Conditional Framework of a Book

Based on the interest in content construction, particularly with the book as a primary medium, I have always sought a new perspective on how content might be structured—specifically, by adopting a design methodology that is oriented around frameworks and tailored to the nature of the content itself, in place of purely subjective aesthetics.

In the book *Conditional Design Workbook*, the authors discuss this approach to framework-based creation, stating that "art is the idea of producing art." which means the emphasis of artistic creation lies not in the meticulous refinement of visual details, but in the construction of overarching concepts and rules. The focus shifts toward developing a systematic, rule-based framework centered on ideation and expression, thereby replacing subjective control. Through such generative frameworks, a continuous and fluid body of content—both visual and textual—can be produced.

Until now, the books I have created have consistently attempted to use this approach as a visual framework for content. In this project, for the first time I introduce code into book design—utilizing a generative tool governed by conceptual rules to produce a large volume of visual outcomes with internal continuity. Meanwhile, i think the selection of generative rules should derive from external principles that explore the essence of things. I always hope this could be biological—evolutionary in nature—so that concepts may manifest organically through natural processes.

As William Carlos Williams wrote: "Not to copy the nature, to imitate." That is, the beauty of nature lies not in its surface appearance but in its processes of generation and construction—its underlying structures and rules.

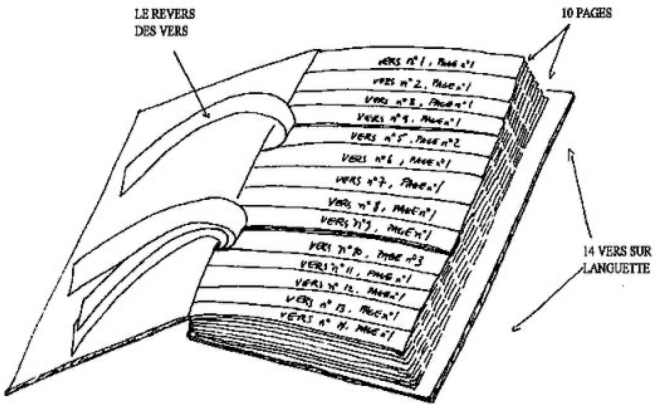
In this project, a cognitive concept of memory said: "We do not usually construct meaning through conscious computation, but computation and reasoning have already been encoded in our genes through evolutionary selection." Therefore, I chose to base my code on cellular automata—a natural evolutionary model proposed by mathematicians in the 1940s—where, under certain conditions, cells "survive" while others are "eliminated" and die out. At the same time, I introduce the evolution of memory over time: I label conflicting memory fragments as "revisions" and supporting fragments as "explanations." These fragments interact within the code—reinforcing or canceling each other out. Over time, memories emerge and are replaced, allowing them to interact and be reconstructed within a natural framework.

Meanwhile, addressing the issue of uncontrollability in generative systems of computation and prediction, Conditional Design Workbook also suggests that such frameworks should not turn into unintelligible puzzles; instead, they should be pre-communicated by the designer during setup. That is, within the computational and unpredictable nature of code, the advantage of adaptability to artistic expression should be preserved, while also disrupting its opposites. In my project, this results in a reversal of code as a purely rational tool. I retain its predictive logic, but allow it to interact with human emotional and narrative expression. Within the structure of this framework, a more readable and humanly comprehensible form of narrative—rather than purely computational output—is generated.

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Book From Reading List



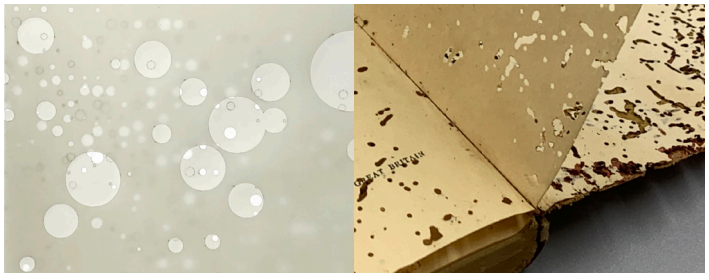
Cent mille milliards de poèmes, published in 1961 by French writer Raymond Queneau, is an experimental poetry book and one of the representative works of the Oulipo literary group. By deconstructing the compositional rules of the sonnet, Queneau printed each verse on a separate flippable strip, enabling readers to generate and read up to one hundred trillion different poems through rearrangement, combination, and substitution of lines. This book seeks to merge rule-based experimental programming and writing with the material medium of the book, in a way that closely aligns with my research direction.

