TO HEAL THE GAP BETWEEN SUBJECT AND PROTAGONIST: RESTORING FEMALE AGENCY WITH IMMERSION AND INTERACTIVITY

Paper for ASCA Mini-Conference
June 8, 2001, Amsterdam
By Alison McMahan, Ph.D.

Mieke Bal, in her book Reading "Rembrandt", critiques the so-called universalism of the myth genre of storytelling because this claim to universalism conceals the split between "the subject who tells the story about itself and the subject it tells about." (Mieke Bal, "Visual Story-Telling: Father and |Son and the Problem of Myth." From Reading "Rembrandt": Beyond the Word-Image Opposition, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991,p.98). In her articulation of the differences between the latter two terms and her analysis of visuality in the literary accounts and of the Rembrandt images, Bal shows us how the method of discourse separates protagonist from subject, specifically, the female subject, and makes the role of protagonist inaccessible for other females. The voyeuristic spectator is invited into a position of internal focalization in Rembrandt's etching, which incriminates the spectator, though she be female and feminist, into a site of "interpretants shaped by a male habit." There are two solutions: the awareness created by an against-the-grain analysis, such as Kaja Silverman's "productive looking" or to change how the story is told.

Feminine agency, ("feminine" here is defined as the socially constructed ideas attached to the female sex. Poststructuralists feminists deconstruct texts in order to make explicit the power relations that structure discourse), on earth or between the pages, cannot be restored unless the gap between subject and protagonist is healed and re-adressed. Interactive fiction may hold promise for the restoration of feminine narrative agency. In order to test this hypothesis I propose to apply and extend Bal's method of analysis to a hypertext called Patchwork Girl. Is it possible for interactive narrative to restore subjecthood to a female protagonist? What specific changes, what tools or devices, are necessary in order for this transformation to occur?

Furthermore we are drawn to look at the phallic shape of the bedpost, an object which simultaneously mediates us into the image and represents the missing Potiphar, the patriarchal father, whose place Joseph would like to fill. Thus the picture can be interpreted in much the same way as the Genesis story, ""it derives it s meaning from the very absence of female subjectivity, the woman acts, but does not focalize"(p. 117). This identification also incriminates the spectator, though she be female and feminist, into a site of "interpretants shaped also by a male habit". (p. 123). The process of "incriminating" the female into a narrative process that simultaneously denies her subjectivity and reduces the effects of the actions she has taken, or will take, to the role they play in a narrative where only males are the protagonists, is quite similar to the way Todorov describes the process of enunciation in dirty jokes (T. Todorov, Theories du Symbole, Paris 1978, as quoted in Willemen, 1980, p.62):

> A (the man) addresses B (the woman) seeking to satisfy his sexual desire; the intervention of C (the rival) makes the satisfaction of desire impossible. Hence, a second situation develops: frustrated in his desire, A addresses aggressive remarks to B and appeals to C as an ally. A new transformation occurs, provoked by the absence of the woman or by the need to observe a social code: instead of addressing B, [the woman], A addresses C by telling him a rude joke; B may well be absent, but instead of being the addressee she has become (implicitly) the object of what is said; C derives pleasure from A's joke.

In other words, one of the key mechanisms for eliminating the subjectivity of the female in dirty jokes, and in most myths and myth representations, is the mode of address. This leads me to another quote from Mieke Bal, from her essay in the Encyclopedia of Narrative and the Visual and Literary Arts, where she says:

> It is crucial to keep in mind that narrative is not a one-sided structure. Address, the ways in which a viewer is invited to participate in the representation, is perhaps the most relevant aspects of a semiotics of subjectivity. … However much autonomy a particular viewer may have (or assume to have) in front of a painting, according to this theory subjectivity is always produced at least by the interaction between the "I" of the work and the "you" this "I" addresses." (Narrative and the Visual and Literary Arts," in Encyclopedia of Aesthetics, Ed by Michael Kelly. New York: Oxford University Press 1998. P.331)

