

Craig Dworkin

## Poetry Without Organs

In Peter Manson's *Adjunct: an Undigest* three of the most distinctive currents of recent poetry converge in a disorienting collage, their flows diverted into thousands of baroque tributaries of eddying, non-laminar torque. The book opens:

The game of Life played on the surface of a torus. Guilt. Concept album about garlic. Some verbs allow clitic climbing and others do not. The natural gas produced was radioactive, which made it unattractive for the home user. Jimmy Jewell is dead. But we are all Lib-Labs now, and in 1997 New Labour's triumph will free Labour history from its sectarian socialist and classbound cocoon and incorporate it fully into British history. Athletic Celerity. Martin McQuillan sings chorus to *Tubthumping* by Chumbawamba during paper on Derrida, apparently. Eric Fenby is dead. Manet's *Olympia* as still from X-rated Tom and Jerry cartoon. Julian Green is dead. Dick Higgins is dead. Must try not to get killed before finishing this because nobody else's going to be able to read my handwriting.<sup>1</sup>

and continues in that mode of paratactic *non-sequitur* for another seventy-five pages and three or four thousand further sentences.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Manson, *Adjunct: an Undigest* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Review, 2004) 1.

The most immediately obvious correlate for such writing is the “new sentence,” a style identified with Language Poetry and cultivated in the 1980s by writers such as Lyn Hejinian, Steve McCaffery, and Ron Silliman.<sup>2</sup> The sentence, in that mode, constitutes the basic unit of composition. In and of themselves, however, the “new” sentences tend to be unmarked: syntactically straightforward, tonally flattened, predominantly declarative, and often simply truncated phrases naming objects. Consequently, the interest of such texts arises not so much from the individual sentences themselves as from the artifice of their composition. Initially, such works rely on the frisson of the paratactic skip or glitch between sentences, as the unshakeable readerly habit of referentially relating any two neighboring sentences is repeatedly invited and then refused. The activity of reading thus comes to incorporate a cyclic series of mid-sentence revisions. In addition to that repeated paratactic tic—the ‘fit’ of sentences, in both senses of the word—a similarly syncopated play of coherence and disjunction subsequently unfolds at a different scale, across larger passages. Certain phrases repeat, with variations and permutations, and more conventionally coherent stories can be pieced together from widely dispersed fragments spaced over many pages. These associations allow patterns and structures to emerge against the foreground of local incoherence. Pointing readers anaphorically to previous sentences and creating the expectation of future returns, these repetitions underscore the degree to which ‘reference’ in such works tends to be textual, and that any ‘narrative’ tends to be about the development of the text itself—a story of *writing* rather than anything written *about*. Indeed, “new sentence” texts typically diminish or radically distend referential narrative in favor of local textual effect, orienting

<sup>2</sup> See, for example: Lyn Hejinian, *My Life* (Providence: Burning Deck, 1980; revised and expanded edition Los Angeles: Sun & Moon, 1987); Steve McCaffery, *The Black Debt* (Vancouver: Nightwood Editions, 1989); Ron Silliman, *Ketjak* (Oakland: This Press, 1978), and *Tjanting* (Great Barrington: The Figures, 1981; reissued Applecross: Salt Publishing, 2002).

readerly attention to the artifice of the writing itself. And furthermore, any stories the reader is able to reconstruct from widely spaced fragments tend to be exceedingly banal (someone sits in a chair and writes with a ball point pen, a child sees a bird at a zoo, and so on).

However easily *Adjunct* can be assimilated to the tradition of the “new sentence”—a comparison Manson invites with a number of references to Silliman throughout the text—the book is equally indebted to two other literary trends. By including large amounts of found material, *Adjunct* takes part in the so-disant “uncreative” conceptual poetics that emerged in the 1990s. Building on the tolerance for disjunction and non-expressive *écriture* that Language Poetry had promoted in the previous decades, conceptual writing looked to traditions in post-war music and the visual arts as well, finding the permission for wholesale textual appropriation and reframing that allowed it to admit a degree of transcription unprecedented in poetry. In relation to *Adjunct*, the most apposite work in this appropriative tradition is Kenneth Goldsmith’s *No. 111 2.7.93-10.20.96*.<sup>3</sup> Begun in February 1993 (as its unwieldy title indicates), just a few months before Manson started work on *Adjunct*, Goldsmith’s book was written in two stages. First, he accumulated a large amount of ambient source material, from snatches of personal conversation and email messages to excerpts from a range of media: books and newspapers, radio and television, and above all the usenet groups of a nascent internet. Then Goldsmith organized that material according to pre-established rules, sorting it into chapters according to syllable count and alphabetizing the entries within each chapter.

According to the book’s subscript, *Adjunct* took twice as long to complete as *No. 111* (a Joycean seven years, in Manson’s case), but the process was quite similar.<sup>4</sup> Manson constructed

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth Goldsmith, *No. 111 2.7.92-10.20.96* (Great Barrington: The Figures, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 76.

the book largely through the accumulation of a large quantity of source material, including diary-like jottings, quotidian observations, and a range of found material, from library catalogues to product packaging labels. In fact, much of *Adjunct* has its origin in tabloid newspapers, some of which Manson assembled into a related work of colorful collage with newsprint pasted over a notebook page, framing cut-out photographs with détourned text.<sup>5</sup> Although the final work would be published under the sign of poetry, that notebook construction is more indebted to the DIY post-punk aesthetic of 'zines and the dictaphone audio-collages of Mark E. Smith than to anything published as "poetry" (tellingly, there are more mentions of Smith and The Fall in *Adjunct* than there are to Silliman and *Tjanting*). In *No. 111*, the rhetorical conventions of usenet dialogues and discussions lead to jarring tonal shifts, as entries switch suddenly to conventions of abbreviation and slang, or angry retorts erupt without their provocation. The sources for *Adjunct* leave their imprint on the final work in the same way. Like all genre writing, the stylized language of the tabloid, with its mini-genres of captions and headlines, carries the uncanny aura of being always already ironically quoted to some extent. Re-contextualized in *Adjunct*, that language is raised to another power of citation, something like a third-degree of reference: a quotation of a quotation of a quotation. The shifts of distance and perspective in *Adjunct*, accordingly, can be disorienting, with sources always suggested but always uncertain. Moreover, passages sometimes seem to reveal the context for earlier sentences, but they just as often cast doubt on the presumed source or ostensible subject of previous entries, until the reader finds it increasingly difficult to know what Manson has written himself and what he has merely recorded, or to distinguish the falsely intimate address of public language from the coldly unemotional register in which Manson jots

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.petermanson.com/Adjunctcollage.htm>

genuinely personal material, the observed from the confessional, voyeurism from exhibitionism.

