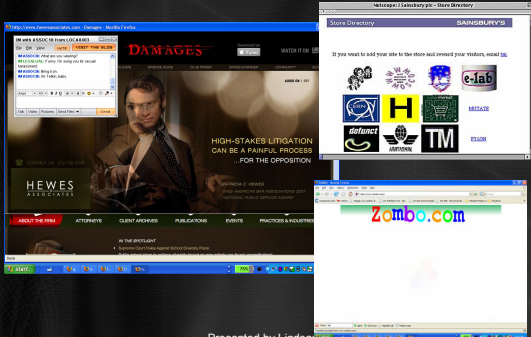
The Strategy of the Real

- “Illusion is no longer, possible because the real is no longer possible”
- “The network of artificial signs will become inextricably mixed up with real elements”
- How to feign a violation?



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The Strategy of the Real



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Questions

- How does the growth of reality tv link to hyperreality and the destruction of the real
- Does you tube extend these notions?
- What experiences in your everyday illustrate his theory (e.g. Jogging)
- Are there institutions or places that combat these notions – an anti-Disneyland prototype?

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Questions

- Have you seen or know of any art that plays on the notion of dissimulating experience?
- How do these concepts effect authenticity? What about process?
- Have you tried to feign violation – Other than the allowed institutions for feigning (e.g. a gallery space, a theater)?

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Questions

- Is Baudrillard a Situationist with a “finer point”?
- Can there be real dissimulation if the simulation is everything? Are dissimulations distracting from the simulations?
- Where are the deserts of the real? What’s still there?



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Producers of Simulacra?

- Wikipedia? Networked information fabricated from non-expert experts
- Is Wikipedia Hyperreal?
- Anything not television, managed by its image?

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References

- Re-purpose of Information: Art as Network, Joel Slayton: <http://ewitch.sjsu.edu/web/v4n2/joel/index.html>
- Redux Project: Multitudes: http://www.reduxprojects.org.uk/multitude/multitude_press.html#the_multitude

The [Matrix Trailer](#)
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