

Real Rules of Innovation for the 21st century

(Part 4)

Inspiration Materials

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Rule of Innovation VIII: *Perform*: or how to innovate in politics

Searching for a body?
Any body?

“27 December 2003 | 04:17 | Washington Times

The Central Intelligence Agency /CIA/ is making an investigation to prove that the Antrax attacks in 2001 were a part of the international terrorist plan, writes the Washington Times. Officials of the American administration, who have access to the secret documentation shared that there is still no proved connection between the letters containing Antrax and the outrages from September 11th, 2001, but the two things are not accidental. According to some of the officials the theory for the terrorist Antrax attacks coincide with the hypothesis of the FBI about an American scientist who wants to take revenge.”¹

Looking for a body.

Phaedrus: What a very strange person you are, Socrates. So far from being like a native, you resemble, in your own phrase, a visitor being shown the sights by a guide.

Where are we?
Was that always the question?

¹ Date: Sat, 27 Dec 2003 23:03:37 +0100 Subject: [Spy News] Antrax Attacks are a Part of the International Terrorist Plan Reply-To: spynews@yahoogroups.com Washington Times: Antrax Attacks are a Part of the International Terrorist Plan.

It appears not.

“The origin of the map is lost to history. No one knows when or where or for what purpose someone got the first idea to draw a sketch to communicate a sense of place, some sense of here in relation to there.”²

Where is here?

“Action is everywhere in life. As Stanislavski wrote: ‘On the stage you must always be enacting something; action, motion is the basis of the art...of the actor; ...even external immobility...does not imply passiveness. You may sit without motion and at the same time be in full action’ (Stanislavsky 1963: 7-8).”³

Where is there?

“Berkaak has noted that the rock ‘n’ roll of Elvis Presley was not created while the red lights in the recording studio were on. It came into being when Elvis and his musicians were ‘goofing around, playing in between the recordings.’”⁴

Here and there are in between.

Something we tend to lose sight of, focused as we are on a mediated reality. We think for example that distributing security will lead to secure environments:

“With unusual self-awareness, a CIA author noted in a newly declassified study that the Agency’s secrecy system for handling highly classified intelligence information could have unintended psychological effects.

The March 1977 study, entitled “Critique of the Codeword Compartment in the CIA,” was formally declassified (with redactions) and accessioned at the National Archives on October 21. The 67 page document was obtained by Jeffrey Richelson of the National Security Archive, who kindly shared a copy.

“We know that secrecy by its very nature may affect the personality of its practitioners,” the unnamed author wrote.

“This is true of all forms of secrecy from the primitive secret society

² John Noble Wilford, *The Map Makers*, Vintage Books, 2001, p.6.

³ Hastrup, Kirsten. *Othello’s Dance: Cultural Creativity and Human Agency*, p.39.

⁴ (Berkaak 1993:176) In: Schade-Poulsen, Marc. *The Playing of Music in a State of Crisis: Gender and Rai music in Algeria*, p. 116.

to the codeword compartment. The latter is a heightened form of secrecy that resembles the former in many ways. It has the aura of a secret society. It has its initiation, its oaths, its esoteric phrases, its sequestered areas, and its secrets within secrets. And in place of passwords and hand signs, there are letter designations on badges. There are in-groups and out-groups. No wonder, then, if the codeword compartment has unintended psychological effects."

Among other effects identified, cleared personnel tend to assign undue accuracy and weight to highly classified information, and to equate access levels with professional status.

"On balance, the psychological side effects of the codeword compartment seem to diminish rather than enhance security," the author concludes."⁵

Let me repeat:

Among other effects identified, cleared personnel tend to assign undue accuracy and weight to highly classified information, and to equate access levels with professional status.

Let us highly classify:

The ways we drink

Me? I quit drinking three years ago. I broke the loop. I kept the pattern, now I drink Perrier.

