SUBVERSES / Eleanor Ivory Weber

A rough chronology of instances

September 2017 through February 2019

[a.pass research trajectory]

<u>The World Today All In The Mind</u> (2017-)
Excursion for "Halfway Days" (mid-Block presentations); instruction-based durational reading and listening exercise held during opening hours at the Royal Library of Belgium reading room, Brussels, 23 October 2017. A predictive excursion to the unknown, is it possible?
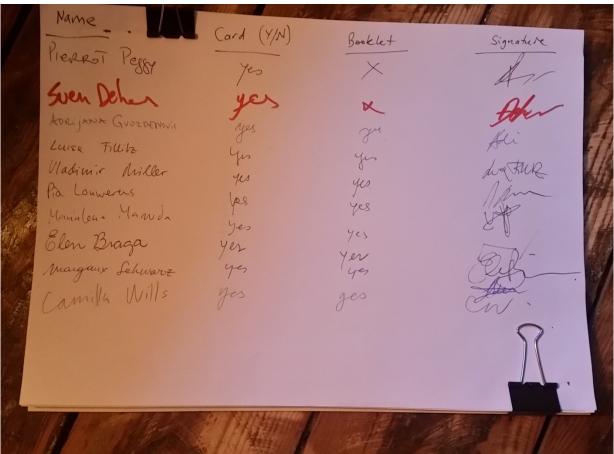
Audio and audio-to-text sources comprised excerpts from the preceding three weeks of broadcasting on ABC Radio National, Australia, ordered chronologically, including:

- Four transcripts from the weekly program *All in the Mind*, exploring "all things mental" (30 minutes, live on Sundays at 5:00pm AEST): "The gambling zone" (1 October 2017); "Therapy outside the box" (8 October 2017); "Emotional CPR" (15 October 2017); "Life as a brain surgeon" (22 October 2017): http://abc.net.au/radionational/programs/allinthemind/.
- Audio downloaded daily from the daily world news program *The World Today* and edited by week, one story per day, for example: https://soundcloud.com/cicatrise/the-world-today-week-1/s-iJg7V.

Photos: Eleanor Weber.

Ong, W.J., 1982. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. Reprint 2002. New York, NY: Routledge. (2017-)
Every sentence containing the word "orality" in Walter J. Ong's Orality and Literacy *(1982), in sequential order.*

Published in the Bâtard Festival reader, *Into the Pores of the Brain* (eds. Henry Andersen, Eva Decaesstecker, Hannes Dereere, Bryana Fritz, Hana Miletić), Brussels, October 2017.

Performed in *'CUZ WORDS*, event organised by feeelings (Camille Gérenton & Anouchka Oler) at Triangle France, Marseille, 18 November 2017.

Performed in *rosa rosa rosae rosae*, exhibition and moments curated by Pauline Hatzigeorgiou at SB34–The Pool, Brussels, 15 February 2019.

Photo: www.feeelingsfeeelings.com.

Play (2017-)
End-of-Block presentation comprising a live reading of the transcript of my end-of-Block presentation, recorded two nights earlier alone in my room. Excerpt:

"*Play, ah voila, OK, now it's recording. OK, so … The idea for this presentation would be, or rather is, erm, which occurred to me quite late at night, yesterday, so we're talking about late November 2017, um, the idea for this presentation would be that in fact that I do the presentation already in my room, which is number 1-6-3 at the, er, rue Haute number 15 in St-Erme, and I then do, yeah, I present my research to you, basically, to this recorder, and then I, um, I play it back for my presentation [on Wednesday 29 November]. I may or may not do some, mild editing work to this document [whether to the text itself or the audio], 'cause it felt like, maybe, that was necessary.*"

Performed at Performing Arts forum (PAF), St-Erme, France, 29 November 2017. The live reading included recorded elements from the introduction to my reading at Triangle France, Marseille (see page 3).

