Punctuation

SPECIAL ISSUE

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Seeing Punctuation

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ABSTRACT

This introduction to this special issue of *Visible Language* examines why, and in what circumstances, punctuation may become visible: when especially does it come into view and demand our attention? While punctuation marks are, of course, visible signs, when they are functioning according to our expectations (and sometimes even when defying them), they can be barely noticed. The essay begins with discussion of a passage from Charles Dickens's *Little Dorrit* in which a character's punctuation is referred to. This serves as a starting point for identifying a number of questions raised by such visibility, matters that are developed further, and variously, by the essays that follow. These include: punctuation's roles in articulating grammar and suggesting orality; what punctuation may tell us about views on education and literacy; defining punctuation; its historical visibility or invisibility; its variation according to technological change; and its iconic and figurative potential.

In Charles Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, we meet Flora Finching, the former sweetheart of Arthur Clennam who has returned from working abroad in China after almost twenty years. Flora proves not to be the woman Arthur remembers, instead the narrator tells us of his vertigo in the presence of her coquettish volubility. Flora chatters and goes on chattering: she "never once came to a full stop," "pointing" we are told "her conversation with nothing but commas, and very few of them."[1] In the second encounter between Arthur and Flora, when she visits his new place of business, the garrulousness has worsened, expressing something that can be read both as pain and comic petulance, occasioned by her sense of being slighted by her former love:

> 'Pray say nothing in the way of apology,' Arthur entreated. 'You are always welcome.'
>
> 'Very polite of you to say so Arthur — cannot remember Mr Clennam until the word is out, such is the habit of times for ever fled and so true it is that oft in the stilly night ere slumber's chain has bound people fond memory brings the light of other days around people — very polite but more polite than true I am afraid, for to go in to the machinery business without so much as sending a line or a card to papa — I don't say me though there was a time but that is past and stern reality has now my gracious never mind — does not look like it you must confess.'
>
> Even Flora's commas seemed to have fled on this occasion; she was so much more disjointed and voluble than in the preceding interview.[2]

The more and faster Flora speaks the more punctuation diminishes into invisibility: the depiction of her language is characterized, first, by a relative paucity of full-stops and then even her commas seem to have fled the scene. In this instance, Flora is not described as "pointing" her own speech; instead, punctuation is anthropomorphized, escaping, as poor Arthur, fixed in her presence, cannot.

Punctuation is the subject of this special issue of *Visible Language* and the central preoccupation that its essays seek to explore is the ways in which punctuation is or may become visible to us as readers. While of course, in literal terms, punctuation marks are inherently visible signs—intrinsically more visual than any breath they may represent—and yet to devote a special issue of *Visible Language* to the subject of punctuation has something of a paradox about it, because when punctuation is functioning as it should, it remains largely unnoticed: "Inconspicuousness," as

1. Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit* (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1857), book I, chapter 13.

2. Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, book I, chapter 23.

Adorno has written, "is what punctuation lives by."[3] The purpose of this special issue is to examine how, and in what circumstances, punctuation may especially come to, or demand, our attention. Through a range of analytical approaches, the contributions to this issue suggest how attention is rewardingly directed towards these (commonly) smallest of textual signs.

In this example from *Little Dorrit*, for instance, punctuation is conspicuous by its very absence: it is its failure to appear that makes it noticeable. There is, with respect to punctuation, as this example shows, a relationship between aberrant usage and awareness. First, the absence of marks of punctuation occasions their translation into verbal terms as Flora's unusual "pointing" of her speech finds itself deserving of narratorial comment, and eventually further neglect of marks of punctuation conjures them to life (upping and leaving the text); Dickens's narration gives them agency and volition because, paradoxically, they are not there. But this passage from *Little Dorrit* provides us with even further insights into the workings of punctuation and our apprehension of it. Dickens's articulation of Flora's commas here raises matters of both historical and contemporary interest that will be picked up in various ways by contributions to this special issue.

First of all, to describe Flora as the producer of her own marks of punctuation— her commas and full-stops—isn't accurate. In suggesting this, Dickens presents us with something of the complex set of relations between spoken and written forms of language that we are encouraged to meditate upon. Flora, as a speaker, doesn't use commas as she utters, rather to 'point' seems synonymous with to pause; we are asked to imagine in a visual form, as marks on the page, the aural and invisible rests in speech. As such, Dickens draws primarily on the elocutionary function of punctuation marks, to indicate where we rest and may draw breath, while at the same time emphasizing, through the very reference to commas, that this is, inevitably, a textual depiction of the spoken word. Over time, theories of punctuation have variously (or concurrently) emphasized the elocutionary or the grammatical values of punctuation,[4] the latter being prominent, for instance, in the prescriptive grammars that began to proliferate in the eighteenth century, following which grammatical thinking became more securely established in the nineteenth century by means of John Wilson's work *A Treatise on Grammatical Punctuation;*

3. Theodor W. Adorno, Punctuation Marks, in *Notes to Literature, volume one*, Shierry Weber Nicholsen, translator (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 96; 'Satzzeichen' first published in *Akzente*, 1956.

4. Malcolm Parkes, The impact of printing: a precarious balance between logical and rhetorical analysis, in *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1992), 87–92. See also, Alan Cruttenden, Intonation and the Comma, in *Visible Language*, 25.1, (1991), 55–73.

designed for letter-writers, authors, printers, and correctors of the press; and for the use of academies and schools (1844) which became a standard guide for printers.[5] This passage from Dickens makes vivid how intrinsically inseparable the elocutionary and the syntactical are, as punctuation articulates the syntactic relations between parts of speech, helping us to distinguish grammatical sense on the page, as well as articulating pausing in any putative oral delivery. Dickens in fact maintains a syntactic cohesiveness to Flora's speech: its written form seems to aspire to, but doesn't quite capture in a verbatim sense, the disorderliness of spoken utterances: and certainly at no point does the passage lapse into complete incomprehensibility. Nevertheless it is as disorienting, according to our expectations of written language, to read Flora, as it is apparently to Arthur to listen to her.

The imagined co-existence of speech and writing in this instance (Flora's metaphorical marks), suggests something of Dickens's own history as a journalist and parliamentary reporter. Another of his characters, David Copperfield, like Dickens himself, learns the art of transcriptive reporting by means of shorthand. Small (and large) shifts in communication practice and technology—in this case, popular developments in modes of transcribing speech for parliamentary process— can have a permeating and transforming influence. In the popular novels of Dickens, we see a new and influential aspiration towards the replication of informal and idiosyncratic dialogue. Dickens, as Steven Marcus has put it, becomes the "stenographer of his characters,"[6] though in the case of Flora he seems outstripped by her. According to Thomas Gurney, whose manual of shorthand, *Brachygraphy*, Dickens studied, punctuation has no place in shorthand, as it would "impede" and "confuse" the writer's "dispatch," and instead breaks in an utterance are to be marked by a "vacancy," or gap on the page.[7] The relative absence of punctuation marks in Flora's discourse draws attention both to spoken and transcriptional rapidity. But the shorthand writer must nevertheless translate shorthand back into longhand, and a speaker's utterance will be imagined, to some degree, or at some stage, in punctuational terms, even if this is to leave such marks out. In *Pickwick Papers*, Dickens's first full-length novel, he imagines the character Jingle as speaking according to a "system of stenography," and Jingle's "rapid and disjointed

5. Park Honan, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century English Punctuation Theory, in *English Studies* (1960), 92-102.
6. Steven Marcus, Language into structure: Pickwick revisited, *Dædalus*, 101 (1972), 183-202, 192. See also Ivan Kreilkamp, *Voice and the Victorian Storyteller* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), chapter 3.