The ways we walk

In my opinion, walking is the first exercise that people should work into their lives. It lowers the blood pressure, ameliorates back problems, strengthens your lower muscles and bones, is low impact, and is what we evolved to do. It's much easier if you live in a neighbourhood where groceries, video stores, post offices, and the other places one goes for other purposes are easy to reach by foot.⁶

The ways we sleep

I best sleep without a pillow. You?

⁵ Secrecy News is written by Steven Aftergood and published by the Federation of American Scientists. web: www.fas.org/sgp/index.html

⁶ From: "Russell Turpin" deafbox@hotmail.com To: fork@xent.com List-Id: Friends of Rohit Khare <fork.xent.com> Date: Tue, 28 Jan 2003 19:29:04 +0000

The ways we chat with a neighbour at the grocery store

Those wine oranges are much more juicy.

The ways we chat with a neighbour at the butcher

We had a vegetarian burger last night and you know what? The kids loved it!

The ways we talk to our children before they go to sleep

All is well. I'm here to stay. I will never ever go away. As you are mine.

The ways we can fly a kite on a Thursday afternoon

Call your boys, call your girls. Get in your car, drive to the beach and show them how to fly a kite on a Thursday afternoon. Talk to them.

The ways we can fly a kite on a Monday

Call your boys, call your girls. Get in your car, drive to the beach and show them how to fly a kite on a Monday. Talk to them.

The way we bury terrorists

*"According to the Moskovski Komsomol newspaper, Russian security forces have decided to bury the terrorists from last's week's hostage siege wrapped in pig's skin. The aim is to deter potential Islamic terrorists from future attacks. Shahidi (Jihad martyrs) believe by their nefarious acts that they ascend immediately to heaven. Using their beliefs against them, wrapping their corpses in 'unclean' pigskin prevents them from entering heaven for eternity."*⁷

The ways we watch our kids at school

"On the contrary, security experts and administrators who use the cameras say, students and teachers seem to appreciate the increased sense of security. And in some cases, administrators say, having cameras around has modified students' behaviour. Dozens of inconspicuous wall and ceiling camera's in W. E. B. DuBois and Carter G. Woodson charter schools, Fresno, California, allow the Police Department, the school's director

⁷ From: "John Hall" johnhall@evergo.net To: "FoRK" <fork@xent.com>
Subject: Russians to bury terrorists wrapped in pigskin. Date: Thu, 31 Oct 2002 13:46:59 -0800
<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/news.php3?id=32749>><http://www.israelnationalnews.com/news.php3?id=32749>

and the security company in Jackson, Mississippi – half a continent away – to remotely monitor the daily activities of the 350 students. “We have kids coming up and admitting to things we don’t even have on camera,” says Dr. Drawdy, the Biloxi superintendent of schools, who spent \$1.2 million to put a security camera in each of its nearly 500 classrooms.”⁸

The ways spiders see flies

“When a fly is caught in a spider’s web it is at once attacked. Yet if a fly is put before the same spider away from its web, the fly is not attacked, but the spider rapidly moves away from the fly. Thus the fly appears quite different to the spider when seen on its web and away from it; the fly is only recognized as prey when seen together with the web. For us a fly is always a fly; not so for the spider.”⁹

The ways we start the day

I start the day with tea, preferably green tea. If I’m teaching I will not have my coffee until after my last class. Hmm. Coffee.

Classify that information!

Highly classify that information.

Then put it in a map and mark it: s e c r e t

Gramsci knew.

When he wrote home he did not ask for statistics. He asked which patron saints the farmers had carried in the procession. That told him if they were optimistic or pessimistic about the coming year.

Gramsci, the leader of the Italian communist party, was imprisoned by Mussolini. In over a decade he wrote his prison notebooks.

We are losing him to a reactionary right-wing cause.¹⁰

Gramsci has become entangled in Ceasarism; a situation in which the forces in conflict balance each other in a catastrophic manner.¹¹

⁸ Date: Thu, 27 Feb 2003 16:29:27 -0600 (CST) Subject: [>Htech] NYT: Where the Hall Monitor Is a Webcam. NYT February 27, 2003, By KATIE HAFNER.