Performed by Lydia McGlinchey at *Subtracted Seduction*, event organised by a.pass at Hectolitre, Brussels, 1 & 2 February 2019.
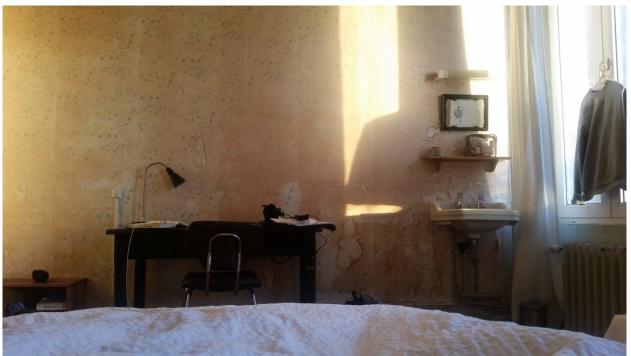

Photo: Eleanor Weber.

<u>Unfree Movement</u> (2017-)
Physical practice to music, comprising repetitive movements towards "establishing a pattern", starting with walking around the periphery of the space. As the habit of one movement sets in, new movements are cumulatively added. Performing Arts forum (PAF), St-Erme, France, 1 December 2017.
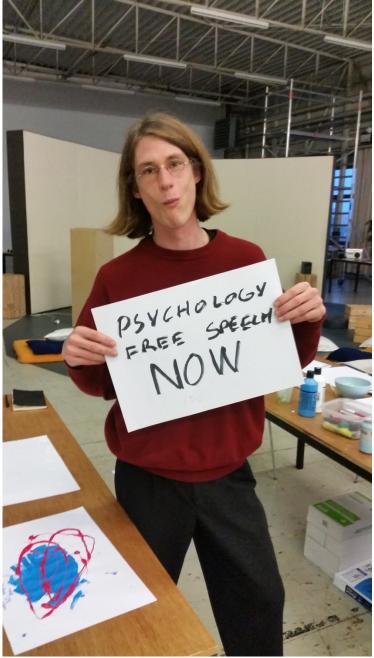Special thanks to Sven Dehens and Leo Kay.

Photo: Eleanor Weber.

<u>Glossolalien missive</u> (2018-)
This work, which exists in several and ongoing variations, applies the same editing protocol to excerpts of four source-essays (by Anne Carson, Michel de Certeau, Amy Ireland and Cornelia Vismann). The sources coincide primarily in that I read them around the same time: winter 2017-18. Together they produced a question in me about what concretely connected them beyond this temporal coincidence. I felt their combined effect to be greater than their parts and sought a way of apprehending this effect non-analytically.

I went to the print-outs, which I had variously underlined and commenced the following process:
The first underlined section (that is, individual underlined words or everything contained in a continuously underlined group of words) of *each* essay is retyped from the print-outs into a Microsoft Word document. Each section is kept distinct from other sections and retains autonomy. This procedure is repeated for the second underlined section of *each* essay, then the third underlined section of *each* essay, then the fourth, fifth, sixth, etc., until there are no more underlined sections left for *any* of the four essays (this happens to be after the 29th underlined section of de Certeau). This means the essays with fewer underlined sections (probably, though not necessarily, those with fewer words overall) have several "blank" sections, symbolised by §, while other essays continue to unfold. Next, maintaining the author's word-order, each section is formatted into a vertical list of words; all punctuation except capital letters is removed. For each section, when a word appears for the second, third, fourth (etc.) time it joins the line of the first word of its kind. In other words: in each section, the word that appears closest to the top of the list collects beside it each successive word of its kind.

With some humour, I refer to this writing protocol as "scarcity at the bottom".

The unpredictable repetition creates a stuttering effect that disrupts traditional reading techniques through explicating non-consensual syntax. The words that appear replicated together are inevitably either important to the syntax of the original text or to its content and theme.