After reading this I felt forced to go back to the etching by Rembrandt and ask myself where the woman was looking, was it in fact true that she did not focalize? Since she

looks, couldn't I, as the spectator, look with her? And if I did look with her, and tried to sketch out lines of sight as Bal did for Joseph, what would I see? I thought at first that a similar argument could be made for the gaze of the woman, of Potiphar's wife: she is gazing up at the ceiling, as if wanting to be rescued, perhaps from Potiphar, perhaps from being pregnant. She is not looking at Joseph. What does she actually see? These lines that look like rays of light falling on her. Those lines make me think of Zeus raining down on Danae in the form of a shower of gold (the visual pun on "golden showers" cannot be escaped). Though Danae was locked in her tower Zeus succeeded in impregnating her this way. So even if I try to read the image "against the grain", using Kaja Silverman's "productive looking," (Kaja Silverman, The Threshold of the Visible World, New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 180-5), in other words, if I consciously rebel against the traditional patriarchal stance that is all the etching makes available, I am thwarted. Is there any way out of this conundrum? Are we all imprisoned in our patriarchal media landscape, just as Potiphar's wife is, by the impregnable walls of patriarchal modes of address?

CINEMA'S FOUR LOOKS

Laura Mulvey was one of the first to attempt to answer this question. Her essay, Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema (Screen Autumn 1975, vol. 16, no.3, pp.6-18) analyzed the modes of address of mainstream cinema, especially the star system, strip-tease, and a variety of other phenomena. She described the cinema as an activity of looking and isolated three particular looks: the look of the spectator at the screen; a metaphorical look, or gaze, of the camera at the pro-filmic events and characters; and the looks exchanged between characters or the gaze of characters upon objects or events within the diegesis. In mainstream cinema "the camera never looks at the space that the audience 'occupies' (the 180° rule); the actors never look down the axis of the camera.(see John Ellis, "On Pornography", Screen Spring 1980, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp.81-109 for a lucid application of Mulvey to pornography). Paul Willemen identified a fourth look, which refers to a character's look at the camera.("Letter to John", Screen, Summer 1980, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 53-66.) The Fourth look is fairly rare in mainstream cinema, though it is common in early cinema.

Jean Châteauvert categorized the fourth look of the early cinema as follows:

The Actuality Look: In non-fiction or actuality films, real people engaged in real

events look at the camera, (and the camera operator) which is thereby inscribed in the sequence of real events. (Such signs as drops of water on the lense, shaky camera, and panning to follow action are also indicators of this mode of address).

The Vaudeville Look: The actors or performers drop out of character to address or wink at the audience, engaging them as accomplices in their performance. In this case the audience is addressed or constructed, not as cinema spectators, but as a theatrical audience akin to one in a live theatre. In this case the camera operator and other members of the film crew are also placed in this role of live audience.

The Subjective Look: The actors or performers look at the camera, but they remain in character. The camera and camera operator are here erased, since they are stand-ins for a diegetic character. Often some form of mediation is used: the shot is part of a point of view sequence, or some other mechanical indication is used to indicate an inter-diegetic look (a matte around the image to indicate a telescope or keyhole, etc.)

The Emblematic Look: The actor, in character, addresses the cinematic spectator. The look falls outside of the diegesis (as the cowboy does in the end shot of The Great Train Robbery). The presence of the camera is not so much effaced here as denied in order for the character to step over the line between diegetic and non-diegetic. (Châteauvert, “Monstration et Narration”, in Le cinéma au tournant du siècle, Cinema at the Turn of the Century, Edited by Claire Dupré la Tour, André Gaudreault and Roberta Pearson, Québec: Éditions Nota bene, 1999, pp.197-203.)

Willemen’s formulation of the fourth look in pornography (the look of the female performing the signs for orgasm aimed at the male cinema spectator) coincides most closely with Châteauvert’s Emblematic look of the early cinema. In both cases the connection of this look to a narrative is so tenuous as to almost non-existent and the boundary between diegetic and non-diegetic is hopelessly blurred. The same process of incriminating the cinema spectator into a pornographic look was achieved in early cinema through spatial displacement, when a striptease was presented at an angle that benefits the film spectator more than the diegetic spectator. The mechanism of incrimination here is similar to that described by Bal in reference to the Rembrandt etching or by Todorov in reference to the mechanism of dirty jokes. However, filmmaker Bette Gordon, in her article about her own film, Variety, mentions one way in which the fourth look can be used to break the pattern:

> an observer looks at the viewer of pornography, catching him in a taboo act. The fourth look could be the superego or the threat of censorship, directed at

