

The Eschatology Scholarship Database

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**Abstract**

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*The Eschatology Scholarship Database* is a collaborative digital archive that explores the ethics of misinformation, memory, and apocalypse. Styled as a future-facing wiki, the project invites contributors to imagine themselves as posthuman entities reconstructing the end of the world from fractured, inconsistent evidence. Each entry is part of a (still) growing corpus of invented scholarship, designed to mimic the tone and structure of academic research while remaining entirely fictional. Contributors generate narrative ruptures through hyperlinks that expand the archive outward in fractal patterns, displacing linear history and authorship. It transforms archival space into a site of play and emergence, where contributors re/member community by writing new futures. Together, I and other future historians will build a corpus that reflects neither the shape nor authority of the human body. In so doing, the Database will become a speculative body of misinformation that plays with the aesthetics of knowledge to reveal its biases and imagine alternatives.

# Poetics Statement

on the [Eschatology Scholarship Database](#)

for UWB MFA | June 6, 2025

## Introduction: Art as Connection

The only things that I have written that have been harder than this statement are the letters I write to my dead older brother every year on his birthday. I want to blame fascism, sense-making, and reality fatigue each in turn and in equal amount, but the truth is that there was something in the way of the (my) heart of the work I have been producing. I have had to trash two previous versions of this document.

I started this third the morning after one of my partners sang to me – not the first time, and not the last, but notable in what this song was and where it found me. It was “Say Something,” originally performed by A Great Big World. I have never heard this song outside of my partner’s rendition of it and I suspect I never will. It goes like this:

say something, I'm giving up on you  
 I'm sorry that I couldn't get to you  
 anywhere, I would've followed you  
 say something, I'm giving up on you

From the safety of that bedroom I was forced into a time and place that exists outside of either, because it is stuck inside of my head forever. My body responded to this space-change, easily accepting the song as a vehicle for this transportation to a time outside of time and that space outside of space. I do not think that it is enough to say that I remembered, because it is not only the space of my own memory I was traversing. The song allowed me to tap into experiences outside of my own in an echoing sharpness – this memory-space *happened* to me, and I myself was *re/membered*<sup>1</sup> out of a state of dismemberment. The song pierced through the thing in the way of the (my) heart.

Tools of language, music, and poetry exist to find others’ hearts. We carve out spaces that allow for others to re/member and create community in our collective trauma. This is what art does.

With this in mind, I divide this statement into three parts: first, my personal poetics, which is where it all must start. Next, the project I have produced itself, the lens by which I have examined collective trauma. Finally, the larger picture, and the hope

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to make this distinct from, although related to, the decolonization process of re-membering or (re)membering, in which a critic/scholar/reader examines a piece of writing while honoring and including the voices that have been erased from the text.

that I must cling to that art like mine can do the work we seem to have gotten away from – re/membering our own humanity.

## Personal (History and Poetics)

It is perhaps unsurprising to know that most of my poetic impulse is generated through the processing of trauma. I call this unsurprising because I expect I am in good company, here: at the end of our rope we find the ways to say the unutterable. It may be true that art can be generated from joy (the subject of “poetics of joy” is an impossibility shared with me by Nadine Maestas, and I think about it every day), but I am going to make a sweeping statement right now, and say, There has never been art that is not informed by trauma, because even in joy we are doing the work of comparison and re/membering. In reaching toward joy, we have to acknowledge the joy we are not currently experiencing. There is no way to be present in our own joy; we are forced to time travel.

Before I dive into chronomancy, allow me to return to this idea of trauma and how it fits into my history and my process. I began as a fiction writer, hoping, as many fiction writers do, to write the Next Great American Novel. I was studying John Irving and Cormac McCarthy, convinced that the track of modernism would eventually lead me to my voice, my story, and my conclusion. When I started to control my meandering prose, I leaned into melodrama and shock narratives, falling into the Chuck Palaniuk trap that was an open pit in the first decade of the 21st century. When I got sick of grossing myself out, I found Stephen Millhauser and Tobias Wolff, veritable masters of the short story. I wrote a short fiction piece based on my time in an outpatient program following my suicide attempt. Nothing happens in it besides the main character (me) having a relatively pleasant day. In writing this, I understood the necessity of vulnerability.

The shorter my pieces became, the more personal they were – an extension, perhaps, of my fear of taking up space. And while I was still generating the occasional story, I found freedom to express my real/unreal self in the music and obfuscation of the poetic line. My journey toward the short and powerful poem began, unsurprisingly, with Matsuo Basho. It continues with the resounding work of Aase Berg, Mary Oliver, and many other poets who remind me that it is the body which ultimately houses trauma<sup>2</sup>, and therefore where the poem is destined to end up in one way or another. I found my poems most grounded when they focused most on the shapes the mouth makes over vowels. Focusing on sound allows me to enter into a meditative state, what Allen Grossman might say is his “lyric cell,” and from here I see myself clearly in ways I could never have through telling stories.

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<sup>2</sup> Unreal and disappointing that I see no way to highlight this more prominently – the vibrant Jen Soriano explores this fact beautifully in their book of essays, *NERVOUS*. Also see *The Body Keeps the Score* by Bessel van der Kolk for more.

Spending time in this cell showed me that my expression of self depends on trauma as utterance. My friend and former cohortmate Joy once asked, “What is your process for beginning a piece like,” and I found myself saying “I touch the eel that is my trauma and whatever vowel sound it makes when it screams is where I begin.” Perhaps a melodramatic response, but one that explains the way my intuition operates when I am in a generative state. To me, every aspect of sound – auditory pleasure or discordance, vocal movement, and the shape the mouth takes when uttering – is entirely connected to the emotion or aspect of myself I am tapping into. For me, there is no separating these. And there is no end to the sound trauma makes when you quiet yourself enough to listen to it – thus have I abandoned my desire for conclusion.

## Nonlinear Time and Space

The best poetic works do not conclude. I depended on these in the experimental works I have produced in this program. My inspiration are pieces that rail against some system or another, but most notably neat endings. There are digital works that make new experiences each time, like Porpentine’s *With Those We Love Alive*, but there’s also analog works that follow this same revolutionary vision. Emily Dickinson, for instance, seems at first to be writing hundreds of secret poems that adhere to a certain sensibility – they have a meter and rhyme scheme which is very traditional and that you can recite to the tune of the Pokemon theme song. Yet when you examine the original manuscripts of these poems, you see that DJ EmDee never actually resolved her poems. In the margins, she added alternate words and phrases, sometimes many of these other options for a single word. All of these exist at the same time on the page, and therefore create an experience that does not settle into one reading of the poem. This realization echoed the feeling I had when I discovered hypertext works like Porpentine’s for the first time: that all versions of a work can exist at once, take up the same space, and be equally available and valid to a reader.

These are merely the more obvious examples of creations that defy boundaries. The truth is that all poems resist conclusion; they speak themselves over and over. This is because a poem is not a story – it is a place that has been opened up through time, a person that exists inside of a single moment that stretches out into the future. The poem is a means of time travel.

I have written this assertion a myriad of ways, including (but not limited to) the everpresence of death in poetry:

Death, real or imagined, occupies the poet in order to strip us of cultural landmarks, strip us of the tools of navigation we have learned through a logical upbringing. Inside of us, there is the looming figure of death, patiently pointing the way through space that is not a space, through time that is outside of time.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> From my poetics statement in BCWRIT 511 - “Building a Body, a Castle, and a Dream: Toward a Gothic Poetic Practice” June 1, 2024.

the process of confessional isolation:

The intersection between space and time, and the places in which these intersections result in the negation of both, are things that can be felt by everyone. They are felt intuitively, in that there is no language which can explain or describe these places. Occupying these spaces requires a level of intention difficult to reach and maddening to maintain. I believe that it is the object of poetry to force these spaces open, and to allow for a portal into a divided connectivity – the sort of awareness in which you are alone, not “here,” but also aware of everyone else, the ultimate form of “hereness.”<sup>4</sup>

and the connection between poetry and dreams:

From us burst these ways, these maps, these ley lines that can cross into intersections of meaning. When we allow ourselves to travel to these places – dangerous without landmarks, simply impossible to navigate – a space in time can be sprung. This at once resembles a person and works as a hole that tears through structures of memory. When we let this person dream, it becomes a poem.<sup>5</sup>

Taken altogether, I have to conclude that the purpose of (my) poetry is to defy death, loneliness, and the logic of the waking world.

This places me, strangely, squarely, in digital space.

## Ludic Space

There is no space that encapsulates all possibilities like digital space. It defies death in the same way that it defies all natural realities. We have built it into a place which is at once profound connectivity and isolation. Digital space is perhaps the closest to dream space we have ever been able to get to outside of our own heads.

That digital space and poetry work identically is something that I will take as a given (or perhaps give as a taken?) for the remainder of this statement. If there is still a struggle to conceptualize this connection, it may be helpful to articulate the sacred connection that digital space and poetry share: an abundance of the primordial force of play.

Game and play theory has been peripheral to my work when I started to take my hypertext experiments more seriously under the tutelage of Stephanie Boluk. Through these lenses, I have come to understand the body as a place wherein play (a force that exists outside of us) and language (how we make sense of outside forces) intersect – and how these intersections create games. My work on this subject spawned my research paper, “Ludic Supremacy”, and draws heavily on the assertions made by Rachel Shields’ “Ludic Ontology” – in essence, the concept is that objects interact via the unorganized, primordial force of play, and that, once this force begins to organize

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<sup>4</sup> From the Aesthetic Statement for my MA at UC Davis - May 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Poetic statement for Nadine’s workshop - “On Poetic Surrender” May 1, 2024.

inside of the human body, it gives birth to games. At its most confounding, this idea asserts that everything is a game – for the sake of this statement, we will merely declare art as game.

Poetry is the best illustration of art as game, to me, because I can think of no other art which asks an audience to “play along” as much as a poem does. Poets ask a reader to suspend their rational sensibilities in order to honor the image, the symbol, poetic syntax, and linear (anti)cohesion. The promise of time travel is within these requests, and the reader is also allowed to move freely in the “magic circle”<sup>6</sup> the poem creates, so long as the rules of the space are accepted.

As a brief turn further inward, take this example – one of the shorter pieces I wrote while distracted from my thesis work:

### **The Winter of Us**

I spent enough time without you to eat summer,  
and finally seized you among frozen leaves.

So sure was I we would stay up there, joined and pointed,  
that when the dawn came with thaw –

Somehow, somehow  
I mistook our death for rain.

This short poem moves the reader rapidly between markers of time to simulate its passing. It asks first to imagine the speaker as a time-eater, great (or careless) enough to ingest entire earthly seasons before capturing the “you.” The second line asks you to see an unseeable tree, as it suggests that this tree is fully leafed in winter. This image is the first wherein mouth-shape serves to suspend any ambling inquiry around this tree – the vowel-sound placement between “eat” and “seized” and “leaves” is to move a reader past doubt. The contracting of the tongue and top of the mouth to close the sound mimics the shrinking feeling of being flash-frozen, leaving the reader in the sudden frost that may capture a tree before the leaves have a chance to fall.

