

NeoVictorian, Nobitic, & Narrative

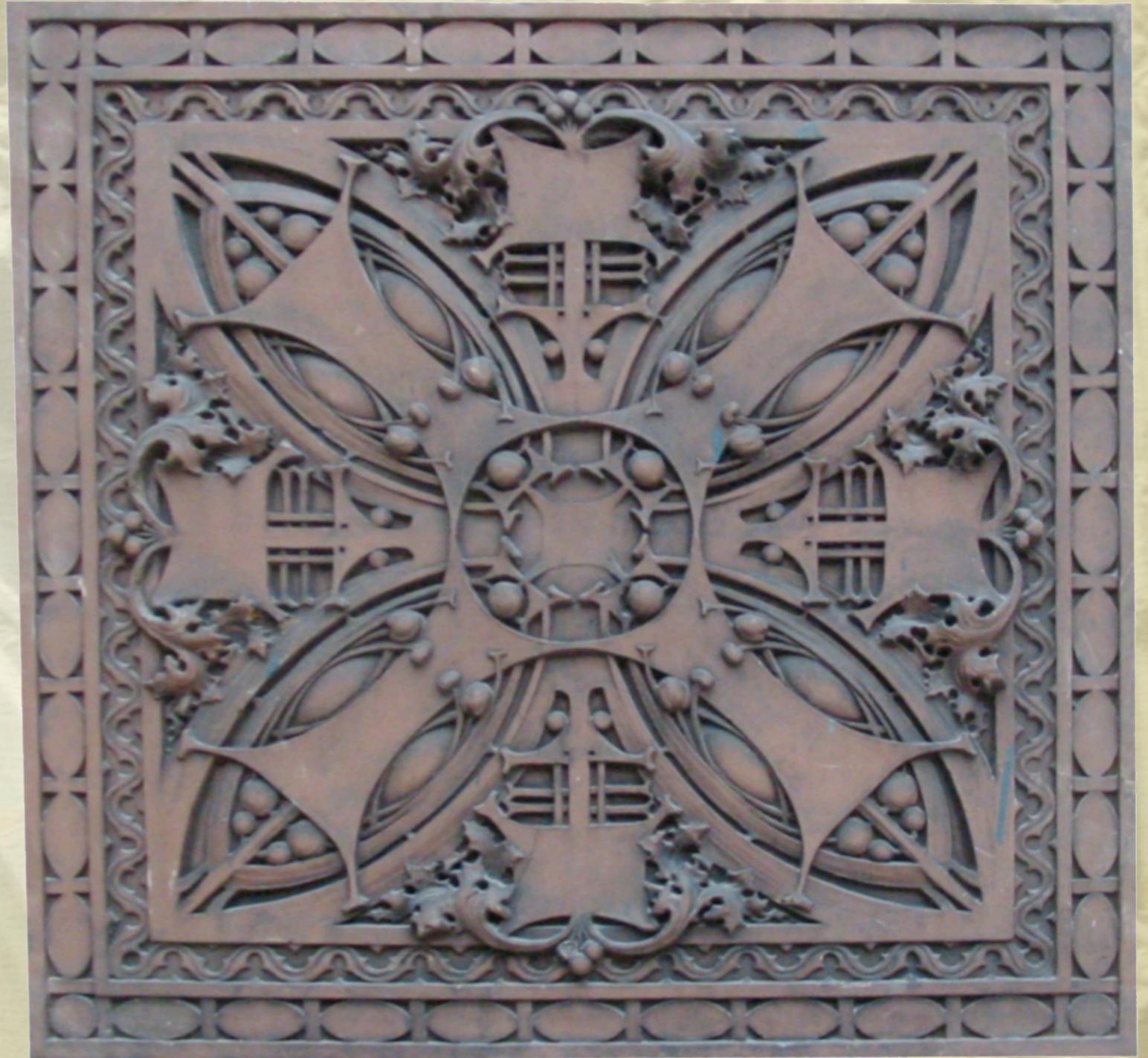
Ancient anticipations
and the meaning of weblogs

Mark Bernstein

Eastgate Systems, Inc

“Form Follows Function”

Louis Sullivan



Metaphor

Louis H. Sullivan, terra cotta fire control panel. Art Institute of Chicago.



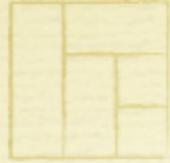
Ancient Airs

*of the intellectual, artistic,
social, and sexual concerns of
weblogs*

We write few
manifestoes
these days...



PHOTOS: PAUL HOFFMAN & CO., NYPL 1160912;
GAVIN STEWART

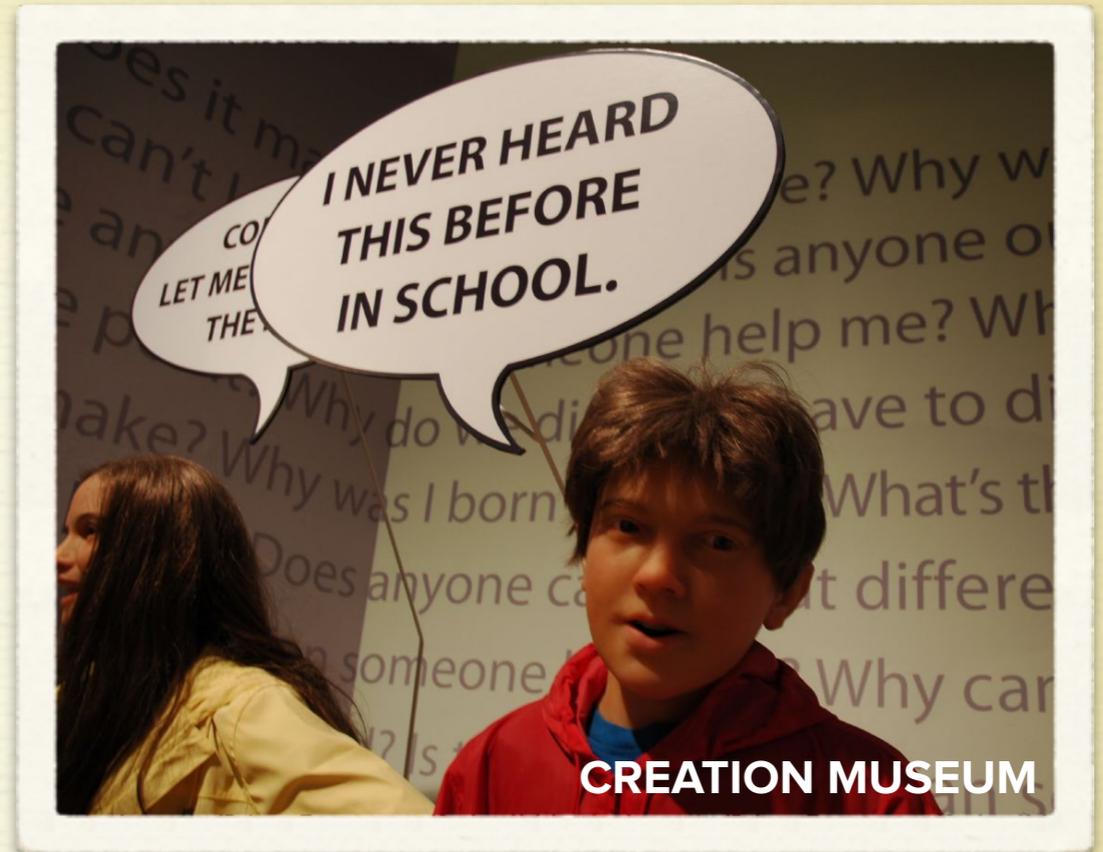


anti- intellectualism

The blogosphere everywhere retain
a detectably American flavor

The US political tradition of “know-
nothingism” flavors weblog writing
and criticism.

Romantic blog populism (“**Everyone
can/should have a blog! It’s free!**”)
reinforces the sense that weblogs
have no use for ideas.