> the pornography's illicit place in the culture. A woman in a porn store represents the fourth look and so makes men uncomfortable. Other men are complicit, but a woman is not. She is supposed to be the object of their gaze. (Bette Gordon, “Variety,” in Issues in Feminist Film Criticism, edited by Patricia Erens, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990, p.421)

What Gordon is referring to is that when a female subject is inserted into the closed loop of the scopophilic or voyeuristic gaze it breaks the circuit of incrimination and highlights the fetishism and disavowal that motivated the pornographic sequence to begin with. It is extremely difficult, however, to insert the female subject into a classic cinematic narrative without altering the mode of address. It is evident that even in traditional cinema female characters have been shown to have a degree of agency. They are even shown gazing upon and pursuing the objects of their desire. The difference is that they are routinely punished for it. Such female characters even have a name: transgressors. They are "transgressing" by breaking the cultural taboo that denies them agency. Susan Hayward defines agency as follows:

> Agency (see also subjectivity). Refers essentially to issues of control and operates both within and outside the film. Within the film, agency is often applied to a character in relation to desire. If that character has agency over desire it means that she or he (though predominantly in classic narrative cinema it is a 'he') is able to act upon that desire and fulfil it (a classic example is: boy meets girl, boy wants girl, boy gets girl). Agency also functions at the level of the narrative inside and outside the film. Whose narration is it? A character in the film? A character outside the film? The directors? Hollywood's? And finally, agency also applies to the spectator. In viewing the film, the spectator has agency over the text in that she or he produces a meaning and a reading of the filmic text. (Hayward, Susan, Key Concepts in Cinema Studies, London and New York: Routledge, 1996, p.4).

As this definition makes clear, an analysis that focuses on issues of agency in a film text and in the reception of that text is a narratological one. In other words, it shouldn’t be necessary to construct films for women in a completely new or different cinematic language in order to address women as spectators. It is enough to include a feminist mode of address at at least one level of narration. For example, the character gaze could be female, and that of the camera male. This occurs often, especially in "women's films" though productive looking or reading against the grain is required for feminist enjoyment.

The character gaze and the camera gaze could be female. This is quite difficult, since -- as Mulvey -- in our culture the image of the female itself connotes a male gazer. Some filmmakers have dealt with this by adding a female voice-over, as Marleen Gorliss did in Antonia's Line. Susan Seidelman's film Smithereens rocked the critics because the camera was placed in the woman's position instead of the man's, as did Amy Heckerling in Fast Times at Ridgemont High. What does the man see in a love scene? The woman's face. What does the woman see? The ceiling. Putting the camera in the woman's position, instead of in the more common male position, calls the viewer's attention to one way in which the camera gaze is subject to convention.

Others have created a female camera gaze and male character gaze. For example, Fast Times at Ridgemont High (1982, dir. Amy Heckerling, based on the book by Cameron Crowe) and Thelma and Louise (1991, dir. Ridley Scott with a script by Callie Khouri) are both examples of female camera gazes and mixed character gaze. Say Anything (1989, written and directed by Cameron Crowe) has a male character and camera gaze, but there is a powerful sequence in the middle where the girl that the John Cusack character is trying to win watches him as other teens at a party make him the guardian of their car keys. It is relevant to note that the most obvious examples of female character gaze occur in teen films. Perhaps it is easier to achieve a camera identification with a female among teens, where social hierarchy is still roughly level. (Further possibilities of varying the socially constructed positions from which the camera's gaze originates also exist, whether we define the constructed position in terms of gender, class, or race). This is another pointer to the importance of modes of address at each level of narration: the extra-diegetic (the advertising campaign, which constructs cinema viewers as live audience members), the non-diegetic (such as uses of the fourth look which addresses the cinematic spectator directly), the diegetic, such as the examples of teen films just listed), which can be subdivided into levels of external and internal focalization and which put mechanisms of character identification such as alignment and engagement into play.)

In other words, at each level of narration the narratee is constructed differently. For many years critics have focused on the narration side of the narrative circuit, and in recent years much attention has been paid to reception, to how spectators and fans actually react, especially to film and television. Very little attention has been paid to how the spectator is constructed at the various levels of address in a given medium, which is a key step in the circle of communication between narration and reception. In this sense, cinema studies has much to gain from the discoveries of advertising theorists.