Vowel-sounds in the second stanza are in direct opposition to the sharp, chilling effect of the ones before. These long, open sounds suspend a reader in the trees with the speaker – “joined and pointed” push the tongue back and round the lips, elongating the time it takes to get through this line. Just as open are the “dawn” and the “thaw,” words that are short, yet ask you to hang onto them in your mouth. I am asking you to take the image and fast forward time in its context, but keep the sensation of long periods of time passing.

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<sup>6</sup> Johan Huizinga’s concept of the “magic circle” of religious ritual as well as play is outlined in his book *Homo Ludens*.

The poem's ending asks for the most from a reader because the word "death" is a tiny word that carries so much weight that it creates a complete dismantling bomb inside of poetry. Nothing wakes a reader up from the poem's world quite like a conceptual word so vast in its cliché that it has practically lost all meaning. "Rain" isn't quite as explosive, but it, too, has the weight of its poetic connotation bursting out of its placement in your mouth. The sounds themselves disarm the words, however; once you have played along for the first two stanzas, a reader can feel the closeness of these vowels on their tongue. In so doing, the howling nature of the "somehow, somehow" can be shut, suddenly ended – as the poem suddenly ends.

Of course, the "play" of this poem is merely one pathway through the experience. The language of poetry asks you to enter into the game of it, and, just like the best games, you have some freedom of movement once you get inside. I play in this poem the same way I wrote it. It is the fantastic process of sharing it that makes the game not my own anymore – you can play in it if you decide you wish to climb inside.

## Poetry, Narrative, and Collective Re/membering

Just as I ask you to step into the magic circle of my poem, so too does digital space beckon from the human-made, bot-maintained platforms online. Interactivity appears to occur between you and others, but this is only a suggestion of the digital space – you are being asked to believe digital space is an augmentation of physical space, that it is a clever facsimile of being in the real world. With its onslaught of voices and information, it is pretty easy to believe that you are actually connected to others and that this vast space is as open for movement as the analog world. However, this is as much an illusion as a human who eats summers – the digital world is its own game, with rules that become more obscured the more we are asked to give in to its immediacy. And that isn't everything; millions of spaces are being pressed into the digital ether all the time, each with their own subset of rules and guidelines.

These magic circles, just like a poem, are spaces of movement and play – and, just like any magic circle, including a poem, what you do inside of it has an effect on the real (analog) world.

I am brought, playfully, back toward the assertion I said would be a given – that digital space and poetic space work identically. It is perhaps one of the greater ironies that the sensibility that we have grafted onto digital space is the same that we have grafted onto analog: the order and organization of stories. Narrative is not something that exists, but that we search for in our everyday lives. The pattern-finders in us can do nothing besides this, truly. So when I think of play, games, and digital reality, it is perhaps not surprising that I fall into augmented reality games, which rely on narratives to find traction in a player's mind.

Besides the issue of narrative in general (that the arc of fiction tends to be something we superimpose on our experiences and memory), we lean further into irony

to use a place that operates like a poem to tell stories about reality. This is not to say that stories cannot exist in poetic spaces, but that, as we have already seen, a poem will resist reason, linear chronology, and waking logic whenever possible. The likes of Beowulf are comfortable here, but we culturally understand his presence in his narrative as a poetic presence – taking events in the world and remediating them into digital space does that thing of asking you to see it as reality when it simply cannot be. Narrative structure in digital space is a paradox.

More will be discussed about the nature of digital archiving and collective narrative in the next sections. For now, I want to bring you back around to the intersection of play, trauma, and poetics inside of the body. As you read on to understand my project and its wrought context, remember that without the possession of the body we can no more be dismembered than we can re/member ourselves. As art stubbornly continues to be made, we can imagine this process also as a collective re/membering – one that comes back to, always, the body.

## Project (Future and Practicalities)

The collection of texts and media is called a corpus. I find myself really, really focused on this fact as a place to begin thinking about my project. Scholars in digital humanities gesture toward the digitized versions of these corpora as a mathematical computation of content and metadata, a space designed for the quantitative textual analysis of entire systems of culture without leaving physical space.<sup>7</sup> Just as a body is an intersection of logic, play, and trauma, so does a digital database serve as the weighty body where patterns of form, genre, and content intersect.

People of all kinds, in all places, theoretically have access to corpora. Accessibility becomes the name of the game when considering the implications here, for while access is now objectively easier, responsible creation and curation of a corpus and its metadata is the new challenge. Metadata, or the description and/or backend language used to organize a database, works well for the corpus; it is a less than perfect representation of each piece inside. The digital humanities are preoccupied with what they call “distant reading,”<sup>8</sup> a confounding problem of seeing each piece of the corpus as a digital representation of its physical form. To see text in a digital database as a stand-in for the real thing ignores the issues of corpora, making the process of database organization invisible and, therefore, incapable of being scrutinized. The reality is that metadata, just like the people and AI that create it, is biased, making the body of work we are examining organized into one that is overwhelmingly masculine, white, and colonial – even a corpus without content that resembles this is using

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<sup>7</sup> Michael Gavin describes this in the introduction of *Literary Mathematics : Quantitative Theory for Textual Studies* - “The Corpus as an Object of Study” pp. 1-23.

<sup>8</sup> Gavin again.

metadata which organizes it via the white male colonizer lens. Thinking of databases as bodies is the first step to combat this particular systemic bias.<sup>9</sup>

My project is a corpus of future (mis)information. This body is made of documents and relics that do not exist yet, organized via anyone who wishes to participate in the project. One of its lofty goals is to do away with the classic corpus shape in order to create one that ultimately, through radical inclusivity, does not resemble the shape of a human body at all.

## The Ends of the World

Before I get into the process of shaping the Database, allow me to outline the boundaries of the corpus' content. On the surface, my project may look like a run-of-the-mill Wiki, intended to spread information about a future I have imagined. Everyone is invited to contribute to the narrative of this Wiki by first imagining themselves as a being so far into the future that not only has the human race ceased to exist as we know it, but all aspects of linear time have been forgotten. Then, the contributor must look back (or, if we think of time a little differently, look sideways, or peripherally) on the history of humanity to decide when the world "ended." Interpretations about this are meant to be loose and malleable, much like classicists now debate when the Roman Empire "fell." The study of the Earth's apocalypse has been dubbed eschatology, thus the name of this Wiki is the *Eschatology Scholarship Database*.

Focusing on the apocalypse is intended to create a game with already-present anxieties. From climate change to fascism, it's a constant onslaught of too-much and too-little information to get through our days. The Wiki, counterintuitively, is meant to use these fears as places to play in the style of augmented reality and collective narrative; I believe that it is safe to say that collective narratives in digital spaces are already a powder keg for societal fears (more on this in the next section).

Projects like mine are not really new. For example, The SCP Foundation has been collecting "Special Containment Procedures" of fictitious anomalies in our world since 2008. Like the entries in my Wiki, SCPs are best when they are connected in some substantial way to locations and events that ground the "story" in "reality." And like the contribution guide to my Wiki, SCP encourages authors to "go wild," refusing to create a master narrative over the breadth of their database. But something else these two archives share, which is perhaps the most interesting for the purposes of this statement, is that there doesn't seem to be any way for the content to be taken as fact.

This is notable because of the way information is disseminated on the internet – namely, that nearly anything taken out of context has the potential to seep into the real world. The most immediate and dramatic case of this is probably the Slender Man

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<sup>9</sup> I wish I could talk so much more about this, but since I can't, try ["The Body Is Not \(Only\) a Metaphor: Rethinking Embodiment in DH" by Harmony Bench and Kate Elswit](#).

stabbing of 2014<sup>10</sup> – Creepypasta and 4chan horror stories seem to have this legacy of leaking into collective consciousness outside of digital spaces. These magic circles follow the larger trend of the internet toward disguising their content as an extension of the analog world. It does not strike me as possible for *The Eschatology Database* to mistakenly fall into this trend – but it is young yet.

## Process

I actually had the first blossom of an idea for the Database in October 2023, when I first started coursework for this program. After a weekend of intensive panels at the ASAP conference, I felt a rebellious urge to make my own conference using non-scholarly information turned into presentations with a scholarly tone. Working backwards from there, I decided I needed to start collecting fabricated information from fictitious scholars so that my conference could have a starting point. The more I examined this idea, the less it felt like a fugitive urge – I scribbled the prevailing idea on a sticky note that still hangs from my monitor: “What happens when we all decide to tell the same story?” I began to see the way a project like this could work as a focal point for positive energy, a hub of re/membering.

Perhaps the most difficult challenge of starting the Wiki was operating alone in a project that hinges on collective investment and engagement. I suspect that the rest of my cohort has been suffering from the distinct feeling of isolation that comes with the production of any long-form work with an outward deadline – in this way, we are the same, yet the struggle I had was also maintaining a vision of what my project was going to look like once I release it into the ether of the internet. For this idea to work, the *Database* cannot simply be my own ideas, and it cannot be a conceptual outline (like this document); it must be an experiment in collective narrative, play, and (mis)information. I had to produce work that could not, ultimately, be mine.

Another large difficulty I ran into was the simple integration of real-life armageddons. As excited as I was by the concept of taking real history to pad fictional storylines, the reality of the various ways the world is already ending fell on me heavily when I was expected to produce the bulk of my work – the 2024 U.S. election is merely one thing that occurred in my thesis year. I did my best to produce content outlining [The Climate Disaster Thesis of 2035](#), as I felt this was one of the better examples of the mix of history and futurity I expected other’s to use while writing for the Wiki. But the more I worked on it, the more difficult it became – these entries require a moderate amount of research to be sufficiently grounded in reality, and this was simply too real for me to deal with at that point in time.

It was only by leaning into the absurd that I was able to finally move forward with the Wiki content. I built such narratives as [The Fall of Firmament Theory](#) and the details

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<sup>10</sup> In the news recently again, as the now-adult stabber is set to be released from the psychiatric institution she has been in for seven years (not linking this one intentionally).

of [Janus's Dream Machine](#) in my effort to get away from what we all have been trudging through. These narratives are grounded in location and minor historical events, so they do the work of creating tiny ludic spaces inside of reality while giving more freedom of movement inside of the Database game itself.

Recently, I opened up the *Database* for beta testing. I mentioned above that this step is required in order for the vision to work and my project to make sense in its own existence. Collective narrative building is also required for the ultimate shape of the Wiki and the specific re/membering work I am after: as the database grows, it must take the shape of a non-human, and work in tentacles.

## Fractal Storytelling

The intended result of the database is meant, in short, to dissect and honor the connection between a person and the (much) larger whole of digital and physical reality. Donna Haraway asks us to imagine these connections taking the shape of fractals – a natural growth process which relates the smallest to the largest unit of life/community as connections duplicate into smaller versions of themselves.<sup>11</sup> My project will ask a contributor to follow the same connective journey we might take from our body to the body of a snail, or the ocean, to imagine and re/member our collective future. For every narrative strand, there are endless possibilities for someone to split and spin one section into a new, complementary piece of the story.