CREATION MUSEUM



The
Romantic Critic



after a photograph of Lady Raven Eve, Singapore

enemies

“The very nature of the blogosphere is proliferation and dispersal; it is centrifugal and represents a reversal of the norms of print culture.”

— *Sven Birkerts*

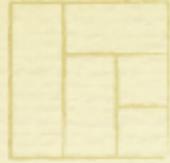
Ideas are useful

- ☐ Underlying ideas can explain blog phenomena that seem arbitrary or obscure
- ☐ How do we excel?
- ☐ What shall we build?



We have been here before

• new media • new technology •
new freedom



NeoVictorian Computing

Mark Bernstein
OOPSLA 2007



-  built for people
-  built by people
-  crafted in workshops
-  irregular
-  inspired



“we all have the same computer”

Mark Bernstein OOPSLA 2007

the long 19th century

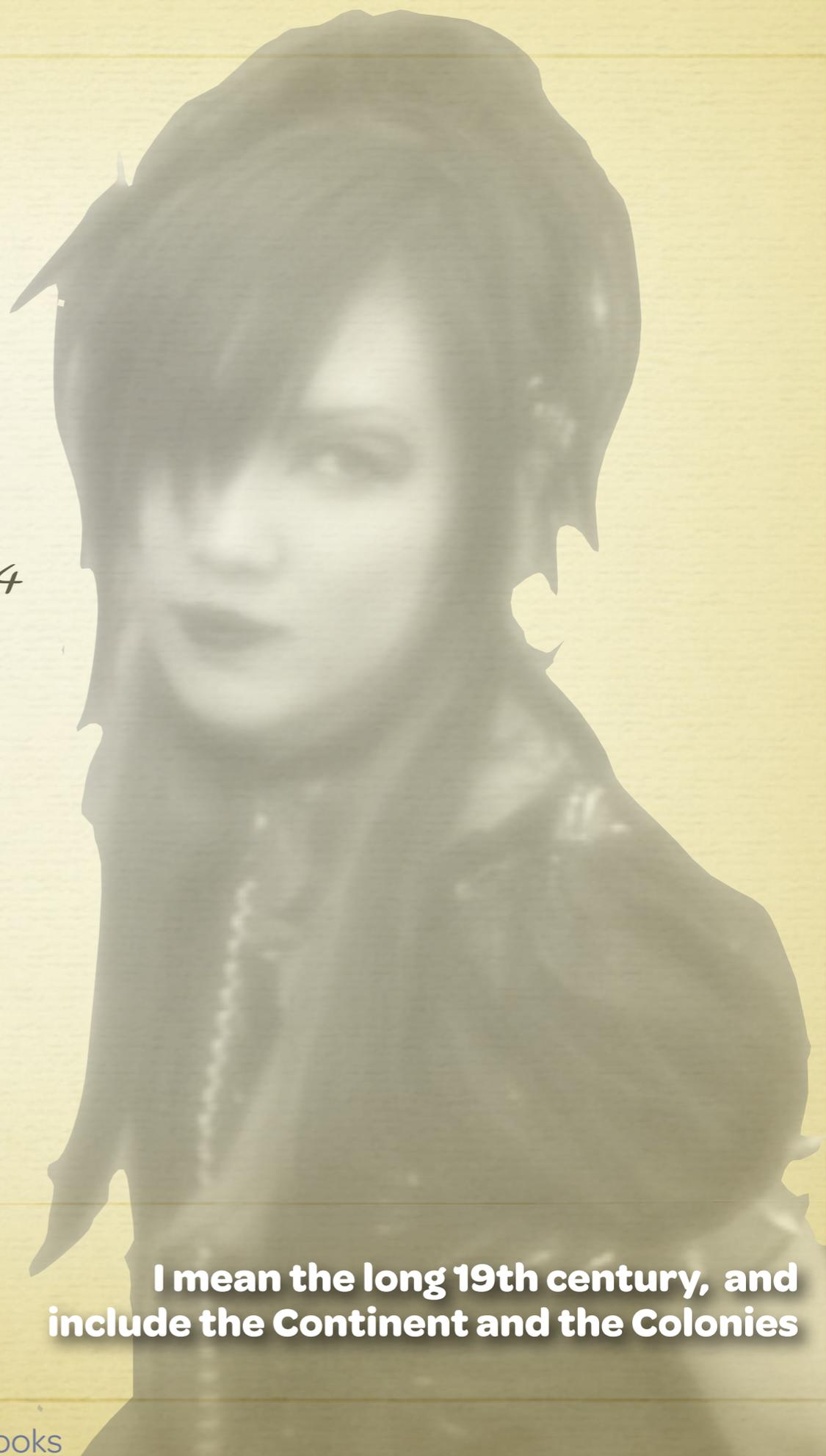
1776 1914

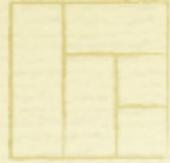
the short 20th century

1914 1989

NeoVictorian?

I mean the long 19th century, and include the Continent and the Colonies





Victorian Questions

- ❑ If we can depict anything, what is worth seeing?
- ❑ If we can say anything, is anything worth saying?
- ❑ Family, fraternity, class: what is our circle?
- ❑ Narrative, causality, fate, and chance



PHOTO: LADY RAVEN EVE

Weblog Questions

- ❑ If we can depict anything, what is worth seeing?
- ❑ If we can say anything, is anything worth saying?
- ❑ Family, fraternity, class: what is our circle?
- ❑ Narrative, causality, fate, and chance



PHOTO: LADY RAVEN EVE

What do
weblogs
want?

vanity

“Popular culture used to draw people to what they liked. Internet culture draws people to what everyone else likes.”

Lee Siegel, *Against The Machine*

LOOK AT ME!

“Now that fame and links are one and the same, there are bloggers out there who will do practically anything— start rumors, tell lies, pick fights, create fake personas, and post embarrassing videos—to get noticed and linked to.”

Sarah Boxer, “Blogs”, NYRB 55(2) 14 Feb 2008



Writing With Links

the most important new punctuation
mark since the comma

Visit a different kind of mom's club
Passion for politics
Hope for social justice
Disdain for the mommy wars

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SEIU VOICE .ORG

On Healthcare,
Labor and Politics

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insiders is derailing member
involvement in setting the
course of America's largest
union. SEIUvoice.org stands to
put SEIU back on track so that
workers can build the most
power to take back our
country and force a coalition
for real change.
[Read more...](#)

[guardian.co.uk](#)
Clinton lays into Obama in
debate
M.P. Polls: Obama's lead
narrows

**THE STATE
OF
THE NATION**

Menu

- ★ Home
- ★ Diaries
- ★ dKosopedia
- ★ Search
- ★ Create account
- ★ Login
- ★ Lose Your Password?

wide | | narrow |

About

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- ★ Advertising
- ★ Contact Us
- ★ Daily Kos Store
- ★ FAQ

Recommended Diaries

Russer's meeskit kashesh
and the unasked question
(UPDATE)
by [Background N015e](#)
387 comments

NYTimes editorial on 60
minutes Siegelman
'blackout' in 'bama
by [NYFM](#)
111 comments

Republican Ideology Has
Broken the Economy
by [bondadd](#)
242 comments

How Mark Penn Drove The
Clinton Bus Into The Ditch

AK-Sen: Begich to announce in a few hours
by [kos](#)
Wed Feb 27, 2008 at 08:34:12 AM PST

Alaska mayor Mark Begich will announce he's taking on Ted "Tubes" Stevens for his state's U.S. Senate seat at 11:30 a.m. PT. I polled this race back in early December:

Research 2008 for Daily Kos. 12/3-6. Likely voters. MoE 4% (No trend lines)

If 2008 election for U.S. Senate were held today, for whom would you vote for if the choices were between Mark Begich, the Democrat, and Ted Stevens, the Republican?

Stevens (R) 41
Begich (D) 47

Even more surprisingly, instead of spinning these results away, Stevens' pollster actually **confirmed** the results not once, but twice.