7. *Brachygraphy: Or an easy and compendious system of shorthand, by Thomas Gurney, improved by Joseph Gurney, and now practiced by William Brodie Gurney, short hand writer to both houses of parliament. The sixteenth edition* (London, for W.B. Gurney, 1835), 10.

communication" is marked, contrary to Flora's, by a proliferation of dashes:[8] the vacancies prescribed in shorthand are translated into this textual sign of absence and abruptness, which in turn become a visual signature of Jingle's elliptical self:

'Terrible place — dangerous work — other day — five children — mother — tall lady, eating sandwiches — forgot the arch — crash — knock — children look round — mother's head off — sandwich in her hand — no mouth to put it in — head of a family off — shocking, shocking. Looking at Whitehall, sir? — fine place —[9]

Flora's, like Jingle's, failure to speak with conventionally placed full-stops and commas signals the rapidity of her utterance, but this also casts some implicit aspersions on literacy. Flora's failure to speak decorously is presented by means of a failure of *written* judiciousness, even though she's not writing. In *Dombey and Son*, Dickens does something similar with another female speaker, Spitfire who "made use of none but comma pauses; shooting out whatever she had to say in one sentence, and in one breath, if possible."[10] However, in the same novel Dickens identifies a corresponding male pomposity that similarly, but by means of an aspiration to inordinately lengthy classical periods, fails to reach a full-stop.[11] In these examples, the speakers themselves don't *misuse* punctuation marks, but readers are asked to imagine them doing so through their speech, or, rather, failing to use them when expected. A current-day example of error facilitating visibility and comment is the misplaced apostrophe, sometimes described as the 'greengrocer's apostrophe' (draft addition to *OED*, 2002, defined: 'an apostrophe used irregularly'), which in turn makes visible the issues of class and education that still, and seemingly inevitably, govern punctuational orthodoxy. Grammatical rules and consistency of usage have quite obvious benefits for our mutual understanding, but we might also acknowledge that punctuation rules, rather than being historically absolute, evolve and change over time. The apostrophe, for instance, was originally introduced into English as a sign of elision and although in the eighteenth century it was being used to mark possession, grammarians still tended to acknowledge alone its earlier role.[12]

Commas that flee, that are attributed with human characteristics, are familiar to us today in an age where we have seen the emergence of the emoticon: the

8. Charles Dickens, *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1837), chapter 7.
9. Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers*, chapter 2.
10. Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son* (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1848), chapter 3.
11. Dickens, *Dombey and Son*, chapter 12.
12. Vivian Salmon, Orthography and Punctuation, in *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, vol. III, 1476–1776, Roger Lass, editor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 48.

assemblage of punctuation marks that make faces at us on our pages and screens. Punctuation is not so unusual a candidate for anthropomorphism as, perhaps, we might expect.[13] John Harris's illustrated *Punctuation Personified* of 1824 demonstrated how for children it can serve as an important mnemonic aid. Punctuation marks also provide important information about the contours of the human speaking voice. In many English grammars, especially early ones, the simple primary marks of punctuation (, ; : .) were described emphatically in terms of pausing and intonation, as well as being commonly compared with rests in music, each signaling a rest of a differing length.[14] It is the exclamation mark and the question mark, however, that may suggest even more of the thought and the emotion that lie behind, and in, a speaking voice: the exclamation mark communicating, for example, "exultation, indignation, joy and burning rage" (according to Chekhov), as well as, more generally, volume and inflection.[15] In 1551 John Hart personified the exclamation mark as the "wonderer";[16] in 1919, George Summey, in *Modern Punctuation: Its Uses and Conventions*, described it in a crescendo of personification, as "the note of admiration, the shriek of surprise, the representation of an excited gentleman jumping skyward."[17] Some punctuation marks thus act as shorthand to human emotions, bypassing laborious verbal descriptions, though usually relying upon interpretative support through context. They can provide vividly human characteristics to text that is in essence divorced from the human being who speaks and they do so in informal modes of writing especially, as we seek to imbue our texts with something of our human presence.

In 1948, the psychologist E.L. Thorndike published in the *American Journal of Psychology* a short, intriguing, article entitled, The Psychology of Punctuation. Thorndike was interested in examining the extent to which punctuation can provide insights into the psychology of customs, which would be of import for a range of disciplines. That is, how, by means of the history of punctuation, we are able to trace the ways in which codes of practice are initiated and perpetuated. But he also wished to gauge the extent to which punctuation may act as an index to the psychology of authors. He thus provides punctuation counts across a range

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13. See for instance, in this issue, Dürrenmatt quoting Adorno on this subject. Also Jennifer DeVere Brody, *Punctuation: Art, Politics, and Play* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2008), 6.
14. For example, John Hart in his 1551 *The opening of the unreasonable writing of our Inglish toung*; see Salmon, 22.
15. Anton Chekhov, *The Exclamation Mark*, Rosamund Bartlett, translator (London: Hesperus Press Limited, 2008).
16. Salmon, Orthography and Punctuation, 22.
17. George Summey, *Modern Punctuation: Its Utilities and Conventions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919), 189.

of writers, seeing punctuation marks as "symptoms"—in a sense, as Dickens does with respect to his characters—and seeking a diagnosis of authorial characteristics, though he admits that punctuation reveals little of a "total personality."[18]

In the course of his punctuation surveys, Thorndike came across a mark that hadn't previously registered on his consciousness, though clearly he had encountered it many times:

> I myself read all of George Meredith's novels and many of H.G. Wells's without acquiring any meaning whatever for '...'. Nor did a wide reading of other books that I now know contained thousands of '...' attach any meaning to it. Not until I found it abounding in my counts of punctuation, did I ever think anything about it.[19]

It is hard to know whether to weight the cause of this occurrence to the inherent unnoticability of marks that lurk in between words, because meaning is primarily attributable to verbal semantics; or whether we might say, slightly differently, that readers can suffer from a conditioned form of obliviousness to non-verbal elements of textual experience. The latter is something from which Thorndike recovers, for once '...' is perceived by him, it is transformed from invisibility to excess, seen in vast quantities and occasioning some anxiety—previously unexperienced because unnoticed—due to its unorthodox and innovative nature: "Among many recent writers there has been a veritable mania for '...'. What they mean by it and what it means to their readers I have not been able to discover."[20] Such bafflement sits oddly alongside appreciation. Furthermore, attributing the introduction of '...' into high quality fiction to the English novelist George Meredith, Thorndike still fails to see a much longer and broader continental history for '...' which rests behind Meredith's predilection for the mark. In spite of Thorndike's optimism regarding the tracing of developing codes of practice for punctuation, the history of punctuation, and of individual punctuation marks—its lines of influence, its accumulating connotations, the connection between one usage and another—can be enormously difficult to bring into view. Choosing to follow one trajectory may only obscure another.

