

A Curious Circumstance of the iPod Shuffle

or,

Confessions of a Recovering Liberal Humanist

By: Bill Bahng Boyer

Bill Bahng Boyer is a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at New York University. He holds degrees in Music from Northwestern University and the University of California, San Diego. He is currently researching creative usage of new sound media in public spaces in New York City and Southern California.

In 1867, shortly after the U.S. Civil War ended, the provinces of what is now Canada were threatened by Union aggression in North Atlantic waters, as well as the United States' renewed faith in its manifest destiny to span the entire continent. As a result, the British North American provinces collectively sought permission from the British Empire to form a Confederation, which provided virtual sovereignty and rights to defend its territories in North America from the expansion of the United States.

That same year, Karl Marx warned in *Capital* of the impending danger of the emergent capitalist mode of production and identified what would become a defining feature of global capitalism in the next century: the commodity fetish.

Around the same time, John Stuart Mill responded to the worsening social conditions of the industrial revolution in England by arguing for the defense of civil liberties, personal well-being, and the universal pursuit of happiness in his treatises *On Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women*. Mill's treatise marked the apex of the popularity of liberal humanist sentiment in Europe and Anglophone North America in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The concept of liberal humanism, despite its utility in arguments for human rights, has seen its share of criticism. According to Robert Paul Wolff, "In the more sophisticated versions of liberal philosophy, the crude picture of man as a pleasure maximizer is softened somewhat. Mill recognizes that men may pursue higher ends than pleasure... and he even recognizes the possibility of altruistic or other-regarding feelings of sympathy and compassion. Nevertheless, society continues to be viewed as a system of independent centers of consciousness, each pursuing its own gratification and confronting the others as beings, standing-over-against the self, which is to say, as *objects*. The condition of the individual in such a state of affairs is what a different tradition of social philosophy would call 'alienation'" (145). This other tradition is Marxism.

Here you can see, as you have seen before, a photograph of my car parked in front of the Confederation Bridge, which connects Prince Edward Island to the Canadian mainland. You

might remember from Beverly Diamond's ethnography of island fiddlers that the construction of the bridge was a disputed topic. Industry and business representatives saw increased traffic as a boon to the local economy, while environmentalists and local residents feared that a permanent connection to the rest of the country would trigger an inevitable loss of local ways of life to a homogenous, global consumer culture.

The metaphor of the bridge interests me, particularly when it acts as a point of contention where contrasting perspectives collide, intertwine, and disperse. As the Confederation Bridge demonstrates, the blurring of boundaries can elicit both anxious and celebratory opinions. How can we apply the bridge metaphor to our everyday negotiations of the boundaries of postmodern society and the condition of global capitalism?

How do these questions relate to the Apple iPod, the latest and most fashionable technological product in the fifty year history of portable personal audio devices?

Many of the questions I will raise here have to do with the iPod Shuffle, one of the more recent members of the iPod family. Marketed as a more portable, spontaneous model than earlier generations, the Shuffle's most notable features are the lack of a graphical user interface and a built in focus on its namesake random playlist mode.

How do the iPod and the iPod Shuffle act as bridges, connecting the listener to his aural and social surroundings and blurring the boundaries of the globalized, postmodern twenty-first century? Is the usefulness of the iPod contested, as was the construction of the Confederation Bridge in Canada?

Forty-two days after the fall of the World Trade Center, Apple released the iPod personal digital audio player to lukewarm reviews from *Wired* Magazine.

Apple CEO Steve Jobs called the iPod a "breakthrough" in the portable digital music player market. "With iPod, listening to music will never be the same again," he announced, adding that compared with competing devices, "I think this blows them away" (King, "Apple's 'Breakthrough' iPod").

But journalists pointed out the limitations of the machine, as well as the fact that other manufacturers' products were not only more affordable, but could hold more music. While the first generation iPod could only play 80 minutes of music, other machines could play over 300 hours, or two weeks, of music without repeating a single song.

When *Wired* writer MacCommunist devoted an entire article to the many ways the Nomad Jukebox outperformed the iPod, the magazine received a wash of letters to the editor from the new Apple toy's fans, beginning what would be the latest chapter in the Cult of Mac (Hauser, "MacCommunist: Smash the Ipod"). The iPod's popularity soared, and its dominance of the mp3 player market has only increased.