Local pollsters are not surprised by the numbers. Dave Dittman, who's firm Dittman Research is polling for Stevens, said the publicity on corruption investigations is hurting the Republicans. "It's interesting and it's early but I wasn't shocked," Dittman said. "Both Congressman Young and Sen. Stevens have been under attack[or] at least the subject of a lot of negative information and news stories and things for almost two years. I would think it's got to have an effect."

And...

"He's more vulnerable than he has been before," conceded Anchorage pollster and political consultant Dave Dittman, who is working for the Stevens campaign.

DARING FIREBALL

By JOHN GRUBER

Localised Application Names

Sven-S. Porst:

Mac OS X comes with the ability to localise displayed application names. While that seems like a great feature at first, it is an essentially flawed idea. Flawed because it makes things inconsistent. And thus makes it harder to communicate with people or the machine about those items.

Sounds like a real mess.

TUESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2008

All New MacBook Keyboards Have Right-Side Option Key

Me, back in 2005:

My only actual complaint about the PowerBook keyboard is the Enter key next to the right-side Command key. I would much prefer to have a second Option key there. Yes, yes, Enter is a different key than Return on a Mac, but if you really need Enter while using the PowerBook keyboard, you can use Fn + Return. I've been baffled by this key arrangement for years — who uses the Enter key so much that it deserves such a prominent spot on the keyboard?

Today's new MacBooks and MacBook Pros do just that: I've had my fingers crossed ever since I noticed that the Air keyboard had a right-side Option key instead of an Enter key. UPDATE: Apparently the regular MacBooks — but not the Pros — have had this key arrangement since November. Have the MacBook Pros, too?

UPDATE 2: Other MacBook Pro keyboard changes today: no more

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coding and heroic results.

ADD VIA THE CHECK

dooe
I'm Heather B. Armstrong.
THIS IS MY WEBSITE

OUT THIS SITE CONTACT ME ARCHIVE

Is there ANYTHING funny?

The various voices of a misanthropic Australian Shepherd

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27 2008 FILE UNDER: DAILY, VIDEO

Coco has earned several nicknames in the two months that she has been living in our home. Among them: Gina, DAMN GINA!, that Awful Dog, and Coco Furrocious. That last one is actually a bit of a stretch, and we like to think that if Coco were ever to take up a career in music that she'd get this name and a lightning bolt shaved into the hair. And she'd have a hit song about our corrupt government, and she'd be a hero to her hos.

Whenever we see another dog while we are out walking she goes into a frenzy to prove that she is vicious, either by huffing and puffing and barking, or by hopping up strategically to make it look like she's actually attacking. And then the mad barking... my God, if that string of barking were translated into English we'd have to walk around bleeping every five minutes. But then it doesn't stop there, she has to get the last word in, and when the dogs walk away she looks after them and barks under her breath.

username: password: [login](#)
new user? help?

GAWKER

MEDIA GOSSIP AND POP CULTURE ROUND THE CLOCK.

NEW YORK, 11:42 AM, WED FEB 27
66 POSTS IN THE LAST 24 HOURS | [RSS](#)
EDITED BY NICK DENTON | [TIPS@GAWKER.COM](#)

[TOM CRUISE](#) [MEDIA](#) [GOSSIP](#) [POP CULTURE](#) [BRITNEY SPEARS](#) [BARACK OBAMA](#)

**EVERYTHING IS OLD
"Garfield Minus Garfield"**

Sometimes Denton will send me some link and I will say "OLD! Defamer had it in January!" Because I read the entire Internet every day, which is why I am such a miserable bastard and no one really enjoys talking to me anymore. Anyway, that "Garfield without Garfield" thing is funny, isn't it? But it's not as clever as ARBUCKLE, the comic where Garfield remains in the strip but his thought bubbles are removed, which makes it all even more existential and depressing. (Also some of those photoshopped strips have been floating around message boards for years people.) (Seriously, I'm becoming completely intolerant to be around.) [Arbuckle, Garfield Minus Garfield]

11:24 AM ON WED FEB 27 2008
BY [PARENE](#)
135 views, 13 comments

Latest by [cugat](#): Someone did this thing out of all of Garfield's word balloons so that just some sad sack of shit talking to his screaming at his cat, or calling his cat funnier more >

**MARKETING
Hip Hop: Now Owned By Smirnoff**

Last night at a club called Element, on Houston Street, a line formed in the rain. Everyone in line was on the list for a free Smirnoff-sponsored concert featuring Common, Q-Tip, and KRS-ONE. The fact that everyone was on the list made them that much more put off that the doors opened 45 minutes late. "I'm with Diogen," moaned one girl. "I don't do lines." MORE >

11:17 AM ON WED FEB 27 2008
BY [HAMILTON NOLAN](#)
326 views, 9 comments

**BARACK O'BOLLYWO
OTHER AMAZING INT
ATTACK ADS**

ABOUT | MOBILE RECIPES | ARCHIVES | STORE | FORUMS | MAKE YOUR OWN

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RECIPES

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LISTS

- New Cookbook Releases
- Heidi's Cookbook Collection
- Favorite Cookbooks
- Favorite Food Sites

Breakfast Polenta
February 26, 2008 | by [Heidi](#)

This breakfast polenta just edged out the do-it-yourself waffle bar as my favorite crowd-pleasing brunch component. I love the idea of making a big pot, keeping it warm over a low burner (or crockpot), and offering up a range of toppings, sweet and savory, for friends to choose from. It is creamy and comforting, and receptive to many add-in flavors and textures. For this version I served small bowls of fluffy yellow polenta topped with toasted almonds, jewel-colored dried fruits, and a drizzle of cream and honey.

Considerations: While you can certainly get away with using an instant polenta (and in turn much shorter cooking times), treat yourself to real deal, stone-ground, coarse polenta this time around. Keep in mind that each polenta has its own personality, required cooking time, and quirks (based on factors like the size of the grind, how long it's been around, etc). The reward for a bit of patience is a looser, creamier, beautifully textured final polenta eagerly awaiting a dollop, swirl, or sprinkling of your favorite ingredients. Again, it's great for a mixed-crowd brunch because the polenta itself in this case is dairy-free, vegan, vegetarian, I think it can qualify as gluten-free if you buy the polenta from the right source (maybe the GFers can help me out here)...I'm going to add a list of brunch-friendly toppings below here.

Ads by Google

10 Rules for Fat
Lose 9 lbs. even with these 10 Rules of Fat
[www.fatloosetips.com](#)

Recipe MyRecipes.com
Find Recipes Appetizers & Snacks
[www.myrecipes.com](#)

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[www.EveGave.com](#)

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Top Secret Recipe
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[www.Cookbook.com](#)

Italy's Best
The most out of this delicious garlic recipe on earth
[www.GarlicVale.com](#)

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[www.SuperNatural.com](#)