While demonstrating so clearly how, with regard to punctuation, we may fail to see what lies before us and what lies behind its most familiar uses, Thorndike's essay does also reveal a new twentieth-century visibility to punctuation in terms other than the prescriptive. Thorndike admired and drew on the work of George

18. E.L. Thorndike, The Psychology of Punctuation, *American Journal of Psychology*, 61 (1948), 222–28, 28.

19. Thorndike, The Psychology of Punctuation, 225.

20. Thorndike, The Psychology of Punctuation, 223.

Summey who desired to move away from the study of punctuation as a tyrannically rule-bound practice, governed by printers and writers of school-textbooks whose "method has been prescription";[21] instead he reflected on punctuation in practice in contemporary American writing. For Summey in 1919, punctuation is, as he repeats, "an art," not a "code," nor "a matter of mechanical correctness"[22] and it serves as a conduit of cultural information. Juxtapose with this Jennifer DeVere Brody's 2008 book *Punctuation: Art, Politics, and Play* where such a desire to eschew "prescriptivist rules" in the analysis of punctuation is repeated.[23] Thus we see here another strong strain at work in the history of punctuation, one in which writers, critics and artists more generally, seek to liberate punctuation from contextual expectation and pedagogic dogmatism.

Brody doesn't just see punctuation as an art, but draws our attention to punctuation as an *art form*, a performance, including even material manifestations of punctuation marks in contemporary sculpture. The concretization of punctuation displays in Brody's terms "[p]unctuation's increasing ability to stand on its own—without a sentence to make sense of it."[24] But that's not to say that punctuation hasn't always had the potential for visual and figurative autonomy. In Percival Leigh's 1840 *Comic English Grammar* the pun in punctuation is displayed, as grammatical punctiliousness is pictured as a ballerina, on her own, standing on her points, even though it is "both absurd and inconvenient" to do so.[25] Or, to return to the art of Dickens, we see punctuation not only escaping grammatical constraints to facilitate characterization, but Dickens also identifies its ability to exist alone as an imagined gesture, a communication of affect, an independent performance of personality. When Stephen Blackpool approaches Bounderby's home in *Hard Times,* the door is described as having "a round brazen doorhandle underneath it like a brazen full stop."[26] The imagined full-stop has no need of a sentence in its prohibitiveness, proclaiming itself brazenly as an icon of character.

In *Little Dorrit*, when Flora holds the floor with her monologue, not only do commas flee but there is also a noticeable diminishment of narratorial interjection—the narrator, like Arthur, seemingly finds it difficult to get a word in—and, therewith, any description of environment, movement or gesture. Language becomes oddly disembodied and unmediated. Brody describes punctuation as performing "somatic gestures."[27] Punctuation is certainly revealed in this passage of *Little Dorrit*—again,

21. Summey, *Modern Punctuation*, 4.
22. Summey, *Modern Punctuation*, viii and 6.
23. Brody, *Punctuation*, 22.
24. Brody, *Punctuation*, 26.
25. Percival Leigh, *Comic English Grammar: a new and facetious introduction to the English tongue* (London: Richard Bentley, 1840), 218.
26. Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*. For these Times (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1854), book I, chapter 11.
27. Brody, *Punctuation*, 76.

by means its absence—as a space for performance, a gap in which we may reflect on tone, in which we (and the author) may visualize the movements of the body, the momentary closing of the lips. Instead, we experience here a form of narrative stasis as Flora returns repeatedly to a past that has gone and we witness a form of somatic stasis, occasioned by such verbal excess. When imagined gesture returns in the movement of Flora's head, it is accompanied, tellingly, by more conventional, expressive punctuation, in the two instances of an exclamation mark:

> 'But I do deny it, Flora. I should soon have made you a friendly visit.'
> 'Ah!' said Flora, tossing her head. 'I dare say!' and she gave him another of the old looks' [28]

At this point the narrative moves on, to the more interesting topic, for Arthur, of Little Dorrit.

In the eighteenth century, Thomas Sheridan was keen to promote an understanding of the paralinguistic elements of communication in his *Course of Lectures on Elocution*. In his chapter on 'gestures,' he describes our extensive range of bodily gesture—especially that of the hands and the eyes—as a "visible language" that he believed sufficient "to every purpose of social communication,"[29] while earlier in his lectures lamenting that "there are no visible marks to serve as guides" to the non-verbal.[30] He was certainly correct to point out that our written language does not by any measure match the "extensiveness" of gesture,[31] however, that is not to say that punctuation hasn't been, and continues to be, a locus of inventiveness for notating tonal and gestural elements of communication. In comprising an issue of *Visible Language*, the essays that follow suggest some ways of thinking about punctuation in the terms of the journal's title, an expression, as we have seen, that is common to Sheridan's writing about fundamental, performative principles of communication.

This issue of *Visible Language* brings together writers working in a range of disciplines: literary criticism; linguistics; education; typography and lexicography. The majority of the essays attend, though in rather different ways, to historical moments of change within punctuation practice. In the first essay, Jacques

28. With many thanks to those students with whom I have had the opportunity of discussing Flora's punctuational predicament in *Little Dorrit*.

29. Thomas Sheridan, *A Course of Lectures on Elocution: together with two dissertations on language; and some other tracts relative to those subjects* (London: by W. Strahan, [1762]), 147.
30. Sheridan, *A Course of Lectures*, 10.
31. Sheridan, *A Course of Lectures*, 148.

Dürrenmatt investigates the deployment of punctuation marks in comic books, including their emergence as isolated and autonomous signs, taking examples that range from the 1830s to the early 2000s to trace how punctuation marks can serve elocutionary, emotional and ideological purposes (without, necessarily, accompanying verbal text). The comic book's combination of the verbal with the pictorial facilitated the punctuation mark, which is both a linguistic and iconic sign, to emerge as a marker of the genre. E.L. Thorndike, when describing the "veritable mania" for '...' noticed that while it might well be popular with highbrow writers such as Meredith, "the most extreme devotion" to the mark in his experience was in *Superman* where '...' appeared with three times the frequency than in the work of H.G. Wells.[32] Dürrenmatt similarly testifies to the popularity of certain marks of punctuation in the comics, with suspension points (or ellipsis), the question mark and the exclamation mark—all of which are especially useful in providing paralinguistic and emotional information—becoming prevalent often to an excessive degree.