As a work of Oulipo literary experimentation, it exemplifies the group's tendency to introduce uncontrollable and unpredictable elements through the formulation of algorithms and constraints. It is seen as an experimental process that tests—or even completely dismantles—the literary essence it explores: the complete suppression of the editorial identity behind a text, whereby countless philosophical and poetic texts are generated solely through programming.

In the early experimental phase of my project, I also encoded similar sentence-generating systems. However, through practical application, I realized that the actual meaning and content produced still directly depend on the selection, compilation, and literary nature of the word bank and grammatical structure (otherwise, the result tends to resemble nonsensical automated headlines). This highlights the close entanglement between content and authorial identity. Although this seems contrary to the original intention of Oulipo, the conceptual rules remain applicable to structural organization of the content. In the subsequent stages of practice, I chose to retain the authorial identity by inputting the code system with paragraphs rather than individual words, while still preserving the system's generative constraints. This allowed for the creation of coherent, narratively driven texts that genuinely originated from my editorial position. The overall layout, generated through a rule-based system, makes the content retain its unpredictability and boundlessness, thus achieving a relative balance between generativity and human intervention, unpredictability and subjective expression. Nevertheless, I continue to reflect on the implications of text within the context of the conceptual book as a material object—particularly as my final outcomes resulted in a large volume of narrative texts that require the reader's participation.

When readers do not engage in close reading, how can the book itself—through its materiality, spatiality, and interactivity—allow them to directly perceive the expression of its underlying concept? If we consider only visual communication, does the narrative quality of the text still matter?

In Cent mille milliards de poèmes, the nearly infinite possibilities of flipping and recombining lines reveal the boundlessness of literature. The designer designed the flipping action, which closely matches the concept of the text: without engaging in actual reading, one can intuitively sense and experience the concept through the act of flipping. At the same time, the book's physical structure and craftsmanship serve as a visualized model of code logic, materializing abstract systems of rules through physical form. In my project, the rule-based system based on biological evolution — and the visual characteristics of code as both fragmented and continuous — reminded me of worm-eaten perforations in old books, where the passage of time physically alters and erases information through the materiality of its medium. It also responds to the evolution of memory over time, as the brain, being its vessel, continuously reshapes it through its inherent imagination and subjectivity. Moreover, the hollows and interwoven layers, beyond visualizing and modeling biological rules, introduce a sense of fragmentation and stratification into the reading process, resonating with the conceptual framework.
Furthermore, the visual design must ensure that the experience of flipping pages evokes a focused and intentional sense of agency, free from extraneous or disruptive gestures.



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Rule-based Content Generation

This project builds upon a deep iteration of the emotional code work Methods of Iterating. In my previous practice, I developed a code system for text evolution based on Cellular Automata, a model inspired by biological evolution rules, and extended this system into printed media.

In *Adhocism: The Case for Improvisation*, the authors propose a concept of development: how a tool's potential can be expanded through modification and recombination. This idea unfolds in two directions:
1. The evolution of a particular technique itself;
2. The development of its latent potential—through shifts in context or purpose—so that it may serve new and specific functions.

In relation to my project, It suggests two directions for iterating on the code-based system I use:
1. Introducing more human intervention into the generative process, in order to subvert the overly rational outcomes of computation;
2. Developing the potential of Cellular Automata as a logic of biological evolution enables its use as a rule-based framwork for constructing text and articulating concepts—shifting the emphasis from subjective aesthetic control to structural design.