Weblogs want to be right

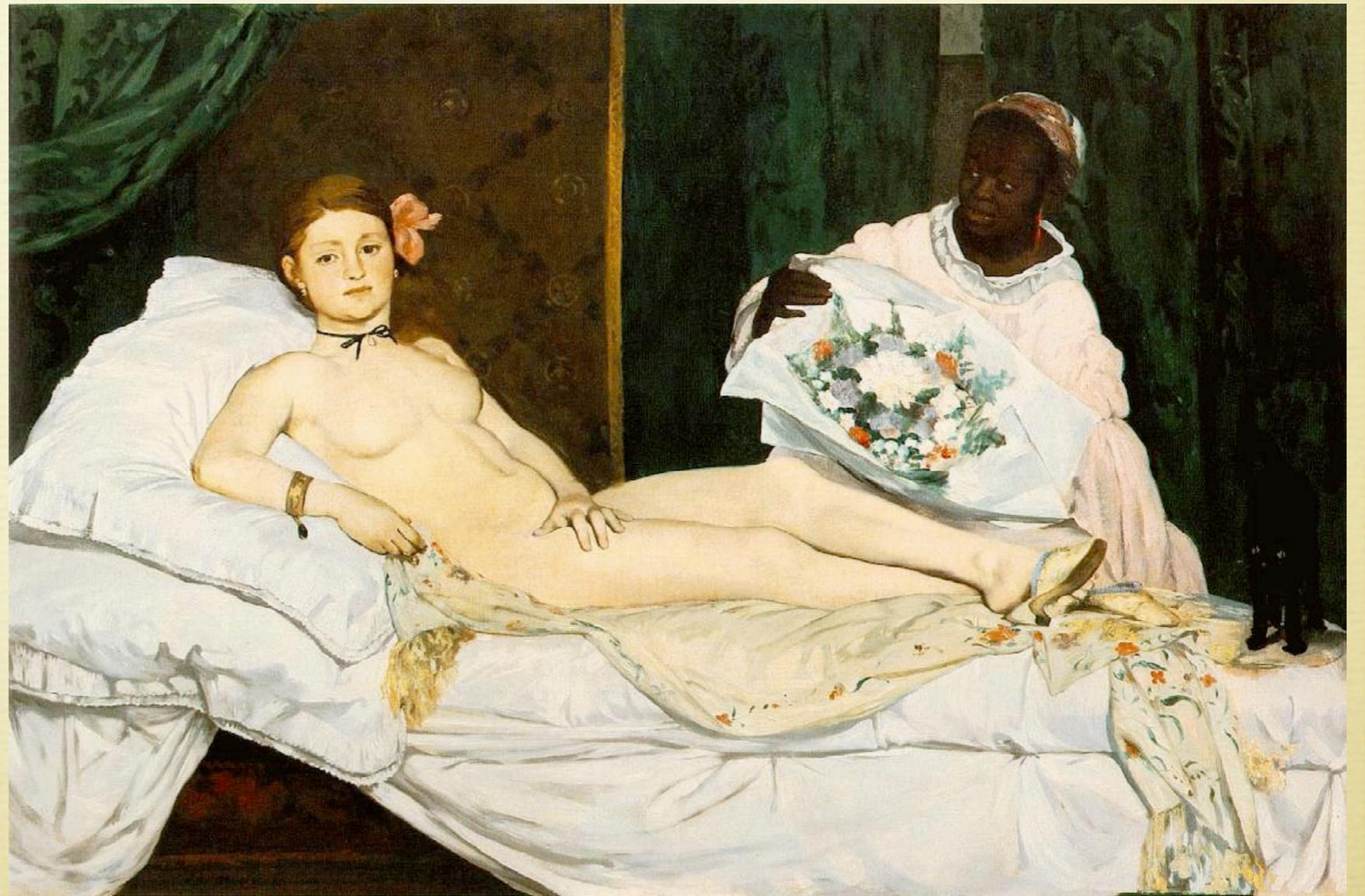


Independency

The streets of London cast a shadow

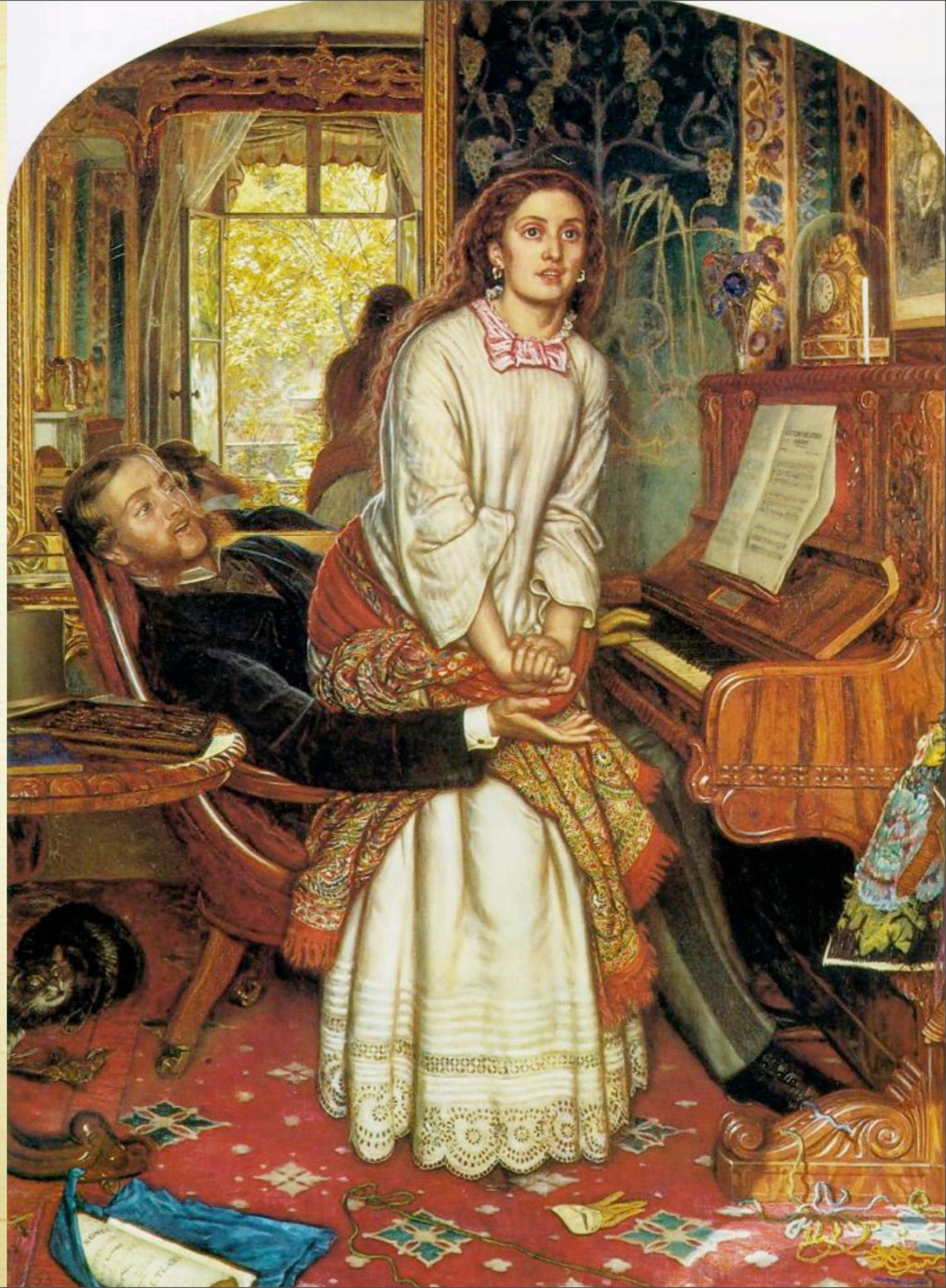
photo: MediaEater, Carlos Castillo

Realism



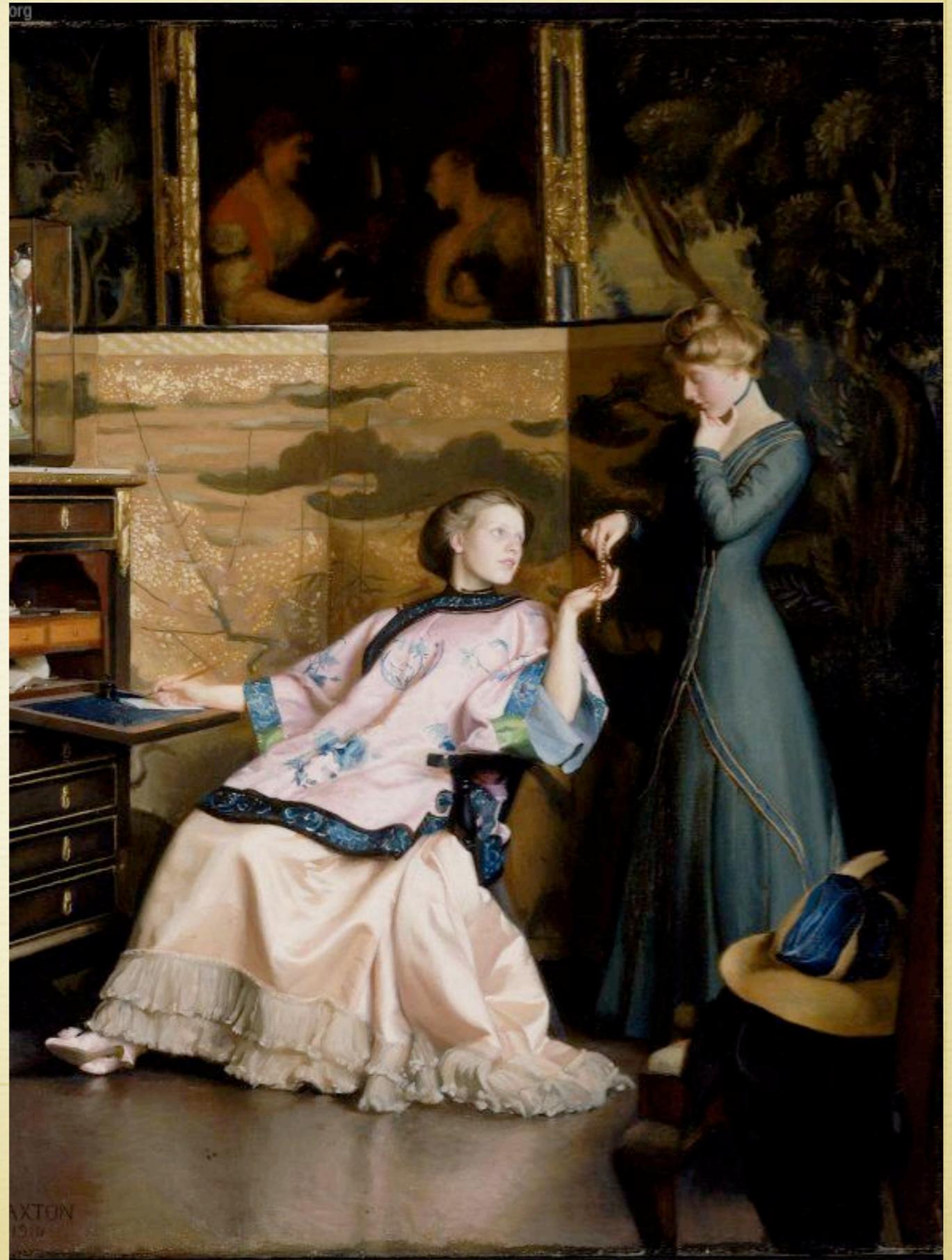
Sentiment

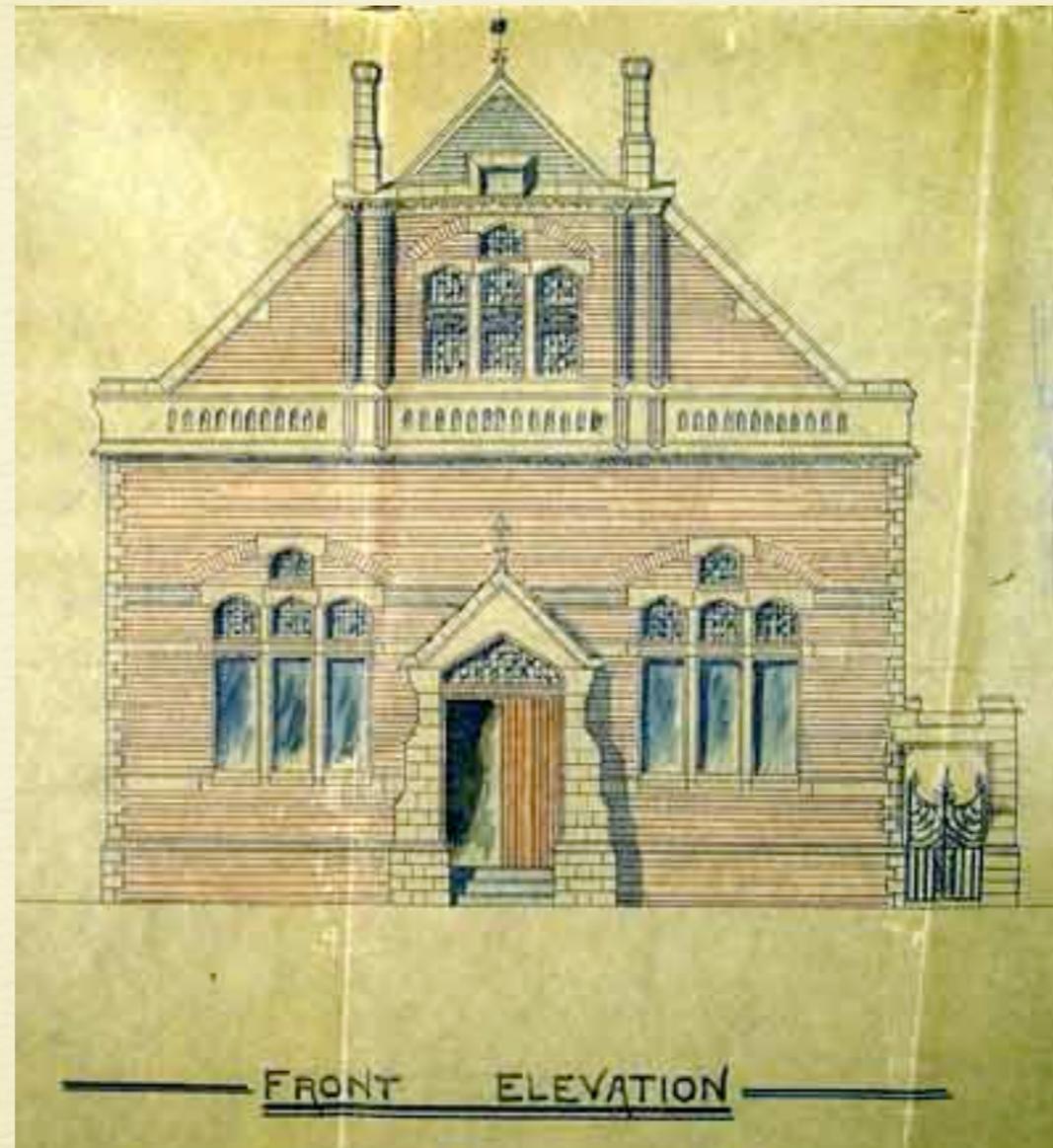
William Holman Hunt, *The Awakening Conscience*, 1853, Tate Gallery



Sentiment

William McGregor Paxton
The New Necklace (1910)
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston





Mutual Improvement

Penrhiwceiber Workmen's Institute
designed by Edward H Bruton, 1888



Jessica Cutler Online *the blog my biog a novel contact shop*

I am a published author who jumps out of cakes for money.

Named one of Gizmodo's "Top 10 Blogger Babes"

Named one of GIANT Magazine's "8 Rising Stars of Media and Politics"

Named one of Jane Magazine's "30 Under 30"

One of "NYC's hottest bloggirs" —Jossip

Voted one of "Washington's Most Loathsome"

Email Me
me@jessicacutleronline.com

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Credits
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 Bra by Agent Provocateur, as worn by me.

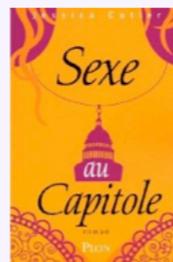
The Washingtonienne: A Novel
 In bookstores everywhere

Amazon
 Barnes & Noble
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 BookSense.com
 Powell's Books



Sexe au Capitole
 French translation also available

Amazon.ca
 Amazon.fr



Washingtonienne's Guide to DC

"Armed with a closet of clingy dresses and with a compact of Nars Orgasm blush, the wanton heroine wastes no time making DC her playground."

—Washingtonian Magazine

Reviews

"There's something very refreshing about her cynical sexual frankness, her shrugging irreverence toward the buffoons with whom she is intimate, her Scarlett O'Hara tenacity...It's amusing to see Washington fixed by such a vodka-gimlet eye...the beltway bunch should be grateful for this lewd, unpretentious valentine to their city."

