J.-P. Caron

On Constitutive Dissociations as a Means of World-Unmaking: Henry Flynt and Generative Aesthetics Redefined

1.

In one of a series of video interviews conducted by Benjamin Piekut in 2005, Henry Flynt mentions his involvement in certain sci-fi literary scenes of the 1970s.[1] Given his background in mathematics and analytic philosophy, in addition to his radical Marxist agitation as a member of the Workers World Party in the sixties, Flynt took an interest in the more speculative aspects of sci-fi. "I was really thinking myself out of Marxism," he says. "Trying to strip away its assumptions – [Marx's] assumption that a utopia was possible with human beings as raw material." Such musings would bring Flynt close to sci-fi as he considered the revision of the human and what he called "extraterrestrial politics." He mentions a few pamphlets that he wrote and took with him to meetings with sci-fi writers, only to discover, shockingly, that they had no interest in such topics. Instead, conversations drifted quickly to the current state of the book market for sci-fi writing.[2]

I'm interested in this anecdote in the contemporary context given that sci-fi writing has acquired status as quasi-philosophy, as a medium where different worlds are fashioned, sometimes guided by current scientific research, as in so-called "hard" sci-fi. While I don't intend here to examine sci-fi directly, it does allude to the nature of worldmaking and generative aesthetics – the nature of which I hope to illuminate below by engaging with Flynt's work, as well as that of the philosophers Nelson Goodman and Peter Strawson. By doing so, I intend to uncover the meaning of Flynt's critique of the human referenced above.

Coming out of the New York downtown avant-garde of the sixties, Flynt is often mis-categorized as a member of Fluxus – a group he claims to have never have been part of, notwithstanding his close collaboration with George Maciunas. His engagements with philosophy, mathematics, economics, Marxism, experimental music, and concept art – a term he coined in anticipation of the later "conceptual art" – testify to the broad scale of his thought, which could not be confined to just one artistic milieu. His work was guided by an overarching project: nothing less than the *total refashioning of human culture and experience*, as indicated by the title of his, until recently, only published book, *Blueprint For a Higher Civilization* (1975). His project brings together radical empiricism with cognitive nihilism, yielding the sensible-conceptual, interventive approach that characterizes some of his concept art of the sixties. He defines his "meta-technology" project as follows:

Meta-technology addresses the juncture at

actual trajectory of Master Sound

f — frequency f (MS)

frequency range
of Master Sound

time

occurrences of sound A and B
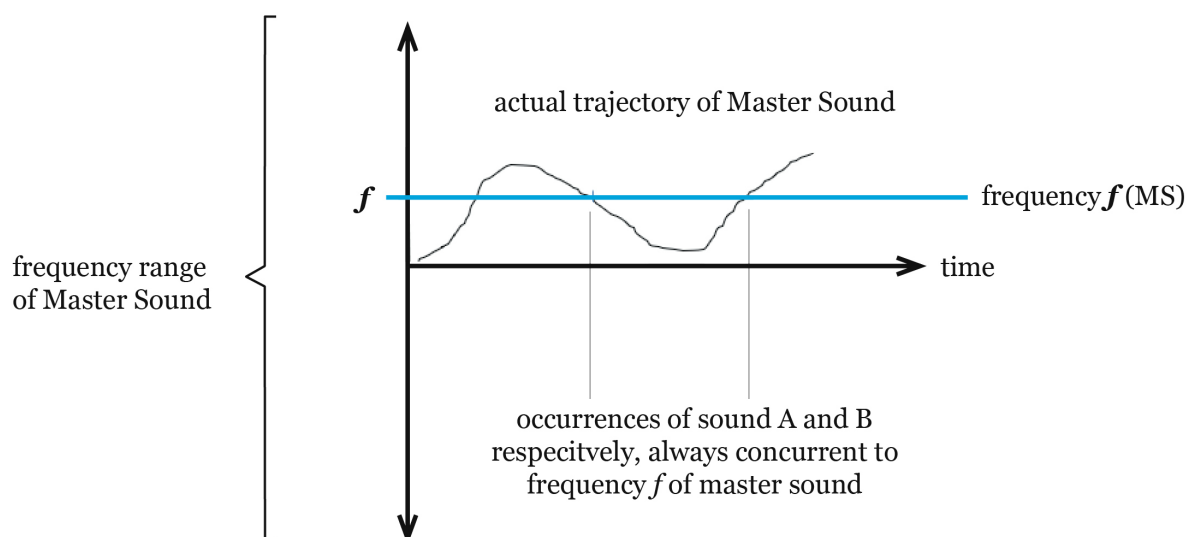respecitvely, always concurrent to
frequency f of master sound

