

Panarticon

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tobias c. van Veen

Twenty Years of Discorder & Linda Scholten

...to clash, and tension from the failure to reach agreement... dissonance, dischord, inharmony... A confused or harsh mingling of sounds. Rampant incompatibility. A distopia of Discordians. *The Discorder*. Twenty years of dissent, and a name that still confounds everyone I meet: what does *Discorder* mean? All, more, none: *The Discorder* is what you make it, and so far... *it has made it*. *The Discorder* is one of Canada's longest-running underground & indie 'zines (if not *the one and only*). A 'zine that has sprouted from a small yet fighting rag to an accomplishment of slash-n'-burn journalism, punk perniciousness and granulated gonzo. At times light and frothy, *Discorder* nevertheless packs a secret blow from the left and an urgency brought on by more than just deadlines. Congratulations, *Discorder*, to all the staff and writers, photographers and behind-the-scenes slaves, to everyone who has held it together, to all the Editors who have put up with late words and arrogant abuse and all the writers who have put up with the dictatorship of Editors, to all the advertisers who have stuck with this 'zine, and first and foremost to Publisher and Station Manager Linda Scholten. Linda *will be, at some point soon*, leaving CiTR after guiding this ragtag and variable conglomerate of outcasts and hotheaded students since the '80s. Linda has seen us through thick & thin, launching high-power FM and grabbing guaranteed funding and a full-sized Station. Always on the vigilance against AMS takeovers and corporate covert ops, Linda has been the true rebel leader here at CiTR, and with a great candy jar to boot. We will miss you, Linda (when you finally & actually leave: the position is open...).

The Necessity of Discordians

And what are you waiting for—this is an open magazine, so get up here, sign up as a member of CiTR, and throw it down. This is a good time to discuss the necessity of "little" 'zines like *Discorder*. The 20-year reign of dissent is fragile—there are always threats on the horizon: losing funding, advertising, writers. We always need alternate avenues of information and opinion. As the internet becomes patrolled and silenced, and mainstream alternative left press muted, the open space of print 'zines once again becomes a primary place of communication. The prophetic digitization of the world may still come, but the prospect of dissident PalmPilot programs are dim. Movements such as the Woodward's Squatters need accessible press that recognizes their existence and which they can access. Even in the age of the Internet, it is still a question of the *materiality* of the situation.

The Materiality of Dissent

At the August New Forms Festival panel the issue of the Palladium chip was raised, with Paul Miller arguing for a reactive hack-around & me calling for pro-active resistance. Palladium runs all media (potentially *all data*) through an encryption process that is at the *material level of your motherboard & cannot be hacked*—at least without hardware tinkering. Palladium attempts to stop "piracy," but also acts as a joint corporate-gov't sniffer inside your box. Much like the iPod won't hook up to more than one machine, a

Sony MiniDisc won't USB transfer your own tracks, & many CDs & DVDs won't play on computers, this is a chilling step backwards towards increasing surveillance & control.

Tie this into the "new" Carnivore. Carnivore was developed by the CIA to monitor internet traffic. The recent Homeland Security bill calls for *all* traffic to be monitored *in real time*—and the cost will be pushed onto the ISP (i.e. you). *Total Information Awareness*. The measure will also allow ISPs to "hand over content of their customers' communications without consent based on a good-faith belief that there is an emergency," says Chris Hoofnagle of surveillance watchdog Epic.org. This bypasses due process through a Judge; the ISP becomes wiretap, Judge & Jury. And although privacy rights may hold out here a bit longer, ISPs are primarily American, and so is the backbone. And this is what it comes down to: who owns the material conditions of possibility for the virtual world. Geert Lovink points this out in his book *Dark Fiber* when he speaks of the inability for tactical media to intervene & cover the Kosovo war. Without electricity or phone lines, there is no net resistance. If access is shut down & tapped; well...the ghost in the machine died with the power.
[www.guerrillanews.com/sci-tech/doc953.html]

It's Down to the Thing

Thing.net ISP faces the immanent loss of its net access by upstream provider Verio. Dow Chemical served a DMCA (Digital Millenium Copyright Act) complaint to Verio over a tactical media site by The Yes Men that was hosted on Thing. The site aped Dow for its negligence in Bhopal, India that killed thousands of people in 1984. Thing.net hosts Artforum.com, Nettime.org, Rtmark.com and the PS1 gallery among others.
[www.yesmen.org]

"Verio's actions are nothing short of outrageous," says Wolfgang Staehle, Thing.net Executive Director. "They could have resolved the matter with the Dow parodists directly; instead they chose to shut down our entire network. This self-appointed enforcement of the DMCA could have a serious chilling effect on free speech, and has already damaged our business."

Forget postmodern remixing. We need to go back to what Hakim Bey said in the late '80s in *Temporary Autonomous Zone*: we need a *counter-net*, not a "culture net on the Net." The counter-net is a self-sustained *alternative*. Linux, Open Source, GNU licensing is excellent, but we need *open source manufacturers of non-monitored hardware and net backbones*. Is this possible? Yes. [<http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/6/26740.html>]

Cracking DVDs

All charges against 19-year-old Norwegian Jon Johansen have been dropped. Johansen cracked the DVD code so he could play *purchased* DVDs *on his own computer*. Johansen's lawyer: "[The ruling says] that when you have bought a film legally, you have access to its content. It is irrelevant how you get that access. You have bought the movie, after all." That's right—many new DVDs *won't play on computers*. This is how scared the corporates are over losing their billion-dollar profit margins, kids.

Proposal for Gordon Campbell

He should be given a bus pass. That's it.

Congrats to COPE. Larry Campbell, you fuckin' rock, ever since I saw you giving speeches back in the mid-90s on drinking & driving. [The Irony, Oh, The Irony]. Don't let us down.