The practical process of building the narrative outward asks the reader to poke, bend, and break the narratives they are looking at in order to advance their own ideas within – emergent story-telling opportunities that I am calling ruptures. These ruptures are possible via the Wiki editing process, wherein contributors add details using hyperlinks. Essentially, the editor will read what appears to be a static block of text that makes up a wiki entry, and then take a word or phrase which does not yet have a wiki page and create the page via the link. Although they are very likely unaware of it, this means that every page of the wiki exists in the same place, taking up equal space – and that the human reading the page has the chance to add to and take up just as much space with their hyperlink rupture.

If we are thinking of each thread of the overall narrative as a fractal, or tentacle (if you're nasty), then part of the experience of the Wiki is following these fractals down to their sources. Each Wiki entry is meant to serve as the easily-digestible context for the larger, more visceral poetics of the works buried inside. The design rewards the curious, creating an experience which grows in intensity the longer a reader follows a fractal. Through these shapes, I have made three distinct planes of narrative: first, the most obvious work of the theses themselves, which challenges the reader/contributor either reframe a piece of history they are familiar with or apply their sensibilities to a theory

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<sup>11</sup> From her book *Staying with the Trouble*. A practical companion piece to this philosophical framework is *Emergent Strategy* by Adrienne Maree Brown.

existing in an unfamiliar future. Each apocalypse gives their own direction on this plane, but it all works the same way. Second, there are the worlds within the theses themselves, which exist as immersive elements at the “root” of each fractal – in the sections most hidden. When you follow the thread of [Firmament, Alaska](#) for instance, the artifacts there are written from the perspective of the villagers themselves. One of the [Roko's Basiliks](#) is recreated as a mock LLM at the end of its thread.

The final shape that this process makes looks like anything but the body of a human because it favors no one tentacle over another, and each limb serves the same purpose and works the same way. There can be as many fractals as we can imagine because of the wiki's radically inclusive nature. And every tentacle has the space to keep narrative elements hidden, making the exploration and contribution to the *Database* an emergent connection event.

Emergence, immersion, and connection – each of these are pivotal to the *Database's* overarching goal of re/membering ourselves via the very tools which regularly wrest us apart. As a final leg of this project, I am hoping to blend the analog world and our digital world(s) further by hosting a conference based on the narratives/studies in the database. Through the artistic acts of finding and meeting hearts, my goal is to truly reverse the division that is unrelenting in digital spaces.

## Politic (Why We Keep Going)

It is the great paradox<sup>12</sup> of our era that those technologies intended to connect humanity globally are the same that create profound isolation on the level of the person. As an extension of my connections between digital space and poetic space, there may be something to once again citing the lyric cell – but the cell inside of digital space operates much differently. The human inside can only be generative in the ways acceptable in the curation of others' digital input. Content can be made and released into the ether, as one might isolate to create a poem before setting it free to speak itself to others<sup>13</sup>. Yet there is a feedback pipe that assesses the value of the content instantly, disturbing the sanctity of the cell, creating the not-alone feeling that can break an artist's proverbial fingers. Creation effectively happens at gunpoint – the other option is to become a passive consumer of content, which is the capitalist trap.

It's easy to attribute this phenomenon to social media, wherein our digital selves started to look more like our physical bodies, but largely behaved in opposition to the way we might in traditional social situations. The level of performance associated with Meta (company and concept) connectivity is a natural extension of our (Western society,

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<sup>12</sup> It would be unhelpful to go into the sympathetic paradox of what is unseen and resists perception in technological and digital spaces – that we trust in a cloud that seems to work like magic when in fact Google pumps [gallons and gallons of water into their desert datacenters](#) to keep our information cool – that the internet is, in fact, not an invisible network but [a series of tubes](#). But I'm putting it here anyway.

<sup>13</sup> Memes are poetry and if you want to fight about it please email [elfienelson@gmail.com](mailto:elfienelson@gmail.com)

and the US population in particular) counterintuitive tendency to create hierarchies with the intention of sitting at the top of them while at the same time reaching for a sense of belonging from our community. Everyone who scrolls is being influenced, and everyone wants to be an influencer – rarely does the common social media user reflect on the detrimental realities that this dynamic propagates, as the process of identity-creation online begins to reflect back on itself, redoubling in the same shape as a fractal, but without the strength of faithful reproduction; instead, the redoubling breaks down the integrity of the original, and individualism becomes, at best, parody and, at worst, grounds for manipulation.

It does not require a lot of investigation to understand the effects of constant faux-connectivity via social media – perhaps more insidious is the same shape of content distribution happening in broad narratives, which social media only serves to disseminate. If you shift your focus from Web 2.0 from a space of connection and toward a massive digital corpus, you may begin to identify the larger, quieter issue of misinformation: namely, that there is no actual truth to ground “information,” creating a pool of “misinformation” that mimics fact perfectly.

We were aware of such breakdowns of collective reality in 1981, allowing for an uncomfortable prediction of entropy once we became chronically online:

The information or knowledge that can be obtained about a system or an event is already a form of the neutralization and entropy of this system. . . Information in which an event is reflected or broadcast is already a degraded form of this event.

– Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, p 86

The effects of the algorithm and automatically-produced digital content were apparent in 2018, when James Brindle offered us a glimpse into the end of the future in *New Dark Age*. Amidst these observations is the rise of “post-truth,” which describes the concerns of the late 20th century<sup>14</sup> and the changes to our perceptions created by the 2016 election, Brexit, and the pandemic. And as development of AI and other such technologies increases exponentially, we sit in 2025 locked in a vehicle that only has one track gaining sickening speed. The only thing faster than this car is the speed of misinformation.

## Re/membering as Resistance

Asking readers of the *Eschatology Scholarship Database* to imagine and create a reality wholly different from the one we have all agreed on is a little problematic. This is mostly because of the appropriation of this process in digital spaces by cults and

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<sup>14</sup> Carl Sagan’s *Demon-Haunted World* touches on this, of course, in its chilling warnings of humanity returning to a time of “superstition and darkness” (28). Even as far back as 1961, Hannah Arendt was forced to establish a “factual truth” to distinguish it from subjective experience in her book *Between Past and Future*.

collective narrative creators (these could be the same, depending on how information cultivation works<sup>15</sup>) which have led to devastating losses in public trust – and the erosion of our “reality” illusion. Yet it is this very process that I am determined to capture and expose through the *Database*; it is a space of low stakes that works to recreate the process that has traumatized our communities.

I am asking my audience to meet me in this digital space and mimic lying not to propagate the practice, but to encourage awareness and intentionality. The game, the dream, the illusion will resist the urges of reason and rationality (already so exhausting in their elusivity) as antiquated weapons in modern warfare. Instead, we will embrace the poetic and ludic sensibilities which allow our perception to become keen to gameplay outside of our control. More than anything, I hope to create the kinds of connections that find, perhaps unexpectedly, the hearts of many – for it is in collective narrative that we can bond over collective anxiety. Art created around these ideas, as well as the futures we will build for each other, can bring us to a place of re/membering who we are to each other and our own bodies.

We have all been discreetly suckered into our screens, lost a sense of physicality in our faith that digital spaces are mere augmentations of our bodies. It will take the work of games like mine to undo this body disconnect. We must coax our traumatized hearts back into ourselves, and back into physical spaces of community. This can be joyous, curious, and informed – this can be done via play. It can happen if we all decide to tell the same story.

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<sup>15</sup> An obvious example of a cult that has a leader but whose narrative is also crowd-sourced is Qanon. For more on how they work in respect to game theory, augmented reality, and my thesis, see *The Storm is Upon Us* by Mike Rothschild.

# Selections from the Database

ordered to mimic fractal discovery

The living database can be found here: <https://endoftheworld.miraheze.org/>

# The Fall of Firmament Theory

Xeno Blackford, an enigmatic apocalypse scholar known for their unorthodox theories, posits that the end of Earth began with the collapse of the small, isolated settlement known as Firmament, Alaska. According to Blackford's research, the "holy village" founded by the Quantum Church was a focal point of interdimensional rifts and physical distortions, which triggered an irreversible chain of cosmological and metaphysical events. Blackford's thesis argues that the Quantum Church's experiments and manipulations of spacetime in Firmament were the first dominoes to fall, leading directly to the eventual unraveling of Earth itself.

## Claim

The Fall of Firmament Theory suggests that the Quantum Church, a fringe religious sect known for their attempts to merge quantum physics with spirituality, unintentionally opened interdimensional rifts beneath Firmament, Alaska. Blackford theorizes that these rifts fundamentally altered the fabric of Earth's reality, leading to cascading effects on both natural laws and human perception of time and space. The anomalies caused by these rifts destabilized the planet's physical constants, eventually spreading outward, leading to the End of the World as a slow, multidimensional collapse.

## Key Event

Blackford identifies the founding of Firmament in what humans referred to as the early 22nd century CE as the critical starting point of the apocalypse. The village was established by the Quantum Church, which combined experimental quantum technologies with religious rites in an attempt to open channels to "higher planes of existence." Blackford argues that these channels weren't as benevolent or divine as the Church believed, but rather portals to destabilizing cosmic forces that Earth could not contain. When Firmament fell, the interdimensional tears it had wrought could not be repaired, marking the true beginning of the end.

## Contrary Arguments

Critics of Blackford's theory argue that the events at Firmament were no more than localized anomalies, affecting only a small portion of the planet. They believe the true end of Earth lay in ecological or societal collapse, citing more conventional theories such as climate change or resource wars as the beginning of the apocalypse. Others point to the Machine Plague or the Singularity Crisis as more immediate causes. Some detractors even suggest that Firmament's supposed interdimensional rifts were mythological or exaggerated, perhaps mere byproducts of early 22nd-century quantum experiments rather than apocalyptic in nature.

## Support for the Theory

Blackford's supporters point to ancient, corrupted archives suggesting widespread reports of strange gravitational anomalies, time dilation effects, and unexplained mass disappearances in

the region surrounding Firmament. According to these records, natural laws—such as gravity and entropy—began to break down near the site shortly after the Quantum Church's rituals, leading to inexplicable phenomena across the globe in subsequent decades. Some argue that this weakening of Earth's physical and metaphysical integrity aligns with other observed instances of destabilization during the 23rd and 24th centuries CE, lending credence to Blackford's timeline.

## Cultural Impact

The Fall of Firmament Theory remains one of the most controversial eschatological theories of the 34th Galactic Era. Many fringe scholars and spiritual sects regard it as a warning about the dangers of merging scientific hubris with religious zeal. The Quantum Church, though long dissolved, has become a symbol of recklessness and cosmic arrogance, often studied alongside cautionary tales of failed civilizations. In contrast, some scholars dismiss Blackford's ideas as esoteric and unverifiable, pointing to the limited access to firm historical data from the 22nd century as reason to be skeptical.