⁹ Munro Fox, H. *The Personality of Animals*, Penguin, 1940, p.9.

¹⁰ Whose Gramsci? Right-wing Gramscism, van Kranenburg *International Gramsci Society Newsletter* Number 9 (March, 1999): 14-18.

Cultural Studies front man Tony Bennett said, "It is always tempting these days and especially at the end of long essays to wheel out Gramsci as a 'hey-presto' man, as the theorist who holds the key to all our current theoretical difficulties."¹²

Now his 'hey-presto' qualities seem to have faded, not, unfortunately, in extremely right-wing circles where his fundamental notion of hegemony is being hailed as a politically effective and productive way of gaining influence and political power.

What happened?

Not only is Gramsci misunderstood, as in the new elitist focus of McGuigan who blames the uncritical embracement of mass consumption on the hegemony theorists who have closed their eyes to an economic grounding of all cultural production, a position which can be easily refuted within Gramsci's own framework:

"Can there be cultural reform, and can the position of the depressed strata of society be improved culturally, without a previous economic reform and a change in their position in the social and economic fields? Intellectual and moral reform has to be linked with a programme of economic reform indeed the programme of economic reform is precisely the concrete form in which every intellectual and moral reform presents itself." (Notes, p.133)

But within the progressive framework of cultural studies, his concept of hegemony is questioned as well, especially because "there are problems with distinguishing hegemony theory from the dominant ideology thesis;¹³ the feminist perspective does "not accept such a privileging of capitalism over patriarchy as the determinate structure of ideological relations," and ethnic studies claims that "the national-popular concept is in danger of suppressing specific dynamics of black and ethnic struggles". Moreover, "the problems of reconciling it [hegemony] with a theory of pleasure are insurmountable"¹⁴.

Unfortunately, the French Nouvelle Droite movement headed by Alain DeBenoist, and the Flemish extremely right political

¹¹ *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Quintin Hoare, Geoffrey Nowell Smith (ed), Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971; p. 219. Hereafter cited as SPN.

¹² Tony Bennett, "Marxism and Popular Fiction" In: *Popular Fictions, Essays in Literature and History* Peter Humm, Paul Stigant & Peter Widdowson (ed.) Methuen, London and New York, 1986; p. 263.

¹³ Mercer, "Complicit Pleasures", In T. Bennett, Mercer, *Popular Culture and Social Relations*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1986, p. 66.

¹⁴ Ibid, p.66.

party Het Vlaams Blok have no such insurmountable problems whatsoever with Gramsci's notion of hegemony.

On the contrary, they use it to their utmost ability and they're not being shy about it. The Nouvelle Droite was founded as an ideological perspective in the mid- sixties by the French theorist Alain de Benoist. Ironically, it is inspired as an active movement by Gramsci's *Quaderni del carcere*, and it literally calls the metapolitical struggle for cultural hegemony the Gramscism of the Right.¹⁵

Gramsci's notes on hegemony in his prison writings are spread out throughout his text, deeply imbedded not infrequently within concrete historial situations and events as his was no disinterested academic exercise but a genuine attempt to understand the elements of a triumphant Italian fascism.

We would however, not misrepresent him if we take his notion of hegemony to mean that in between consent and active dissent we find passive consent, that cultural change precedes political change, and that changes must connect to an audience that is ready to respond. As Gramsci notes, "the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as 'domination' and as 'intellectual and moral leadership'.

*"A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which it tends to 'liquidate', or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups. A social group can, and indeed must, already exercise 'leadership' [hegemony] before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power); it subsequently becomes dominant when it exercises power, but even if it holds it firmly in its grasp, it must continue to 'lead' as well."*¹⁶

Gramsci's notion of hegemony, or rather on how hegemony is procured, is literally restated by the leader of the reactionary Het Vlaams Blok, Filip Dewinter: "The ideological majority is more important than the parliamentary majority, the former actually almost always precedes the latter"¹⁷. T

The theft of Gramsci by the Nouvelle Droite becomes especially unseemly in the case of the extreme right wing Flemish organization, Were Di, which finds its inspiration in the views of the Nouvelle Droite for three axiomatic foundations:

¹⁵ Grove Borstels, *Stel dat het Vlaams Blok morgen zijn programma realiseert, hoe zou Vlaanderen er dan uitzien?*, van Halewijck, 1995.