References List

Jencks, C. and Silver, N., 2013. Adhocism: The Case for Improvisation. [Originally published 1972] Cambridge: The MIT Press. Excerpt, pp.38–53.

Book From Reading List

The work *Un proverbe peut en cacher un autre*, created by Marcel Bénabou in 1980, explores the generative relationship between grammar rules, text, and meaning. It consists of two main components: a set of syntactic structures and a lexicon. The grammar outlines various templates for proverbs, while the lexicon comprises a range of words—synonyms, antonyms and semantically linked terms. Through random substitutions from this word bank, an infinite number of proverbs are generated, each seemingly more meaningful than the last.

But where does the meaning of the generated text come from? Is it derived from the author's selection of vocabulary, from the inherent structure of the grammar, or from the generative act of combining words according to a program?

Furthermore, the work raises broader questions about standards for generated text:How can algorithmically produced language achieve greater readability and narrative coherence?

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Literary Practice

As a rule-based substitution writing technique, **S+7** was created by **Jean Lescure** in **1961**, in which each noun in a text is replaced by the **seventh noun** that follows it in a dictionary. This method of synonym substitution not only highlights the expressive richness that can emerge when translating the same content, but also reveals the inherent ambiguity of language—nothing is absolute. As the original sentence is gradually replaced by synonymous elements, new meanings emerge. This process resonates with the generative, substitutive, and ambiguous nature of memory that I explore in my project.

At the same time, its approach of dividing words into two opposing lexical categories and importing them into a program system is the same as my own code. However, such categorization is inherently subjective, which has led me to further explore how text libraries in programs can be categorized—particularly within the framework of computational systems that require explicit classificatory logic. What kinds of material are most suitable for introducing this kind of subjectively driven categorization system?

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Literary Practice

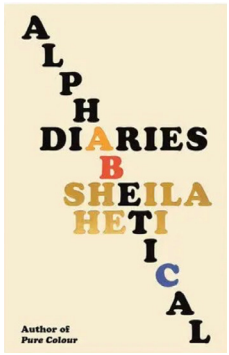
Memory as a Material

When considering how to integrate the biological logic of evolving Cellular Automata code with the characteristics of my modified text-generation code and the book medium, placing them within a more harmonious context, I have taken human memory generation and reconstruction in diaries as a new branching direction.

In *Alphabet Diary*, Sheila Heti extracts her own diary entries, assigning the author's identity to the alphabet and using the rules of the alphabe·t to arrange the material, thereby replacing chronological time.

In this book, she breaks the imposed temporal order of the diary and embraces the random outcomes generated by external rules. This concept is similar to that of my text-generation code, which uses chosen external conditions as a framework to allow the text to generate and reveal its unique qualities under new contextual rules.

At the same time, compared to other generative text works, she retains the author's agency—carefully editing and selecting 60,000 words from 500,000. This also prompts me to reflect on whether to preserve the authorial identity.



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Heti, S., 2024. Alphabetical Diaries. London: Fitzcarraldo Editions.

Book

As an artist rooted in the fusion of writing and documentary materials, Moyra Davey has spoken in interviews about certain paradoxes inherent in autobiographical texts. She points out that autobiography, as a highly edited form of material, the restoration of the truth never exists. Much like memory itself, it involves a subjective recording and reconstruction of events, once stripped of its context and abstracted, the original memory ceases to exist.—providing evidence of the relevance between diary-based materials and the theme of memory reconstruction in my work.

At the same time, she offers an artist's perspective on diary writing: "The more 'honestly' you put yourself into the story, the more the story will resonate with others." That is, the more personal, subjective, or individualized your narrative is, the more people are likely to be touched, engaged, or interrupted by what you say. This even involves preserving parts that may feel shameful or uncomfortable.

This also prompted me to reflect on how memory, in its material form, influences the creation of the work itself: when people write memoirs, or when we remember in our minds, which parts—those that no longer align with our present needs or expectations—get edited out or erased.