Diagram by the author

which the knower is an experiencing subject, for example – not a detection box. The juncture at which the knower *subjugates* the life-stream by *imposing* a conceptual apparatus on it. (E.g. identitarian logic and quantitative idealization.) ... Proceeding to the point when meta-technology got its name, I coined the term, as I said, in 1979. It is defined as technology **whose field of action is the determination of reality**.[3]

2.

In its original formulation as proposed by the philosopher and writer Max Bense in 1965, generative aesthetics

implies a combination of all operations, rules and theorems which can be used deliberately to produce aesthetic states (both distributions and configurations) when applied to a set of material elements. Hence generative aesthetics is analogous to generative grammar, in so far as it helps to formulate the principles of a grammatical schema – realizations of an aesthetic structure.[4]

Bense's approach concerns the combining of material that has a signifying character into a functional unity – into a work of art. I want to propose a reconceptualization of generative aesthetics that instead concerns a cluster of interrelated, hypothetically transcendental structures of subjective apprehension and comprehension. This reconceptualization belongs more to *aesthesis*, as the study of sensibility and conceptually informed perception, than to the more parochial field of the philosophy of art. While following Bense's notion of the structural character of an investigation of "elements" to be specified, the concept of generative that I am preoccupied with is upstream from that level of investigation. I am instead concerned with the constitution of experience without presupposing the given nature and character of the unities to be combined, instead dealing with the determination of reality out of sensibility and a choice of conceptual frameworks. This understanding of generative aesthetics aims to be a kind of tinkering with the coordinates of experience. I will defend Flynt as an important figure in the history of that tinkering.

In order to better understand the traditional notion of generative aesthetics, it is helpful to examine two very different approaches to the problems of generative aesthetics as I understand the term. The first was developed by

British philosopher Peter Strawson, especially in his 1959 book *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics*. Here he offers a thought experiment involving a "purely auditory world": a world without "given" objecthood, a "no-space world" composed solely of sounds.[5] This thought experiment is a way to bracket the particular way our forms of intuition are entangled; this bracketing isn't the primary objective of Strawson's thought experiment, but rather a means to *test* the persistence of certain properties of the perceptual framework. The second approach to generative aesthetics can be found in American philosopher Nelson Goodman's notion of "world-making." The term encapsulates the "theory ladenness" of our knowledge and judgments, meaning that there's no such a thing as a framework-independent world. This implies that much of how we understand the world is the result of conceptual contraptions of our own making.

3.

Generative aesthetics thus pertains to a reflection on the conditions of experience itself. Strawson's thought experiment invites us to imagine that we don't have bodies – since having a body would entail having space – and that our only means to detect worldly items is through listening. One might ask: if we don't have bodies, what would constitute our personal point of view, or rather our point of listening? In Strawson's thought experiment he brackets the specific means by which "we" have access to sounds and sounds alone. It is only under this condition that we can understand the purely auditory world as a surrogate for a no-space world in the Strawsonian sense. I say "we" in quotes, because in this framework the difference between "I" and "my" surroundings is also put into question.

Within this framework, Strawson asks: if we listen to Sound A, and then to an identical Sound B, do we detect the *same* sound, or two *sounds of the same type*? Can we make this distinction without the additional dimension of a spatial coordinate in order to disambiguate between the two possibilities? Strawson provides a good example of such a disambiguation from ordinary life. Imagine two different orchestras playing the exact same piece of music in two different concert halls at the exact same time. Both orchestras reach the same chord at the same time. Is it the *same* chord? In what sense? We might be inclined to say that they are the same *type* of chord, but not the same *particular* chord, since they are spatially segregated. The point of asking whether Sound A and Sound B are the same in the no-space world is to see if it is possible to make a distinction that is not one of type, but of particulars, without spatial