¹⁶ SPN, p. 254. A very similar passage in his notebooks reads: "A social group can, and indeed must already 'lead' [i.e. be hegemonic] before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power)". (SPN, p. 47).

¹⁷ Filip Dewinter in *Zwartboek 'Progressieve leraars'*, cited from MarcSpruyt: Grove Borstels, p. 164.

“hereditary inequality, hierarchic society, elitist organisation”.¹⁸

Most evidence in any court can be read both ways, the corruption of notions and concepts has been reevaluated as appropriation or expropriation, yes, but whenever there’s a line to be drawn, it is most certainly in this particular moment when Gramsci’s painstaking labour is turned against him and all he ever stood for.

And, in as much as this is a moral stand, I plead firmly guilty.

So we are experiencing Ceasarism with “Gramsci” as the discursive battlefield, a catastrophic moment where a sound, productive concept—“hegemony”—is being abandoned by progressive positions and revitalised by reactionary forces. And again it is Gramsci himself who gives us the basic clue from which we have to try to start our understanding of his contemporary position. For his remarks on Machiavelli can now be read as referring to his current position:

*“The habit has been formed of considering Machiavelli too much as the man of politics in general, as the ‘scientist of politics’, relevant in every period.”*¹⁹

This is exactly what has happened with Gramsci’s notion of hegemony in progressive positions, they have overstretched its productive capacity to the extent that its inability to reconcile it with specific historical (contemporary) positions such as a theory of pleasure, a recognition of ethnic or feminist struggles has become to be viewed as a drawback of the original concept, an intrinsic inability that produces ‘insurmountable’ difficulties.

But Gramsci of course would have been among the first to recognize that these are genuine critical contemporary problems that have to be taken into account in any reading of our concrete historical scenario; he, unfortunately, was concerned ‘only’ with his specific situation and his specific reading of the mechanisms of the making of Italian fascism.

And in the meantime, while we were talking, Gramsci has suddenly become an obscure man who died of pneumonia in a prison somehow, somewhere, and hegemony is something that has to do with the way the Nouvelle Droite sees things, right?

Wrong:

“Now they were walking down a narrow street, with old men on wicker chairs, and grandmothers playing with balloons to

¹⁸ Nationalistische Grondslagen, Were Di, 1985, p. 3.

¹⁹ SPN, p. 140.

amuse their grandchildren. At the end of the street was suspended another gigantic portrait: a great domed head, like a beehive of thought, wearing glasses. That's Gramsci. He put his arm round her shoulders so that she could lean her head against his damp flannel shirt.

Antonio Gramsci, she said.

He taught us all.

You wouldn't mistake for a horse dealer! he said.”²⁰

No, you wouldn't.

After all, in the philosophy of Aristoteles theoria and praxis were never in opposition. On the contrary, praxis was matched with a set of data, phronesis : that knowledge that we use daily in our practice of living our everyday existence.

Do we have others?

Do you?

Classify that information!

The FBI knows.

“(12-29) 11:26 PST WASHINGTON (AP) –

The FBI is warning police nationwide to be alert for people carrying almanacs, cautioning that the popular reference books covering everything from abbreviations to weather trends could be used for terrorist planning.

In a bulletin sent Christmas Eve to about 18,000 police organizations, the FBI said terrorists may use almanacs “to assist with target selection and pre-operational planning.”

It urged officers to watch during searches, traffic stops and other investigations for anyone carrying almanacs, especially if the books are annotated in suspicious ways.

“The practice of researching potential targets is consistent with known methods of al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations that seek to maximize the likelihood of operational success through careful planning,” the FBI wrote.