The tendency to multiple use of particular marks of punctuation is also of interest to Naomi Baron and Rich Ling in their essay on punctuation marks as used in electronically-mediated communication, as they consider how punctuation practice is changing in, and because of, such media and in doing so they challenge some popular misconceptions about language use in an electronic age. Their primary focus is text messaging: in the first part of their study they examine whether gender has an influence on punctuation usage, concentrating on a sample of teenage users; and in the second part, they examine text messages as produced by older, university students, comparing punctuation use in this medium to more traditional forms. Their findings display some clearly defined principles at work in the punctuation choices made by these students. In both their case studies we see, among other things, the emotional and socially-interactive work to which punctuation is put: again there are noticeably popular marks used for the purposes of informal and orally-inflected exchange, but, crucially, this is not necessarily at the expense of understanding more formal expectations of pointing.

In the next essay we stay with young users of punctuation, as Nigel Hall and Sue Sing investigate children's comprehension of punctuation marks, in particular how seven and eight years olds understand and employ speech marks. Their research is positioned alongside relatively new attention given to punctuation in the English national curriculum, as schools are provided with targets in the teaching of English, including ages for the correct use of particular marks of punctuation

[32] Thorndike, The Psychology of Punctuation, 226.

and of a designated terminology relating to these marks. To use speech marks is to identify accurately on the page the boundaries between one speaker and another, a complex matter for young children; furthermore, Hall and Sing point out the typographical range for marking speech that children are presented with in children's books, as well as the extensive range of terms that refer to marks of speech. When the children, especially the younger children, involved in this study discuss punctuation, they are clearly most responsive to terminology that stimulates a visual image. With little extended research having been done into the pedagogy of punctuation, Hall and Sing express their intention to make children's own views on punctuation visible.

Speech marks are also the subject of Nick Blackburn's essay, though he investigates early users of the mark in another sense. His interest is the emergence of 'speech marks' in print: that is, the mark ["] that evolves into the inverted commas that we now use to demarcate speech. He traces the mark from early manuscript culture in the second century BC through to the print culture of England in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, focusing on literary and dramatic composition. These marks develop their association with quotation from their early-modern usage of marking sententious comments in books: that is, aphoristic, memorable phrases of the sort that might be excerpted into a commonplace book. One of the major concerns of Blackburn's essay is the relationship between manuscript and print cultures: how marks made by a particular reader, or group of readers, are captured in the pages of printed book. It is for this reason that in printed texts, these marks can seem strangely enigmatic and devoid of context. Our encounter with such fossils is one of alienation from an original reading context and yet, on the other hand, we have a momentary insight into a particular moment of textual engagement and reflection, preserved from the past seemingly arbitrarily. By means of such textual emphasis a trace of some person's private reading experience remains visible.

Common to the essays of Blackburn and John Lennard is the writing of Sir Philip Sidney (as well as, in Lennard's words, both doing "the past the favour of understanding that it punctuated things differently"). Both authors refer to different works by Sidney that pose punctuational problems to the modern reader. Lennard's focus is Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*, as he observes that in one of the two early printed versions of the text and in at least one early manuscript the argument of the entire *Defence* is contained in a single paragraph. The edition posthumously printed in 1595 for William Ponsonby is commonly used as the copy-text for modern editions, but its 67-page single paragraph is almost invariably divided into lesser paragraphs in these

later editions. In light of this, Lennard reflects on the possible purposes of the single paragraph, as well as the assumptions of modern editors in relegating its original form to invisibility. This example follows and exemplifies a theoretical discussion of the ways in which punctuation can be understood as invisible, with Lennard suggesting throughout the means by which technology facilitates punctuation's appearance to view.

The first of Lennard's categories of 'invisibility' is 'denial,' in which he points out that standard definitions of 'punctuation' imply punctuation *marks* and thus fail to acknowledge much broader systems of punctuating, such as spatial features of the text, including the paragraph. In the final essay of this issue, we turn to the punctuation of dictionary entries, as Paul Luna investigates 'punctuation' in its more expansive, typographical forms, including, as well as graphic symbols, paragraphing, indenting and changes of font. Luna charts the history of the typography of dictionaries from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first, demonstrating an increasing complexity of typographic coding over time, largely occasioned by the demands of space. In compact dictionaries, say, the spatial means of displaying entries and their component parts, has to be minimized, making the entry more dependent upon typographic cues. Likewise, the varying kinds of information supplied in any given dictionary have to be negotiated. Technological change has occasioned such changes. The development of bold styles of type in the nineteenth century allowed greater variation within entries, while mechanical and photomechanical typesetting put economic constraints on the number of fonts that could be used at any one time, a restriction to be removed by digital text. It is fitting that Paul Luna ends his own entry to this special issue by reflecting on the new possibilities offered by online dictionaries in which "a return can be made to text articulated by space."

From voice to page, manuscript to print, print to digital and all of these translating back again to voice, we will see, throughout these essays, attention to the ways in which shifts in media impact upon punctuation and how punctuation is responsive to, and articulates, those very changes. Punctuation is notoriously vulnerable to editorial interference, yet extraordinarily resilient in maintaining its forms and functions amid long histories of orthographic and technological change. It is a tool of logic, a notation of the voice and a graphic sign that may metamorphose imaginatively before our eyes. The essays collected together in this issue present us with many ways in which punctuation articulates and visualizes: 'visible language' captures its versatility well.