Whatever the source of its sentences, the process of retranscription—from found sources to *Adjunct*, often by way of an intermediate pocket notebook—is where Manson’s project takes form. The thousands of phrases that fill the 152 page notebook dedicated to the project were methodically arranged, and that redistribution of previously generated material in *Adjunct* announces the book’s affiliation with a third major trend in recent poetry. The placement of the sentences in *Adjunct* was made according to a random number generator, which determined their dispersal. Specifically, by multiplying the number generator’s three decimal figure output by the number of pages in the project’s notebook, Manson obtained a page number and a rough estimate of where on the page the entry should be placed (as result such as 14.2, for example, would place the entry a fifth of the way down on page 14).<sup>6</sup> The organization of the sentences is thus strictly determined but unpredictable, and Manson could not have predicted which sentences would appear next to one another. In this respect, *Adjunct* takes its place in the tradition of ‘chance generated’ forms such as John Cage’s mesostics and Jackson Mac Low’s diastics, both of which used predetermined rules to sort and organize source texts. Not by chance, both Mac Low and Cage are mentioned in *Adjunct*.

Although this formal aspect of the text’s construction is not immediately evident to the reader, its effects can nonetheless be felt. Manson decided that if the page or line indicated by the number generator were already filled, the sentence would be placed on the next available line.<sup>7</sup> One collateral effect of this rule is that later entries tend to be clustered closer together in the final text, so that although the procedure for each entry is uniform, and although the statistical spread is equally random in mathematical terms, *Adjunct* appears to contain occasional

<sup>6</sup> Peter Manson, personal correspondence, 24 February, 2005.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Manson, personal correspondence, 24 February, 2005.

pockets of greater order and organization. Moreover, Manson alerts the reader to the presence of some latent form, however invisible in its own right, by including sentences that discuss their own mode of composition: “Print out several pages of random numbers to make this easier,” and “7.2.97 realise that the birthday paradox is the reason why I’ve always worried that the random number generator I’ve been using for this wasn’t random.”<sup>8</sup>

The randomized disordering of previously published material in *Adjunct* accounts in part for its subtitle, and the ironic work of its derivational prefix. *Adjunct* is most certainly a “digest,” in the sense of bringing together material previously published in a range of venues, but as the *Oxford English Dictionary* records, “digest” has also always implied a method and system. As a noun, “digest” denotes a “methodically arranged compendium of [...] written matter”; and as a verb: to distribute “methodically or according to a system.”<sup>9</sup> By distributing his material according to a random number scheme, Manson’s text follows a method (*digest*) without being methodical (*undigest*). As I will try to show, a comparable dynamic of digestion and its reversal—a play between the breakdown and dispersal of material into fragments and the reabsorption of those fragments into new, undifferentiated wholes—animates *Adjunct* at every level.

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“Of course,” as *Adjunct* itself is quick to point out, “few techniques are more exhausted than mere quotation, a quotation which stands in for thought as though it were already

<sup>8</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 9-10, 49; cf. 24.

<sup>9</sup> The mathematical procedure may also account for the book’s main title. In set theory, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “adjunction” denotes “the relation holding between sets when without overlapping one another they are so ‘joined’ or continuous as to form another complete set; also, the process of putting them into this relation.” I will return to the idea of related but separate sets at the close of this essay.

masterly irony," and one of the reader's first tasks is to try and account for the bewildering range of material that Manson has had occasion to quote.<sup>10</sup> Despite some passages which are apparently "just...verbiage" or "*remplissage*"—fragments of garbled or incomplete text and abbreviations that remain indecipherable outside of their original context—readers come to discern a handful of distinct topics or sources: a catalogue of obituaries; notes on linguistic morphology; horticultural experiments; allusions to contemporary poets and the 20th century avant-garde; the class conscious registration of fiscal anxieties; advertisements for clubs and lottery tickets; and briefly noted, diary-like entries from a telegraphic memoir: the subject of dreams, encounters with friends, thoughts on editing and writing projects, witty observation, postal addresses, the daily life of the body mirrored somewhere between the candid, the self-deprecating, and the abject.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, the body—medically interrogated and thoroughly medicated—emerges as one of the book's principal subjects. Not to be mistaken for any single body (much less for Manson himself), the concerns of the many bodies mentioned in *Adjunct* construct a consistent corporeal composite. With the wry recognition of an acknowledged but not entirely controlled addiction, *Adjunct* records the ingestion of formidable quantities of drugs. From insomnia-producing stimulants to sleep-inducing narcotics, injectables to inhalants, the "pharmacological import" of all kinds of chemicals comes to be tested: coffee and cigarettes, Benzedrine and Nytol, hypnotics and hallucinogens, carefully dosed prescription antipsychotics and antidepressants, and a cupboard full of ad hoc intoxicants of concentrated solvents and aerosols.<sup>12</sup> One improbable entry even describes "snorting a line of sea-monkeys."<sup>13</sup> And all of it is washed down with gallons of alcohol. *Adjunct* records both a

<sup>10</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 25.

<sup>11</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 54, 46.

<sup>12</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 40.

frequency and depth of intoxication: “Keep bumping into my neighbor when drunk”; “Difficult THATT I could be as DRUNK AS THIS”; “Wide-eyed *South Park* reaction shot of friends discovering how much I now drink”; “surpris ed how mich alcohol he s had”; “After many whiskies, worry about breathing on candle.”<sup>14</sup> The pace of consumption is timed with a careful accounting: “Lots of whisky”; “whisky at 9am again”; “three bottles of whisky in six days”; “three bottles of spirits in two days”; “Four Happy Days, two pints of Guinness, a double Grouse, a double Southern Comfort and a litre and a half of Bulgarian Cabernet Sauvignon”; “Four bottles of whisky @ £10.79 + 11 bottles wine @ £2.59 + 2 litres of wine @£2.00= £77.63”; “Dispose of 19 bottles. Move on to Vodka.”<sup>15</sup> With the attitude of a “career alcoholic,” the phrase “sensible drinking” is met with a parenthetical “giggle,” and Manson gives the following hilarious example of terms from literary theory: “six-pack’s relationship to Peter André’s abdomen is metaphoric; to mine is metonymic.”<sup>16</sup>

Even with foods, the body in *Adjunct* only ever seems to drink. With little need for chewing, the foods mentioned are almost always liquid (soup, puree, yoghurt, fondue, “meat extract or homemade meat tea”), melted (butter and chocolate), or softened (enzymatic and mouldering cheeses, a banana forgotten in a coat pocket for three days until “it’s black and soft”).<sup>17</sup> Many are already “partly digested” (pap, minces, rissoles, patés).<sup>18</sup> The bodies in *Adjunct* not only take in all this liquid, but they excrete fluids at an equally impressive pace.<sup>19</sup> The body as it appears in this book is a site of “hemorrhage,” “excrement,” “discharge,” and “evacuations” of all kinds.<sup>20</sup> If

<sup>14</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 17, 4, 25, 36, 48.

<sup>15</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 65, 44, 13, 47, 69, 61-2, 53.

<sup>16</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 13, 51; cf. “Gold Alcoholics Anonymous credit card” (44).

<sup>17</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 69, 64.

<sup>18</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 65.

<sup>19</sup> This is true of non-human bodies as well; one sentence explains: “These insects eat nitrogen from the earth then discharge a juice which is full of nitrogen” (71).