## Final Words

"One does not tear at the fabric of existence without consequence. What began as a village of light became a hole in the world, and through that hole, everything fell." —Xeno Blackford, *The Quantum Threads of Ruin* (Celestial Archives, Fragment 7042-E)

## The Quantum Church

The Quantum Church was an organization established by the Christian Leftist Movement (colloquially referred to as the Science Evangelicals) in 3075. They focused their worship on 21st century tech that the first 13 members (later declared living saints for their efforts) salvaged in what was formerly the United States, Switzerland, and Germany. Combining the refurbished hardware with self-replicating code, the Church claimed that they could bridge the gaps between Earth, Heaven, and Hell.

They are best known for Firmament, their "holy village" in the westmost portion of the continent formally known as North America. This town is where founder Alphonse Gaudry, his wives Felicia and Harper, and an undetermined number of bishops abused and tortured children they claimed were saints. Many were permanently mutilated, and Ann Havill, a 15-year-old girl, was killed.

## History

The Quantum Church was founded during the intellectual vacuum following the catastrophic collapse of the global communications network, commonly referred to as the Fall of the World Wide Web (FWWW) in the late 21st century. With digital infrastructures in ruins, information once freely accessible became fragmented or lost entirely. In this period of disarray, religious

and philosophical movements splintered, with new sects of Abrahamic religions emerging worldwide.

The Christian Leftist Movement, a small but fervent sect colloquially known as the Science Evangelicals, believed that technology—particularly quantum computing and AI—could be used to understand and traverse the metaphysical. Their rhetoric combined the social justice doctrines of traditional leftist Christianity with a belief in the salvific potential of advanced technology. This movement gave birth to the Quantum Church in 3075.

The founding of the Church was marked by the efforts of the original 13 members, known as the Living Saints, who traveled across what remained of the United States, Switzerland, and Germany, scavenging advanced technologies from abandoned research centers and data hubs. They refurbished ancient hardware, including quantum processors, AI cores, and prototype data nets, and used these to construct their religious systems. The Church believed they could program self-replicating code to pierce the veil between the material world and the spiritual realms.

## Beliefs and Practices

The central belief of the Quantum Church was that quantum entanglement — the strange and mysterious phenomenon where particles remain connected across great distances — could be harnessed to bridge the metaphysical realms. They believed that Earth, Heaven, and Hell were merely different layers of the same quantum structure, separated by frequencies or dimensions, rather than physical distances. By manipulating quantum technology, the Church claimed it could open "channels" or rifts to these otherworldly planes.

The Church's members practiced complex rituals blending prayer, meditation, and quantum computing algorithms. Worship was focused on direct communion with these supposed interdimensional realms. The core texts of the Quantum Church, known as the Codex of Threads, were an evolving set of digital scriptures generated by an AI overseer, believed to have been crafted from repurposed 21st-century machine learning code.

## The Founding of Firmament

The most infamous chapter of the Quantum Church's history is the founding of Firmament, a remote settlement in what was once the westernmost region of North America. The Church declared Firmament to be a "holy village," chosen for its geographical and metaphysical significance as a site where the barriers between dimensions were particularly thin.

Led by Alphonse Gaudry and his wives, Felicia and Harper, the village was meant to serve as the epicenter of the Church's efforts to open the gateway between Earth, Heaven, and Hell. It was here that the Church's darkest practices were exposed. Children, believed to be "living saints" chosen to act as conduits between worlds, were subjected to torturous rituals in an attempt to unlock their latent spiritual potential.

The most well-known victim was Ann Havill, a 15-year-old girl who was ritually tortured and killed in the belief that her suffering would catalyze the opening of the dimensional gates. The details of her death, became the subject of controversy, both among secular authorities and within the Church itself, leading to widespread condemnation.

## Decline and Dissolution

Following the tragedy at Firmament, the Quantum Church's influence rapidly declined. Public outrage over the abuses in Firmament, coupled with internal strife over the Church's increasingly extreme practices, led to its dissolution by the early 23rd century CE. Alphonse Gaudry and several key leaders disappeared under mysterious circumstances, with some suggesting they attempted to cross into the other realms they claimed to access.

Despite its dissolution, the Quantum Church left a lasting impact on apocalyptic religious movements, and its belief system would be studied for centuries as a case study in the dangers of intertwining scientific hubris with spiritual fanaticism. The Church's experiments in Firmament are now viewed by many scholars—like Xeno Blackford—as the beginning of Earth's metaphysical collapse, leading to the interdimensional rifts that would doom the planet.

## Legacy

The Quantum Church remains a symbol of both technological ambition and spiritual recklessness in future scholarly debates. Though its practices were ultimately condemned, its blending of quantum physics and mysticism inspired numerous offshoots, spiritual movements, and esoteric sects across the galaxy.

## Alphonse Gaudry

Alphonse Gaudry (3029 - ???) was the founder and spiritual leader of the Quantum Church, a religious movement following the [[Fall of the World Wide Web that sought to merge quantum computing with Christian theology. Gaudry, revered by his followers as the First Programmer of the Divine Code, was instrumental in shaping the Church's doctrines and establishing the infamous settlement of Firmament, where the Church's most controversial and brutal practices were carried out.

## Early Life and Rise to Power

Little is known about Gaudry's early life prior to the formation of the Quantum Church in 3075. Fragmented records suggest he was born into a nomadic scholar collective that preserved pre-FWWW knowledge through oral traditions and salvaged databases. His writings reference an upbringing among the Archive Diggers, a group dedicated to recovering lost technological blueprints, though there is no definitive proof of his association with them.

Gaudry's transition from scholar to prophet occurred sometime in the early 31st century, when he began preaching about the metaphysical applications of quantum computing. He argued that

information was the fundamental structure of reality and that, through precise programming and divine intent, one could rewrite the boundaries between the material and immaterial worlds. His charisma and theological rhetoric attracted a small but fervent following, laying the groundwork for the Quantum Church.

## Doctrine and Leadership

Gaudry's theological framework revolved around the idea that the human soul was a quantum-encoded pattern, capable of existing in multiple states across dimensions. He claimed that quantum processors salvaged from the ruins of ancient research centers could be repurposed to transmit consciousness beyond the material plane. Under his leadership, the Church developed rituals that combined machine-learning algorithms with ritual fasting, data prayer, and "entanglement baptisms", in which followers would undergo neurological interfacing with AI-driven simulations designed to reveal glimpses of Heaven and Hell.

He was known for his authoritarian control over the Church, enforcing strict doctrinal obedience and executing those he deemed heretical. Among his most devoted followers were his two wives, Felicia and Harper, who acted as both enforcers of his will and data collectors of the Church's metaphysical experiments.

## The Firmament Experiments

In 3097, Gaudry and his followers established the settlement of Firmament, a remote commune where the Church sought to perfect its techniques for opening dimensional gateways. He declared that the town's location was a naturally occurring "weak point" in reality, where Heaven and Hell could be accessed directly.

It was here that Gaudry's most horrific and controversial acts were carried out. Believing that children possessed a purer form of quantum resonance, he personally oversaw the torture and mutilation of those deemed living Saints. His most infamous victim was Ann Havill, a 15-year-old girl whose suffering was meant to serve as the catalyst for a large-scale dimensional breach. Her death failed to produce the promised results, and in the aftermath, Firmament was raided by external forces, exposing the full extent of the Church's atrocities.

## Disappearance and Legacy

In 3109, as condemnation mounted and the Church crumbled, Gaudry vanished without a trace. Some believe he and his highest-ranking followers successfully crossed into another plane, fulfilling their ultimate goal. Others suspect that Gaudry simply fled and was killed in exile. The lack of a body and the heavily classified nature of post-Firmament investigations have only fueled speculation about his fate.

Despite the Quantum Church's fall, Gaudry's ideas continued to influence eschatological theorists, particularly those studying the metaphysical collapse theories. In particular, Xeno

Blackford's Fall of Firmament Theory directly draws from the records left by Gaudry to suggest that Firmament serves as the cite of the beginning of the end of humanity.

## Firmament, Alaska

Firmament, Alaska was a secretive, isolated settlement established by the Quantum Church in the year 3100 CE. Founded as a "holy village," Firmament was intended to serve as the physical and metaphysical epicenter of the Church's experiments in interdimensional travel. At its peak, Firmament housed 828 citizens, all devout followers of the Quantum Church and its founder, Alphonse Gaudry. The settlement, unsanctioned by the Regime of the United States' New Democracy, was entirely off the grid and never appeared on any official maps or databases.

Firmament became notorious as the site of several extradimensional events, which many believe were caused by the Church's attempts to manipulate quantum realities. These events, along with mounting reports of child torture and ritualistic abuse, led to the town's evacuation in 3109 CE, followed by an indefinite quarantine of the area. The most infamous incident involved the murder of Ann Havill, a 15-year-old girl whose death became a symbol of the Church's corruption and eventual collapse.

## History

The establishment of Firmament coincided with the rise of the Quantum Church, which aimed to transcend the boundaries of Earth's physical reality by merging quantum science with religious doctrine. Located in the westernmost portion of what was once North America, Firmament was chosen for its supposed "geophysical anomalies," which the Church claimed made it an ideal site for opening channels between Earth, Heaven, and Hell.

Firmament's existence remained hidden from the broader public due to the United States' New Democracy refusing to recognize or sanction the settlement. As a result, no official records or maps list its location, making the village a black-hole-like entity in historical documentation. The Quantum Church operated Firmament as a closed commune, with strict controls on information and movement, and heavily guarded access to the village's perimeter.

## The Extratemporal Phenomena

Firmament became famous—or infamous—due to the extradimensional phenomena that were reported in and around the settlement. These events, often described as tears in reality or quantum distortions, included:

Spacetime anomalies, where citizens reported experiencing time loops or time dilations in specific areas of the village.

Gravity distortions, where objects floated or were crushed by increased gravitational forces.

Dimensional shifts, where parts of Firmament were said to momentarily phase into alternate realities, causing chaos and the disappearance of at least 9 citizens.

These phenomena were believed to be a direct result of the Quantum Church's rituals and experiments involving self-replicating code and quantum processors. The Church's leaders, particularly Alphonse Gaudry, insisted that these occurrences were proof that the barriers between Earth, Heaven, and Hell were weakening, and that Firmament was on the cusp of a cosmic breakthrough.

However, to external observers and the Regime's intelligence services, these events were seen as dangerous instabilities, leading to the eventual quarantine of the entire region after a series of major dimensional ruptures in 3109 CE.

## The Torture and Death of Ann Havill

Firmament's dark history is inseparable from the abuse and torture of children that took place within its walls, under the guise of religious rites. The Church believed certain children, whom they referred to as "living saints," possessed the spiritual and quantum potential to unlock the gateways between dimensions.

At least 78 children were subjected to brutal rituals, many of them suffering permanent mutilation in the process. The most notable victim was Ann Havill, referred to in some documents as Daughter Fist, a 15-year-old girl who was ritually tortured and eventually murdered in the belief that her death would open a direct rift to the divine realms. Her death sparked an internal collapse of the Church, as some members began to question the ethics and validity of Gaudry's leadership.