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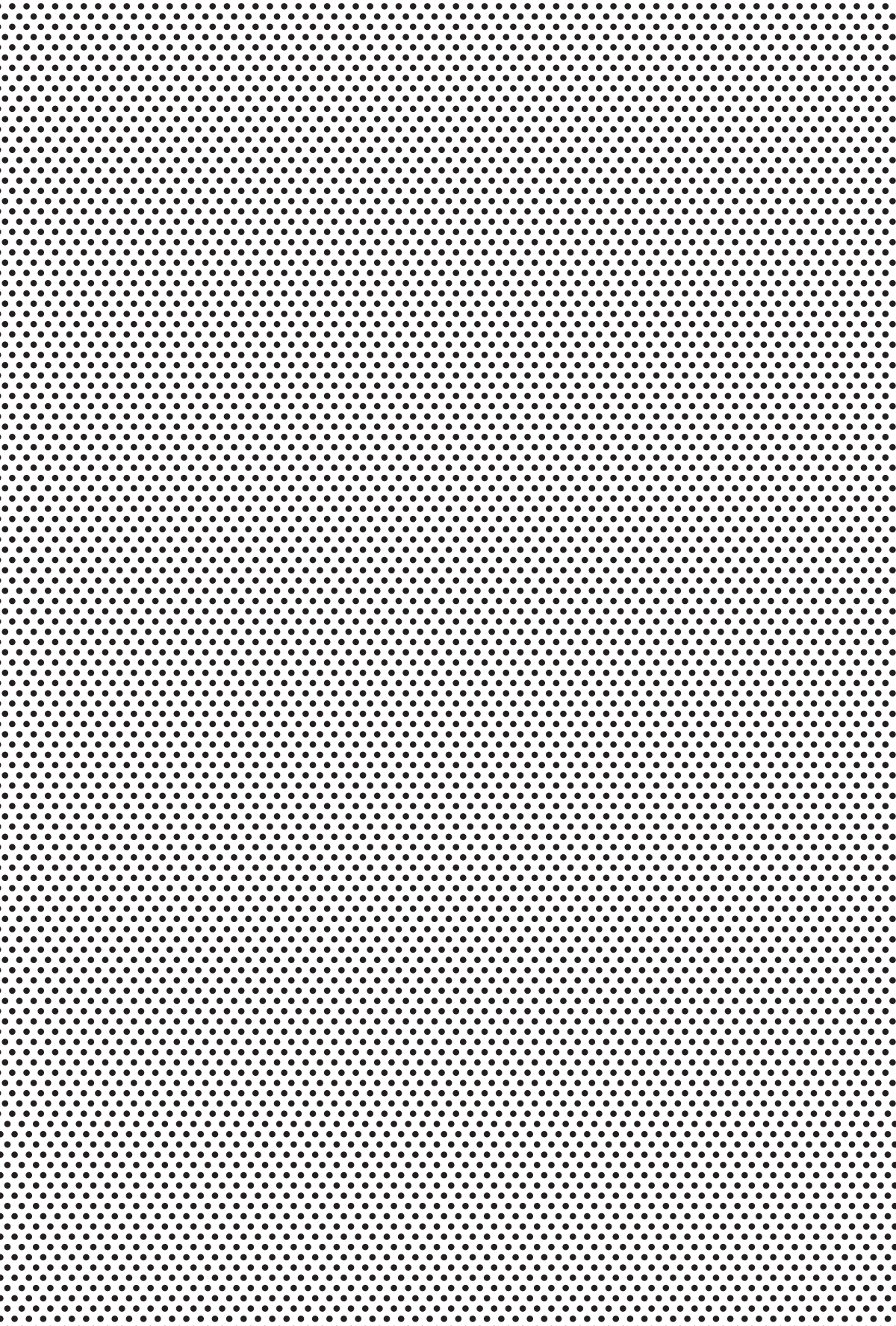
From Invisibility to Visibility and Backwards

PUNCTUATION IN COMICS

;

Jacques Dürrenmatt

ABSTRACT

In a literary form such as comics that combines images and texts punctuation is due to play a specific function. From its invention in the beginning of the 19th century, creators like Töpffer or Doré played with it, especially the expressive signs, imitating what happened at the same time in numerous novels. The habit of overloading the images, with exclamation and interrogation marks or dashes, leads however progressively to saturation in the golden age of superheroes comics and therefore to a sort of punctuation crisis. Questioning increased on the ideological meaning of such signs, which lead to rethinking what punctuating meant. Nowadays graphic novelists tend to invent new uses of the signs which question the way making language visible can produce interesting meanings.

INTRODUCTION

During the late 1950s, when punctuation was a matter reserved for printers and grammarians who had set increasingly rigid rules, Adorno chose to devote several pages to the subject, prompted by the new practices that he spotted in newspapers and modern literature which promised to simplify the system greatly, to the advantage of the "simplest" signs such as commas and points. It is no surprise to see this great thinker of the image beginning his analysis with a willful naïvety, taking into account a possible iconic interpretation of the signs:

> The less punctuation marks, taken in isolation, convey meaning or expression and the more they constitute the opposite pole in language to names, the more each of them acquires a definite physiognomic status of its own, an expression of its own, which cannot be separated from its syntactic function but is by no means exhausted by it. [...] An exclamation point looks like an index finger raised in warning; a question mark looks like a flashing light or the blink of an eye (1990, 300).

In an art form such as comics, in which the legibility of the drawings and the visibility of the text are continuously called into question, punctuation was to become a site of experimentation due to its uniqueness as a symbolic system that is both linguistic and iconic.

BIRTH OF THE COMICS:
FIRST EXPERIMENTS WITH VISUAL PUNCTUATION

By inventing, around 1830, what he calls "literature in prints," Töpffer is very clear on the necessary complementarity of image and text in this new form of art: "This little book is of a mixed nature. It is composed of a series of autographed line drawings. Each of these drawings is accompanied by one or two lines of text. The drawings, without this text, would be obscure in meaning, the text, without the drawings, would mean nothing" (Kunzle, 2007, 60). The text is to accommodate itself to the drawing, which explains why it has to be very clearly written by the same hand that draws the images, separates them, frames them, *often* without hesitating to embellish the whole with tight networks of curls. Therefore, the punctuation is thought of as a mid-way point, because it is a system of signs that can easily be used in *other* ways than as indications of respiratory pauses or intonation

patterns or as syntactic organizers; *this is especially the case* when the marks are repeated, since one mark is normally enough to provide the necessary semantic and prosodic information. We can therefore say that the way Töpffer presents his characters' speeches, not in balloons but under the images, shows a continuity with medieval manuscripts where "speech tends to be represented as a scroll rather than a cloud or bubble, and it emanates from the gesturing hand of the speaker rather than the mouth; language seems to co-exist in the same pictive/scriptive space— hand-writing emanating from hand-gesture—instead of being depicted as a ghostly emanation from an invisible interior" (Mitchell, 1994, 92).

An obvious symbolic game with the number of punctuation marks takes place at the beginning of *The Loves of Mr. Vieux Bois*. The original manuscript of 1827 contains no trace of the expressive punctuation that will appear a decade later when it is edited by autography, a process in lithography by which copies of text or drawing are produced in facsimile. On the first page of the album, "Mr. Vieux Bois's encounter." becomes "Mr. Vieux Bois's encounter.....!!!!!" followed by a more neutral sentence with one simple period before the return of the former marks but fewer: "Mr. Vieux Bois feels through his inner fire that it is for life....!!!". By contrast, the next page begins with a sentence without punctuation: "Mr. Vieux Bois is trying to distract himself by studying" In caricaturing *such* romantic effusions, exclamation is used here to display the beginning of a passion, which was not betrayed by a very neutral first caption. The shortening of the number of points until they vanish, moreover, visually suggests the painful disappearance of the "beloved Subject" and the relapse into banality.

In *Mr. Pencil* (Töpffer, 1840), we move from "The Doctor exclaims: Inhabited! inhabited! (the planet)" (12) to "The Doctor ran crying: Satellite!! Satellite!!" (13). Doubling the number of exclamation marks simply helps the reader to feel the rising excitement. In *Dr. Festus* (1840), a game on the height of the marks is added, which is not allowed by common typography:

> "A huge planet!... opaque!... heavily inhabited!..... A satellite!!!!...
> The whole Institute, by a spontaneous movement, rises shouting: A satellite..........
> Long live the King!!!!!!!!.... (55)

The gradual reduction in size of the exclamation points which follow the word *King* leads to their final transformation into periods and symbolizes the gradual decline in sound level of a useless cry whose nationalism is slammed by the Swiss writer who wrote in his manuscript a more explicit "Long live the Bourbons!" and

in the novel published in parallel to the album: "Long live the *Barbons*." The irony becomes obvious as the name of the French reigning family is distorted and becomes a pejorative word that designates grey beards. Moreover the rest of the passage is written as:

"A huge planet!.... opaque!.... elongated!.... heavily populated!! Three satellites!!! [...]
The whole Institute, by a spontaneous movement, stood up and shouted: Three satellites!
(Töpffer, 1840, 123).