<sup>20</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 20, 5, 17, 55 and 71, 73.



one of the sentences seems to accuse Manson by rebuking “you don’t surface expressively in your poems,” the poem itself is quite literally “expressive”: “weeping,” “leaking” and “expectorating.”<sup>21</sup> Indeed, *Adjunct* details not only the expected “blood” “sweat” and “tears” (including the blood of bruises and slit wrists, spontaneous hemorrhaging and nosebleeds, erections and menstruations, sugar surges and pressure drops, blisters and poisoning and donations), but the full spectrum of fluid bodily products: “urine,” “pus,” “phlegm” (both “snot” and “spit”), “bile,” “gall,” “mucous,” “milk,” “sperm,” and “semen.”<sup>22</sup> Characters are constantly “sick on” their surroundings (“We are such stuff as pukers are made on,” one entry riffs). Another confesses that “it would be great to vomit,” and after discovering a “strange burp in vomit,” a “burp turns into vomit,” escalating to “projectile vomiting at the dinner table” and ultimately “faecal vomiting”—“an undigest” that links regurgitation to the many mentions of “waste” and “sewage”: “shit” and “crap,” “caca” and “merde,” “guano,” “manure,” “droppings,” “dung,” and all tending to the extreme (“bowel too long”), the softened (“laxatives,” whipped excrement), and the liquefied: infant soiling and “diarrhoea.”<sup>23</sup> As all this excessive diarrhoea and vomiting indicates, the body in *Adjunct* can be pathologically productive, and Manson includes all manner of unhealthy retentions and emissions. The body is repeatedly subject to fluid swellings, and it further endures a wart and a wen, “watery cysts,” a blister as big as a matchbox and another that bursts, the suppuration of several

<sup>21</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 13, cf. 71, 63, 19, 38, 57.

<sup>22</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 16, 25, 34, 35, 40, 47, 49, 50, 56, 58, 63, 67, 68, 70; 45, 52, 38, cf. 52, 13, 14, 21; 7, 21, 42, 66; 70, 25, 61, cf. 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 17, 26, 37, 38, 42, 44, 47, 52, 58; 15; 5, 22, 28, 60, cf. 3, 23, 41, 51, 59, 75; 16, 39, 58; 18, 59; 10; 1, 24, 32, 52; 2, 32, 37, 42, 59, 61; 8, 38, 65, 67; 52.

<sup>23</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 12, 36, cf. 38; 49; 75; 44; 19; 35; 15, cf. 13, 22, 24, 39; 39; 68; 11, 25, 28, 30, 41, 58, 60; 26, 60; 18; 8, 20, 41; 44; 41; 65, 74; 24; 67; 45, cf. 6, 42; 28; 45; 22, 36. See also the gaseous releases and soft excretions of the body: “farts” (23, 40, 42, 43, 44, 60, 61, 62, 65, 75), “burps” (19, 44, 55, cf. 61), and “[ear] wax” (12).

boils (one “persistent” and another that “bursts all over distant curtains”), and a particularly gruesome “explosive pustule.”<sup>24</sup>

Filling, swelling, leaking, bursting—the body in *Adjunct* liquefies and overflows. Subcutaneous reservoirs of blood expand alarmingly, fluid spouts from unexpected sites, and the entire self, if not necessarily the actual body, is reduced to blood or excrement: “that man of blood”; “I am shit at my job”; “Dear Sir I’m shit, love Peter.”<sup>25</sup> However figural those expressions might be, the focus on the emollient pulps and spongy parts of the body are quite literal; *Adjunct* pointedly specifies the reservoirs of the spleen, bladder, kidney, liver, adenoids, as well as the lipids of “suet” and “lard,” and the ominous trio of “gelatine, tallow, and semen.”<sup>26</sup> Leaving only “grease and dead skin,” the body in *Adjunct* continually sloughs off solid tissues.<sup>27</sup> One finds a surprising number of depilations and exfoliations; hair balds prematurely or is shorn, nails are

<sup>24</sup> For instances of swelling: “face swells up” (37); “eyelid swells up” (37); “swollen feet” (43); “swollen appendices” (1); “mysterious swelling fits” (72); and “veins appear on left temple” (64). Other quotations from *Adjunct* in this sentence: 14; 8; 61; 19; 16, cf. 72; 58; 39; 51; 6.

<sup>25</sup> The absence of a bruise on the hematomatic body is noteworthy (“no bruise at all from blood donation” [67]), but other bruises unfold fantastically: “if you stare at that bruise long enough, a 3D image of a dolphin appears” (55); “Bruise chromatography” (19); “Bruise on upper arm the same shape and colour as Kandinsky’s *Black Strokes I*, 1913, though smaller” (56); “Oskar Fischinger cartoon of bruise expanding” (70); “Largest ever mystery bruise on upper arm” (27, cf. 39); “Big blue bruise where the needle went in” (3); “Big bruise around the injection hole” (16); “Bruise starts dripping down leg under skin” (14, cf. 41, 46); “Kneecap bruise larger than handspan” (13); “Kneecap bruise larger than two hand spans” (9); “A dinner plate the size of a bruise” (7); “Skin still discoloured two months after bruise” (6). This injury may be related to the chronic loss of tissue on a leg mentioned in several other entries (see citations in note 27 below) and culminating in “Legs just decide to be scarred” (31). For the emergence of unexpected spouts, see, for example, “clitoris fountain” (72). Other quotations from *Adjunct* in this sentence: 35; 70, cf. 46; 25.

<sup>26</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 76; 55; 26; 11, 21, 41, 44, 52, 61, 66, 72; 68; 17; 56, 76, cf. “fat”: 44, 52, 74; 52. More distressing still, included among several references to fried foods one finds “Noodles fried in human fat” (62), and the recollection of a woman “caught frying her husband’s sperm” (67).

<sup>27</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 43.

clipped, skin peels and flakes off with alarming insistence: “skin loosens on face”; “pieces of skin keep flaking off my leg”; “back of leg rips”; “two years later and bits of skin still keep flaking off my leg and not healing”; “Four years later and the leg is no better.”<sup>28</sup> Or worse: “your skin goes hard and you die.”<sup>29</sup> Or worse still: “reconstruct a Victorian schoolgirl from fragments of skin”; “unfortunately the ears were attached to the hair”; “a band of human hair and skin was left 1.5 metres up the wall. Other human body parts, such as eye-balls, were scattered on the floor.”<sup>30</sup> My point is not that the text can be morbid, but that the solid body in *Adjunct* is relentlessly disarticulated, repeatedly “broken,” “irretrievably shattered,” and even threatening to dematerialize completely.<sup>31</sup> “Earless” and “headless,” castrated or having “no genitals,” the body’s skeletal structure and extremities are unfailingly failing: brittle, disarticulated, or removed.<sup>32</sup> Lungs collapse and are lost entirely; sections of the liver are “cut out”; legs and arms break or are amputated, leaving people “crutched” and “crippled”; toes “bruise or break”; spines are broken; digits are cut, cut off, and replaced with prosthetics; elbows are fractured, knees

<sup>28</sup> A few examples: “did not have exfoliated genitalia, but depilated genitalia (having lost her hair rather than layers of skin)” (41); “Low hair quality: (44); “He cut off a lock of my hair and put it in my hole” (51); “I had very long hair for a while, now I am bald” (61); “I cut my hair” (61); “Prematurely bald” (21). For other quotations from *Adjunct* in this sentence: 43, cf. “skin tightens on face” (56); 36; 31; 73; 41.