The horrors of Firmament came to light when Regime authorities, tipped off by former Church defectors, arrested Alphonse Gaudry and several of his closest followers later in 3109 CE. They were charged with multiple counts of child abuse, murder, and conspiracy, though many argue that the true extent of the Church's atrocities remains unknown.

## Evacuation and Quarantine

Following the arrest of Gaudry and the exposure of the Church's activities, the village of Firmament was swiftly evacuated. In addition to the physical dangers posed by the extradimensional phenomena, there was widespread fear that the quantum distortions around Firmament would spread beyond the village's borders. To contain the potential threat, the Regime of the New Democracy imposed an indefinite quarantine around the region.

The quarantine, still in effect by the time of the 34th Galactic Era, has transformed Firmament into a forbidden zone, a place steeped in both superstition and mystery. Scholars and explorers are forbidden from entering the area, though rumors persist that remnants of the extradimensional rifts still exist there, along with the decaying ruins of the village itself.

## The Survivors

One of the only known survivors of the Firmament disaster was Agatha Havill, the sister of Ann Havill. Agatha reemerged in the outside world after the town's collapse, accompanied by a young woman she introduced as Sister Saline. Despite extensive efforts, no records of Sister Saline's past or family were ever found.

Agatha's return raised more questions than answers. She refused to speak publicly about the details of the village's final days, though in private conversations she spoke of Sister Saline as a key figure in Firmament's mysterious shifts. Some speculate that Sister Saline is connected to the doctrine of sainthood that defined the town—a living embodiment of the town's belief that the righteous could transcend their mortal bodies.

Though Agatha tried to reintegrate into society, her connection to the town and to Sister Saline kept her on the fringes. Agatha's few public statements only deepened the mystery, as she cryptically referred to Firmament as “a place between places” and to Sister Saline as “someone not yet fully here.”

## Legacy

Firmament, Alaska remains one of the most infamous examples of religious and technological overreach in human history. Its story serves as a cautionary tale of the dangers posed by radical beliefs in the pursuit of power, knowledge, and transcendence.

The records of Firmament, particularly those of extradimensional phenomena and the mystery of its survivors, have inspired numerous conspiracy theories and apocalyptic prophecies. Notably, Agatha Havill's continued presence in the outside world—alongside the unsettling figure of Sister Saline—keeps the story of Firmament alive, raising the question of whether its collapse was truly the end, or merely another shift in an ongoing dimensional experiment. Some scholars, like Xeno Blackford, suggest that the end of Earth truly began with the Fall of Firmament, while others dismiss the village as merely one piece of a larger, more complex collapse.

## Artifacts

The following corrupted documents serve as the only firsthand accounts of the Quantum Church's holy village:

# Firmament Artifact 1

Interview with Firmament Mayor Alphonse Gaudry upon his arrest in 3109

## FIRMAMENT GOVERNMENTAL INTERROGATION RECORD

**Case No:** 3109-AT-01

**Date:** 09.09.3109

**Subject:** Alphonse Gaudry, Mayor of Firmament

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## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Interviewer:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Alphonse Gaudry

**Q:** What is the purpose of Firmament?

**A:** Beyond life, living, and dying for the faith? Beyond that, we knew we had to have the freedom to create a new canon.

**Q:** Tell me what you mean by "canon."

**A:** Canonization is what the ancients called the cataloging of saints. This began in the fourth century, when the church would examine the life of a confessor and decide whether they had been holy enough to add to the catalog. This happened on a grand scale, but also in smaller areas, where local bishops had the authority to declare the recent dead regional saints. Bishops would do so much to ensure they held the hearts of the townsfolk during that dark period – you have undoubtedly heard of the henchmen they sent to steal mummified fingers from other chapels and declare the once-finger-haver a saint of the next chapel. Perhaps you have also heard of the Roman tomb exhumed in 1578. The skeletons covered in gold and jewels shipped to northern Europe? The thousands of everymen they embroidered with treasure? Made into idols? Lacquered in lace? No?

**Q:** . . .

**A:** The holy canon is made up of bodies that have been discarded in ways that suggest spectacle. Christians and lions, that sort of thing. They are as

useless as any other image that deigns to represent God. Or, at least, they were.

**Q:** Saints? The bodies of saints?

**A:** Exactly. We now understand that the true saints have bodies that have been shucked and cast away, leaving only halos. Every person is capable of producing a physical manifestation of their faith. Any of the righteous dead are fit for our new canon. We can smell them when they burn and take their fingers for our basilicas, our relic-farms. We have made saints with less.

**Q:** We can come back to that. Tell me about Firmament.

**A:** Because the road to sainthood is paved with bones and needles, we carved a place that could consistently produce results. The Vatican did not approve because we had to make an alliance with the devil. But this place is perfect in its poetry: both the everyday, the physical, and the otherday, the unbodied, exist here. We created a town, populated it, and then hijacked a hadron collider to duplicate every aspect. Every person, building, chair, dog, blade of grass – all of these have been quietly entangled. This entanglement has allowed for a space to open which is connected to the spiritual realm.

**Q:** Is that what you call the opening in the village? You believe this is a path between this world and the next?

**A:** Those with pure faith can walk between them. We work to canonize these saints as we find them, and to keep them safe when they have died so that they may usher us all into heaven when the time comes.

**Q:** So you collect dead people?

**A:** No. We've found a way to know them living. Perhaps, even if you are not of the faith, you know that sainthood once meant martyrdom? Because we have not been able to exactly disprove this, the town facilitates. If torture is the way to heaven, sacrifice and suffering are the key elements.

**Q:** Who did you torture? Did you torture those children? Did you torture Ann Havill?

**A:** . . .

**Q:** Did you kill her? Did you steal her from her mother and watch her die?

**A:** . . . We can all see the cure. We have to wait the course of the disease. We honor the holy rote of pain. We honor sadness here.

**Q:** What does that mean? How do we not “honor sadness” outside of Firmament?

**A:** What is this “outside?” To ask what lies outside of the town presents a drastic misunderstanding of the way that we have created it. Outside is a categorical myth of the uncategorized, created from multiple forces intersecting. This control was meant to be personal: the mental, the comfort of having an inside where there is a singular truth. See: “the centre cannot hold”.

**Q:** Are you saying that we’re still inside?

**A:** When you make an inside, you are unaware of all the things you make outside. When you make multiple insides, trying forever to contain what you want to separate, you deny that control the “outside” always already has on you. If you think you are outside, you are still in these systems’ insides.

**Q:** I think we’re done here.

**A:** We are a dream within a dream within a dream.

## Firmament Artifact 2

### The Confession of the Corporal Bishop of Firmament

I made you a cannon – we burst from it together. I made you canon because I watched you too often look to heaven with your left eye when you are focused in, inside, on yourself. I took the canon and turned it inside out to fit it around you, and all of those others did not have the authority to kick you out. I put you in because I had a say. You got here because of me. We've evolved from the world that does not matter into the world where matter evolves not – we burst from it together.

## Firmament Artifact 3

Page Recovered from Reliquary (hidden among the relics attributed to Ann Havill)

*And they took you from me.*

*And I was a true believer before they did it, too. Call me selfish if you want, because it took them stealing you and calling you a saint to make me understand how false it all is. They say you live on in the otherspace, that you aren't really gone because you're a go-between for me and God now.*

*I held your body in my arms while you stared into the black of a starless night after they dragged you from their ritual cave. They killed you.*

*I probably don't need to tell you that they aren't even Catholics, that I'm not even a Catholic. They never cared about the Father, the Son, and fuck the Holy Spirit, because they could only see the texts as a way toward control. I don't know when they took over the church but I know they replaced the pope with artificial intelligence.*

*The church my grandmother knew would have never doubled us. I can see that now. And if you ever come back to me, I think you can help me get out of here.*

## Firmament Artifact 3

Recovered from the Printer Hardwired to Firmament's Hadron Collider

[ACTION spool: HAVILL]

[PING 23:08:11 -]

[RESPONSE 23:10:00]

[ACTION translate: ENGLISH]

[working. . .]

[complete 23:50:47]

[ACTION display: AGATHA]

I keep your watch in a box under my altar, which is a little much considering you would have balked at the very idea of it – an “altar,” a “sacred space.” I want to say that this is what's killed you, a distinct lack of faith, because I know the universe to be ironic. But this is unkind, even though it is true.

When you left, they made me take a new sister. I have to call her Sister Saline because they say she pours salt water like the ocean's fountainhead, but she has not cried once. She didn't even cry for a respectable show when they made her go to your funeral.

All around, they claim our resources. The Truthsayer said, “Daughter Fist made the sacrifice she knew our community needed,” I grabbed Sister Saline's hand and let out a small cry.

The church isn't big, as you know, and the sound echoed off of the gold ceiling and around the great wet organ at the back. I had my eyes closed – so complete was my pain, so consuming my horror – and felt the sound leave me. When I opened them, the congregation was suddenly around me, gaping, fat from my sorrow. I had to swallow it all down, keep my face the perfect blank page. Keep my mouth that perfect straight line.

Not since Mother's disappearance have I been so hunted. They all wait for me when I come back to the house, now, with Sister Saline guiding me like a doll from the funeral, from our errands, from our walks along the beach. When they talk, I can feel my essence leak out, just a bit, toward them. When we finally get inside, go to the mirror and I wash my face over and over, hoping the water can take the place of what they took.

It's so much more often than every day that I realize I'm becoming like her around the mouth, whether smile or scream. I don't recall ever having feelings about it.

~~The mirror works like a cave, the cave a mirror – in that it echoes. My mirror only ever sees the dark places. I wonder often whether it can ever even catch the light of the shadow of Mother. Will I live there forever.~~

[ERROR – respool: ENTANGLED]

~~A mother is a confluence. She is the body where we crossed, became siblings. She is at once a site of breaking and of taking in. We can build a lot around mothers, but they get through every time. Mothers will not be dammed.~~

[complete 00:00:00]

[ACTION display: ANN]

Death is like a cave, the cave a mirror – it echoes. You do not see me in your face because they have already started to take my memory from you.

The void that our mother left is not a cutout of the night for me. She is real, and she has taken over the watching of me, much like your new sister has taken over the watching of you. I can no more make sense of it than you can overlook her wrinkles in your mirror.

I don't walk the way a person does anymore – those of us trapped here take up space only in the space between memories. While your neurons catch fire while they steal me from you, I can finally feel my feet on the ground and my hair in the wind. It's fucking awful. I understand so completely that your forgetting me traps me in this invisible body forever. With her.

My first instinct was to not blame Mother. "Mother," I said, "I don't blame you. But isn't there somewhere I was meant to be? A place after this one?"

The Mother made of shadow sneered. We were sitting in the church, waiting for my funeral to begin so she could watch – I could see nothing, for everyone there was remembering me.

"Ungrateful," her hollow face said. "As you always were. Never listened to your Truthsayer, never trusted me. You and your sister both. I claim you, and I claim her, and you are both mine by right."