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Interview

The Third Memory

In *Invisible Cities*, Italo Calvino has crafted 55 cities reconstructed through his personal lens—original cities, cities as remembered, The evolution of the city as they remember it.The author weaves together these highly abstracted cities from memory and presents them to the reader with intense narrativity. As a result, during the reading process, the cities we construct in our imagination are continuously deconstructed, extracted, and reconstructed. Just as "a thousand readers yield a thousand Hamlets," so too do they yield a thousand imagined cities.

This contemplation has led me to explore the concept of a "third memory": memories that have been highly abstracted and reshaped through imagination.

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Calvino, I., 1974. Invisible Cities. Translated from Italian by W. Weaver. Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company. [Originally published in 1972], pp.5–35.

Book From Reading List

In the film *The Third Memory*, the transformation of personal memory through the merging of external sources becomes even more apparent. At the same time, the work also emphasizes the importance of incorporating the memory-bearing individual as a metacognitive agent into the material construction of personalized memory-based material.

The memory presented in the film is composed of three sources: the perpetrator's own recollection of the robbery event, the relatively objective live television broadcast, and the highly narrative and fictionalized cinematic representation. These sources intertwine and, through the perpetrator's retelling, give rise to a third, hybrid form of memory. This personalized and blended narrative outcome reveals the very mechanism of memory itself—the formation of composite memory.



At the same time, it also led me to further explore the theory of "embodied, embedded, enacted, and extended cognition", which conceives memory as the result of interactions between internal and external sources of information.

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Huyghe, P., 2000. The Third Memory. [installation] New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

Movie

In W, or the Memory of Childhood, Georges Perec attempts to reconstruct his missing childhood memories. The book is composed of two parallel narrative strands—fiction and autobiography. These two channels intertwine: a highly abstract fictional narrative and a few remaining fragments of personal memoirs. Together, they complement one another and form a "third memory"—a final, composite form of remembrance.

Through writing, Perec extends his memory process into the text itself. He pieces together fragmented memories from different sources, which either reinforce or contradict each other, forming a reconstructed version of his childhood.

This formed the foundational rule of my memory-based code: over time, conflicting memory fragments are reconciled, supportive ones are inferred as "true," and the author's present interpretation of past events is integrated into the process.

Memory is not preservative, but generative. The original memory no longer exists; it relies on the individual's act of piecing together, inferring, and imagining fragments of the past. I aim to make this process visible and replayable within my project.

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Haraldsen, M. (2023). Extended Remembering: Georges Perec and Writing as Thinking. Style, 57(1), 11–33. https://doi.org/10.5325/style.57.1.0011

Essay

How Memory Becomes Narrative

"Given enough time, our well-argued convictions begin to falter; our certainties become fantasies." This ongoing revision of fragmented memories over time reminds me of the literary concept of the unreliable narrator. Through a narrative strategy that introduces paradoxes, the text continuously withdraws or negates previously established facts, creating an unstable and ever-shifting mode of storytelling.

If we extract the text from its narrative structure and attempt to reconstruct it in chronological order, would the unfolding of discourse—by means of its own denials—erase the events it had once narrated?

There is no recoverable memory, only an undifferentiated collection of past time. In this framework, the discourse of the work may be fixed, but its story remains fundamentally indeterminate.

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Essay

Autobiographical memory, like other forms of memory, is inherently prone to error. Research has shown that even individuals with vivid recollections of past events can develop false memories and incorporate new details into their recollections over time. The article explores how such memory—shaped by imagination and consciousness—contributes to the construction of autobiographical memory, transforming one imagined reality into another.

At the same time, from the writer's position in shaping language, the text highlights the fictional and distorted nature of memory, introducing the idea of revision as a dynamic, ongoing process driven by the individual's current needs. This also resonates with the metacognitive qualities of autobiographical fiction—its reflection on memory, writing, and self-awareness as a process of introspection.

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Zunshine, L. (2022). How Memories Become Literature. SubStance, 51(3), 92–114. https://doi.org/10.1353/sub.2022.0029

Essay