<sup>29</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 52; cf. same page: “Lucian Freud skin disease.”

<sup>30</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 56; 5; 9. The scene rhymes with the grisly “contorting pieces of red flesh controlled by the white eye-balls of crazy horses” (5), and it recalls “red trickles furious with slaughter” and the mention of an “*Enucleated Eye*” (19; 7).

<sup>31</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 3; 14; 15: “If she were to lose weight now one fears she might disappear into her mound entirely.” The absence of a body is foregrounded with the mention of a “cenotaph” (6). Compare the unmarked inclusion of a line from Henry King’s Seventeenth Century poem “The Surrender,” in which the archaic inversion of the terminal verb suggests a plural noun: “As the divorced soul from her body parts” (Manson, *Adjunct*, 55).

<sup>32</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 16; 72; 6; 14; cf. “genital cancer” (69); “testicle [put] in flask” (51).

capped, other joints grow arthritic or become dislocated, limbs are “dismembered” or “dead.”<sup>33</sup> Teeth are similarly at risk in *Adjunct*; missing, removable, decaying, toxic, blocked, no longer fitting together, artificial, and so essentially unstable that they actually define “insecurity” and “precarious.”<sup>34</sup> And although the motivation for the sentence is comically paranomastic, even the hard encrustation of plaque is figured as soft, swollen, and tender: “bubonic plaque.”<sup>35</sup>

With its structures dissolving and its anatomy remade, the liquefying body in *Adjunct* resembles Antonin Artaud’s “body without organs.”<sup>36</sup> Manson plays on the phrase in the sentence “Gaelic without organs,” and he mentions Artaud at least a half-dozen times in *Adjunct*, but the progeny of Artaud’s body are even more to the point.<sup>37</sup> With an uncanny precision, the

<sup>33</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 16; 70; 44; 13; 20, cf. the displacement and reincorporation of “Richard Cork’s leg” (38); 55; 57; 58; 59, 72; 52; 44; 67; 62; 36; 55, 20; 62, cf. 2; 56. Cf. “Organ donor card” (47). *Adjunct* also focuses on the infant body’s natural losses and cultural excisions: “Rubbing your face with the afterbirth” (9); “umbilical cord” (22); “prepuce” (30), and the “foreskin” or punning “force kin” (59; 46).

<sup>34</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 49; 5; 21; 18; 12; 13; 11; 22; 21.

<sup>35</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 7; “plague” proper appears later in the book (49, 67).

<sup>36</sup> The phrase appears in the 1947 radio play “Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu,” *Ceuvres Complètes d’Antonin Artaud* Vol. XIII (Paris: Gallimard, 1974) 67 et seq.; translation by Clayton Eshleman with Bernard Bador in *Watchfiends & Rack Screams: Works from the Final Period by Antonin Artaud* (Boston: Exact Change, 1995) 307. The concept of the body without organs, however, is developed throughout Artaud’s later work.

<sup>37</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 40. Manson explains that this phrase originated in an anagrammatic misreading of a title glimpsed on the shelf at a used book store (personal correspondence, 24 February, 2005), which must have been John MacKechnie’s teach-yourself *Gaelic without Groans* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962). The parapraxis, however, is far from incidental and points directly back to Artaud through the emphasis on “groans [*plaintes*]” in Artaud’s *Theatre of Cruelty* manifesto. For explicit references to Artaud in *Adjunct*, see: “Dismembering a small trout while Artaud screams” (2); “Photograph appears to show Artaud being played by Ian McShane in new feature film” (22); “Leave display copy of glossy art-book open at the Art-Language / Artaud page” (34); “Artaud film set in late 50s” (45); “A bag containing *Joyce’s Dislocutions, The Penguin Book of Contemporary [sic] American Verse, Artaud* by Martin Esslin, and

body in *Adjunct* describes the procession of “bodies without organs” exhibited by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. The composite ‘adjunct-body,’ as we might summarize it—drugged and liquefying, in mental extremis and abject pain—encompasses the variety of states elaborated by Deleuze and Guattari with a striking exactitude. In their appropriation of Artaud’s term, Deleuze and Guattari define the desire for unrestricted flows as a “corps sans organes [body without organs].”<sup>38</sup> That body “est déjà en route dès que le corps en a assez des organes, et veut les déposer, ou bien les perd [is already under way the moment the body has had enough of organs and wants to slough them off, or loses them],” and its multiplicities comprise a “longue procession:—du corps hypocondriaque [...] du corps paranoïaque [...] du corps schizo [...] et puis du corps drogué [...] du corps masochiste.... [a long procession: the *hypochondriac body*.... the *paranoid body*.... the *schizo body*.... then the *drugged body*.... the *masochist body*....].”<sup>39</sup>

an umbrella” (62); “Pan Am advert on colophon of Artaud *Collected Works* volume 1” (68); “Artaud is what happens when cousins marry” (75).

<sup>38</sup> See *Capitalisme et Schizophrénie*. 2 Tomes (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1972/1980), translated as *Anti-Oedipus* by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983); and as *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). One might note that *Adjunct* names Deleuze, with the sentence “Gilles Deleuze is dead” (21), but that unlike the hundreds of other persons named in that fashion, the Index does not label Deleuze’s entry as an obituary (79). Although probably inadvertent, the allegory is exact. The relation of death to the body without organs—both examples of limits for Deleuze—is fundamental and wittily summed up by a line from *Adjunct*: “Nobody dying at the moment (famous last words)” (73). In their discussion of the body without organs, Deleuze and Guattari paraphrase a passage from Henry Miller’s *Tropic of Cancer* (itself perhaps a dilation of George Eliot’s delicious line from the opening Book and Chapter of *The Mill On The Floss* [1860]: “I am in love with moistness”), and their digestion reads like an index to *Adjunct*: “‘I love everything that flows, even the menstrual flow that carries away the seed unfecund.’ Amniotic fluid spilling out of the sac and kidney stones; flowing hair; a flow of spittle; a flow of sperm, shit, or urine...” (*Anti-Oedipe*, 11-12/5-6). For the original Miller passage see *The Tropic of Cancer* (New York: Grove Press, 1961) 257-8.

<sup>39</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Milles plateaux*, 186/150.