STROKE-NUMERAL

STROKE

VACANT
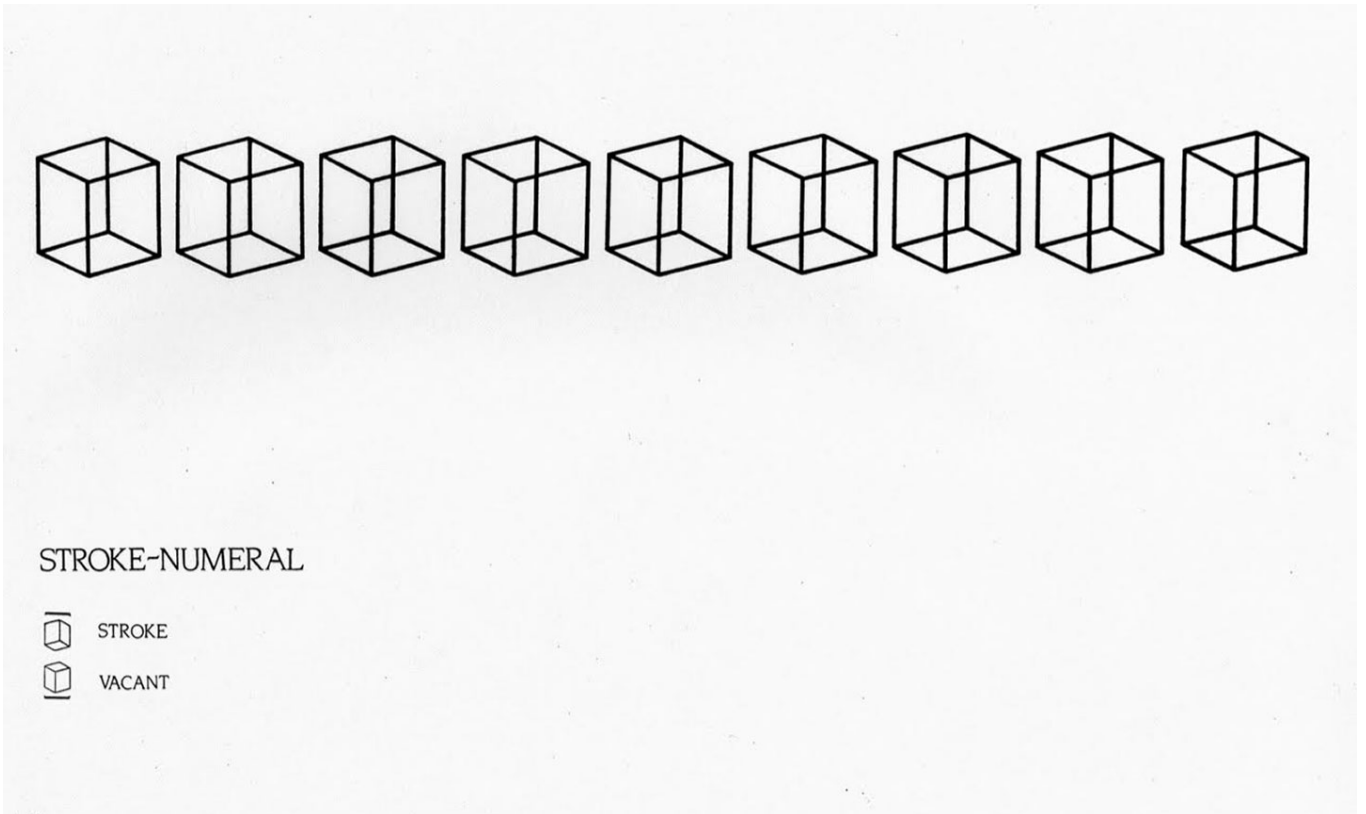
Henry Flynt, *Stroke Numeral,* 1987. Paint on aluminum; 19 x 41 1/2 in. Courtesy of Henry Flynt.

coordinates.