The numbering system of *Glossolalien missive/It–subject* makes a paltry nod to legal logic. Numbers organise information in a neurotic fashion because they signify an order outside themselves, outside language, which paradoxically cannot be signified–numbers signify nothing but empty orders. I am interested in the tension of the subjective and the lexical that the numbering system corroborates. Seeking to induce the banalised paranoia of the present, where meaning is presumed to be found anywhere and words are taken for reality not as its ciphers, *Glossolalien missive/It–subject* insists that neither the writer nor the reader nor the

original author can know what has been said.

What is "extreme" within such a neurotic logic is precisely how it is apprehended as a mild symptom and not the defining paradigm of writing.

Performed by Camille Gérenton, Karl Lydahl, Camilla Wills and myself for *Aftertaste*, 24-hour event curated by Margaux Schwarz at Établissement d'en face, Brussels, 17 February 2018.

Published (as *It-subject*) in *Jacket2: Extreme Texts* (ed. Divya Victor), University of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, Spring 2019.

Published (as *Glossolalian missive (post-Aftertaste)*) in *SALT.* (eds. Hannah Regel, Thea Smith, Jala Wahid), Issue #10, London UK, April 2019.

Performed (as *Subverses II (Glossolalia basement)*, part 1 [de Certeau] only) at *Subtracted Seduction*, event organised by a.pass at Hectolitre, Brussels, 1 & 2 February 2019.

Photo: unknown sender via Telegram.

Smog I (2018-)

Smog I (Welcome speech for the guard) was first performed at 00:00 midnight on 17 February 2018 at Établissement d'en face, Brussels. The protocol consists of a reading of philosopher Peter Sloterdijk's *Terror from the Air* (2009, 112 pages, trans. Amy Patton & Steve Corcoran) in its entirety. In this instance, it was publicised as a "group reading" and I read alone with listeners coming in and out as they pleased (excluding artist Alex Chalmers who chose to remain for the whole performance). I took one break to use the bathroom. The book's time (via my voice) was about 3'45". The reading occurred parallel to the 24-hour soundtrack composed by Neither for the *Aftertaste* event.

The MIT Press: '*This terror from the air inaugurated an era in which the main idea was no longer to target the enemy's body, but their environment. From then on, what would be attacked in wartime as well as in peacetime would be the very conditions necessary for life. […] Sloterdijk goes on to describe the offensive of modern aesthetics, aesthetic terrorism from Surrealism to Malevich – an "atmo-terrorism" in the arts that parallels the assault on environment that had originated in warfare.*'

When it was decided the "Halfway Days" would take place over the span of 32 hours, therefore encompassing the midnight hours, I seized the occasion to re-present *Smog I* on 17 October 2018 (the date introducing a new constraint into this piece: it must occur on the 17th of the month). This time, given the overlapping nature of the "Halfway Days" programming, the reading was paralleled by drone music by composer Charlie Usher. Before the reading commenced, I asked each listener (including myself) to open the book at random and read one sentence from it, out loud; I asked them, furthermore, to hold one word from that sentence in their mind throughout the session. Due to my fatigue and an open invitation, other readers sporadically took over reading duty, including: Deborah Birch, Maurice Meewisse, Laura Pante. This reading lasted approximately four hours.
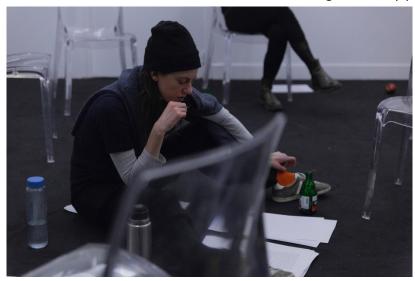

Photo: Margaux Schwarz.

Sub Text Labour (2018-)

A long-term writing, performance and publication project, *Sub Text Labour* (STL) is the term I use to describe the multiple aspects of my writing and editing work, including many of those described above. STL entails: Submission to language (in my case, predominantly English language) and its concrete constraints; generation of text (i.e. sequences of words that produce meaning); bodily engagement (taking writing as physical labour in time as well as highlighting the verbal production of linguistic sounds as separate to printed words); emphasis on sub-text (that which cannot be pre-determined nor wholly defined by the author but which is radically subjective and invisible).