We have seen Manson's version of the drugged and "hypochondriac body," in which the disarrayed corpus empties out as its "organs are destroyed," but the adjunct-body also shares the mental conditions investigated by Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>40</sup> One of the diary-like entries in *Adjunct* records "becoming borderline delusional"; another quips chiastically: "I saw the best generations of my mind destroyed by madness"; and others discuss "psychiatric assessment," "mental instability," "psychological drama," and "insanity."<sup>41</sup> Among the repeated vocabulary of the book are "psychosomatic," "schizophrenic," "neurotic," "aphasic," "mad," "crazed" and "crazy."<sup>42</sup> *Adjunct* includes a "sadistic invalid" and "masochistic sex," as well as an international cast of mentally ill characters: "clinically insane guy with a guitar"; "insane Venezuelan"; "Schizophrenic Irishman"; "insane [...] Iranian gourmand"; and one woman "rumoured to be slightly mad" but in the final analysis "definitely completely mad."<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, with its distinctive combination of chemical, physiological, and mental conditions, the body in *Adjunct* exhibits the very types of violent intersections, confusions, and blockages that exemplify the body without organs for Deleuze and Guattari. In *Milles plateaux*, they illustrate their concept with a quote from William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*: "The human body is scandalously inefficient. Instead of a mouth and an anus to get out of order why not have one all-purpose hole to eat *and* eliminate?"<sup>44</sup> Manson implicitly asks the same question with his interest in *opalinidae*, creatures with "no

<sup>40</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Milles plateaux*, 186/150.

<sup>41</sup> Manson: *Adjunct*, 22; 71; 19; 23; 12; 49.

<sup>42</sup> Manson: *Adjunct*, 40, 49; 2, 43, 59; 33; 32, 34; 26, 51, 55, 61, 63; 1, 5, 57, 75; 51.

<sup>43</sup> Manson: *Adjunct*, 12; 33; 49; 12; 2; 32; 11, *cf.* 63. In addition to the psychosexual descriptions of sado-masochism and "autoerotic asphyxiation" (6), *Adjunct* includes references to bestiality and incest: "He fantasized about making love to his sister and tried it once with his dog" (47); "Sexual relationships with animals surprised me" (56).

<sup>44</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Milles plateaux*, 186/150. For the original text, see William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch* (New York: Grove Press, 1966) 131.

'mouth' or contractile vacuole" living parasitically "in the rectum of amphibians."<sup>45</sup> He specifies other bodies that possess "no openings or orifices" whatsoever, and includes an unacknowledged quotation from Jacques Cartier's 1536 account of indigenous North Americans: "The people, possessing no anus, neither eat nor digest."<sup>46</sup> Like Deleuze and Guattari, Manson returns to questions of corporeal blockage and flow. On the one hand, *Adjunct* details a number of blockages ("butt-plugs," a "tampon," "anti-embolism stockings," swollen eyelids, a man "trying not to open his mouth in conversation") and the book is punctuated by a series of comments on portraits of English Romantic poets—Blake, Southey, Hazlitt, Shelley, Keats, Hunt—with each man described identically as looking "like he's got a finger up him."<sup>47</sup> With a similarly sophomoric humor, a line from Robert Burns is détourned to suggest the enemies of unblocked orifices ("As open pussie's mortal foes / When, pop! she starts before their nose") and Manson includes a story which demands to be read allegorically—however factually accurate it may be—about the removal of an orifice: "Keith Orifice" (a Hollywood gaffer, we learn from a later entry), "changes name to Keith Orefice."<sup>48</sup> Other sentences narrate more serious, and even fatal blockages: "Dried apricot

<sup>45</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 16. Cf. "The mouth is the antechamber of the organism" (41). In a book so concerned with the relation of bodies to fluids, the parasites' host also resonates; *Adjunct* returns to both hydrophilic amphibians as well as sponges (16, 30, 40, 57; 51, 57), including the book's final line, which reads like a sort of a backward glancing self-assessment of the preceding whole: "That looks like a sponge" (76).

<sup>46</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 10.

<sup>47</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 54-55; 31; 32; 37; 43. For the portraits, see: 3, 14, 42, 48, 28, and 39. Compare the descriptions of those pictures with similar entries: "up the budgie's bum" (36); "a cucumber up his bum" (23); "That Jimmy Hill should have the wrong end of a pineapple up him" (43).

<sup>48</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 33; for the original poem, see Robert Burns, "Tam O'Shanter." *Antiquities of Scotland*, ed. Francis Grose (April, 1791); the pivotal term is a Scots diminutive of "purse." For the story about Keith Orifice, see the first edition of *Adjunct* (ubu editions: 2001) 20; cf. *Edinburgh Review* edition at 37. Readers should be aware of occasional but significant discrepancies between the two editions.

rehydrates to block woman's intestine"; "Having for some years taken a dozen aspirin a day, Cage was now taking a form that explodes in the stomach"; "the mysterious, real constipation which had ended with her husband's death."<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, as one might expect, *Adjunct* demonstrates an equal interest in orifices that are ineffectual or overcome, as when "ears spontaneously unblock," an "eyelid splits," an "anal fissure" opens, or someone receives an unexpected "enema."<sup>50</sup> Manson records the "laxative properties" of a meat rissole and the "laxative effect" of excessive consumption; one sentence notes drily (so to speak): "the laxatives were a mistake."<sup>51</sup> Records for continence and the threat of incontinence continue the theme: "Deep sea explorer avoids urinating for 18 hours"; "lips must touch at all times, couples must stand and may not sleep. / People have been warned that there are no toilet breaks and 'adult nappies' are banned."<sup>52</sup>

Intoxicated, overflowing, schizophrenic, non-hermetic—pulled between these extremes the adjunct-body opens to the more serious consequences of a radical loss of any integral, self-contained identity, and it displays the kinds of profound dissolution and reabsorption that define the body without organs for Deleuze and Guattari. "Incorporating," not coincidentally, is one of Manson's signature words, and many of the body's interpenetrations are commonplace and unremarkable, but not unrelated to its more extreme embodiments.<sup>53</sup> As I have documented, the body in *Adjunct* is chemically altered by intoxicants; it also digests and metabolizes food, makes use of prostheses, hosts a range of

<sup>49</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 18; 37; 35; cf. "constipated" (26). The story gives an ominous cast to the sentence fragment "Partially rehydrated dried fruit" (70).

<sup>50</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 56; 29; 74; 40, cf. "unexpected...douche" (24).

<sup>51</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 6; 41-42; 45.

<sup>52</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 33; 22; cf. "pampers" (70) and the "glazed" surface of the "Junior Boys toilet" (41).