To help with this disambiguation, Strawson imagines that listener "has" a sound of their own, capable of being heard by "others." In addition to this listener-specific sound, and the sounds of others, there is also access to what he calls a master sound (MS). The master sound is a glissando, a sliding sound that goes up and down the audible spectrum. "We" locate ourselves relative to the trajectory of the MS in the world; our sense of "movement" is linked to this trajectory. Now imagine that Sound A and Sound B happen at the same point of the master sound's trajectory. This means that at frequency *f* of the MS, we listen to Sound A. Shortly afterwards, while the MS continues modulating as we "move," we find Sound B correlated with the same frequency *f* of the MS. Would we be inclined to regard Sound B as identical to Sound A – as the same particular thing – because of its localization relative to the MS, assuming there aren't any further timbral differences between them? Is having a master sound as an independent medium a sufficient means for reconstituting, within the purely audible world, an analogue of space, such that a reidentification of particulars would then become possible? And is having a constant sound of our own a sufficient condition for differentiating between ourselves and others?

The situation described is similar to the one depicted in the diagram above. In the diagram one can clearly see the function of the MS: its frequency range literally replaces the y-axis as a criterion of localization – meaning that it functions as a candidate for replacing one of the dimensions of localization, namely space. But the question lingers, and it is a logical one: can one differentiate between Sounds A and B, or identify them, from their relative position to frequency *f* (which functions here as a spatial position) alone?

Strawson's answer is inconclusive, but his thought experiment nonetheless investigates the conditions of our perceptual-conceptual experience. Strawson's intent was to posit a frame of reference different from our own in order to test the survival of the properties of localization and reidentification that are characteristic of our frame of reference. In this sense, Strawson's proposal is a conservative one, in which the departure from an actual frame of reference serves only to validate it. Something quite different will be found in Flynt's approach.

4.

Whereas Strawson is overtly trying to describe the actual categorical structure of experience, explicitly against what he calls revisionary metaphysics, which thrive to replace this

categorical structure with another, in his *Ways of Worldmaking*, Goodman stresses the fact that we live in several different worlds, rather than just one.

> Consider, to begin with, the statements "The sun always moves" and "The sun never moves" which, though equally true, are at odds with each other. Shall we say, then, that they describe different worlds, and indeed that there are as many different worlds as there are such mutually exclusive truths? Rather, we are inclined to regard the two strings of words not as complete statements with truth-values of their own but as elliptical for some such statements as "Under frame of reference A, the sun always moves" and "Under frame of reference B, the sun never moves," statements that may both be true of the same world. Frames of reference, though, seem to belong less to what is described than to systems of description: and each of the two statements relates to what is described to such a system. If I ask about the world, you can offer to tell me how it is under one or more frames of reference. But, if I insist that you tell me how it is apart from all frames, what can you say. We are confined to ways of describing whatever is described.[6]

But even if we're confined to the different descriptions we have, we are not only confined to descriptions. According to Goodman, there are different ways of referring to a scenario besides verbal description. These nonverbal symbolizing practices – art is one example – symbolize not only through denotation but also through classification, expression, and exemplification.

Goodman's "grue paradox," although developed prior to his key writings on world-making, nonetheless helps illuminate the concept.[7] Goodman asks us to imagine, besides the ordinary color predicates "blue" and "green," two further predicates, defined as follows:

> Def1 *grue*: anything that is green if examined before time t and blue after said time.

> Def2 *bleen*: anything that is blue if examined before time t and green after said time.

The point of devising such weird predicates is to challenge existing predicates as the only adequate ones. While one might think of "blue" and "green" as primitive and "grue" and "bleen"

EACH POINT ON THIS LINE IS A COMPOSITION.

Henry Flynt Jan. 1961
reconstruction 1981

Henry Flynt, *Each Point on This Line is a Composition,* 1961 (reconstructed 1981). Ballpoint pen and pencil on paper; 11 x 8 1/2 in. The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, MoMA, New York. Courtesy of Henry Flynt.

as derived, the definitions given above can be reversed in order to give us "green" and "blue" out of "grue" and "bleen" as primitives.

> Def1² *green*: anything that is grue if examined before time t, and bleen after said time.

> Def2² *blue*: anything that is bleen if examined before time t, and grue after said time.

Given that grue was green before time t, and bleen was green after time t, while bleen was blue before time t, and grue was blue after the same time, predicates can be rearranged to form stabilities. Thus, it is possible to rearrange our predicates so that they are derived from the "weird" ones. Thus the argument from derivability doesn't hold.