The Western notion of the subject is rooted in early Enlightenment philosophy based on scientific experimentation. The observation by which scientific methodology operated was, as the word "observation" reveals, predominantly visual. The privileging of visual experience over the other senses has shaped a particular formation of Western subjectivity, an epistemic framework that persists into the present period of the so-called postmodern.

As Susan Hekman explains, "in the current debate between the modernist and postmodernist approaches to language and knowledge, the question of the subject has been a central theme. Modernism's adherence to the transcendental subject of the Cartesian and Kantian traditions is fundamental to its definition. The rational, autonomous, disembodied, and constituting subject of this tradition is the epistemological ground of the search for indubitable knowledge, the search that is the hallmark of modernity. It was this definition of the subject that separated modern philosophy from its premodern roots, and it is this same subject that separates modernity from its contemporary critics" (1098).

As the twentieth century progressed, and Marx's prophetic warning of the dangers of capitalism proved true, scholars began to decry the adverse side effects of the liberal humanist notion of subjectivity, which posited a Western European, affluent, and Christian male perspective as the universal subject.

The history of feminist theory's relationship to Western subjectivity, as Patricia Waugh explains in her book *Feminine Fictions*, has been multi-sided and frequently contradictory. During what Waugh calls "the first phase of post-1960s feminism," the desire to attain the very same masculinist position of subjectivity with which Mill fought for universal human rights one hundred years earlier drove feminist activists more than "the desire to

deconstruct, decentre, or fragment" this same subjectivity, a practice found throughout "post-1960s postmodern practice and post-structuralist theory" (1098).

For unlike the male theorists—Derrida, Jameson, Lyotard, etc.—who sought to abandon what they had come to see as problematic and exclusive conceptions of self-hood, feminist theorists "had not yet experienced this 'whole' or 'unitary' or 'essential' subjectivity that their male counterparts were so eager to get beyond" (12).

Although "most contemporary feminisms have refused to espouse an extreme anti-humanism," Waugh argues that "they have also recognized the contradictions in that liberal-humanism theory which posits a natural 'self' outside, or prior to, the social. What they have articulated instead is a core belief in a self which, although contradictory, non-unitary, and historically produced through 'discursive' and ideological formations, nevertheless has a material existence and history in actual human relationships, beginning crucially with those between infant and caretakers at the start of life" (14).

For Waugh, "it is the gradual recognition of the value of construing human identity in terms of relationships and dispersal, rather than as a unitary, self-directing, isolated ego, which has fundamentally altered the course of modern and contemporary women's writing to challenge gender stereotypes" (12-3).

Donna Haraway, a professor of science and consciousness and activist eco-feminist, spared no harsh words in the following description of the problems of Western subjectivity and its privileging of the visual:

"The eyes have been used to signify a perverse capacity—honed to perfection in the history of science tied to militarism, capitalism, colonialism, and male supremacy—to distance the knowing subject from everybody and everything in the interests of unfettered power. The instruments of visualization in multinationalist, postmodernist culture have compounded these meanings of dis-embodiment" ("Situated Knowledge," 188).

This dis-embodiment, the same one that portable audio devices sell to consumers, has been a source of anxiety for many twentieth century scholars and critics—most notably feminists and non-Western intellectuals, both of whom were struggling to gain the rights that Western culture had denied them for centuries. The latter half of the twentieth century saw the theorization of alternative epistemologies of knowledge, each attempting to either broaden the inclusive potential of subjectivity or deconstruct it for good.

This blurring of the boundary between self and other is one of many points in Haraway's monumental mid-1980s text, "A Cyborg Manifesto," in which she posits the model of the cyborg as that very being which exists at the boundary between dichotomous entities:

“By the late twentieth century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics.... In the traditions of 'Western' science and politics—the tradition of racist, male-dominated capitalism; the tradition of progress; the tradition of the appropriation of nature as resource for the productions of culture; the tradition of reproduction of the self from the reflections of the other—the relation between organism and machine has been a border war.” Haraway’s manifesto is simultaneously “an argument for pleasure in the confusion of boundaries and ... responsibility in their construction” (“A Cyborg Manifesto,” 150).

Haraway actively connects the relationships between people to the relationships between humans and technology. She does this because the discourse of technology has traditionally been constructed and populated by men, to the exclusion of women. She calls for a reclamation of technology outside of the dominant realm of patriarchal constructions of subjective knowledge. Cyberfeminism, a recent mode of feminist criticism, directly addresses the gendered nature of technology and makes the claim that women are just as technologically savvy as men, despite what the media tells us.