<sup>53</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 1, 22, 49, 70.



microbes, and is susceptible to allergens.<sup>54</sup> But these contaminations of the body proper by foreign bodies set the stage for more extraordinary losses of bodily integrity. Even within the body, beset by its series of unregulated flows, organs intrude on one another (“sliding hiatus hernia”) or prove strangely interchangeable (“an eye for a penis. A penis for an eye”), and the frequent evacuations from the body’s orifices are not always as expected: “expectorating siliputty”; “I have four huge squash plants that came out of my bowel”; “Foetus like a grasshopper from out my nose”; “Once she attempted to leap out of her mouth with a ski slope.”<sup>55</sup> One sentence asks: “Are you constructing yourself as a pond?”<sup>56</sup> Another confesses: “I’ve got rats in my skull.”<sup>57</sup> Several entries recount similarly schizophrenic episodes: including characters “who pass through the bodies of the six others,” and an “out of body experience early March 1990 where I move one foot to the left and one foot up, intersecting with myself.”<sup>58</sup> Sounding like a triumphant if still delusional Daniel Paul Schreber, finally in control of the rays that penetrate and subjugate his body, one speaker declares; “I put a torch in my mouth and my body

<sup>54</sup> Among the many instances of prostheses, “These include a new heart monitor operated through the patient’s mouth, and a glass bolus, much like a boiled sweet for cattle and sheep, which dissolves over a period of months, releasing essential vitamins and minerals” (7), as well as affection for a “false” *stéatopyge* and “electrical domestic appliances for use with the human body” (22; 28). For some examples of infections and parasitism, see: “pneumonia” (56), that liquid filling of the lungs, which swell for one woman “like a frog” (57); “tropical fungus infection” (6); “tear duct stops being septic” (54); “smelling someone’s armpits” (1); “2 old ladies with B.O. on next park bench” (25); “odour crisis in left armpit only” (58). Among evidence of allergens: “hay fever so bad I can’t sleep” (65); “hay fever” (67); “Can’t stop sneezing” (3); “*Furore of Sneezing*” (25); “Sneeze / eyes go puffy” (41); “First sneezing fit of 1997” (51); “Wheezing...Second sneezing fit of 1997” (59); “sneezing” (75).

<sup>55</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 6; 39; 57; 4; 48; 40.

<sup>56</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 66.

<sup>57</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 43.

<sup>58</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 62; 37.

fluids act as a fibreoptic guide so I can pee a strand of light."<sup>59</sup> With a less assured tone, one atypically lengthy passage explains a similar bodily luminescence:

with an intense need to push my own perception beyond this strangling manifold, I obtained an image, literally of beams of light directed from my own eyes towards the spaces I couldn't resolve, and of the light being deflected sideways, as if by magnetic repulsion, causing the same pain in the eye-muscles as is caused by trying to focus on an object too close to the eye.<sup>60</sup>

Examples could be proliferated, but the point I want to emphasize is that bodies in *Adjunct*, like those "without organs" in *L'anti Œdipe* and *Milles plateaux*, are again and again penetrated and transfixed, confused and commixed, absorbent and absorbed—quite literally promiscuous, improper, and indiscrete.

Without clear boundaries between bodies and other objects, those other objects, in *Adjunct*, end up being much like the body: permeable, fungible, fluid, commingled.<sup>61</sup> The confusion begins with flows that reverse or recycle: "Regurg. into mouth tastes like licking open battery"; "Nasal mucous (incorporating day-old red wine vomit)"; "Antonio looks like he's tasted a sick man's urine"; "blood tastes of black pudding"; "removal and disposal of inedible blood"; "Don't take the liver. I will finish this vase of stale piss in good time."<sup>62</sup> Ingestion or purgation,

<sup>59</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 8. This may account in part for the earlier, enigmatic sentence: "Luminous blue abdomen, you are following me around" (5-6).

<sup>60</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 51-2.

<sup>61</sup> The fluids discharged by bodies in *Adjunct* are frequently reabsorbed by others: "soaking trousers" (8); "sick on my trousers" (36); "trouser leg stiff with blood" (49); trousers soiled (60); "soup stains on slept-in tee-shirt" (13); "Can't stop sneezing for long enough to note that absorbency in handkerchiefs is a function of age" (3); "Alasdair's jacket can absorb four pints of sweat per hour" (45).

<sup>62</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 7; 22; 42; 56; 47; 44. Further examples of "mutant mixture" in *Adjunct* include (50): "Shit smells of quite good food" (28); "Diarrhoea smells of Lilt" (36); "Fart smells of Malathion" (40); "Fart smells of chips" (65); "Dried parmesan smells of sick" (38); "Urine smells strongly of coffee" and "Tea smells

digestion or undigestion, it all seems to be the same in *Adjunct*, where clearly delineated forms dissolve and every thing overflows its boundaries. I have already noted the watery state of comestibles in *Adjunct*, but even architecture is “not solid” and the structural integrity of buildings fares no better than bodies: they leak, grow damp, then waterlog, and finally collapse.<sup>63</sup> A range of materials are described as “porous,” “microporous,” and “ventilated,” and under the “dissipations” of atomizing steams and aerosol sprays, the world of *Adjunct* is filled with amorphous substances: “sludge,” “foam,” “emulsion” and “paste.”<sup>64</sup> Among “spouting,” “frothing,” “percolation,” and “pouring,” its objects “drip,” “decant,” “leak,” and “float,” becoming “glutinous,” “bubbly” and “puffy.”<sup>65</sup> Again and again, solids soften, turn “runny,” and “melt.”<sup>66</sup> Nylon “dissolves”; one discovers “Mould digesting aluminium.”<sup>67</sup> Ultimately, “it is not enough to be pliable,” as one speaker dreams of the further molecular melt of even liquids: “I want my soup to dissociate.”<sup>68</sup>

of tobacco” (66; 69); “Breath smells of bad Brie” (17); “Ear drops smell of smoked sausage” (71); “cheesy mineral water” (66). One sentence announces, “Vodka tastes of TV licensing envelope glue” (6), and a later entry completes the equation: “TV licensing envelope glue tastes of vodka” (29).

<sup>63</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 18. See, for examples: “roof leaks, but not much” (25); “ruins...heavy rain water seeped through” (51); “dripping from my ceiling” (6); “Ceiling is pouring” (60); “ceiling peaked at a bucket an hour” (10); “ceiling collapses” (25).

<sup>64</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 59; 29; 65; 46; 52, 37; 2, 29, 32, 33, 59, 70; 9, 68; 17, 28, 74; 36, 37; 56, 62.

<sup>65</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 18; 23, cf. 15; 76; 60, cf. 13, 41, 68, 70, 75; 6, 14, cf. 9, 67; 23, 49; 19, 25; 16, 24; 9; 25, cf. 41, 56, 60, 64; 41, 43, cf. 50.

<sup>66</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 2; 22, 25, 29, 36, 51, 59. Even solids tend to be in a quasi-liquid suspension: “precipitated solids” (75); “black precipitate from Dettol and urine” (21); “powdered milk goes like iron filings on hitting the steam” (37); “talcum powder falls onto stamp spraymounted onto sofa” (70); *et cetera*. Compare to the general state of “degenerate” “corruption” in *Adjunct* (50, 64), exemplified by: “shit which has been left to decay for a long time” (25); “slow motion cucumber decay” (56); “paté left to decay” (70); “rotted bag of carrots” (21). Cf. leprosy (14, 38, 63).

<sup>67</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 38; 60.

<sup>68</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 20; 2.