Goodman then asks if there is a principled reason why we should use the predicate "green" rather than "grue" to refer to emeralds. The problem here is that of the differentiation between projectible and non-projectible predicates. Goodman equates this difference with that between predicates that are lawlike (i.e., likely to constitute regularities), and purely accidental predicates. The following two hypotheses give an example of this difference:

> 1. The copper object that I have on my table is a good electrical conductor. This confirms that copper objects are good electrical conductors.

> 2. The object that I have on my table is made of copper and is a good electrical conductor. This confirms that all the objects that are on my table are good electrical conductors.

To determine which of these statements is correct we need merely examine the properties of the objects on the table. The choice between "green" and "grue" cannot be decided in the same manner, for there isn't an empirical property that could decide for one or the other option. Goodman's answer to his own conundrum is a holistic one: we choose because of the history of a specific predicate – what he calls the degree of its "entrenchment" – and we adjust our regularities to the predicates we use accordingly. As Goodman writes, if we understand the predicates we use as being bound up by rules of use, then

> a rule is amended if it yields an inference

we are unwilling to accept; an inference is rejected if it violates a rule we are unwilling to amend. The process of justification is the delicate one of making mutual adjustments between rules and accepted inferences; and in the agreement achieved lies the only justification needed for either.[8]

From his reflections on the riddle of induction, one gets the sense of the projective character of Goodman's aesthetics as well, which is fully developed in works such as his *Languages of Art*. As Goodman and Catherine Elgin write in their coauthored book *Reconceptions in Philosophy and Other Arts and Sciences*: "The mind is actively engaged in perception just as it is in other modes of cognition. It imposes order on, as much as it discerns order in a domain. Moreover, things do not present themselves to us in any privileged vocabulary or system of categories."[9]

Here a second dimension of generative aesthetics presents itself. While the Strawsonian thought experiment exemplified the downward determination of possible conceptual "moves" from an upstream modification in the sensible contents one has access to, Goodman's endeavor illustrates the upward determination of the categories of a world from the downstream conceptual choice of predicates to be projected. In this sense, Strawson's experiment tinkers with the upstream availability of perceptual contents, while Goodman's deals with the downstream conceptual determination of available perceptual contents.

5.
In a paper analyzing works by LaMonte Young and others, Flynt defines his concept of "constitutive dissociation":

> I find a principle running through these cases which I call constitutive dissociation. Constitutive dissociation presupposes a genre with a standard protocol. In the genre, situations are established by ordainments. (A reality exists because of somebody's rule.) Moreover, it is customary in the genre for situations to have certain aims. A constitutively dissociated situation comes about because the instigator of the situation alters the aims of the genre from the customary aims, without declaring so. Since the traditional aims are foregone, the instigator can evade or replace standard protocol with an inscrutable protocol (a contrived enigma).[10]

The radically nontraditional compositions – or rather compositions – that Flynt examines in this text result from actions and gestures that may or

La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, *Dream House: Sound and Light Environment*, 1993-present; MELA Foundation, 275 Church Street, 3rd Floor, New York City. Photo: Jung Hee Choi. Copyright: Jung Hee Choi, 2009.

may not be determined by a "score," which often takes the form of a linguistic text. They include pieces like those that comprise Young's *Compositions 1960*, such as his famous *#10 (to Bob Morris)*, which reads: "draw a straight line and follow it." These compositions are a considerable departure from the characteristic concept of a musical work as defined within the European tradition: a determined and detailed sound morphology that should to be respected in a concert performance. Some of Young's compositions propose nonmusical situations performed by human performers, as in *#2*, which instructs the performer to build a fire in front of the audience, or *#3*, which instructs the audience to do whatever they wish. Others employ nonhuman participants, like *#5*, which involves releasing a butterfly into the concert space.

Young's pieces create various "dissociated situations" insofar as they "alter the aims" of the concert performance "without declaring so." This leads to a conceptual revision of normative practices. I have referred to this elsewhere as "the normative turn" of the post-Cagean tradition, "a tendency to incorporate the attitudes of treating the work as a work (the act of reading a score, reproducing a score, performing before an audience, etc.) within the work itself."[11] The transparency of the work as work is abandoned, and the very act of "playing a work," its characteristic protocols and ordainments, become the aesthetic material of music. Richard Kostelanetz, referring to Cage's *4′33″*, calls this "inferential art."[12] Such works presents unfamiliar situations that provoke the audience to ask, "Where is the work?" – a question that unleashes a process of searching and forces the audience to adjust their existing concepts. Flynt's own "Work such that no one knows what's going on," comes down to its title and the possible imaginative process that it feeds. What would a piece look like such that no one knows it exists? For pieces that elict such epistemological/ontological questions – what he would later call "meta-technological investigations" – Flynt reserves the predicate "concept art".