As for the increase in the number of exclamation points, it follows the graduation of the three successive discoveries and finally echoes the "three satellites" (which are themselves the misinterpretation of three blown off wigs).
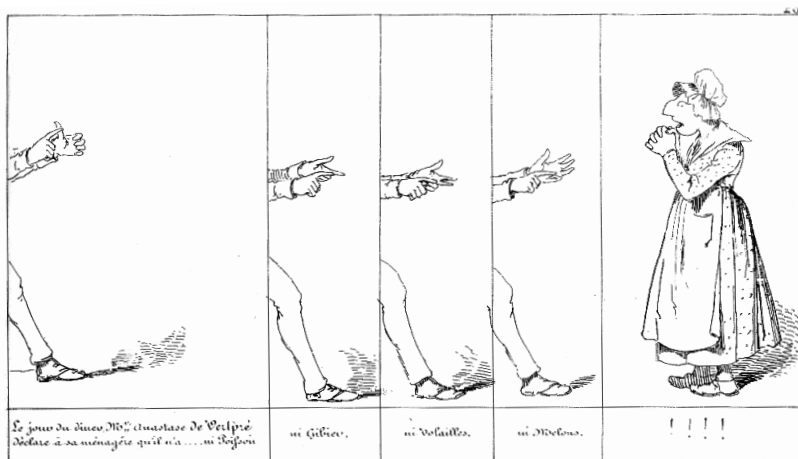

Figure 1: *Mr. de Vertpré*, 1840

Töpffer never tries to give autonomy to punctuation marks. This will be done by one of his Parisian followers, the forgotten Forest, in his *Mr de Vertpré* (1840): four exclamation points are used as a caption to a picture showing the housewife's expression of terror when she is told to prepare a dinner without the necessary ingredients and is therefore left literally speechless (*figure 1*). Until then the signs could only *accompany* an interjection such as *ah* or *oh*, which constituted the most basic form of expression of strong emotion. Alone, they intensify the impression made by the open mouth and clasped hands of the female figure. In this they correspond to the image that J. DeVere Brody gives of the exclamation point: a

sign that some call a "screamer" "performing in a singular gesture the "unity of the *gramme*... [the] attempt to recapture the unity of gesture and speech, of body and language [given that its body is its language]" (2008, 150). It is interesting to note that in the literature of the same time, the signs tend to be viewed as independent of the content of the statement for which they are somehow metonymically substituted. Here are two examples:

1) Balzac: *Modeste Mignon* (1845)

Six millions, voilà le prix d'un ami; l'on ne peut pas en avoir beaucoup à ce prix-là !... » La Brière entra dans le cabinet de son ami sur ce dernier point d'exclamation (1976, 600).[1]

2) Hugo: *Les Misérables* (1862)

Mlle Gillenormand était remontée dans sa chambre très intriguée, et avait jeté dans l'escalier ce point d'exclamation: C'est fort! et ce point d'interrogation: Mais où donc est-ce qu'il va? (1951, 651).[2]

In fact, as written by M.B. Parkes, "in *Stop ! Stop !! Stop !!!* the punctuation might be interpreted as representing an increase in decibels; but in *'Stop !!' she whispered* such an interpretation of the exclamation mark is not possible. The writer employs the symbol here to encourage readers to draw on their own experience so that it may contribute to the assessment of the message of the text. By invoking behavioral experience in this way, punctuation becomes a feature of the 'pragmatics' of the written medium. In spoken language such contributions to a message can be conveyed in various ways both linguistic and paralinguistic—such as a repertoire of intonations, or gestures and facial expressions—which can be employed because an interlocutor is present" (1992, 1–2). This latent visibility of the exclamation point can also be found in question marks or suspension points (usually to represent silence) and explains the everlasting success of these three signs in comic books and strips, sometimes so excessively that they can become unbearable.

1. **Balzac:** *Six million is the price of a friend, you cannot have a lot at that price!... La Brière entered the office of his friend on that last exclamation point.*

2. **Hugo:** *Miss Gillenormand had gone up to her room quite puzzled, and had thrown down the stairs this exclamation point: It is hard! and this question mark: But where is he going?*
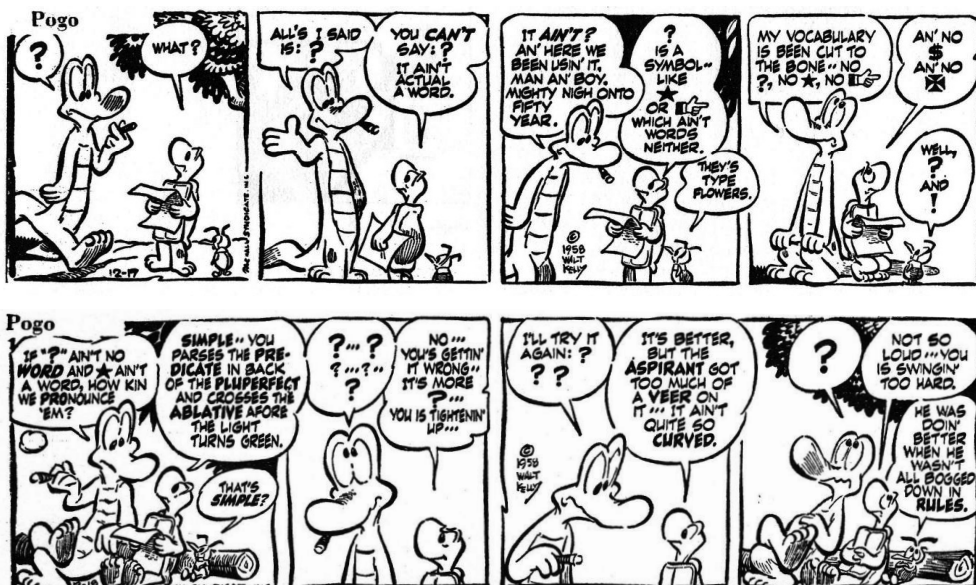
Figure 2: *Pogo*, 1958, Walt Kelly