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“Because I have had occasion to quote” (to quote from *Adjunct*), I have risked a tedious amount of documentation in this essay.<sup>69</sup> In part, this insistent citation was a tactic for dealing with an unusual kind of text (it’s clear at a glance that *Under the Volcano*, say, discusses alcohol—the point scarcely needs to be made; in contrast, topics stated with an equal clarity in *Adjunct* are not equally salient and are easily lost amid the thousands of other interrupting entries). So part of the task at hand was to try and keep an account of certain textual impulses and expenditures, and to see what they would amount to if added up (“actually,” as *Adjunct* admits, “literary criticism is book-keeping”). But in part the catalogues of quotation in this essay were also a demonstration of the main argument I want to make: that *Adjunct* presents its reader with something like a ‘poetry without organs.’ All of the book’s ubiquitous flooding may be no more than a thematic tic, and not particularly interesting in and of itself, but it names a more interesting phenomenon in *Adjunct*. Fluidity—as should by now be abundantly clear—is obviously one of the topics of the book, but by detailing its occurrences I want to emphasize that it is also a characteristic of the book’s structure: that fluidity is both a theme and also the *form of* that theme. To be sure, Manson treats each entry as a distinct unit in the composition of the book, and *Adjunct* itself asks if it isn’t merely “a series of barely-connected anecdotes and random thoughts?” But as quickly the reader recognizes certain sentences as belonging to discrete thematic sets, more patient readers come to recognize that certain of those sets—food, architecture, bodies, objects—are in fact equated through the pervasive similarities of their characterizations.<sup>70</sup>

Moreover, the connections and contaminations do not stop there, as topics that at first appear to be distinctly delimited begin to seep into one another, leaching and bleeding. The Latin

<sup>69</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 75.

<sup>70</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 9.

nomenclature and methodical scientific tone of the many horticultural references, for instance, initially seem to isolate them from the casual disorder and slang of surrounding passages. The plants in question, however, turn out to almost always be cacti and succulents, defined by their ability to absorb and retain fluids, and the other plants mentioned in *Adjunct* appear in the context of ecological and topographic discussions of water flow.<sup>71</sup> Individual sentences also establish further connections between plants and the human body, irrevocably linking the two topics in the schema of the text.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, the economics in the book come down to questions of “solvency” and invoke a vocabulary of real and metaphoric fluidity (“currency,” “liquidation,” “cash flow,” and so on).<sup>73</sup> At the same time, those economic passages also link back to the psychological conditions enumerated elsewhere in the text: “inefficient capitalism is literally mad” (indeed, the title of Deleuze and Guattari’s two volume study on bodies without organs is all to the point: “*Capitalism et schizophrénie [Capitalism and Schizophrenia]*”).<sup>74</sup> Likewise, the repeated quotations from advertisements for lottery tickets—like the several references to

<sup>71</sup> In addition to the Linnean names, “cactus” and its variants occurs more than a dozen times (1, 6, 15, 16, 24, 38, 38, 44, 49, 69, 72), including “cactophiles” and two mentions of the “British Cactus and Succulent society” (56, 20, 26); see also: “*Plants of the Sonoran Desert*” and “A succulent, indehiscent fruit, with a central placenta, as a grape” (71; 54). For water ecology see: “Water always evaporates from the trees” (63); “The branches of the tree are vacuum-like and fibrous so that the inner air is not effect by outer heat (just like thermos) and the fruit does not dry up” (27). And again, elsewhere: “If there would be no trees on the mountains then the surrounding land would be desert due to seasonal streams” (26-7); “The branch roots of trees absorb extra water” (39); “The grass and roots of the trees save the land from cutting action due to water flow” (71), and so on. These passages are all brought to bear self-reflexively on the book itself, with the line: “Newspapers, magazines, envelopes, tickets and books are all produced from the wood of trees” (56). Finally, the proximity of *flower* to *flow* may be all to the point in certain passages.

<sup>72</sup> For instance: “Si-Hü is intestines; SiHu is flower” (66); and “Lily brain stem” (48).

<sup>73</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 65.

<sup>74</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 26.

John Cage—are inflected by the chance-generated placement of those sentences themselves within the larger structure of *Adjunct*, which lends them a self-referential cast.<sup>75</sup> By the same token, when books and writing are mentioned, *mise-en-abîme*, in Manson’s book, they are described exactly like the physiological bodies: sites of fluid expression and absorption.<sup>76</sup> *Adjunct*, in this way, “continues to mutate in form and content.”<sup>77</sup>

In sum, *Adjunct* is full of metatextual references, and in an unusually coherent passage, the book itself provides the reader

<sup>75</sup> In addition to the numerous advertisements (10, 12, 14, 20, 22, 22, 28, 30, 37, 44, 46, 50, 50, 64, 64, 72), see: “Powerball” (51); “It’s a lottery for each and every person in this country” (53); “LUCKY NUMBERS” (51); “*The Tempers of Hazard*” (63), *et cetera*.

<sup>76</sup> For the explicit description of the book as a body, note the reference to “The British National Corpus” (45). Throughout *Adjunct*, “the poetry on the pages ebbs and flows” with fluids (63). Like the personæ, they are soaked in alcohol: “Red wine stains on a random number table” (24); “Curious stain on pages 82 and 83 of Selected Wallace Stevens” (22); “Guinness spot on a Chamfort maxim” (34); “pour beer onto notebook” (68); “Wine poured into a computer keyboard” (70). Similarly, they stain and are stained by fluids: “small blots of printers ink are spreading onto clothes and furniture” (64); “crimson amoeba stained the sheets” (73); “Printer’s ink bleaches to crimson and liberates chlorine” (12). Books are also infested (4, *cf.* 75), and writing is related to bruises and mental illness (19, 18); notebooks, papers, and envelopes are repeatedly sprayed and licked and sticking together (6, 16, 29, 33, 59, 70, *cf.* 43, 64). Most emblematic, perhaps: “British Telecom answering machine brochure stuck by an unidentified odourless liquid to back of *Adjunct*” (2). Additionally, defecation and bodily fluids are repeatedly linked to the materials of writing: “bleeding ink” (53); “spits blood in letters” (58); “gush poems” (67); “Tampon-gravure” (31); “*Faber Book of Modern Verse* smells of cat pee” (12); “Shits pen to paper; wets his shitting pen; is pa-pee-er for his ‘pen’” (58); “a journal of descriptions of actual defecations” (60, *cf.* “Department of fecal studies” [65]); and with a play on the proximity of *diary* and *diarrhea*: “*Shit Diary* continues to mutate in form and content” (60). Similarly: “waste paper” (72); “peeing though a letterbox” (42); “you can’t fart in an envelope” (43). Less explicitly, the parallel grammar and marked punctuation of two sentences further equates the writing in *Adjunct* with bodily fluids: “It’s just...verbiage!” and “It’s all...sperm!” (54, 65).