Flynt first defined "concept art" in his seminal 1961 essay of the same title:

> "Concept art" is first of all an art of which the material is "concepts," as the material of for ex. music is sound. Since "concepts" are closely bound up with language, concept art is a kind of art of which the material is language. That is, unlike for ex. a work of music, in which the music proper (as opposed to notation, analysis, a.s.f.) is just sound, concept art proper will involve

language.[13]

The text advances an important critique of the European paradigm of concert music, which Flynt calls "structure art":

> Much structure art is a vestige of the time when for ex. music was believed to be knowledge, a science which had important things to say in astronomy a.s.f. Contemporary structure artists, on the other hand, tend to claim the kind of cognitive value for their art that conventional contemporary mathematicians claim for mathematics. Modern examples of structure art are the fugue and total serial music.

For Flynt, music is a "structure art" because sounds are made to operate as vehicles for maintaining and communicating an abstract "structure," irreducible to the sensible presence of the sounds. In his later text "Against 'Participation': A Total Critique of Culture," Flynt clarifies this critique:

> My earliest surviving survey is "Concept Art," from 1961 (hereafter CA). In that document, my purpose in criticizing structure art, and in undermining mathematics, was to announce concept art as a new genre. Roughly, concept art explores the aesthetics of categorization, in works which serve as object-critiques of the exact sciences. (It was this last requirement which was never understood by the artists who adopted my phrase for their "word pieces.")[14]

For Flynt, structure art involves an underdevelopment both of structure and of the sensible content of the art. This results from the mutual tethering of one to the other. Insofar as music seeks to satisfy both poles (structural and sensible/musical), at the same time, both are diluted: structure becomes impoverished as it needs to be incarnated in sounds, and music becomes impoverished to the extent that it obeys a logic external to sounds themselves. Concept art is a way of releasing the abstract structure from the sensible carcass; when concepts are freed from incarnation, it is possible to create more complex and interesting logical structures.

Flynt saw concept art as occupying a higher threshold of abstraction above constitutive dissociations as such. He writes:

> If concept art was not a label for word pieces, neither was it a label for all art that

was imaginative or thinky. Concept art was much more specific – and in an ironic sense academic – than that. You had to know David Hilbert and Rudolf Carnap as philosophers of logic and mathematics to understand my springboard. You had to engage with logic as an intellectual activity. (The logic of the creation of abstract entities by stipulation – as with Gottlob Frege's creation of the integers 0 and 1 as abstract entities in Foundations of Arithmetic.) What did Hilbert and Carnap do? Implicitly, they cut the content out of mathematics, leaving only a formal shell. Cage, anyone?[15]

In that sense, many of the word pieces as constitutively dissociated situations fall into the category of the "downstream" revision of concepts, but with an important caveat: the reconceptualizations do not attempt to bring about logical consistency and relative closure, but, on the contrary, to *unbind the inferential pathways* of traditional practice. If we understand the ontological status of an artwork as the result of specific forms of *doing* that are always conceptually laden, then constitutive dissociations are a means of *world-unmaking* that dissolve the connections believed to be essential for certain practices, potentially yielding unheard of practices. The unmaking of worlds offers an occasion for the rewiring of the inferential links that form an anterior practice into a (still undetermined) posterior one.[16]

6.