EXCESS AND INVISIBILITY

With the arrival of balloons the isolated signs were assigned to characters and no longer supported by narrative and graphic authority, as these two strips (*figure 2*) by Walt Kelly (*Pogo*, 1958) humorously show. There are two opposing conceptions of the question: a brutal one expressed by the question mark alone and without oral equivalence, the other more specific thanks to an interrogative word (*what*), closer to the oral reality. What is at stake is the obvious visual impact of the signs, whether they can replace the text to express all the emotions (which leads to a more visual reading and gives ammunition to those who accuse comics of diverting children from serious reading), or support it by stressing the way it must be modalized. Inflation, in fact, will soon threaten the two dominant forms of the comics: the comic ones where all speeches need to be read as excessive, grotesque or at least more or less witty, and the action ones where intensity has to be almost constantly maximal. In the 1920s, Saint-Ogan colors some of the many exclamation points and question marks that dot its series *Zig et Puce* in orange to give them greater visibility in pages saturated
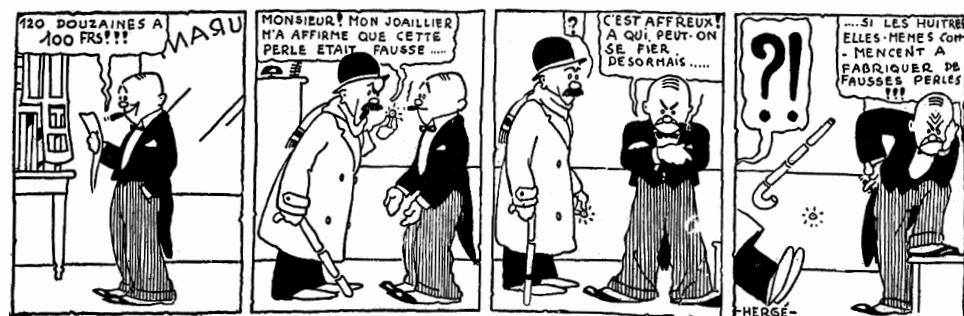
Figure 3: *Réveillon*, 1928, Hergé. Permission by © Hergé/Moulinsart 2011

with punctuation. An example of this inflation can be seen in a page that the young Hergé, heavily influenced by Saint-Ogan, published in the journal *Le Sifflet* in 1928 (*figure 3*).[3]

The comic facial expressions are not considered enough to express surprise or questioning: Hergé chooses to stress them by using isolated signs in bubbles. He even combines marks in the last image although the codified movement of the character falling backward could have easily been enough to mean astonishment. The speeches of the owner of the restaurant end up being punctuated with three exclamation points that now express the strength of his contentment, and now ironically support his dishonesty to give more strength to the final joke. Even the time indication, that is nothing extraordinary and that articulates the two moments of the narrative, is equipped with an exclamation point. Later on Hergé will moderate his use of the "screaming" signs and find other ways to express *visibly* the intensity he wishes to convey.

The same desire for maximum expression explains the gradual invasion of superhero comics by exclamation points that will be made increasingly visible by means of flashy colors, thick lines and dynamic shapes. "By the late 1940s [in] DC Comics [...] most remarks in speech balloons became exclamations! Everything was dramatic! Even the most mundane remarks! And if a speech really didn't call for an exclamation point or question mark... then it ended with an ellipsis—or two hyphens... (Or three hyphens, or one, or four dots [...]). One sign that American comic books were maturing in the 1980s was that they welcomed back periods" (Bell, 2008). A persistent story has it that this extensive use of the marks in question was due to the poor quality of the paper and ink used for the first publications: a period might disappear in the printing process used at the time, whereas an exclamation mark would likely remain recognizable even if there was a printing glitch. The previous Hergé example shows the reality to be different since these habits were already in place in comic strips and one-page comics published in the newspapers.

In any case, the main question is to determine if, confronted with such a pervasive use of emotional points, the reader perceives them to any greater degree

3. *The customers don't want oysters!*
Give me your fake pearl necklace, Zoé
You'll be a customer, Jules
Ok! Sir !
You'll be a pearl expert: Jeroboam Aahslach
This pearl is 3,000 francs worth at least.
Oysters / Here, Sir / At last!... / Boom! Here they are! / Oysters! / Waiter! Oysters! It's half an hour since... / Here! / 100 francs the dozen!

The day after!
120 dozens at 100 francs!!!
Sir! My jeweler claimed that this pearl was fake....
That's awful! Who can be trusted nowadays.....
.....if the oysters themselves begin to make fake pearls!!!

as signs with a specific value. It is easy to doubt it: most of the time the signs are only used for emotional charge, whether to emphasize the pragmatic function of the injunctions and warnings of the characters or to indicate their surprise when facing a reality that constantly eludes rationality. They share the same logic as the use of bold characters. This permanent intensity should allow effects of contrast with passages using a more neutral punctuation, but this is hardly the case. The variation between exclamation point and period is rarely significant. The exclamation point quickly became so tightly associated with comics that some authors eventually incorporated it into their pen names, like Elliot S! Maggin and Scott Shaw!. When many "serious" writers criticized the "crude" effect of such marks in their writings and got rid of them (DeVere Brody, 2008, 149–150), comics showed them off. Was it somehow naïvely or to demonstrate a form of refusal to submit oneself to the tyranny of good taste?

In the early 1970s, the great writer Stan Lee, at the time Editor-in-Chief of Marvel Comics, sought to ban the exclamation point without much success and with the paradoxical result of texts without punctuation, as reported by Cronin: he "decided that exclamation points were too juvenile, so he decreed that no Marvel Comics were to feature exclamation points from then on! Well, the problem was, most of these issues where he decreed would be without exclamation points were already getting ready to be sent out. So the solution was to just remove the exclamation points from the issues as they lay. The problem with that is that it only worked with exclamation points at the end of the word balloons (whether that was because they literally couldn't or because they didn't feel like it, I don't know). [...] You'd have silly stuff like exclamation points in the middle of a long piece of dialogue but nothing at the end" (2010). Stan Lee was not followed. Was this due to the unwillingness of the printers? Authors didn't really understand what was at stake and the 'purification' of the exclamatory was a failure. Nothing really happened until the arrival of new and more literary adult comics that began to exploit all possible sorts of nuances (narrative, ideological as well as stylistic). In *Watchmen* by Moore and Gibbons (1987), in particular, the suspension points and the bold characters only remain. Even interjections are devoid of exclamation points, which no longer appear alone in the balloons. However, in many other comics, old habits remain as shown in the commentary that Piekos makes in his normative "Comic Book Grammar & Tradition" on the use of the question mark / exclamation point combo: "This should only be used for a shouted question. It's a loose rule that the question mark should come first. Marvel insists on it, and I agree, since the

text is probably already bold or enlarged (indicating shouting) so the only visual clue a reader has that it's also a question, is the question mark—giving it priority" (2009). The usual redundancy between exclamation points and bold characters is highlighted, while the question finally appears as the only interesting information in this type of combination.

In a recent work, inspired by Queneau's *Exercises in Style*, Matt Madden tries to propose *99 Ways to Tell a Story* (2005) by using 99 one-page comics that are all variations from a minimum script. One of them consists of a "Calligram" which takes the form of a large question mark made from a series of words and which highlights the fact that the short story is based on two questions made evident in the "template": "What time is it?" and "What the hell was I looking for, anyway?" Another one, entitled "Reframing (Hands and Punctuation Marks)," isolates the question marks and exclamation points by a simple process of reframing, as if to emphasize the uniqueness of the comics, the only form capable of isolating and making sense of the punctuation marks *on their own*. Many continue to highlight ironically the pervasive (in)visibility of expressive signs in contemporary art forms, in the manner that Artschwager has proposed since the 1980s with his sculptures in the shape of question marks; these force the viewer to question simultaneously their legitimacy as sculpture, what they ask us to attempt in terms of interpretation, as well as the meaning we are used to giving to the signs (see DeVere Brody, 2008, 18–22).