<sup>77</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 60.

with a protocol for leveraging themes of fluidity as a means of literary analysis:

The 'leperous distillment' has spread from the ear of the dead king to infect the whole of Denmark, and normality can only be restored through the destruction of the core of Danish society. Any other ending would have left traces of the poison behind to continue its corruption. It is the difference between treating the symptoms of a disease—and eradicating it.

Other entries invite readers to make similar connections: "The Cagean tradition doesn't want to define things as known and fixed. It doesn't want to categorize. Anything can be performed from one modality of art into another." And more pointedly: "art is supposed to be about breaking down boundaries; you can't expect the objects to do it on their own."

Or perhaps you can. Deleuze and Guattari profess that "tout 'objet' suppose la continuité d'un flux, tout flux, la fragmentation de l'objet [every 'object' presupposes the continuity of a flow; every flow, the fragmentation of an object]." In fact, one might consider the very mode of composition in *Adjunct*—Manson's particular procedures for distributing citations and its effects—in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's "body without organs" and the dynamic concatenations of their "machines désirantes [desiring machines]." On its surface, Manson's text has the adjunctive construction that characterizes the coupling of desiring machines. As Deleuze and Guattari insist, such machines arrange themselves by paratactic accumulation: "«et, et puis»...«et puis, et puis, et puis...» [‘and...’ ‘and then...’ (....) and then...and then...and then...]"<sup>78</sup> Moreover, as a hinge between texts, channeling source texts into a new construction, *Adjunct* operates according to the "productive synthesis" or "production of production" by which every connection between desiring machines is a disruption, and every

<sup>78</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipe*, 11/5 ; 44/36.

disruption permits a further connective flow. In that endless set of linkages, “one machine is always coupled with another” and “toute machine est coupure de flux par rapport à celle à laquelle elle est connectée, mais flux elle-même ou production de flux par rapport à celle qui lui est connectée [every machine functions as a break in the flow in relation to the machine to which it is connected, but at the same time is also a flow itself, or the production of a flow, in relation to the machine connected to it]”; “une machine-organe est branchée sur une machine-source: l’une émet un flux, que l’autre coupe [an organ-machine is coupled with a source-machine: the one produces a flow that the other interrupts].”<sup>79</sup> Manson cuts from source texts, interrupting them and severing their networks of flow by extracting passages, but when rearticulated by the random number generator those passages are then partitioned in the service of another text, where new flows are liberated and possibilities for new channels of communication between the reassembled fragments open. However decontextualized or truncated, when the segments are newly arrayed and remembered they inevitably form a new set of unpredictable but unavoidable associations, linking up through subterranean, rhizomatic tributaries, and overflowing their boundaries.

In *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze designates the poles of this vacillation as two types of literary machines. The first is “défini avant tout par une production d’objets partiels [...] fragments sans totalité, parties morcelées, cases sans communication, scènes cloisonnées [defined chiefly by a production of *partial objects*..., fragments without totality, vessels without communication, partitioned scenes].”<sup>80</sup> “This machine, as *Adjunct* cautions, “does not take messages.” Seen from this perspective, the *non sequitur*

<sup>79</sup> Compare: “C’est qu’il y a toujours une machine productrice d’un flux, et une autre qui lui est connectée, opérant une coupure, un prélèvement de flux [there is always a flow-producing machine, and another machine connected to it that interrupts or draws off part of this flow]” (*Anti-Oedipe*, 11/5)

<sup>80</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Proust et les signes* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964); translated by Richard Howard as *Proust and Signs* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000) 180/150.



collage of source material in *Adjunct* exemplify what Deleuze reads as the absence of style, a mode in which utterances—“*non digérés, non encore transformés* [not digested, not yet transformed]”—“se distribuent dans une fragmentation que le tout vient confirmer, puisqu’il en résulte, et non pas corriger ni dépasser [are distributed in a fragmentation that the whole ultimately confirms [...] because it results from it, rather than corrects or transcends].”<sup>81</sup> The second machine, in complement, “produit des résonances, des effets de résonance [produces resonances and effects of resonance]” that are local, selective, and interpretive.<sup>82</sup> This machine describes the activity of the reader who is sensitive to the subtle attractions between sequestered sentences, like the mild tug of lunar tides, and who selects and foregrounds certain aspects of the text, thereby facilitating flows between disparate parts. As *Adjunct* itself advises, that reader must “be able to work accurately, logically and rapidly through complex text. An ability to assimilate unfamiliar concepts and vocabulary quickly, across a wide range of disciplines is essential.” But any networks established by the reader, any flows liberated through the production of resonances, are only ever at the cost of dismantling other connections and shutting down the possibility of yet other flows. The process, again, is one of *digestion*: a breaking down into discrete particles but also absorbing and assimilating. Anabolism and catabolism, writing and reading, cut and flow: in the case of *Adjunct*, each mode plays one term against the other—the logical against the aleatory, coherent arrangement against disruptive disordering, assemblage against disarticulation, part against whole—by foregrounding one while relying on the other.

As Robert Creeley famously reminded Charles Olson: “form is never more than an extension of content.”<sup>83</sup> The content in

<sup>81</sup> Deleuze, *Proust*, 198/165

<sup>82</sup> Deleuze, *Proust*, 181/151.

<sup>83</sup> Charles Olson, “Projective Verse,” *Human Universe and Other Essays*, ed. Donald Allen (New York: Grove Press, 1967) 52.

*Adjunct*, accordingly, is what makes the form legible. In fact, content here seems to be a necessary condition for any sense of the form to emerge. The range of topics and registers, plus the apparent diversity of sources and speakers, allow the reader to see the text as a collage of fragments articulated at the level of the sentence and arranged in an palpably random distribution. Or to state this same proposition from a slightly different angle: without reference to the content, the same grammatical structure could simply constitute a *style* (clipped, staccato, manic, *et cetera*) not yet sublated to form.

But as Robert Creeley reminded more than one interviewer: "content is never more than an extension of form," and the form of *Adjunct*, in turn, helps its reader to reassess the content.<sup>84</sup> Understood as series of cuts and incorporations, interruptions and flows, the form of the text is structured as a perfect analogue of its themes—a "catastrophic reversion to structure," as the book itself phrases it.<sup>85</sup> So the dynamic in play here is paradoxical, and familiar: a certain inscription is only able to be apprehended because of the ground which that same inscription, in turn, abolishes—proving and destroying its own possibility at one and the same time. Appropriate to its host of lubricating fluids, *Adjunct* is thus a particularly slippery text, moving from a content that renders form legible to a form that flows the content, therefore making itself disappear precisely at the moment of its manifestation by erasing the very ground that permitted its emergence.

Or, in short: form always seeks its own level.

*This essay is dedicated to my students at the University of Utah.*

<sup>84</sup> See, for instance, the interview with Robert Arnold (October, 2003) in *Memorious* 1 [www.memorious.org](http://www.memorious.org), or with Leonard Schwartz (November 2003) in *Jacket* 25 (February, 2004) [jacketmagazine.com](http://jacketmagazine.com)

<sup>85</sup> Manson, *Adjunct*, 66.