Media critic Marshall McLuhan stressed some limitations of the visual concept of reality,

which he saw as a product of the transformation of human civilization from orality to literacy just prior to the age of the Enlightenment:

"Western man thinks with only one part of his brain and starves the rest of it. By neglecting ear culture, which is too diffuse for the categorical hierarchies of the left side of the brain, he has locked himself into a position where only linear conceptualization is acceptable.... The constraints of Western logic are tied to our sense of sequential relationships—logic made visual. The middle ground, however accounted for initially, is eventually excluded. It is either-or" (69-70).

Following the massive popularity of the Walkman in the early 1980s, cultural theorists began looking at the device's potential for enabling alternate epistemologies of space. This potential for knowing the world with our ears was rooted in both the intimate cybernetic relationship between listener and Walkman and the mobility that the Walkman permitted.

Michael Bull's book, *Sounding Out the City*, is a phenomenological study of personal audio device users in urban environments. Bull demonstrates how "the use of personal stereos changes the nature of the user's cognition and facilitates ... the successful everyday management of space, place, and interpersonal experience" (9).

In other words, everyday life is enhanced through the augmentation of the so-called natural body with the introduction of a technology that alters perception of one's surroundings. And with the Walkman, that technology is portable, no longer tethering the listener to a particular physical location.

The mobility that the Walkman engenders fits into a particular discourse on movement and epistemology best represented by the work of French critic Michel de Certeau. De Certeau begins his essay "Walking in the City" with a view of New York from the top of the World Trade Center, a perspective from which one can discern the overall pattern of movement and city streets below as if "looking down like a god" (92).

This omniscient perspective represents the universal privileging of the Western rational subject. Against this position de Certeau positions a rhetoric of walking, of being a flaneur

and moving through—and therefore learning—the city. These acts serve as metaphors for ways of knowing and speaking. For de Certeau, a knowledge of the city produced through direct contact with the world and others and an unprivileged, situated perspective on one's surroundings are tactical responses to the problematic nature of Western scientific thinking.

The Walkman not only encourages movement at the level of the street, but also creates the potential for alternative epistemological strategies. Ian Chambers, who also writes about the Walkman, notes that its novelty “does not necessarily lie in itself ... but in the extension of perceptive potential” (141). The Walkman shifts the focus of perception away from the visual toward sound.

One effect of this switch is what has been called the “headphone gaze,” a staring into oblivion. But for Chambers, the visual void of Walkman reception “can also be understood as a pregnant zero, as ... the unobtrusive link in an urban strategy, a semiotic shifter, the crucial digit in a particular organization of sense” (ibid). The Walkman is “a significant symbolic gadget for the nomads of modernity, in which music on the move is continually being decontextualized and recontextualized in the inclusive acoustic and symbolic life of everyday life” (ibid).

French critic Jean-Paul Thibaud has picked up on this notion of the Walkman as nomadic gadget, situating it within the “urban tactic that consists of decomposing the territorial structure of the city and recomposing it through spatio-phonetic behaviours. Double movement of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. This new nomad is here and there at the same time, transported by the secret rhythm of his Walkman and in direct contact with the place he's walking through” (329).

In a study of personal music reception in communist China, Rey Chow gives these theorizations of the potential of the Walkman's immediate political significance. For Chow, the Walkman gives each Chinese citizen “the possibility ... to be a missing part of history, to which I say: ‘I am not there, not where you collect me’” (139-40). Here the Walkman becomes a “hiding place for the music-operator ... ‘to be produced everywhere it is possible to produce it ... by anyone who wants to enjoy it’” (ibid). For Chow, listening joins talking as a political activity; it becomes “a ‘silent’ sabotage of the technology of collectivization with its own instruments” (140). Thus the Walkman acts as a tool of resistance, a way to retain some sort of individuality in the face of involuntary submission.

This movement through and aural perception of space supports de Certeau's notion of flânerie as alternative epistemological strategy, but further removes itself from the problematic universal subjectivity of Western science by shifting from the gaze to the hark as primary epistemic device. McLuhan would be happy, for listening is potentially once

again on par with sight, in the activities of the aural flaneur.