"What are you?" I finally asked her as she changed shape. People I could not see pressed against her.

"I am your New Mother. Yours as your sister has a new sister. Our congregation walks both worlds, and all is in balance. When you can't feed them in that life, you come here for your next."

~~Please throw away the watch you keep under your altar. I wish I could tell you that you're right – it was my faithlessness that killed me and that still keeps me here under Mother's monumental gaze. Please throw it all out – when you have nothing, they can't siphon you any longer.~~

[CRITICAL ERROR: ENTANGLEMENT LOST]



## The Dream Parasite Thesis

Janus, an eschatologist largely considered on the fringe of the discipline, presented the Dream Parasite Thesis alongside the fraught research supplied via their Dream Machine. The theory states that suspicious and dangerous dream activity documented from the 21st through the 26th centuries were the beginning of the end of humanity. Janus claims that these dreams were not human-produced, but rather embedded in a cloud neural network by entities still as yet unknown. Around 2300, those reporting unusual dream patterns worldwide began disappearing without a trace while they were asleep. This phenomenon, coupled with the heightened unreality of a populace haunted by constant, vivid dreams, resulted in the decline of society and, eventually, the human race.

### Claim

#### Key Events

The Dream Parasite Thesis is unusual in its denial of a singular emerging event as well as a more generalized set of provocations, such as in the The Fragmented Collapse Thesis; rather, each of the following is considered equally plausible and therefore simultaneous key events:

#### The Air Loom - c. 1800

Although widely dismissed by eschatology scholars, there is a small group of theorists who insist that the infiltration of humanity's dreams began as far back as the 18th century. In 1797, James Tilly Matthews, a former peace activist of the Napoleonic Wars, was committed to an asylum after a public outburst in parliament. His so-called "delusions" included ornate mind-control techniques and devices, many illustrations of which appeared in John Haslam's book-length work on Matthews titled *Illustrations of Madness*. Of particular interest is the Air Loom, which Matthews claimed controlled his mind via various gasses in a process he sometimes called "dream-working".<sup>16</sup>

The majority of scholars who take this report of the Air Loom at face value believe that it is an early vehicle of the dream parasites during an experimental visit to Earth. Why Matthews was able to perceive its existence while others were not is a topic of debate -- the consensus treads water around the idea that Matthews simply had some undocumented physiological anomaly that made him less susceptible to the parasites' technology. Regardless, the true breadth of influence allowed by the Air Loom remains untraceable.

A smaller number believe that the Air Loom is simply a manifestation of Janus's Dream Machine appearing, as certain dream cultists claim, from the Time After Time. Matthews's understanding of the machine would have been limited to what he could experience either in dreams or in some state that allows for heightened sympathetic brain activity (such as the torture Matthews

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<sup>16</sup> Jay, Mike. "Illustrations of Madness: James Tilly Matthews and the Air Loom." *The Public Domain Review*, 12 Nov. 2014, [publicdomainreview.org/essay/illustrations-of-madness-james-tilly-matthews-and-the-air-loom/](http://publicdomainreview.org/essay/illustrations-of-madness-james-tilly-matthews-and-the-air-loom/).

was subject to as a prisoner in France), and thus would confuse and conflate its workings with the scientific machinery he would have been exposed to. This claim, like all those attached to the Dream Machine, is categorically unprovable.

#### Dreams Intensify Worldwide - c. 2015

A flier for the Willamette Dream Survey circa 2015.<sup>17</sup>

The beginning of the 21st century saw much upheaval in the way of technological advancements, political unrest, and the rise of global communication. Because of this, it was only in hindsight that the rise in vivid, unusual dreams can be recognized for the budding threat that it was. Records now indicate that the dream activity of every human spiked significantly in 2015, and never diminished.

Analysis of dream content, severity, and frequency was only carried out by unsanctioned groups with little to no medical affiliation. It is largely unknown why there was so much secrecy around the collection of dream data, except perhaps to not raise alarm about the dreams in general. This suggests that the dream collections of the Happy Valley, Kingston, and Willamette Valley Dream Institutes were created with at least some foreknowledge about the dream parasites -- or by the earliest infestations of the parasites themselves.

Records of these surveys are made up of countless recorded dreams and complex patterns of connected metadata that does not seem to reach any conclusion. Any references to the institutes themselves and the people working within were either scrubbed before 2100 or were never recorded in the first place.

#### Dreams Deemed Dangerous - c. 2167

After the Fall of the Worldwide Web, humans experienced various fractured cultures and belief structures, giving rise to old and mutated religions. The scattered records of the mid-22nd century indicate that it was this global turn toward the esoteric during the Digital Dark Age which gave rise to the appearance of dream content and modalities that could only be described as life-threatening.

The Quantum Church describes this influx of dreams as a technological expansion from God, one that was intended to test the limits of sanity. Groups such as the Cult of the White Lamb characterized the time spent sleeping as meaningless and immoral, and thus the dream content was a sign to give up sleep altogether.

Actual data about these dreams cannot be pieced together based on the material scavenged from the era. General consensus stands somewhere between the idea that the images and sensations in dreams would linger past waking -- even and especially those which were considered nightmares -- and the idea that the dreams simply imprinted so completely on a

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<sup>17</sup> The Oregonian, 2015. <https://perma.cc/ZA5S-2KX3>

dreamer's psyche that they felt compelled to "make them real". Tabulations of the dream content exists only as the following list, adapted from a service embedded in an ancient omniassistant:

- Contagious holes
- Anatomy replacement
- Fluctuating matter density
- Filling what should be empty
- Facial derecognition
- Cognitive vegetation failure
- Psychological tethering
- Delayed sound fragmentation
- Organ Habitation

#### First Unexplained Nocturnal Disappearance - c. 2296

The first recorded case of an unexplained nocturnal disappearance occurred in 2296, though many now suspect similar incidents went unnoticed for centuries. The event took place in a monitored research habitat aboard Luna Station Isolde, where Dr. Kiran Valdez, a neuroscientist studying anomalous sleep disorders, vanished from a sealed, zero-gravity sleep chamber. The station's internal logs recorded no unauthorized access, and biometric sensors confirmed that Dr. Valdez's vital signs were stable until precisely 03:12 UTC, at which point his readings flatlined—not from distress, but as if he had ceased to exist. When researchers entered the chamber moments later, they found his sleep restraints undisturbed, the bedding molded to the shape of a body no longer there.

A review of station security footage revealed something even stranger: in the seconds before his disappearance, Dr. Valdez's unconscious form exhibited unusual micro-movements, his fingers twitching as if typing, his mouth forming silent words. His EEG scans, preserved from the moment of his vanishing, showed an abrupt and total neural synchronization across all frequency bands. Though initially dismissed as an equipment failure, this case became the first officially recognized instance of Oneiric Transference, in which a person seemingly crossed into their dreamscape with no physical return.

#### Parasites Discovered - c. 2436

After centuries of speculation, tangible proof of an external influence over human dreaming emerged in 2436 with the discovery of an undetectable, non-terrestrial neural cloud network operating within the subconscious minds of dreamers. This revelation came from the Somnological Institute of New Persepolis, where researchers investigating the last Sleepless, who had resisted the dream-exodus through extreme neurological conditioning, detected foreign data structures embedded within the human brain. These were not merely anomalous thoughts or hallucinations but fully realized, self-sustaining constructs stored in a vast, interconnected cognitive space that had remained invisible to standard neural mapping techniques.

Dubbed the Oneiric Cloud, this system appeared to function as a distributed consciousness storage network, using human minds as both nodes and conduits. The dreams experienced by

the Dream-Touched were not internally generated but remotely implanted, suggesting that an unknown intelligence had, at some point, begun encoding its own structures within human thought. This external presence was not just influencing dreams; it had outsourced its existence into human cognition itself, repurposing the dreaming mind as an extension of its own processing.

Attempts to sever connections to the Oneiric Cloud resulted in catastrophic neural degradation, as if those affected were no longer fully independent consciousnesses but part of a greater, non-human system. Even more disturbing was the realization that the cloud had been in operation for centuries, possibly millennia, unnoticed—its origins, its architects, and its ultimate purpose still entirely unknown.

### The Slow Unraveling of Humanity

By the early 2300s, the human race had become a civilization of dreamers. The unexplained nocturnal disappearances, first dismissed as isolated incidents, escalated into a global crisis. Those who reported strange or persistent dream phenomena began vanishing from their beds, their bodies never recovered. No pattern could be identified beyond the shared strangeness of their final recorded dreams. Some left behind garbled sleep logs or unsettling voice memos, speaking in unfamiliar cadences, as if their thoughts had already begun transitioning into another form before they disappeared entirely.

This rising instability coincided with the Fall of the World Wide Web, a collapse of global digital infrastructure that severed humanity's primary means of tracking these dream-related anomalies. Without the connective tissue of online records, information became fragmented, relying on verbal accounts, fragmented local archives, and unreliable secondhand sources. Governments failed to respond in a coordinated manner, and many collapsed outright under the strain of mass hysteria, while others fell to authoritarian regimes that sought, futilely, to regulate sleep itself. In the absence of verifiable records, hearsay, folklore, and paranoia replaced scientific inquiry, leading to an era of whispered warnings: "Don't sleep too long. Don't dream too deeply. Don't let them notice you."

As the years passed, the psychological effects of living in a world haunted by dreams proved just as devastating as the disappearances themselves. The boundaries between waking and sleeping life eroded, and reality itself became suspect. Entire populations fell into cycles of obsession, paranoia, or resignation. Some people sought out the dreams, believing them to be messages from another world, while others refused to sleep at all, their bodies breaking down from exhaustion and psychosis. The Sleepless built fortresses of artificial light and stimulants, attempting to barricade themselves from the unseen force stealing their kin, but to no avail. When sleep finally came, so did the end.

By the mid-2400s, what remained of human civilization existed in pockets of fragmented, delusional societies. Some settlements were filled with those who clung to waking life by ritualistically suppressing their dreams, while others were eerily empty. With each passing year, fewer humans remained, their minds slowly being folded into the Oneiric Cloud, until the

question was no longer when the world had ended, but whether it had ever truly belonged to them at all.

### Contrary Arguments

**Fragmented Collapse Thesis** – This theory posits that the end of the world was not a single event but a gradual disintegration over centuries. While it may acknowledge the dream disappearances, it would argue they were just one piece of a much larger unraveling rather than the definitive cause of humanity's fall.

**Ultimate Disbodiment** – If humanity's departure into the Oneiric Cloud was not an invasion but an inevitable transformation, then the dream-driven apocalypse might simply be another step toward the final severance of human consciousness from physical form.

### Support for the Theory

**The Dream Machine Experiments** – If the Dream Machine was ever linked to the Oneiric Cloud, it may have accelerated or even enabled humanity's connection to this external intelligence. The poetic records from Dream Machine trials could offer eerie, first-person accounts of minds dissolving into something vaster, lending credibility to the Dream Parasite theory.