Glam NETWORK



WASHINGTONIENN
 THE

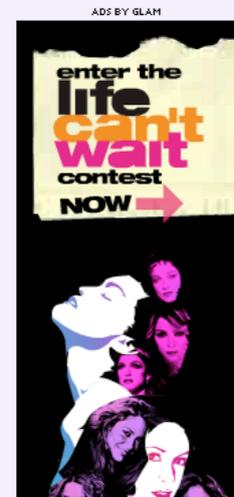
Jessica Cutler

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NER TO LYDIA NEEDS PIX RX WHO



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- [June 2007](#)
- [May 2007](#)
- [April 2007](#)
- [March 2007](#)

angnail.

about any of this nonsense again.

egorized

34 Comments

unsentimental

<http://www.jessicacutleronline.com/>

<http://luchalee.wordpress.com/>

weblogs want to excel

“Sorry.

*What a whinge. What a dreadful
self-pitying whine. I do apologize,
everyone.”*

Stephen Fry's blog, 2008

Romanticism

Craftsmanship

Common / Connection

THE TEST OF OUR PROGRAM
IS NOT WHETHER WE ADD
TO THE ABUNDANCE OF
THOSE WHO HAVE MUCH, IT
IS WHETHER WE PROVIDE ENOUGH
FOR THOSE WHO HAVE

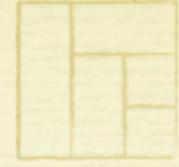
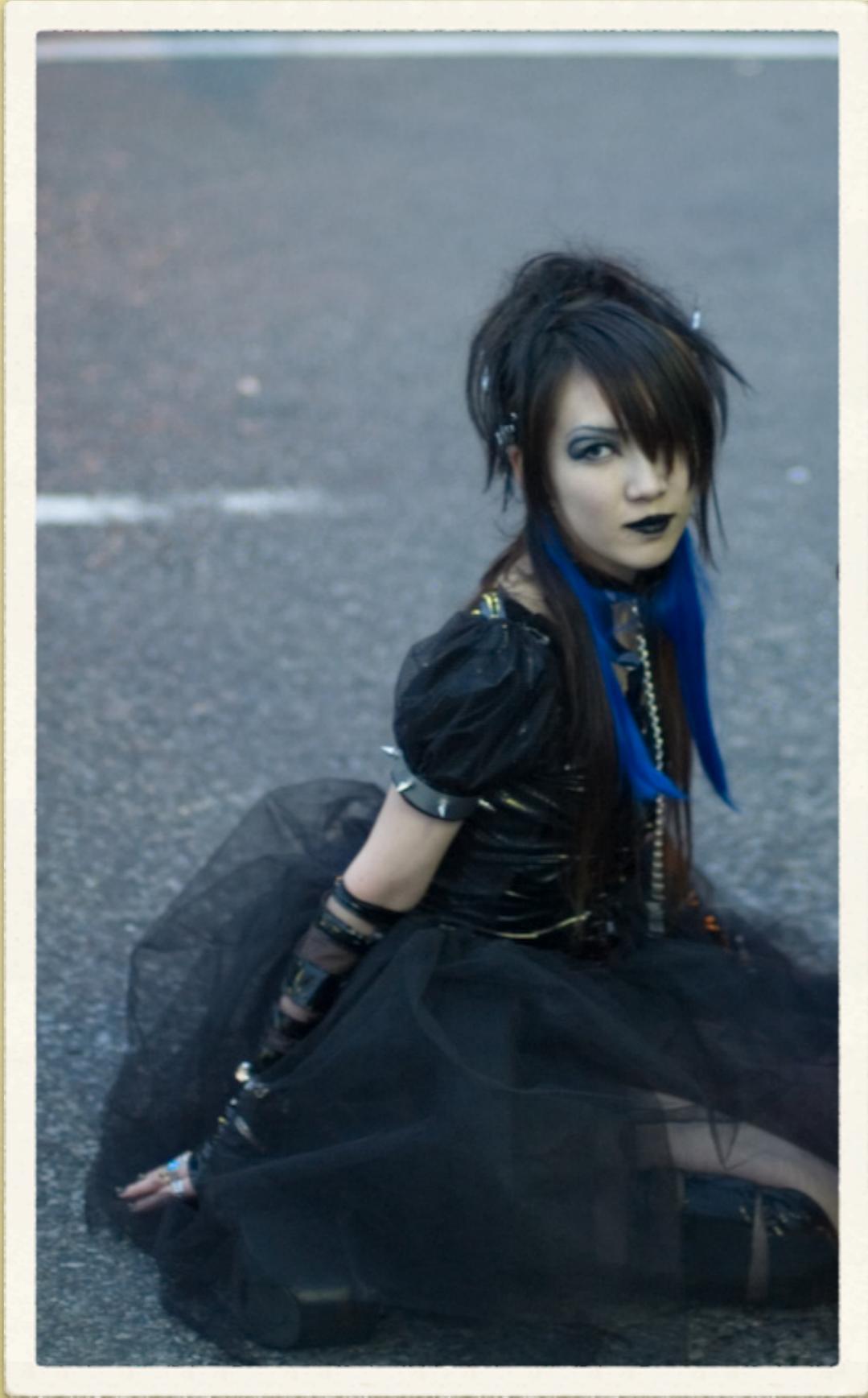


Candid Sexuality

*The concerns of the body are
conspicuous in weblogs, whether
couched in confessional
autobiography or expressed in
cheese sandwiches*

Civilization and its Discontents

Plot and Character

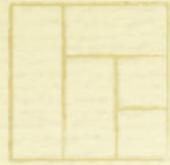


Plot

photo: Keith Hooks



Character



Authenticity & the critics

The revelation that some weblog protagonists (Kaycee Nicole, or LonelyGirl15) are partly or entirely fictitious has been greeted with surprising shock, even among sophisticated readers who are familiar with fiction and the complexities of (re)presentation and construction of meaning.



*What a most
particularly deep
young man this
deep young man
must be!*





Ypres 2001

cosplay

layers of representation



portraits of the artist as a young character

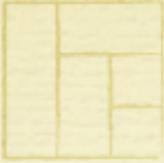
Nobitics

writing for yourself

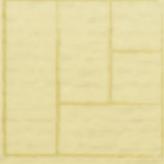


Why do we write to ourselves?

Photo courtesy of Eloisa Bordador,
Anaheim, March 2007; [http://
cats_meow2454.livejournal.com](http://cats_meow2454.livejournal.com).

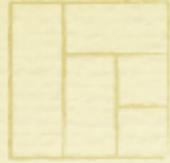


why do we
write diaries?



*“The impulse to
keep a diary is
to actual diaries
as the impulse
to go on a diet is
to actual
slimness.”*

Louis Menand, “Woke Up This Morning”,
The New Yorker (10 Dec 2007)



Why do we read diaries?

*They didn't know
how it would all
turn out...*



Spontaneity & Authenticity



Impressionism

brushstrokes &
disintermediation



Expressionism

direct response



Max Klinger, from *Dramas* (1883)

lonelygirl15

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 ama about a mysterious secret
 s fighting against it.

