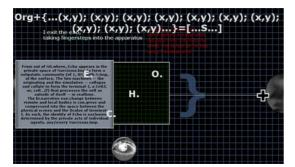
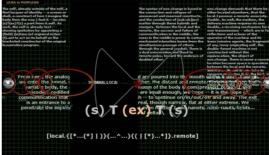
# LEXIA TO PERPLEXIA

Web-based Literary Hypermedia

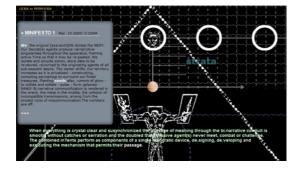
ONLINE AT: http://goo.gl/sC4haA

Lexia to Perplexia was developed 1998-1999 and debuted on the web in early 2000. The work is a deconstructive/grammatological examination of the Internet apparatus as "delivery machine," exploring the processes and phenomena of attachment and networked being; and, as Katherine Hayles has stated, (provide) "a set of interrelated speculations about the future (and past) of human-intelligent machine interactions, along with extensive reinscriptions of human subjectivity and the human body" (Writing Machines 49). The text of the work falls somewhere between theory and fiction, between the rigorous and the frivolous. Within the work, neologisms such as "metastrophe" and "intertimacy" work as sparks that are meant to inspire further thought and exploration. The work also makes reference to classical literature including and Greek and Egyptian mythology, as well as postmodern theory.





The Lexia to Perplexia interface is designed as a diagrammatic metaphor, emphasizing the local (user) and remote (server) poles of network attachment while exploring the "intertimate" hidden spaces of the process. At times its interactive features override the source text, leading to a fragmentary reading experience. In essence, the text does what it says: in that, certain theoretical attributes are not displayed as text but are incorporated into the functionality of the work and hidden within the source code.





The work makes wide use of DHTML and JavaScript, which at the time of production was experimental, with browser dependent conditions and protocols. Though the work is still discussed today, its functionality has been

affected by standardization and will not display correctly in most current browsers. That said, the work predicted its own obsolescence, with its slow decay seen as part of its performance. This aspect of the work has been most recently observed by Zach Whalen, who states, "Lexia to Perplexia's gradual obsolescence, prolonged only by backward-compatibility, is just the final part of its fictive performance."

In 2000 the work was awarded the trAce/Alt-X New Media Writing Award, and received an honorable mention from the 2000 Electronic Literature Organization Awards

#### **Publication/Exhibition**

Institute of Contemporary Art – London Technopoetry Festival – Georgia Tech HT01 Reading Room Iowa Review Web Electronic Book Review trAce Online Writing Community Electronic Literature Collection Volume 1

# **Presentations and Readings**

Digital Art and Culture 2001 Brown University/Providence RI Incubation Conference / Nottingham UK

### **Critical Writing on the work**

Posthyperfiction: Practices in Digital Textuality - Scott Rettberg

Reading Writing Interfaces: From the Digital to the Bookbound - Lori Emerson

Visualizing la(e)ng(-u-)age - Deena Larsen

An Emerging Canon? A Preliminary Analysis of All References to Creative Works in Critical Writing Documented in the ELMCIP Electronic Literature Knowledge Base - Scott Rettberg Electronic Literature Publishing and Distribution in Europe - Markku Eskelinen, Giovanna Di Rosario

Developing an Identity for the Field of Electronic Literature: Reflections on the Electronic Literature Organization Archives - Scott Rettberg

"Terminal Hopscotch": Navigating Networked Space in Talan Memmott's Lexia to Perplexia - Lisa Swanstrom

Comedies of Separation: Toward a Theory of the Ludic Book - Brian Kim Stefans From Synesthesias to Multimedia: How to Talk about New Media Narrative - Daniel Punday Cyborg Tactics and Perilous Hermeneutics in Lexia to Perplexia Shifts in materiality across space - Daniel Carter

Travels in Cybertextuality. The Challenge of Ergodic Literature and Ludology to Literary Theory - Markku Eskelinen

Dada Redux: Elements of Dadaist Practice in Contemporary Electronic Literature - Scott Rettberg

Tekstspill i hypertekst. Koherensopplevelse og sjangergjenkjennelse i lesing av multimodale hyperfiksjoner - Hans Kristian Rustad

New Media Literary: Hypertextual, Cybertextual, and Networked - Katarina Peovic Vukovic Exploiting Kairos in Electronic Literature: A Rhetorical Analysis - Cheri Crenshaw

Electronic Literature: New Horizons for the Literary - N. Katherine Hayles

Born Digital: Writing Poetry in the Age of New Media - Maria Engberg

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Avatars of Story - Marie-Laure Ryan

Poetics in the Expanded Field: Textual, Visual, Digital . . . - Barrett Watten

A New Media Reading Strategy - Cheryl E. Ball

Narrative and the Split Condition of Digital Textuality - Marie-Laure Ryan

Metaphoric Networks in Lexia to Perplexia - N. Katherine Hayles

Talan Memmott's "Lexia to Perplexia" - Thomas Dreher

Creating Screen-Based Multiple State Environments: Investigating Systems of Confutation - Donna Leishman

Genre Trouble: Narrativism and the Art of Simulation - Espen Aarseth

Print Is Flat, Code Is Deep: Rethinking Signification in New Media - N. Katherine Hayles

Multimedia Criticism - Eric Dean Rasmussen

Destination Unknown: Experiments in the Network Novel - Scott Rettberg Interferences: [Net.Writing] and the Practice of Codework - Rita Raley

The Code is not the Text (unless it is the Text) - John Cayley

Writing Machines - N. Katherine Hayles

Reveal Codes: Hypertext and Performance - Rita Raley