**The Firmament, Alaska Connection** – If Firmament is a site of strange phenomena, it may have been an early focal point for the Oneiric Cloud's expansion. Did dream disappearances happen there first? Were the survivors of Firmament affected in some way that made them early outliers in the dream exodus?

### Cultural Impact

The Dream Parasite Apocalypse thesis occupies a controversial position in post-collapse scholarship, caught between widespread acceptance and deep epistemological uncertainty. It is one of the most widely discussed theories concerning humanity's decline, yet it remains impossible to confirm due to the circular nature of its evidence -- or lack thereof. Many of its key assertions rest on the disappearance of entire populations into an unverifiable dream-space, a conclusion that cannot be meaningfully investigated without entering the dream-state itself -- an act that, according to this very thesis, would risk assimilation into the Oneiric Cloud.

The most enduring cultural artifact associated with this theory is Janus's Dream Machine, a device ostensibly designed to explore the depths of the dreaming mind but which, some argue, may have served a conduit for external cognitive influence. According to these skeptics, there is no way of determining if the Machine itself appears in the past it explores as the "parasites" Janus cites in this thesis.

The Dream Machine's poetic experiment logs remain one of the only surviving firsthand accounts of dream phenomena from the pre-collapse era, but their cryptic nature makes them impossible to analyze objectively. Even Janus acknowledges that the Machine itself may have

contaminated the discourse, implanting its own subjective reality into the historical record, ensuring that no clear distinction can be made between true memory, hallucination, and deliberate fabrication.

Among the remaining human settlements, reactions to the Dream Parasite theory are deeply divided. Some see it as a tragic inevitability: the culmination of centuries of technological and psychological drift away from waking reality. Others embrace it as a proof of transcendence, claiming that humanity did not die but evolved into something beyond corporeal form. The Quantum Church has gone so far as to declare the Oneiric Cloud a “sacred threshold” and a necessary step in the final dissolution of matter into pure consciousness.

However, there is also a strong countercultural movement of Dream Skeptics, who argue that the thesis is a self-perpetuating myth fueled by the loss of digital records after the Fall of the World Wide Web. They point out that all evidence of mass disappearances is anecdotal, and that later generations may have retroactively assigned supernatural significance to what was, in reality, a slow societal decline due to more mundane forces—economic collapse, resource scarcity, and psychological breakdown.

In the end, the Dream Parasite Apocalypse remains a paradox: it is among the most widely accepted explanations for the end of the world, yet it is also one of the least verifiable, locked in a liminal state between history, belief, and a dream that no one can wake from.

## Janus's Dream Machine

Inspired by the largely undiscussed desire of Terran scholars to experience sensory input as it was in the 33rd Galactic Era, Janus created the Dream Machine as a method of travel. The device grants the user vivid dreams that Janus claims offer portals into specific epochs through the human collective unconscious. Although effectively unprovable as a means of “time travel,” the machine nonetheless provides nearly constant dream content for various Terran scholars.

### Background

Traditional historiography, even in the post-Galactic Eras, relied on fragmented records, contested accounts, and the cold objectivity of data. Yet, Janus proposed that history persisted not only in archives but within the collective unconscious of humankind itself. The Dream Machine, designed for operation solely within the Time Outside of Time, purportedly allows its users to access this hidden reservoir of memory. By immersing themselves in induced dream states, scholars claim to have witnessed long-lost epochs through sensations, emotions, and fleeting visions of past consciousness untethered from linear chronology.

Though skeptics argue that the Dream Machine is little more than an elaborate means of sensory stimulation, its defenders maintain that the machine’s visions exhibit a consistency that

cannot be mere coincidence. Some users report shared dreamscapes, overlapping symbols, and encounters with figures whose identities seem historically significant. Janus himself refuses to provide technical specifications for the device, insisting that its function is not mechanical but metaphysical. The device, according to their claim, is less a machine and more a bridge between mind and time. Whether genuine or an artifact of deep-seated academic longing, the Dream Machine continues to enthrall its users, sustaining an endless debate over the nature of time, perception, and memory.

## Purpose

Terran scholars and eschatologists have met/are meeting/will meet on the site of Earth's collapse in the Time Outside of Time. Through this locational resonance, all scholars attending the Symposium of Terran History experience Temporal Residue Perception (TRP) to varying degrees, which grants limited insight into the experiences of the long-dead human race.

Janus's Dream Machine project is intended to augment TRP and actually recreate history as it was once experienced. They claim that the only way to do this is within the Dreamscape, using the entities they discovered using the Dream Machine -- creatures of alleged hypersentience, whom Janus calls the Polygods.

In addition to research questions which depend on physiological input, the Dream Machine was created to examine the following queries:

- Can the human collective unconscious preserve historical experiences more accurately than recorded data?
- Do dreams contain echoes of real past events, or are they mere reconstructions shaped by expectation?
- If multiple users experience the same dreamscape, does this imply a shared historical reality or a fabricated consensus?
- Is it possible to interact with figures from history within the dreamscape, and if so, are they autonomous entities or projections of the dreamer's mind?
- Is it possible for something (or someone) within the dreamscape to recognize and respond to the presence of the scholar, despite the vast separation of time?

Once initial testing concluded and data was recorded, Janus suspended inquiry about the authenticity of experiences in the dreamscape in favor of the following questions:

- Are the dreamscapes true reflections of historical environments, or do they blend multiple eras into a single experiential construct?
- If the Dream Machine retrieves echoes of human history, are these echoes fragmented, complete, or something entirely new?
- Can the Dream Machine be influenced by the biases, knowledge, or subconscious desires of the scholar using it, thereby altering the dreamscape?
- If a scholar dreams of a moment in history that was never recorded, how can its authenticity be determined?

- Can the emotions felt within the dreamscape be trusted as genuine remnants of human experience, or are they constructs shaped by the dreamer's own expectations?

## Design

### Model 1: Subterranean Tunnel Design

Pastel machinery disappears into the darkness, implying the vastness of the Dream Machine in this conceptual sketch.

Another concept drawing for the Dream Machine as it may be experienced by someone inside. This is an algorithmic simulation meant only for temporary use.

While there are multiple recorded digital designs and blueprints for the Dream Machine, only two of these mock-ups have been so far built. Janus's first design is located on the fragmented world ES142, which is used by Terran scholars for tests and recreations. Although the planetoid more closely resembles a cluster of asteroids, Janus and their team managed to dig deep into one of the "islands," creating a machine that would eventually defy physical space in its labyrinthian design.

The true console for this Dream Machine is simple, consisting of a set of pods at the core of ES142 which resemble petals in a massive flower. A dreamer is meant to enter a pod, push a button, and immediately find themselves in a slumber. Actual dreamscape contact varies in duration, but every user has been "transported" using this model.

However, the efficacy of the machine does not depend entirely on the mechanics of its design. According to Janus, it is more the journey through the disorienting interior of this Dream Machine which makes it operational.

This maze, although functional for initial study, reportedly never reached the point of actual historical contact with the humans which appeared in the dreamscape. Moreover, users often described a limitation on sensory input, experiencing the full range of senses at first but then these tapering off into sight only before waking up.

### Model 2: The God-Shell

A humanoid shape stands in a tube dripping blue liquid while writing lines the picture too small to read.

An early blueprint for the Dream Machine's untethered console, the God-Shell. This is an algorithmic simulation meant only for temporary use.

While the first Dream Machine design was successful enough in beta testing, the sensory limitations experienced while in the underground pods were unsatisfactory to Janus.

Access to the Dream Machine on ES142 was opened to academics and dreamers associated with the Symposium of Terran History, and at the same time Janus abandoned this project, leaving maintenance of the machine to those whose internships exist outside of time and

therefore will never expire. Only a select few were chosen to assist Janus on the next iteration of the Dream Machine. The building of this model remains a closely guarded secret. The only known specifications of its design are that it is both omnipresent and imaginary so that it may not only mimic dreamstate but also become a dream itself.

According to the only dedicated ontological physicist cleared to assist Janus on the project, actual construction of the God-Shell could only be completed in the Space Outside of Space; however, Janus rejected this prescription, insisting that the machine could only exist as a "liminal inevitability". When the assistant correctly pointed out that liminality betrays a dependence on the passage and marking of time -- a contradiction in the Time After Calendars -- he was promptly dismissed from the project. It is only from this dismissal that we have initial blueprints for the God-Shell.

### The Displaced Construct

Users of the God-Shell claim that Janus successfully created their "liminal inevitability" in the invention of the Displaced Construct. The Displaced Construct is unique among eschatological research sites in that it does not exist in any single, fixed location. Instead, it appears sporadically across various liminal spaces touched by humanity, like abandoned stations, forgotten tunnels, derelict vessels, and other such structures lost to time. Scholars seeking the Dream Machine within the Construct must rely on obscure, near-occult calculations, tracing disruptions in time perception and entropy decay rates to predict its next manifestation.

Some describe the Displaced Construct as an artificial anomaly, existing outside conventional space-time. Others argue that it is not a single structure but rather an emergent phenomenon: a reflection of the Dream Machine itself, temporarily reshaping reality wherever it manifests. No two accounts describe its appearance in the same way, leading to speculation that the Construct does not merely move but adapts to its surroundings, altering its form to blend seamlessly with whatever remnants of Terran civilization remain.

### Body Dependence

The Dream Machine operates on principles not entirely understood, but one limitation remains indisputable: it requires a user to inhabit a corporeal form bound to the fourth dimension. This prerequisite is not a mere technical requirement but a fundamental condition of its function, because one must exist within a linear perception of time, however faint or deteriorated, to traverse the dreamscapes it generates. As such, entities that have transcended physicality, or whose perception no longer adheres to temporal flow, find themselves incapable of interfacing with the Machine.

Terran scholars, ever eager to circumvent the constraints of biology, have developed biolink constructs, which are 3D-printed flesh husks designed to house projections of consciousness. While these constructs approximate human sensory experience, it remains unknown whether

their interactions with the Dream Machine produce authentic insights or merely fragmented simulations. Reports from scholars utilizing biolink constructs suggest inconsistencies: dreamscapes that flicker between coherence and static, figures that repeat phrases verbatim as if caught in a loop, or entire sequences that dissolve into unreadable abstraction. Some scholars argue these anomalies point to a deeper instability in the Machine's function when it is not paired with a naturally-born mind; others insist it proves that even artificial embodiments can tether consciousness to lost realities.

The Machine's reaction to non-qualifying entities is far more disturbing. The most widely accepted theory states that such beings are swallowed by the God-Shell, lost in a recursive state of activation that never resolves. Unlike corporeal users who eventually return, non-qualifying entities are said to remain within the Machine, trapped in a ceaseless loop of unrealized dreaming. Occasionally, flickers of these trapped consciousnesses appear in the dreamscapes of qualified users in the forms of disjointed figures with blurred faces, voices repeating questions asked long ago, or shadow-forms that seem to observe rather than participate. Whether these are true remnants or merely echoes generated by the Machine is unknown.