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40)



Born to Run
 From: lonelygirl15
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<http://tokyoundressed.blogspot.com/2008/02/bottom-of-top-misc-archives.html>



Tokyo Undressed
 Rikki Kasso

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2008

Time and Transportation (misc. archives)




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Artifactual & Epistolary

left: youtuybe.
 right: Rikki Kasso, <http://tokyoundressed.blogspot.com/>

With The Night Mail

Remember

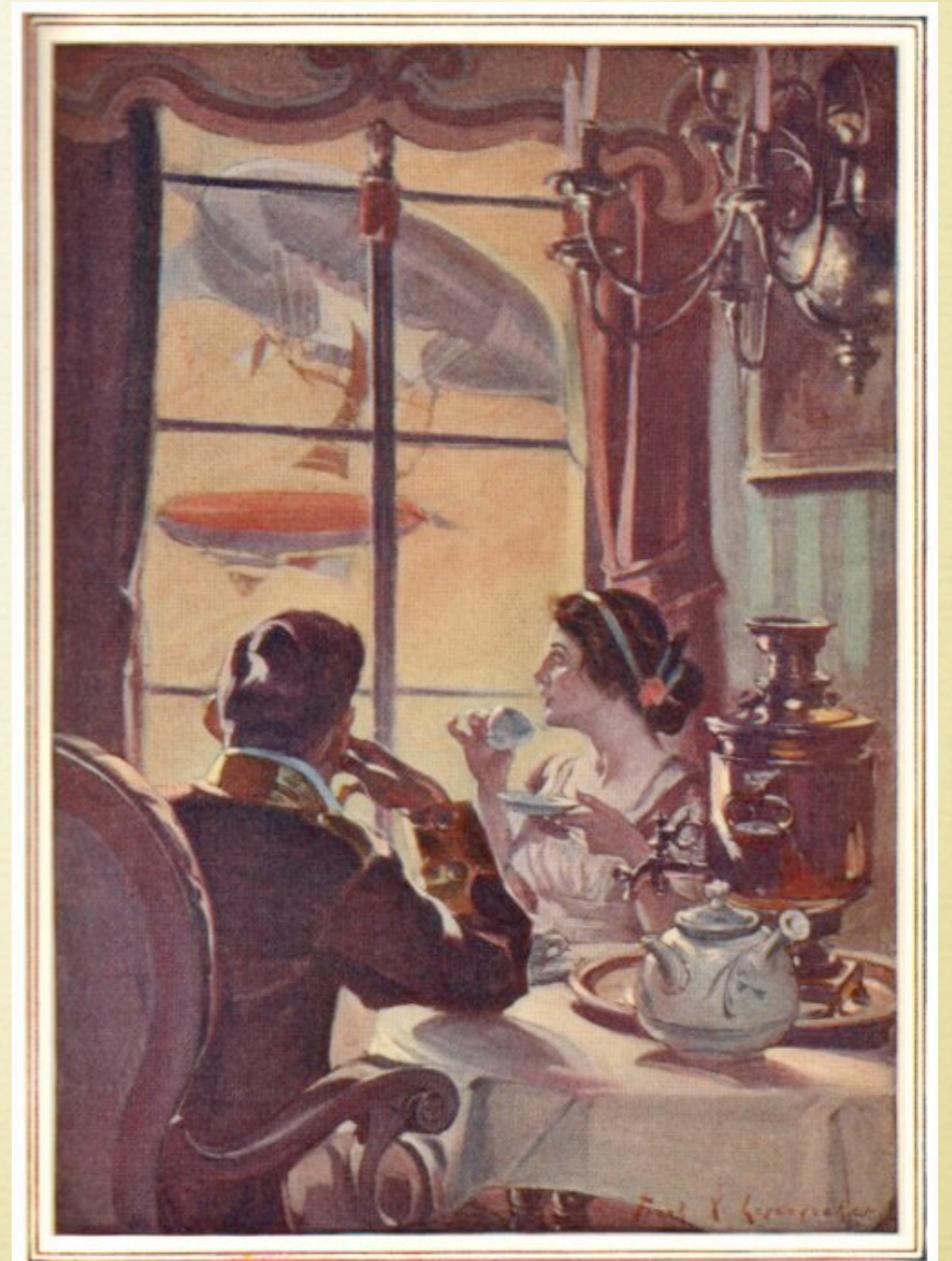
We shall always be pleased to see you.

We build and test and guarantee our dirigibles for all purposes. They go up when you please and they do not come down till you please.

You can please yourself, but -- you might as well choose a dirigible.

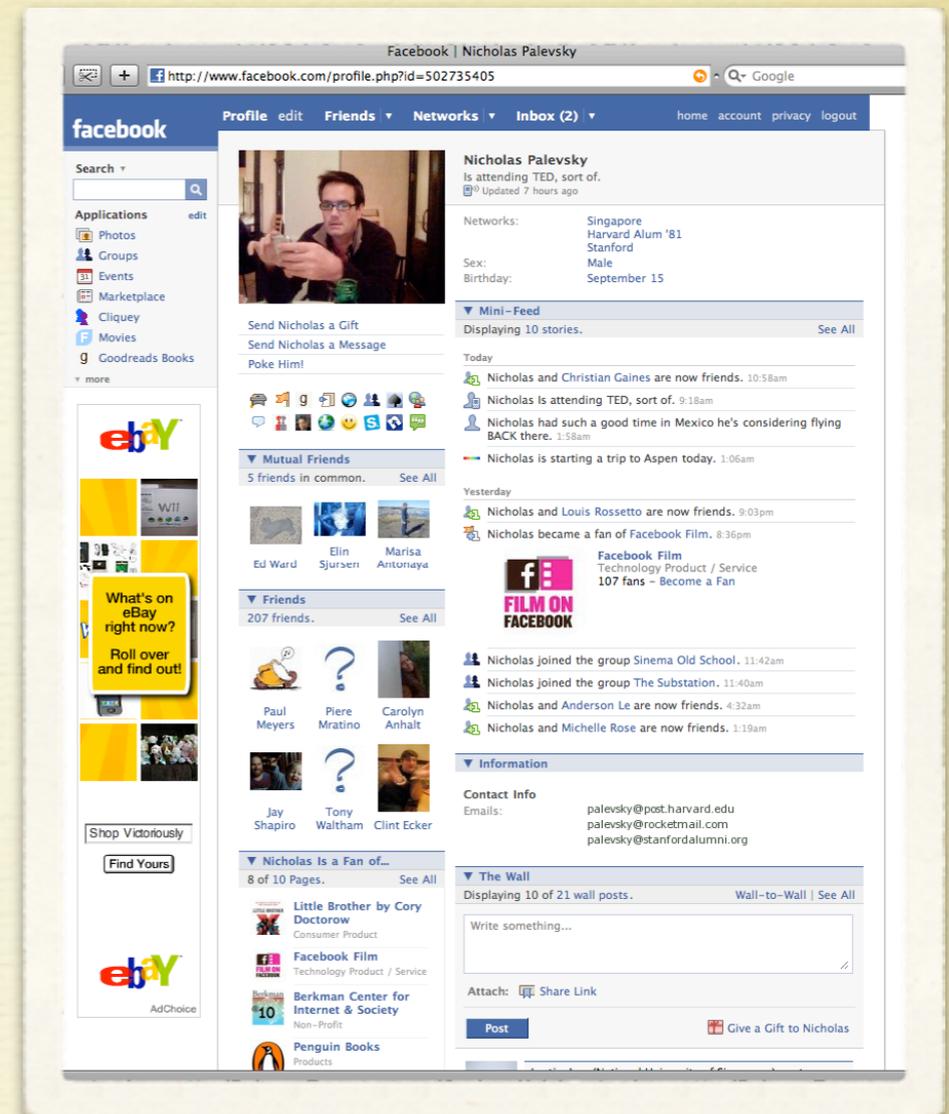
STANDARD DIRIGIBLE
CONSTRUCTION CO.

Millwall *and* Buenos Ayres.