Such a procedure might undermine our usual sense-based determinations of objects. A good example of this is Flynt's piece *Stroke Numeral* (1987), which hijacks a concept from the foundations of mathematics in order to produce what seems like an art piece, while in fact challenging the mathematical purview of David Hilbert's original concept. Flynt explains the mathematical concept of stroke numerals in his text "The Apprehension of Plurality":

> Stroke-numerals replace the traditional answer to the question of what a number is. The stroke-numeral "IIIIII" is a concrete semantics for the sign "6," and at the same time can serve as a sign in place of "6." The problem of positive whole numbers as abstract beings is supposedly avoided by inventing e.g., a number-sign, a numeral, for six, which is identically a concrete semantics for six. Let me elaborate a little further. A string of six copies of a token having no internal structure is used as the numeral "6," the sign for six. Thus the

numeral is itself a collection which supposedly demands a count of six, thereby showing its meaning.[17]

In *Stroke Numeral*, instead of six nonambiguous marks he presents us with nine Necker Cubes – cubes that can be seen from two different perspectives at once, from above and from below. Flynt also provides a notation that attributes values "stroke" or "vacant" to each cube, depending on whether they appear to be seen from above or below when we look at them. The resulting numeral is the sum of the values attributed by the spontaneous perception of the cubes. This introduces a fundamental ambiguity in which the same inscription can have different values, ruining the tentative perspicuity of Hilbert's method.

Flynt detected a similar effect in Marian Zazeela's installation *The Magenta Lights* (1987/2000), which he analyzed at length:

> Substantially, each of the mobiles in *The Magenta Lights* was white aluminum annulus with a single radial cut. Each strip hung from three points so as to become helical. From opposite sides of the two mobiles in a quadrant, beams of magenta light and blue light were directed at the mobiles. The mobiles were moved by slight convection currents and ventilation – and thus were moved independently and non-deterministically. At rare moments the two mobiles in a quadrant would come into phase and then the line of six images would exhibit isometric mirror symmetry about the midpoint …
>
> The installation's illusory character allowed one to take it as an epistemology laboratory – as an opportunity to reexamine commonsense perceptions of the object … In the twentieth century academic philosophy brought forth an epistemology which proposed that one could, by looking properly at what one saw in front of oneself, perceptually infer the uniquely correct substantial object or display … One possible label for this academic epistemology is "comprehension." My reflections militate against comprehension. They contribute to a new enterprise which finds conventional reality to be a fiction, not at the level of theoretical conceptualization, but at the level of perceived objects.[18]

The full epistemological consequences of constitutive dissociations, as seen by Flynt, can

be found in this quote. While Flynt regards concept art pieces as "object-critiques of the exact sciences" – proposing local disintegrative-reintegrative procedures at the level of concepts – he understands Zazeela's work as yielding a possible reconceptualization of our field of experience. In this reconceptualization, the identity of particular substantial objects isn't taken for granted. The "object world" – i.e., our habitual categorizations and judgements – is bracketed, allowing the perceptual field to be renewed.

7.

In an interview with Catherine Christer Hennix, Flynt offers a striking explanation for the basis of his cognitive nihilist program:

> From my point of view – if you want to make an issue out of semantics – this is the profound issue. … How would I understand the question whether there is a substantial glass other than the scopic glass – you know the conclusion … that the question itself forces a yes answer. *This does not mean that a proof of the existence of the external world has been given. It meant that the proposition of the existence of the external world would verify itself even if it were false!*[19]

This kind of built-in verifiability, embedded in the very way the question is formulated, leads Flynt to reject mainstream mathematical and philosophical forms of knowledge and instead adopt a militant cognitive nihilism.

Thus, cognitive nihilism is not here a whim, but a kind of discipline. It takes seriously what Flynt presents as "traps" within our own reasoning, that force us to answer "yes," which then disqualify the question as legitimate. Legitimate empirical questions can be answered "yes" or "no." Flynt goes on to say that much of what we take to be "knowledge" about the world should be disqualified because of the compulsiveness of the answer – such as "Is there an outside world?" and "Is there language?" Once their status as knowledge is disqualified, the gates are open to the noncognitive tinkering that constitutive dissociations are an example of.

Whereas this serves Flynt as a means to articulate his global cognitive nihilist thesis, for me the main thrust of constitutive dissociations is methodological in a different sense. They are a logical tool for the reconfiguration of contents in both the conceptual and sensible orders. They are an "epistemological laboratory," as Flynt himself described them. Constitutive dissociations are a meta-protocol for constructing practices and worldviews that can be further tested against one another.