The FBI noted that use of almanacs or maps may be innocent, “the product of legitimate recreational or commercial activities.” But it warned that when combined with suspicious

²⁰ John Berger in the story “Play Me Something” in his book *Once in Europa* Granta Books, London, 1991; p. 189.

behavior – such as apparent surveillance – a person with an almanac “may point to possible terrorist planning.”²¹

There is no theory or practice. All is sand in your shoes.

Rules of innovation number eight:
Throw away anything marked secret.

²¹ FBI urges police to watch for people carrying almanacs TED BRIDIS,
Associated Press Writer Monday, December 29, 2003 ©2003 Associated Press.

Rule of Innovation IX: *The Black Guitar* or how to innovate in giving things and thoughts away

“Interesting. I got questioned by the Secret Service during Clinton’s reign as well. I had written the concept for a short story based on a guy who has his family kidnapped by the NSA and is supposed to assassinate the president as ransom.

I made the mistake of emailing the idea to a friend of mine to see if he thought it would fly as a story concept. Somewhere in there it got snagged and I got questioned.

They even know what guns I’d store-bought and asked about them.

Being a smart-ass, I asked if they wanted to see them.

Bad idea, by the way.

– Aaronover?” she asked in a tone of incredulity.”²²

I once lived in a house next to a building where a guy sat and played his guitar. He had a beard. He looked hard, rugged, ragged and had a dog. A black dog. After a week or two I spoke to him. I said; it is all very well to play Dylan and spit his words at the shoppers, but they won’t throw you a dime if you keep at that! Tone down, you can sing the words, you can hum them. The meaning will come across. Don’t match the content with the context. You’ll go hungry, if you do. He listened. From that moment on, every morning I’d pass him, Gunther, for my morning coffee and we’d nod. Sometimes I would stay and listen for a few minutes. He is a real good guitar player. His guitars got worse, though. He had two or three that did not play that well. My mother visited me for my birthday that year. She gave me a black acoustic guitar. I took it to Gunther the next day and gave it to him. Things belong most to people who need them most. He was very happy with the black guitar. He played it on the streets. He played it at home. In the afternoons, evenings, and deep into the night. He had the melody in his head, the guitar had the tone. His girlfriend said can’t you slow it down a bit? You’re playing night and day. He tried and failed and failed again not to play. So she left him. She sang in a different street and I hardly dared to pass her by, let alone give her some change for her singing. What good had I done? I still do not know.

All I know is that for me the guitar belonged to Gunther who was playing it all day.

²² From: “Aaron Turpen” aaron@aaronturpen.com Mailing-List: list Underground_Economy@yahoogroups.com; contact Date: Mon, 29 Dec 2003 07:57:05 -0000 Subject: Re: [UE] Metal testing? Reply-To: Underground_Economy@yahoogroups.com

Was I responsible for the consequences of his playing?

Was he?

Hmm.

You could say it is a paradox.

Gunter was highly creative in a very uncertain situation. He still is. Playing in the streets for money. He bought a computer with the small change and is learning himself all kinds of languages.

It is this paradox we are facing globally as well as locally; in order to innovate we have to be creative. Creativity however needs some peace and quiet, whereas innovation needs a constant reminding of something being wrong.

Innovation needs a risk-friendly environment:

"I was in China a few weeks ago, my first time out of the country since 9/11. Looking back at the US from afar and through the eyes of foreign media, the overwhelming perception is one of a country gone stagnant. Rummy was wrong; it is not Europe that is old, but the US.