STL puts the emphasis on the execution of protocols, which are derived from a question the text poses to the writer, or the writer has for the text – a problematic. Plainly put: Invented rules of editing (e.g. elimination, repetition, substitution of words/sentences) are systematically applied to existing texts (the selection of which is very important to the outcome) in order to produce completely new texts and thus meanings. (See *Glossolalien Missive* [page 6], for example.) The "writing" process thus becomes laborious and repetitive, shifting the traditional relation of writerly expression-defined time towards a task-oriented temporality.

The resulting texts can exist both as printed matter (in a poetic/literary context) or as scripts for performance (for one or several voices). I have also commenced a practice of one-on-one or small-group sessions, wherein together we work through a significant text, chosen by participants, in order to uncover some of the sub-textual implications of their choice and the text itself.

During the "Halfway Days" of February 2018, I conducted such small group sessions, nominally towards the as-yet non-existent "Sub Text Labour Manifesto". Having asked participants to bring along one page of "significant" text, the guidelines were as follows:

1) Why this text? What is significant about this text? What does it mean for you? What do you want to know about the text (what is your question to it)?
2) What kind of protocol might help you better understand the text? What elements seem to stand out to you?
3) Labour process: Having decided the protocol, submit the text to it. Note: the protocol might be a writerly, readerly or listenerly one (what mode suits?).
4) What does the new text tell you about yourself, about the text; what new knowledge (sub-text) does it produce?

What follows occurs through discussion, some protocols developed include:

- word closest to the centre of the para-nodal (space in between the nodes created from letters "o" and "c") (Nicolas Galeazzi)
- reordering sentences from shortest to longest (Philippine Hoegen)
- letter "I" creates vector to surrounding words, above, below, on either side and diagonally (Pia Louwerens)
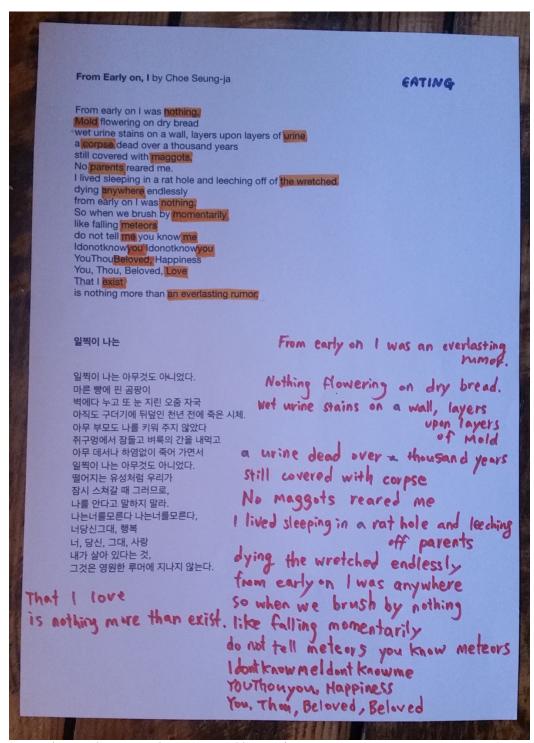- no personal pronouns; re-edit accordingly (Femke Snelting)

Photo: Eleanor Weber (protocol by Eunkyung Jeong).

Livres Parlés: A Public Character (2018)
Typographer Ludivine Loiseau on *Livres Parlés*: "The principle is: teachers and external speakers are invited through a book to introduce it to the public. This moment opens the publications to a space-time of exchange looking for other views on the book object and trying to reconnect it with the practice."
I presented artist Shannon Ebner's book *A Public Character* (about the letter "A"), by reading, from cover forwards, every letter "A" and every word that contains that letter, sequentially. I timed myself and stopped when the timer announced 20'00".
Erg–école de recherche graphique, Brussels, 8 March 2018.

https://vimeo.com/271058727

Photo: Frédéric Dupont/erg.