Nina K. Martin, in her essay about Zalman King's television series The Red Shoe Diaries, (Nina K. Martin, “Red Shoe Diaries:Sexual Fantasy and the Construction of the (Hetero)sexual Woman,” Journal of Film and Video, Volume 46, No. 2, Summer 1994, pp. 44-57) follows such a narrative cycle. She begins with Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale, The Red Shoes, about a young woman named Karen whose wanton desire for a pair of red dancing shoes is naturally punished by death. Michael Powell's 1947 film The Red Shoes contemporized the story by making the heroine a ballerina who achieves fame dancing out the ballet of The Red Shoes. The dancer has to choose to have love or her career. Since she is unable to sacrifice one of them, she must die. In this film she commits suicide, but Martin argues that the red shoes "drove her to it."

The pilot for Zalman King's television series Red Shoe Diaries shows a young woman who is torn between two lovers (one is a shoe salesman who sells her a pair of red shoes). Her guilt over her affair and her inability to choose between the two men lead her to suicide.

There is a certain progression in this kind of narrative: in the original Red Shoes story, the female hero is killed by greater outside forces, punished by an unnamed "angry god" (Anderson earned his middle name!) for putting on the red shoes that she can never remove. In the 1990s such outside punishement is no longer accepted -- so the female hero is shown as unable to live with her agency, her desire, herself, and therefore driven to suicide! This example clearly illustrates Bal’s contention that myth functions in the space between phantasy and primal phantasy, by depriving the female subject of her agency and justifying it with the “unarguable weight”of myth. Myths that have a female at their center are rare, and even when they occur, as in the case of The Red Shoes, the female is punished for her agency.

Much analysis needs to be done on how modes of address are gendered and how the mechanisms of that gendering work. But even without spending a volume or so on that

step, another question immediately comes to mind: if the way to restoring feminine agency and subjectivity to fictional narratives is to manipulate the mechanisms of address, how about a mode of narration where the mode of address is optional, where the spectator has some choice, and decides for herself which narratee position she wants to assume?

Is there a way to accomplish this? Bal offers visuality and engagement -putting the spectator into the position of protagonist - as a solution, and presents an episode out of Mann's novel as an example of how these solutions can work. She quotes Thomas Mann's story, in which Mut (Potiphar's Wife)gives a party and for dessert offers her lady guests oranges and sharp knives to peel them. Dessert is timed with Joseph's entry to serve them wine, and they are so frightened and overwhelmed by his androgynous beauty that they cut themselves with the knives and the blood flowing is a 'fearful sight.' (p. 116). Bal sums up this
episode as follows:

> Mut-em-enet planned this event explicitly to make herself understood, because she wanted her friends to understand, to experience her love at the very same moment they knew it. For the difference between knowing and experiencing is, precisely, identification through affect, confusion of subjects, the passage from subjectivity to intersubjectivity, to meaning. They all had to feel her love, so that it became theirs. Thus the split created by discourse is cured by sight. There is no longer a narrative, a 'third person', an object of gossip radically isolated. Visuality succeeds where words fail. But it succeeds, not because of inconicity, but because of indexicality. (p. 116)

Female subjectivity and feminine agency, on earth or between the pages, cannot be restored unless the gap between subject and protagonist is healed and re-dressed. If. we take Mut-em-enet's approach - the combination of visuality and interactivity - as a starting point, then newer forms of interactive fiction may hold promise for the restoration of feminine narrative agency. In order to test this hypothesis I propose to analyze the modes of address of a feminist hyeprtext, called Patchwork Girl (Eastgate Systems, 1995).

This hypertext consciously invokes various layers of narration. For example, on the cover, under the title, Patchwork Girl, it is said to be by “Mary/Shelley &herself”. (Herself meaning the patchwork girl). Then comes the subtitle, “a graveyard, a journal, a quilt, a

story & broken accents" which is actually a listing of the various diegetic levels to be explored in the hypertext, and finally the name of the hypertext author, Shelley Jackson, which may or may not be a pseudonym.