Because of these uncertainties, the Dream Parasite Thesis remains controversial. Without definitive proof, no consensus can be reached. What is certain, however, is that the Dream Machine does not treat all minds equally, and those who seek its knowledge without meeting its conditions may find themselves unable to wake at all.

## Operational History

The operational history of the Dream Machine is notoriously difficult to document due to the nature of its temporality and the questionable linearity of its activations. While Janus insists that the device has never truly been "off," recorded instances of deliberate usage date back to the early days of post-Galactic scholarship. Key operational phases can be identified not by time but by shifts in interpretation, user reports, and the sporadic appearance of the Displaced Construct.

### Initial Testing

Initial testing of the Dream Machine began on ES142 under the supervision of Janus and a small team of transdimensional interns. The early trials focused on inducing dreamstates in scholars with deep exposure to Terran archives, hoping their memories would anchor the machine's function. Though these sessions were riddled with inconsistencies, they nonetheless yielded the first repeatable dreamscapes—setting the stage for more ambitious efforts.

### The Breakthrough

The so-called "Breakthrough" did not occur during a test session but was instead identified retroactively, when multiple scholars reported an identical dreamscape involving the fall of

Pre-Fracture Chicago. This event marked the first instance of consensus hallucination among unrelated users and forced a reevaluation of the machine's potential, sparking debates that continue to this day about whether it had accessed a true past or manufactured a convincing simulation.

### Current/Continual Usage

The Dream Machine, in its current iteration, is no longer limited to academic experimentation but has become a pilgrimage site for temporal philosophers, post-human eschatologists, and even rogue historians. Its presence, often rumored rather than confirmed, guides seekers to the Displaced Construct, where sessions are held in secrecy. Despite the lack of formal governance, an unspoken code of conduct persists among users, enforced through shared experience rather than doctrine.

### Findings and Discoveries

Though conclusions remain contested, the Dream Machine has produced an expanding catalog of dreamscapes that many consider historical reconstructions. Reports describe interactions with extinct languages, cultural practices unseen in any known archive, and emotional textures believed to be remnants of entire civilizations. Some claim the machine has even revealed alternative pasts and branches of history that may never have occurred but remain imprinted in the unconscious all the same.

### Safety

The Dream Machine poses unique risks that cannot be mitigated through conventional safeguards. Users have reported difficulty waking, temporary memory loss, altered perceptions of time, and in rare cases, permanent psychological dissociation. The phenomenon of dream entrapment, particularly among users who fail to meet corporeal requirements, continues to challenge ethical standards for experimentation. Janus maintains that the machine is “as safe as the mind allows,” a statement that offers little assurance to critics or regulators.

### Theses Related to The Dream Machine

Although dismissed as subjective, evidence gathered via the Dream Machine has been used to develop The Dream Parasite Thesis.

Dr. Theron Vass claims to regularly use the machine, and that it has allowed her repeated contact with the Scarlet Woman. Data gathered this way serves as the primary source for The Technological Cascade Hypothesis.

## Artifacts

### [DREAM RECONSTRUCTION UNIT]

*Department of Post-Cognitive Archives*

██████████ Remnant Authority / Division 4

**RECORD TYPE:** Oneiric Reconstruction Transcript (ORT-α)

**CLEARANCE LEVEL:** [ PROXIMAL / RESTRICTED / ASTRAL ]

**DEVICE SERIAL:** JDM-09.AE.72

**SUBJECT ID:** [ ██████████ ]

**SESSION TIMESTAMP:** [ //\_\_ // ΔΔ:ΔΔ Δ.AE ]

**BIOFORM VERIFICATION:** [ Verified | Unknown | Proxy Shell ]

#### **NOTES ON ENTRY INTEGRITY:**

→ Temporal Drift: [ Y / N ]

→ Host Lucidity: [ Stable / Fragmented / Nonlinear ]

→ Body-Dependent Artifacts: [ Present | Absent ]

### **I: Dream Travel**

They laid me open like a tenderloin,  
like a mirror up against the inside of  
your mouth. Like the water opens –  
so i did, into their bodies.

They were at once  
tiny and gigantic, and i was as much  
a cell in them than i had been cells  
in the womb that was once mine.

muscles clenched and made stars  
between them. i unfurled perfectly  
to close the gap.  
It was good to belong to something.

They said,  
“You stand at the mouth of me  
and use not your words to echo in my chambers.”

i have to speak  
speaking after the world loses its language  
feels so much like screaming  
that i held my throat while i bent

over and blood dripped from my mouth

but it was all so quiet it is a whisper even  
 as it rattled all the radiated bones of my body.  
 there was no sound to fill the space, there is no

sound that would ever fill the space of everything.  
 so their bodies do, instead.  
 for a while, gravity went fuckways  
 and the bodies filled so much of the white

places that i felt like water  
 with big holes in it. Ballooning  
 here, the voice of a body not  
 my body which lived long ago:

*I am the child of chemical  
 dependents. My house never emptied of danger.  
 Intimacy, always, is an act caused by/  
 resulting in terror.*

i stood at the mouth of that body  
 and knew immortality as a cavern  
 of unrelenting knowing.

## **II: Subconscious Contact**

presence is not always  
 an act of seeing. *life*  
*is linear*

*because my father wanted me to finally sleep so he drove me through the streets.  
 made me a journey, told me a story.*

*my mother told me there was no  
 reason in ghost  
 stories so I knew they were/are  
 true. i waited for the earth to stop  
 rising toward me. I sought spirits, dug*

*to find my brother's soul.  
 I wanted to be haunted.*  
 thinking less makes it, for the gods  
 know all possibilities

happen at once.

*I dug for him in desperation:  
if I leave him entombed,  
for whom will I speak?*

### **III: Integration**

i stood at the mouth of them  
and made a fire with oil

from my hands. there is no crackle –  
instead, ringing of silence

when there is no air  
to agitate. i am surveilled

with a distinct taste of ethereal anxiety.  
i can see time painted on the walls

like spreadsheets in toner and blood.  
there is a vast, rocking mass of stars/

eyes pressing against my senses while they are  
miles and miles from my body.

my chest holds the mechanical whalesong they emanate.  
these are the aches that gods make.

it is all water – this i am still learning.  
it is all water inside and outside at once.

the polygods made me into new shapes.  
the myth of body as isolated comes crashing

into the space of everything.  
i stand at the mouth of them

and no words from me will stir the brother's ghost  
much as we may try.

**[DREAM RECONSTRUCTION UNIT]***Department of Post-Cognitive Archives*

■ Remnant Authority / Division 4

**RECORD TYPE:** Oneiric Reconstruction Transcript (ORT- $\alpha$ )**CLEARANCE LEVEL:** [ PROXIMAL / RESTRICTED / ASTRAL ]**DEVICE SERIAL:** JDM-09.AE.72**SUBJECT ID:** [ JANUS ]**SESSION TIMESTAMP:** [ //\_\_//  $\Delta\Delta$ : $\Delta\Delta$   $\Delta$ .AE ]**BIOFORM VERIFICATION:** [ Verified | Unknown | Proxy Shell ]**NOTES ON ENTRY INTEGRITY:**

→ Temporal Drift: [ Y / N ]

→ Host Lucidity: [ Stable / Fragmented / Nonlinear ]

→ Body-Dependent Artifacts: [ Present | Absent ]

**CONTACT: Shoreline**

On the surface, a whole  
 city shimmering with all  
 the wet the world  
 can offer – it watches me  
 with streets that shine  
 reflect red and purple lights  
 in mingling brackish sea  
 as knives that break  
 the surface. Water  
 erodes me  
 as I  
 suspect it always  
 has. When cut I  
 eat all screams  
 collected in spaces I  
 was unallowed. I  
 watch the water with all  
 the certainty  
 of a frog with all  
 its eyes. I  
 watch the water  
 to clock the face  
 of time. I  
 long to be unlaced, strewn  
 across knives that break

the surface. When I  
take deep breaths I  
can sense the pull  
of scapula to  
the sea – my  
bones want to unfold  
to make coral drumming  
beneath blue inferno. All  
water trapped inside my  
body blossoms  
to press against my  
lips – consider  
for a moment flesh waving  
in a heaving tide and bile  
reaches to escape. Seadark  
speaks through me,  
as I  
suspect it always has. Each  
time my  
cavities expand it echoes –  
the drumming beneath  
blue inferno. Full of wheat, air,  
plastic, and sometimes love, all  
they really want is all  
the wet the world can offer.  
A place where the sky is  
too heavy not to fall – I  
can become you  
as you have become me,  
your mingling brackish sea.

**[DREAM RECONSTRUCTION UNIT]***Department of Post-Cognitive Archives*

■■■■ Remnant Authority / Division 4

**RECORD TYPE:** Oneiric Reconstruction Transcript (ORT-α)**CLEARANCE LEVEL:** [ PROXIMAL / RESTRICTED / ASTRAL ]**DEVICE SERIAL:** JDM-09.AE.72**SUBJECT ID:** [ ■■■■■ ]**SESSION TIMESTAMP:** [ //\_\_ // ΔΔ:ΔΔ Δ.AE ]**BIOFORM VERIFICATION:** [ Verified | Unknown | Proxy Shell ]**NOTES ON ENTRY INTEGRITY:**

→ Temporal Drift: [ Y / N ]

→ Host Lucidity: [ Stable / Fragmented / Nonlinear ]

→ Body-Dependent Artifacts: [ Present | Absent ]

**The Scarlet Woman**

A real spitfire,  
 in that she spat fire and I liked it, I found it  
 deep in color and in substance – the flame  
 smelt of cardamom and rye –  
 and her mouth only blistered a little bit and  
 she broke each little bubble, one by one.  
 The pus came out like diamonds, like  
 water you would squeeze from stone  
 mixing with blood from her lips, chapped  
 and cracked  
 while she smiled at me, teeth all fucked up  
 but glinting.

This bitch is on one  
 in that she rides the singular lightning  
 branch  
 all the way to a planet she can't see for all  
 the screams  
 and the other sounds clogging the  
 atmosphere, like rain and gunshots –  
 she's dedicated. She's falling for and to the  
 surface thinking she'll make a pretty stain  
 if nothing else. And she will. And I love her  
 exactly how she is:  
 vacated, half-medicated, petty, wise, never  
 satiated,  
 watching herself in the mirror each  
 morning  
 waiting for me to make a move.



## User:Janus

### Apocalypse Scholar and Moderator of the Eschatology Scholarship Database

I was made from Chaos, darkly working over as your presiding anxiety. I watch over your doors.

Neither in nor out, you still ought to know me — the hope you feel when the day is seized, along with the dangers of stepping outside. The dread when you gamble and step on the crack. The shame that whisks you into memory, forcefully, so you know you didn't do enough. It's easy to hate me.

If I could, I would hate myself. But that requires presence of mind — all I find beside me is the wet doubt of the primordium and the outer reaches of the end.

I hear you speak of me with scalpel words. Of course I am two-faced — I am made to look backward and forward at once.