The ways that the Walkman has been theorized as a technological actor in contemporary society and as a cultural artifact are applicable to the iPod as well. But what emergent practices does the iPod enable that these theorizations do not address? Borrowing from Jonathan Sterne, I am not interested in the imperative presence of new technology, but rather the emergent social practices that the iPod constitutes and encapsulates (337).

The iPod is, as was once true of the Walkman, as much a fashion accessory as a tool of aural epistemology. For many people, the iPod is simply a sign of particular social status.

Like leather jackets and basketball shoes in recent decades, the iPod is now a target of theft. Yet, despite the increasing numbers of iPod thefts in the streets and subways in New York, people refuse to take measures to hide the fact that they are listening to the iPod, such as replacing the distinctive white earphones or not waving the iPod around in public. As one iPod user claimed, "if you use others [sic] headphones it's not a status symbol anymore" (K, Comment posting).

If the iPod is to be a tool of resistance for underprivileged classes, the aura of prestige and a high price tag—both of which keep the device in the upper economic strata of societies—must first be demolished. While a Marxist deconstruction of commodity fetishism would eventually achieve this goal, an even newer, more imperative technology will most likely take the place of the iPod, relegating it to the backwoods of technological fashion and innovation, at which point other questions will arise.

A re-theorization of the iPod might also take into consideration phenomena that the new technology of the iPod makes possible. Because little distinction could be made, until only recently, between the ways the Walkman and the iPod are consumed, the differences between the machines have been underemphasized. But three technical aspects of the iPod reveal the drastic differences between it and the Walkman. First, because the iPod plays digital software versions of music, the physicality of cassette tapes and CDs has been replaced with the online transfer of information via the even more expensive and elite technology of the personal computer. The economic and legal aspects of online music trading have been a topic of international debate recently, and the iPod cannot be theorized separate from these debates.

Another way that the Walkman differs from the iPod is the sheer amount of storage space

of the latter device. An iPod user could go for weeks without hearing the same music twice, a phenomenon that makes the Walkman experience seem drastically finite and miniscule by comparison. Combined with the elimination of physical barriers to music consumption engendered by online file trading, this technology makes iPod use the aural equivalent of global tourism. The promises of the first portable transistor radio are now realized, as we have transcended the limits of radio transmission and international trade restrictions. With the iPod, you truly can hold the world of music in your hand.

Cyberfeminist theorists Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Aimee Bahng, and Lisa Nakamura (shown here) have all identified the role of technology and the concept of the global tourist within the persistent phenomenon of Western colonization and empire-building. Looking at e-commerce advertisements of the early 1990s, Nakamura writes:

"Travel and tourism, like networking technology, are commodities that define the privileged, industrialized first-world subject, and they situate him in the position of the one who looks, the one who has access, the one who communicates.... A sort of technologically enabled transnationality is evoked here, but one that directly addresses the first-world user, whose position on the network will allow him to metaphorically go wherever he likes" (89).

This focus on the erasure of labor required to imagine a utopian transnational tourism is echoed in Aimee Bahng's theorization of the "white iPod space" in the Matrix film trilogy that simultaneously isolates and covers the Asian labor required for the maintenance of the Matrix construct:

"In a subway station situated in limbo between the machine and human worlds, Neo encounters a South Asian family of computer programs.... In the form of this family, Neo comes face to face with the sign of techno-industrial labor, which takes place primarily 'offshore'.... Sati and her parents embody transnational labor in the post-capitalist Matrix world, and it is significant that Neo meets them in a subterranean node of transportation. In the Matrix, Asian bodies represent invisible, supplementary labor that threatens to get smuggled in from the margins at any moment" (6-7).

Wendy Hui Kyong Chun critiques ways that the narratives of online flanerite and Internet exploration "move the focus away from user as spectacle to user as spectator...." (248):

"The ability to observe, to be the perfect spectator, depends on the ability to see, but not be seen, the ability to 'read' others and uncover their traces, while leaving none of its own.... Indeed, the myth of users as super-agents, who supposedly dismantle and engage code, who are active rather than passive, who are explorers rather than explored, has emerged in order to compensate for the vulnerable position of the lurker or networked user" (ibid).

What is the hidden labor of the iPod? What trace does the aural flaneur leave on the world? Over whose backs does the iPod-toting aural flaneur climb in order to attain universal mobility?