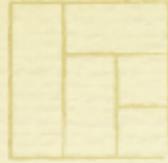
"I'VE ASKED HIM TO TEA ON FRIDAY"

Rudyard Kipling, 1905



Fauvism • Brutalism

Claude Derain, The Turning Road, 1906.
Museum of Fine Arts Houston



uncertainty



photo: Carmen Martinez

our
antisocial
software



Only one character per stage

Elna Borch, Death and the Maiden
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek

Comments failed

*People come, people go,
nothing ever happens.*

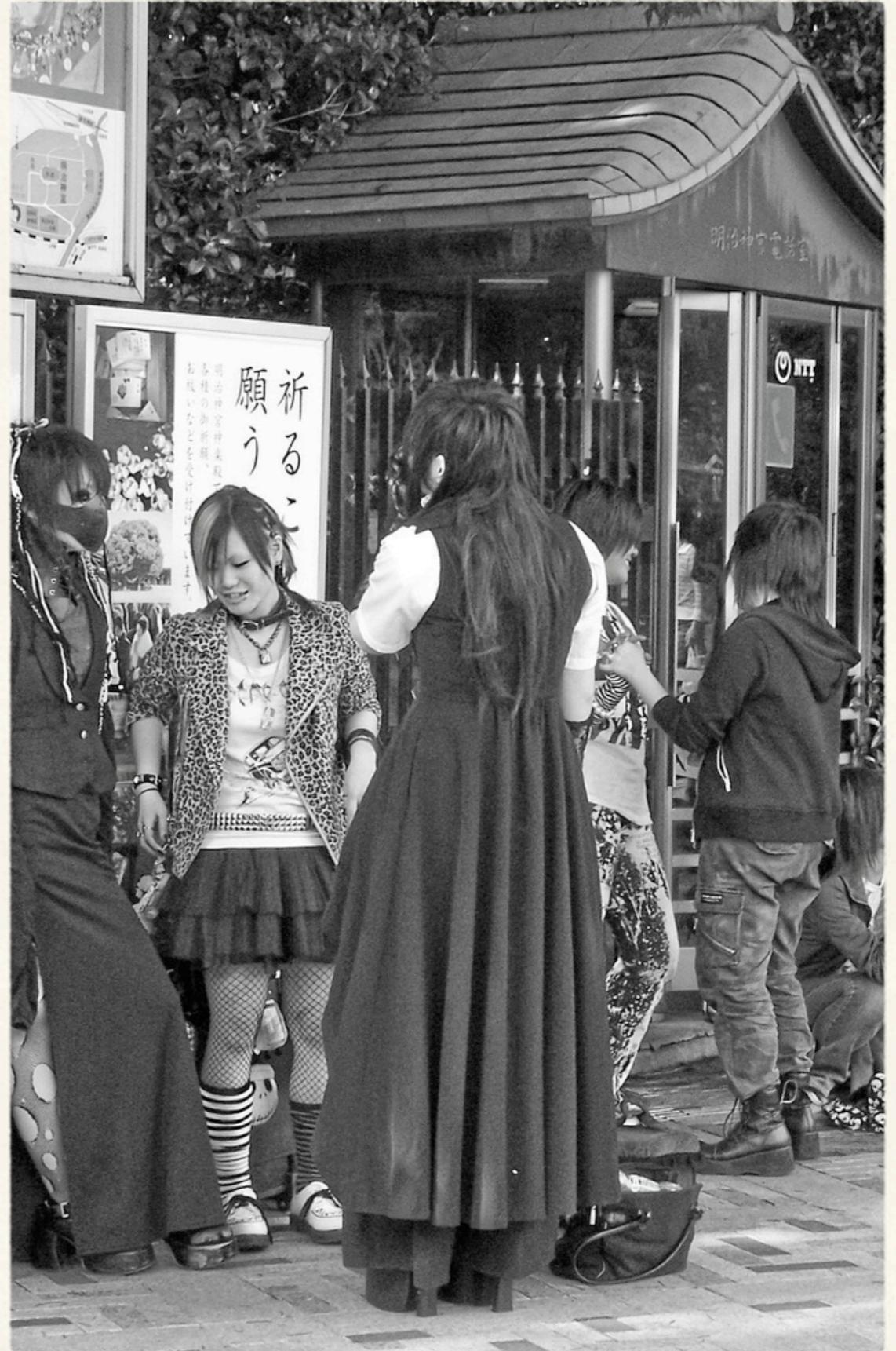
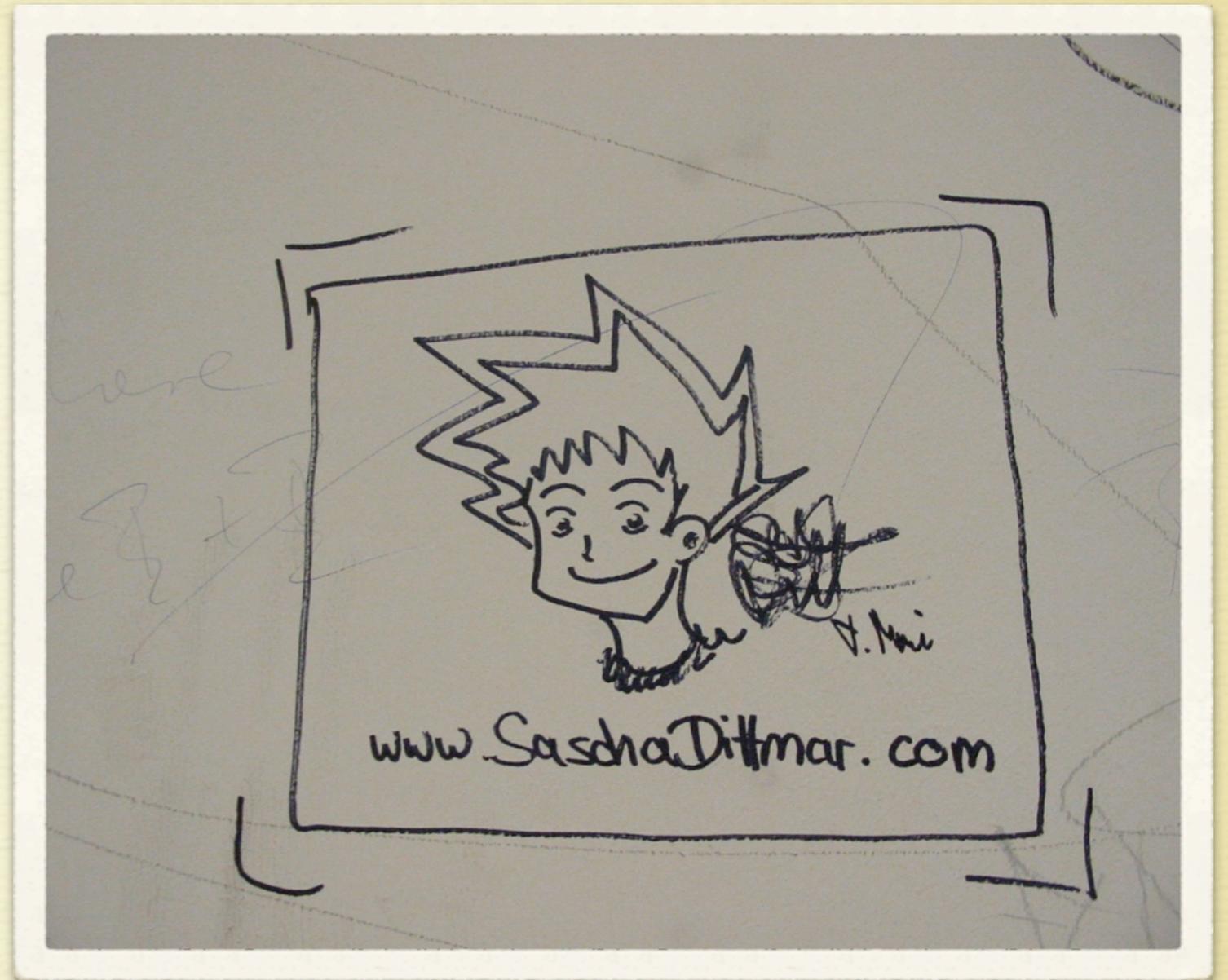


photo: Etienne Chan (Singapore)



the writing is on the wall

writing on the wall



Munich subway, 2005.

By late 2007, the link pointed to a cybersquatter's link farm.

In 2008, perhaps failing to yield sufficient traffic for the pirate, the domain has been allowed to lapse.



Twittering at dawn



our tools have tools

Thanks!

☒ Photos: Carlos Castillo, Etienne Chan, Lady Raven Eve (Singapore), Lewis Wickes Hines, Keith Hooks, Carter McKendry, Carmen Martinez, MediaEater, New York Public Library, John Scalvi, Jake van Slatt, Susan Sterner, Gavin Stewart

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Florenzia (Dooley)
Kane (P22)
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Proxima Nova (Simonson)

<http://markBernstein.org/NeoVictorian.html>