Like the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, the story Patchwork Girl is based on exists in several versions, themselves derived from the numerous versions of the Golem-Frankenstein story. The derivation could be outlined as follows: In Genesis God Creates Adam from mud and Eve from Adam's rib (or from mud, depending on the version). In the 17th century, the Rabbi of Prague created the Golem, who was mute and in some versions falls in love with a girl, sometimes depicted as retarded; in the 19th Century Mary Shelley wrote her
novel, Frankenstein, which some critics say was based on her multiple experiences with miscarriage, stillbirth, and infant death of some of her children; Frankenstein exists today in numerous film and television versions which emphasize the male scientist's paternity of the monster, obliterating Shelley's original theme. It could be argued that this theme is resurrected by Frank Baum, author of the Oz stories, (who also gave us one of the few classical mythic female heroes in Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz), one of which was entitled Patchwork Girl,
about a girl magically created from various bits of cloth. Baum made this story into a film in 1914 (show clip) and Shelley Jackson combined the Shelley and Baum stories to make this hypertext. By referring to Mary/Shelley as well as herself as author, and by putting the slash in Shelley's name, Jackson is reminding us of the history of this myth and the various historical layers of authorship. By also listing the Patchwork Girl "Herself" as an author Jackson both reminds us of the Baum creation and also telegraphs the message that this hypertext is about female subjectivity and how it is constructed.

Once the hypertext is installed, the first window to open is a graphic of a naked woman in the "Stella Maris" position (standing with her arms outstretched almost as if in benediction), her hair blown back as if by wind. Stitching shows where her various body parts have been sutured together. If you click on the image you get the title page, which extends the title on the cover to "Patchwork Girl, or A Monster". A click on the word "graveyard" gives you a task to accomplish during reading:

> I am buried here. You can resurrect me, but only piecemeal. If you want to see the whole, you will have to sew me together yourself."

This is the voice of the Patchwork Girl, a female Frankenstein, who tells the story of each of her body parts (most belonged to women, but some, like her liver, to men, and some, like her lower intestine, to animals – in this case, a cow). Here is the story of her left breast:

> Charlotte's nipple was pink and long, like a crayon. Charlotte nursed eight children, buried six, and felt each loss in her swollen breasts. She squirted the extra milk on her dying babies, rubbed it into their laboring chests. She visited the graveyard, squeezed her breasts over the small hummocks, so little white beads hung on the grass. She filled a quill pen at her nipple and wrote invisible letters to her dead babies. Then she held a match under the page and watched her words come back.
> When I write my left breast sometimes dribbles the milk of invisible children.

The monster escapes from Mary Shelley, her maker, but then returns and the two have a love affair. But Mary is married to Percy and eventually the Patchwork girl leaves to America, where she hopes to overcome her freakishness and find both an inner unity and a community. The emphasis throughout the various episodes – the seances where she fears the ghosts of her bodyparts will speak through the medium, the run-in with a horse carriage that takes her foot off, requiring a trip to the graveyard to dig it up and sew it back on, the final degradation, a hundred years after her story begins, as her limbs finally dissolve and fall apart – the emphasis is always on the difficulty of multiple layers of focalization, the difficulty of her twoness: being what she is but also being a product of an artificial construction. She compares herself to a freak from the circus whose freakishness is artificial, and to a sailer who is actually a woman passing as a man. Unity of self, normality, even the ability to live in peace in one place evades her. She pays a normal woman to buy her past from her and adopts all the signifiers of femininity, trying to rub off her scars or burn them off with acid. Except for Mary, we don't know how anyone else perceives her, everything is given to us from the monster's perspective.

The form of the hypertext – multiple little windows linked together in mysterious ways – perfectly matches the shape of her inner conundrum, a conundrum that is clearly a metaphor for women who try to live a life shaped out of whatever bits the patriarchal regime cuts out for them.

But does reading this story in the form of a hypertext add anything to the experience (as compared to reading it in a book), does it create an open space for the reader to choose a

mode of address?

Let's look at how the hypertext itself works:

Underneath each single lexia (the part of the hypertext that a single window allows us to see) is a map window. While exploring the hypertext the reader always has two windows open to her: one is the current text space she is reading, (a particular area of the diegetic world) and the other is a map window, showing the current diegetic space the reader is in relation to its neighbors. In other words, the reader of Patchwork Girl, the hypertext, is constantly reading at a diegetic level while simultaneously maintaining a non-diegetic level of awareness. This is different from mainstream cinema, which usually uses the credit sequence to gradually absorb the viewer into the diegesis, but similar to computer games, where inventory items, life mana and other non-diegetic bits of information crucial for gameplay are constatnly displayed. And of course both hypertexts and computer games require the reader/player to choose the navigational path from a series of choices on offer. In Patchwork Girl readers can navigate using the map window, clicking on directional controls in the toolbar, or clicking on links in the text or in the graphics that accompany the text.