Like the Walkman before it, the iPod is a product of global capitalism and the exploitation of predominantly female labor in poor Asian countries for the profit of transnational corporations. The narratives of technological innovations consist of triumphant stories of individual exceptionalism in which corporate executives are lauded for their leadership and vision. But these narratives hide a sexual division of labor, as Miriam Glucksmann has argued. They privilege the work of the "father" of technology while hiding the equally necessary labor of the women assemblers in factories.

Other practices of Apple, Inc. have come under scrutiny, most notably their practice of subcontracting janitorial labor in Silicon Valley offices and the refusal to recycle environmentally hazardous technical waste. Any pleasures in the oppositional potential of the iPod must be tempered by an awareness of the consumer's complicit role in supporting these harmful practices.

Returning to Haraway, we can see how this cyborg existence requires the simultaneous "pleasure in the confusion of boundaries and... responsibility in their construction" ("A Cyborg Manifesto" 150).

While increased storage capacity and fragmented patterns exchange are both issues that scholars currently address, there is a third emergent practice that the iPod emphasizes: the shuffle. Why the sudden popularity of the randomization of playlists? What happens when iPod users choose to relinquish control over their sonic environment, however partially, to a technological device?

Recognizing the economic profits that could be extracted from the popularity of the shuffle function, in January of 2005 Apple released the iPod Shuffle to the fanfare of a new body of marketing images and catch-phrases.

"Life is random."

"Give chance a chance."

"Enjoy uncertainty."

In the latter half of the twentieth century, theorists began to see writing as the primary location of the construction and representation of subjectivity. French theorist Hélène Cixous argued for the potential existence of *écriture féminine* as one possible path of resistance to the phallogocentrism of a masculinist subjectivity. For Cixous, *écriture féminine* works to blur the self/other dichotomy. It erases the border between writer and

reader, and both become forms of inscription of meaning. *Écriture féminine* comes from the body, not just the mind.

Cixous describes this feminine textual body as “recognized by the fact that it is always endless, without ending: there’s no closure, it doesn’t stop, and it’s this that very often makes the feminine text difficult to read. For we’ve learned to read books that basically pose the word ‘end.’ But this one doesn’t finish, a feminine text goes on and on and at a certain moment the volume comes to an end but the writing continues and for the reader this means being thrust into the void. These are texts that work on the beginning but not on the origin.... A feminine text starts on all sides at once, starts twenty times, thirty times, over” (53).

Lev Manovich, a professor of visual arts at the University of California, San Diego, has speculated on the narrative nature of the postmodern condition:

“After the novel, and subsequently cinema, privileged narrative as the key form of cultural expression of the modern age, the computer age introduces its correlate—database. Many new media objects do not tell stories; they do not have beginning or end; in fact, they do not have any development, thematically, formally or otherwise that would organize their elements into a sequence. Instead, they are collections of individual items, with every

item possessing the same significance as any other" (218).

When we combine the ideas of Cixous and Manovich it becomes possible to see the act of random listening enabled by the iPod's shuffle function as a distinctly post-modern strategy of *écriture féminine*, and therefore a technology with the potential both to reinforce and deconstruct the problematic Western masculinist construction of subjectivity. Whether this theoretical possibility can be enacted through practice, and who it would benefit, is yet to be seen.

By the time I reached Oregon, twelve thousand miles into my grand ramble of a road trip, I saw the spectacle that I had become. A young, white, college-educated American male, with no social, familial, or economic ties anchoring me to a particular place, I had just spent nearly two months looking at the world and leaving no substantial trace. What did I have to show for it, other than photos of my car and gas receipts?

As a recovering liberal individualist who once unquestioningly subscribed to the epistemological framework posited by a Western, visually constructed notion of subjectivity, I am wary of any activity that unknowingly contributes to the perpetuation of that framework as universal. In many ways the consumption of the iPod parallels my road trip, and I want to question the unreflexive relationship to technology and society that I

see iPod users demonstrating in the streets and subways of New York City and elsewhere. What does it mean to theorize the iPod as a bridge, and what gaps does it span? If iPod users embody Haraway's conception of the post-modern cyborg, what borders are they blurring? What boundaries are they reifying?

Like the Confederation Bridge in Canada, the deconstruction of Western subjectivity has been a point of disagreement in feminist debates. While some see subjectivity as a dangerous concept that needs to be demolished for the sake of the feminist struggle, others argue that the rights of women can only be achieved through the attainment of this very subjectivity.