This "further testing" suggests that this proposal is compatible with a form of *realism* – with one caveat. "Realism" here is not understood as the commitment to a complete reality to be fully and finally described by our symbolizing practices. Rather, this "testing" dimension leads to an *abductive* form of realism, wherein further hypothesizing can always yield different results, depending on how each new piece of information fits into the net of previously accepted ones – or on the necessary reconceptualization of the net itself, while maintaining maximum explanatory power. Within this localized tinkering – not without global consequences if its results are accepted – Flynt's world-unmaking reveals its solidarity with world-making.

The compatibility of Flynt's world-unmaking and Goodman's concept of knowledge as creation under specific constraints testifies to the reach of Flynt's conceptual contraptions, beyond the globally skeptic conclusions he might want to draw from them. In this abductive form of realism, a place exists for constitutive dissociations as a means for reconfiguring social and perceptual data – in the sense that every unbinding gives way to new bindings that reconfigure global aesthetic, political, philosophical, and scientific worlds.

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1
See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yiM9FRzxBU.

2
"I found out about a science fiction meeting that was held in Newark. So I went over there and attended the thing … I was carrying my leaflets much in the same way I carried my 'down with art' to the W.A.R. (Women Artists in Revolution) meeting. And what I found when I got there was that these fellows were exclusively interested in science fiction as a commercial literary genre" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yiM9FRzxBU.

3
Henry Flynt "Preface to Collected Writings on Meta-Technology," 2006 http://www.henryflynt.org/meta_tech/metatech_preface.htm . Bold in original.

4
Max Bense, "The Projects of Generative Aesthetics," in *Cybernetics, Art and Ideas*, ed. Jasia Reichardt (Studio Vista, 1971).

5
Peter Strawson, "Sounds," chap. 2 in *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* (Routledge, 1959).

6
Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking* (Hackett, 1978), 2−3.

7
Nelson Goodman, *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*, 4th ed. (Harvard University Press, 1983), 59−83.

8
Goodman, *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*, 64.

9
Catherine Elgin and Nelson Goodman, *Reconceptions in Philosophy and Other Arts and Sciences* (Hackett, 1988), 6−7.

10
Henry Flynt, "La Monte Young in New York," in *Sound and Light: La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela*, ed. William Duckworth and Richard Fleming (Bucknell University Press, 2012), 85.

11
The standard reading of the Cagean gesture is that it dispenses with the subjective tastes of the composer, and by doing so, opens the work to an assubjective nature in its manner of operation. I suggest inverting the line of reasoning and instead see how such a gesture opens the work to exhibiting the interiority of the normative functioning of the concert ritual, which Flynt's constitutive dissociations anticipated. J.-P. Caron, "L'indétermination à l'œuvre" (doctoral dissertation, forthcoming). See also: J.-P. Caron, "Art and the suspension of subjectivity" https://tripleampersand.org/art-suspension-subjectivity/ .

12
Richard Kostelanetz, "Inferential Art," in *John Cage*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (Da Capo, 1991).

13
Henry Flynt, "Essay: Concept Art," 1961 http://www.henryflynt.org/aesthetics/conart.html.

14
Henry Flynt, "Against 'Participation': A Total Critique of Culture," 1994.

15
Henry Flynt, "Foreward," in *Concept art 2001 Concept Art 50 years* (Grimmmuseum Berlin, 2011), 12.

16
I must here mention Nick James Scavo's provocative essay "Against Worldbuilding," which shares many of the preoccupations of this essay, if not its conclusions. *Tiny Mix Tapes,* December 13, 2018 https://www.tinymixtapes.com/features/2018-against-worldbuilding.

17
Henry Flynt, "The Apprehension of Plurality," 2 https://aworkstation.com/decades-old-dream-house-sound-installation-in-danger-of-closing-artists-live-like-this- their-entire-lives/.

18
Henry Flynt, "The Lightworks of Marian Zazeela," in *Sound and Light*, 106−7, 116. There's a good photograph of this installation here https://aworkstation.com/decades-old-dream-house-sound-installation-in-danger-of-closing-artists-live-like-this- their-entire-lives/.

19
Henry Flynt, "Philosophy of Concept Art," interview by Catherine Christer Hennix, in *Concept Art: 50 Years*, ed. Henry Flynt and Catherine Christer Hennix (Grimmuseum, 2011), 37. Italics in original.