*The systems for getting anything done in America are established, entrenched, calcified. Not much radically risky can happen here anymore. The systems are still open, poorly defined, and changing from month to month in China—the risks being taken by individuals, groups, companies, and state authorities are of a scale and degree unimaginable in our America. Of course, stagnation is guaranteed failure, and worse potential disasters loom from every direction, but in this country there can be no deliberation, no possibility of "doing what needs to be done," whatever that may be. The essential conservatism of the US runs deeper than most people can possibly comprehend, and it does not have anything to do with ideology."*²³

Creativity needs a risk-unfriendly environment:

"You actually think differently when you are anxious than when you are happy. Anxiety causes you to focus in on problems; if something doesn't work, you try it again, harder. But when you're happy, you tend to be more creative and interruptible." So if only for purely utilitarian reasons, devices and software

²³ Date: Tue, 30 Dec 2003 00:18:49 -0600 Subject: Re: <nettime> on new states of affairs From: Dan Wang danwang@mindspring.com To: nettime nettime-l@bbs.thing.net Sender: nettime-l-request@bbs.thing.net Reply-To: Dan Wang <danwang@mindspring.com>

should be designed to influence the mood of the user; they will be more effective because they are more affective."²⁴

What do we need?

A guitar of some kind.

A blue guitar?

The Man with the Blue Guitar

by Wallace Stevens

I

The man bent over his guitar,

A shearsman of sorts. The day was green.

They said, "You have a blue guitar,

You do not play things as they are."

The man replied, "Things as they are

Are changed upon the blue guitar."

And they said then, "But play, you must,

A tune beyond us, yet ourselves,

A tune upon the blue guitar

Of things exactly as they are."

Philip Davies Roberts²⁵ writes how this poem by Wallace Stevens shows us the constant drive of innovation and convention and the pitfalls of creativity in any given situation. For the demand of the audience to play upon the blue guitar

²⁴ Date: Mon, 29 Dec 2003 21:40:12 -0500 (EST) Subject: [>Htech] Scientific American: Why Machines Should Fear Reply-To: transhumantech@yahooogroups.com Scientific American: Why Machines Should Fear December 15, 2003 Once a curmudgeonly champion of "usable" design, cognitive scientist Donald A. Norman argues that future machines will need emotions to be truly dependable. By W. Wayt Gibbs.

²⁵ Philip Davies Roberts, *How Poetry works*, Penguin, 1986.

and still remain fully legible and readable is Gunther's paradox.

So how do we play it?

How do we play a black guitar?

With a plectrum?

What if you don't happen to have one?

Can you play a black guitar with a key, any kind of ordinary key that opens doors or starts cars?

Yes, you can.

Well, then stop that car!

*"The key is the electronics box in most new cars which, when the driver presses the accelerator or brake, sends a message to the engine to speed up or slow down. It can be programmed to limit the speed generally or according to the position of the car, established via a GPS satellite. For remote operation, a modem, which works like a mobile phone, can be used tell the car to slow down or stop"*²⁶

Gimme that key.
That key that can stop all cars.
Make them stand still.
And play the black guitar.

Rules of innovation number nine:
Things and thoughts belong to people who need them most.

Rules of Innovation for the 21st century:

Rule of innovation number one:
Don't look up.

Rule of innovation number two:
Let go.

Rule of innovation number three:
Walk.

Rule of innovation number four:
Think bold, be inconspicuous.

²⁶ 04 – electromagnetic security & surveillance Police call for remote button to stop cars // losing your car keys... Motorists face new 'Big Brother' technology // via drudgereport.com
http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,6903,1111211,00.html

Rule of innovation number five:
Don't visualize, look.

Rule of innovation number six:
Be brave and be grand in acts of dying.

Rule of innovation number seven:
Keep the patterns, break the loops.

Rule of innovation number eight:
Throw away anything marked secret.

Rule of innovation number nine:
Things and thoughts belong to people who need them most.

Rule of innovation number ten:
This one is up to you.

Follow these rules and somebody will find your trail.

Going Backwards

"Bucky Fuller called it 'ephemeralisation' as I recall."²⁷

"The fact is that our social future will be determined by the human qualities of the activities being mediated through hundreds of millions of programmed devices, and by our ability consciously to resonate with and thereby to recognize these qualities."²⁸

All I have to do now is the following. I can not quite put it into adequate terms and I therefore hesitate. I do check my lines regularly for lines that make no sense even in those regions where we need to make no sense for a while in the registers that do make sense so. It has to do with my ability to visualise a setting in which people resonate with media through simulating processes. Simulating processes that are actual processes, for in a digitised real, any process might become experiential, might resonate.