We have now "seen" the connections between subjectivity and the iPod, ending with the shuffle function and its potential for alternative aural epistemologies of space. But I want to end by complicating this positive portrayal of randomization. What is the cultural significance of distancing ourselves from the rest of society, but then relinquishing control of our aural surroundings to technology? Is control, like subjectivity, something that can only be given away by someone who owns it to begin with?

What does it mean to be able to enjoy uncertainty?

Works Cited:

Apple Computer 10 K Annual Report. 2005. SEC Edgar Database. 1 February 2006.

Bahng, Aimee. "Hacking the Matrix: Race, Spectatorship, and Slash Fiction in a Postmodern Cyberpunk Epic." *The Matrix Trilogy and the New Theory*. Ed. Myriam Diocaretz and Stefan Herbrechter. New York: Editions Rodopi, forthcoming.

Bull, Michael. *Sounding Out the City: Personal Stereos and the Management of Everyday Life*. New York: Berg, 2000.

Chambers, Ian. "A Miniature History of the Walkman." *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics* 11 (1990): 1-4. Rpt. in *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman*. Ed. Paul du Gay, Stuart Hall, Linda Janes, Hugh Mackay and Keith Negus. London: Sage Publications, 1997. 141-3.

Chow, Rey. "Listening Otherwise, Music Miniaturized: A Different Type of Question about Revolution." *Discourse* 13.1 (Winter 1990-1). Rpt. in *The Cultural Studies Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Simon During. New York: Routledge, 1993. 462-476.

Chun, Wendy Hui Kyong. "Othering Space." *The Visual Culture Reader*. 2nd ed. Ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff. New York: Routledge, 1998. 243-54.

Cixous, Hélène. "Castration or Decapitation." Trans. Annette Kuhn. *Signs: Journal of*

Women in Culture and Society 7.1 (1981): 41-55.

de Certeau, Michel. "Walking in the City." *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984.

Diamond, Beverly. "The Interpretation of Gender Issues in Musical Life Stories of Prince Edward Islanders." *Music and Gender*. Ed. Pirkko Moisala and Beverly Diamond. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000. 99-139.

Glucksman, Miriam. *Women Assemble*. London: Routledge, 1990.

Haraway, Donna J. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1991. 149-81.

----- "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge, 1991. 183-201.

Hauser, Lukas. "MacCommunist: Smash the iPod." 23 October 2001. *Wired News Online*. 1 February 2006. <<http://www.wired.com/news/gizmos/0,1452,47812,00.html>>

Hekman, Susan. "The Embodiment of the Subject: Feminism and the Communitarian Critique of Liberalism." *The Journal of Politics* 54 (November 1992): 1098-119.

K, Andrea. Comment posting. "iPod Thefts Don't Surprise New Yorkers." 2 April 2005.

Gothamist.com. 1 February 2006.

<http://www.gothamist.com/archives/2005/03/30/ipod_thefts_dont_surprise_new_yorkers.php#comment-47058>

King, Brad, and Farhad Manjoo. "Apple's 'Breakthrough' iPod." 23 October 2001. *Wired News Online*. 1 February 2006.

<<http://www.wired.com/news/gizmos/0,1452,47805,00.html>>

Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001.

Marx, Karl. "The Fetishism of the Commodity." *Capital, Vol. One*. 1867. Trans. Ben Fawkes. New York: Penguin, 1976.

McLuhan, Marshall. "Visual and Acoustic Space." *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. Ed. Christopher Cox and Daniel Warner. New York: Continuum, 2005. 67-72.

Mill, John Stuart. *On Liberty*. 1859. Ed. Elizabeth Rapaport. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1978.

----- *The Subjection of Women*. 1869. Ed. Sue Mansfield. Arlington Heights, IL: AHM Publishing Corp., 1980.

Nakamura, Lisa. *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Purdy, Jedediah. "The God of the Digerati." 1 March 1998. *The American Prospect, Online Edition*. 1 February 2006.
<<http://www.prospect.org/web/page.wv?section=root&name=ViewPrint&articleId=4731>>

Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

Thibaud, Jean-Paul. "The Sonic Composition of the City." *The Auditory Culture Reader*. Ed. Michael Bull and Les Back. Oxford: Berg, 2003. 329-41.

Waugh, Patricia. *Feminine Fictions: Revisiting the Postmodern*. London: Routledge, 1989.

Wolff, Robert Paul. *The Poverty of Liberalism*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1968.