Disappearing the straight mind (2015-)

Due for republication in Melbourne art journal *un Magazine*, my essay "Disappearing the straight mind: witches, monsters, zombies, strangers" (first published in *Hybridize or Disappear* [ed. João Laia], Mousse Publishing 2015) was retracted two days before printing, following substantial track-changes commenting, especially from two sub-editors. At the time, I made a sequential script including my essay and all the editor's and both sub-editors' comments (which total more words than the entire essay: almost 3000). This was never aired.

Three years later I was commissioned by curator Joel Mu to contribute a zine to his gallery M.I/mi1glissé's exhibit *Posts Paris Ass* at Paris Ass Book Fair, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 16-18 March 2018. I used the ROT13 cipher on just four letters (corresponding to each of the four given names in the essay-comments-script) to create the zine *Minus 4 vox, or: without four wordsmiths* (2018), which includes "Disnccrnring thr strnight mind: 'this mny or dnngrrous'". The zine is an edition of four and has a cover in collaboration with artist Camilla Wills.
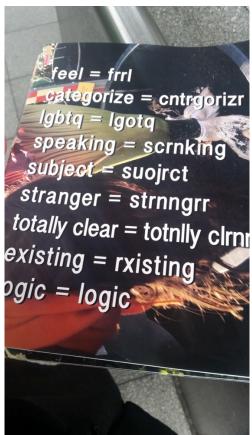

Photo: Eleanor Weber.

The publication concludes with an alphabetical "list of good words" – that is, all the words retaining their integrity, those not affected by the ROT13 protocol. *List of good words* (2018), performed by Anastasia Freygang, 15 April 2018:
https://soundcloud.com/cicatrise/list-of-good-words/s-uljxF

My end-of-Block presentation in late March 2018, at Performing Arts Forum (PAF), St-Erme, France, began:

"There is a story, which I'll tell shortly, this includes four people in a script, but you will only hear three of them – I have removed myself from the vocalised version. You can read my voice, in the print-out later, if you want. […] There are several punctuations, which I ask each one of us to keep in mind. Some of them are silent, they exist in the mind, as figures controlling meaning, even when we can't hear them (or forget their significance), they have influence, they demand our work. Some of them may come to be voiced, and then, we should ask ourselves why. I thought: the blind-spot of my research is punctuation. Punctuation as a code of control. […] (normally I wouldn't tell you what I'm doing), just the comments, none of it is my words."
The reading included a repetitive electronic accompaniment.
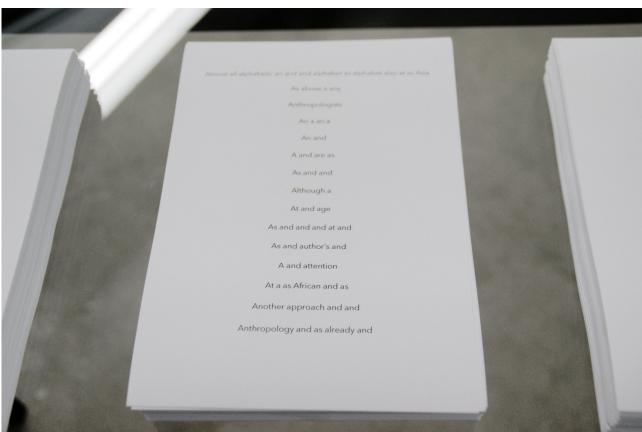

Photos: Eunkyung Jeong.

Seven poems or "I would say (write)" [Ong] (2019)

The results of the "orality" protocol (see page 3) are submitted to another process whereby all sentences beginning with each of the letters spelling the word "orality" are extracted and grouped with their type. Subsequently, all words not beginning with that letter are deleted. There being no sentence starting with the letter "r", the sound-equivalent is sought and found in the "wr" of "writing", twice only. The "r" in Walter Ong's "orality" is the exception that proves the wrule.

Exhibited in *rosa rosa rosae rosae*, curated by Pauline Hatzigeorgiou, SB34–The Pool, Brussels, 10 January – 15 February 2019.

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Photos: Yoann Van Parys.