In the philosophy of Aristoteles there are three domains of knowledge with three corresponding states of knowing; Theoria, Techné and Praxis.

Theoria with its domain of knowledge epistémè, is for the Greek gods, mortals can never reach this state of knowing. But they can strive for it. In Theoria and epistémè we recognize our concepts theory and epistemology.

In Techné with its domain of knowledge poësis we find technology and poetry. The original meaning of the word 'technology' was concerned with know-how or method, and it is with the Great Exhibition of 1851 that the word becomes synonymous with machines.

It is therefore all the more interesting that the domain of knowledge which belonged to Praxis: phronesis has dropped out completely, not only in our language but also in our thought and ways of thinking. Phronesis, that knowledge that any one of us uses daily in the practice of living his everyday existence, is no longer recognized as an important domain of knowledge with a modern linguistic equivalent.

²⁷ From: Chris Hutchings [SMTP:chris.hutchings@VISCOMM.CO.UK]
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2003 1:18 AM To: IDFORUM@YORKU.CA
Subject: Re: the future of...

²⁸ From: Steve Talbott [mailto:stevet@OREILLY.COM] Sent: 28 January 2003 20:16 To: NETFUTURE@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU Subject: NetFuture #141 Issue #141 A Publication of The Nature Institute January 28, 2003 Editor: Stephen L. Talbott (stevet@oreilly.com). Notes concerning *One River: Explorations and Discoveries in the Amazon. Rain Forest*, by Wade Davis (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). Paperback, 537 pages, \$16.

It took me five years to figure out, to grasp, - understand - let me use the word resonate - these lines of Heraclite: and I rephrase them in my own lines - "of all that which is dispersed haphazardly, the order is most beautiful."

In the *Fragments* you read that these lines are incomprehensible as far as the Heraclite scholars are concerned. They can not link it as a line of verse with other words in other lines in verse.

I read it and in reading I knew it to be true.

*"I seem to pick up more knowing by just hanging around than actually going to official class. Cost saving and I got to play with some cool gear while everyone else was in class. The 45 years or so my buds were going thru NJIT in the 80's were a fertile time for me. I even had an EIES account to learn on."*²⁹

Knowing that only as experience is not very productive in a society that has no non-iconic medium for transmitting these kinds of experiences. In order to make this experience productive; read: make it politically viable and socially constructive - in order to find ways of transmitting, ways of teaching experiences like this - we textualise them. We find analogies, we read initial lines as metaphor, as metonymy. I went for a walk one day in the woods near F., in the Belgian Ardennes. A beautiful walk it was, steep down, hued autumn colours, leaves fading into black. In the quiet meadow that we passed I saw autumn leaves, small twigs, pebbles sometimes - hurdled into the most beautiful of patterns by the strength of water moving. I looked hard realizing there was indeed no other way of arranging them.

*"We learn a place and how to visualise spacial relationships, as children, on foot and with imagination. Place and the scale of place must be measured against our bodies and their capabilities."*³⁰

I recognized leaves as data. I recognized data as data. And I recognized the inability to find a way to come to terms with Heraclite's line without walking, without taking a stroll in the woods and look around you, look around you and find the strength of streams arranging.

²⁹ From: Tom tomwhore@slack.net To: Russell Turpin <deafbox@hotmail.com>
Cc: fork@xent.com Subject: Re: Computer Science Education List-Id: Friends of Rohit Khare <fork.xent.com> Date: Tue, 28 Jan 2003 01:01:15 - 0500 (EST)

³⁰ Arnheim, Rudolf, "Thoughts on Art Education", *Occasional Paper 2.*, The J.P. Getty Trust, Los Angeles, 1989, p. 16.

The ability to read data as data is what makes new beginnings.

Reflect a little on what you bump into.

It will bump into you for sure.

Rob van KranenburgGhent, 02/01/2004