In the hypertext the body parts of the Patchwork girl are assembled from the body parts of other women, and each body part tells its own story, both from the perspective of the original owner (internal focalization) and as part of the new, Patchwork Girl body, which the
hypertext reader must assemble, by reading them, as part of the act of reading in order to end up with a complete body (invitation to external focalization and engagement through interactivity).

Like all hypertexts built with Storyspace software, Patchwork Girl keeps a record of the lexias (the hypertext pages or nodes) that the reader has already read. The reader can save this list if the reading session is interrupted and also use it to return to a lexia already visited. Thus the reader's choice of navigational path, considered by hypertext theorists as a record of the reader's train of thought, is preserved. (Some hypertexts, though not this one, also include a note-taking capability). In my case the path reflects my preference for the monster's adventures set at the turn of the century, and when I stumbled upon a lexia where she typed on a portable with a frothing cup of cappuccino close by I would click away with impatience, the way a novel reader might skip to the end of a chapter. Mostly in my reading I looked at all of the possible links available from a page and automatically

chose the first one, sometimes returning to take a path not followed, sometimes choosing a lexia for its provocative heading.

Mostly I was overwhelmed by the hypertext's elegance, by its seamless joining of theme and structure. Jackson's authorial intentions seemed more transparent because of the constant availability of the map and because some clues as to how the hypertext is meant to be read are embedded in the diegetic text. What is clear is the feminist and also lesbian sensibilities, and the desire to communicate the pain of living in a world that is not designed to accommodate such otherness. The writing itself is beautiful, sophisticated, raw and elegant at the same time, giving the same sense of contrast as Mary Shelley's writing about a Monster who could read latin did. The good writing is also a rare quality; many hypertexts are badly written, as the need to write in short units that can flow evenly in almost any direction takes a considerable degree of skill. Hypertext also requires something extra from the reader, not just the effort to choose a navigational path, but also to give oneself up to the process engendered by the design. At first I wanted to read the story chronologically, (I'm a control freak!) but eventually I realized that the map concealed hidden tunnels and dead ends, that I could not read the story chronologically no matter how hard I tried. Eventually I gave myself up to the following of my own whimsey, and then, in direct contrast to be first reaction to the hypertext, I was annoyed that there were not more choices, more paths, more of a variety of ways for my whimsey to go. As the map makes clear, the structure of the hypertext is a hierarchical branching pattern, (also known as a Christmas tree structure) with just enough dead ends and bottlenecks to keep it pruned into its shape. But I didn't realize this until later, until I'd read almost all of it and had gone over the map a few times.

Athough in volume Patchwork Girl is a novel, and its events flow chronologically like those of a novel, even if it is difficult for the reader to experience them that way, reading a hypertext usually has an effect like reading poetry. Some of the claims made on the medium's behalf by scholars such as George Landow about the multivocality of hypertext, about the way that reading through a network of texts causes a continuous shift in the center of consciousness, are absolutely true, at least it was for me, after reading this particular hypertext, with its felicitous match between networked form and multivocal, multiple-address content. However, I already know from experience that not every hypertext works this well; in fact, I tested and discarded several of them before finding the right one for this presentation.

As is the case with myth, many scholars describe hypertext as a panacea with numerous conflicting characteristics. I have critiqued these excessive claims elsewhere (in Branching Characters, Branching Plots: A Narratology of Interactive Fiction, forthcoming). What interests me here is not what interactive fiction is not, but what can be done with it, if we have the desire to do so. Patchwork Girl the hypertext shows that the multiple voices and modes of address of various related myths and various incarnations of the same myth can be reappropriated for the purposes of feminist narrative, and the problems of rigid, patriarchally dictated modes of addressed that seem firmly embedded in the practices of other media can be circumvented in the practice of this one. As I have noted throughout this paper, what is true about hypertexts like Patchwork Girl is also true of computer games, though these have been demonized by the media. We now have a new form and in a way a new language with which to tell our stories: now it is up to us to do so.
END