SIGNS AND POLITICS

In 1964 Charles M. Schulz makes fun of the domination of the exclamation point in the comics in two *Peanuts* strips (*figure 4*). The "way out groups" represented by the minor (comma) or rare (the ampersand, asterisk, pi) signs express their willingness to discard the dominant sign, which is actually drawn bigger. During the conflict between the representatives of the exclamation point and the comma, the dialogue takes place only by signs: if the avalanche of points is immediately comprehensible as a mark of angry or, more broadly, violent emotion, the lonely comma remains perfectly mysterious (What is "that"?) since there is no symbolic meaning associated with its use as an isolated sign. Yet that last discourse triumphs: syntactic punctuation over emotional punctuation. Revenge of the text on the image but also of the smallest on the strongest, of the dominated on the dominant, of the one
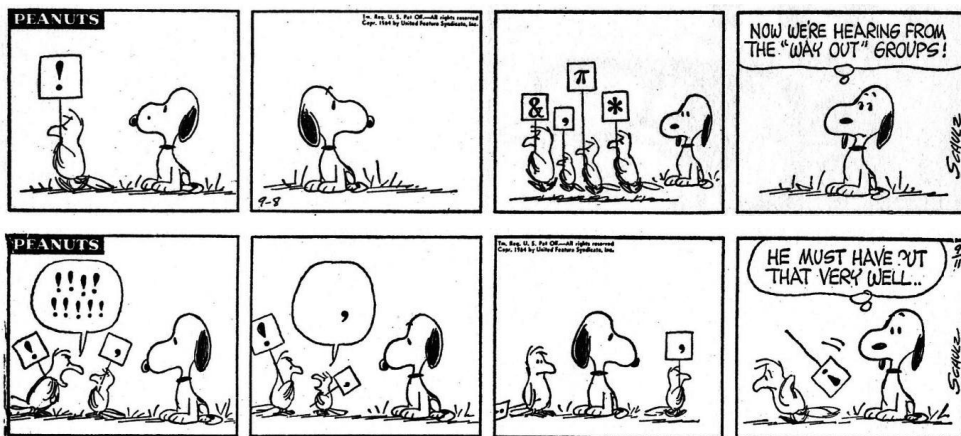
Figure 4: *Peanuts*, 1964, Charles M. Schulz

Figure 5: *Histoire dramatique, pittoresque et caricaturale de la Sainte Russie*, 1854, Gustave Doré

who was marginalized and rendered invisible by the mainstream on the one who became the representative of an entire art form, of the comic strip on the superhero comic book?

The ideological value associable with isolated punctuation appears very early in the history of comics. Gustave Doré chooses to end his violent and extraordinary satire against Russia, *Histoire dramatique, pittoresque et caricaturale de la Sainte Russie* (1854) in two stages (*figure 5*): by a huge question mark crowned with laurels, which seems to represent the glorious uncertainty of the fate which awaits the military sent to Crimea to fight against Russian troops in the year of the book's publication (« en attendant l'épreuve, ils se complaisent à interroger un avenir plein de gloire et surtout d'HONNEUR. »), but also by an epilogue with a quote from an obscure corporal: « .....Qu'on dit comme ja, que si on arrive, nous aut'Frrrancés, à leux y brosser leur czar, on leux y donnera plus le fouet comme à des bêtes; c'est alors que nous vous être des bons amis !!!!!!!! ».[4] The contrast between the highly impressive solemnity of the question mark accompanied by an ironically emphatic text and the very familiar speech from the poor soldier, whose emotion is exhibited by the accumulation of exclamation points, expresses the political message of Doré who was strongly committed to the reconciliation of all nations, once rid of their tyrants.

4. *"waiting for the confrontation, they indulge in questioning a future full of glory and especially HONOR"*

".....Let's say that if we, Frrrenchmen, succeed in defeating their tsar, they won't be whipped any longer like animals; we'll all be good friends then!!!!!!!!!!"

Quelques esprits cosmopolites et avancés blâment Napoléon III d'avoir entrepris une guerre aussi hasardeuse.

Mais quelques autres esprits moins cosmopolites peut-être, mais sans doute plus avancés le sont déjà jusqu'à Warna,

où, en attendant l'épreuve, ils se complaisent à interroger un avenir plein de gloire et surtout d'HONNEUR.

MORALE ET ÉPILOGUE.

Si ta maison debvoit ruiner, falloit-il que en sa ruine, elle tombast sur les atres de celui qui l'avoit aornée? La chose est tant hors des bornes de raison, et tant abhorrente de sens commun que à poine peult elle être par humain entendement conçeue : et jusques à ce mourera non croyable entre les estrangers que l'effect asseuré et témoigné leur donne à entendre que rien n'est ni sainct ni sacré à ceulx qui se sont émancipés de Dieu et raison pour suivre leurs affections perverses, voyre orthodoxes.

(F. Rabelais, Histoire de Russie, ou Vie de Gargantua.)

.....Qu'on dit comme ja, que si on arrive, nous aut' Frrrancès, à leux y brosser leur czar, on leux y donnera plus le fouet comme à des bêtes ; c'est alors que nous vons être des bons amis !!!!!!! (Achille Champavert, caporal au 23e de ligne.

33 /from invisibility to visibility and backwards – dürrenmatt

The dominance of the *capitalized* question mark on the crowd of the other lowercase signs will not last insofar as the text already provides the individual soldier with the last word.

Sign of the relative authority of one who can expect in the future and question, and therefore exercise power, the question mark can instead easily become the symbol of a weakness to understand things or express oneself. This is the case in some comics published during the heyday of colonialism and white power. The first Hergé gives fine examples of this even before his controversial *Tintin in the Congo* and *Tintin in America*. On the one hand, the character of Boy Scout Totor facing the savagery of Redskins (1927), on the other, the black Popokabaka submitted to European power (1928). In the first case (*figure 6*), the position of the big question mark at the center of the square is symbolic of the absolute impossibility of the two characters meeting, finding a common exchange. In the second (*figure 7*), the black question mark appears as an emanation of the character, wide-eyed in front of the mysteries of the civilized world and thus witness to the need of civilizing through a colonial presence. At the time "Belgium harbors a culture that could pass for a caricature of normalcy and respectability, though not without its dark side. Hergé was comfortable in the most banal backwaters of this culture, never questioning its prejudices (something he looked back on, late in life, with a sort of rueful self-contempt.) He attended a Catholic school, and upon graduating at age 18 went to work for a Catholic newspaper, *Le Vingtième Siècle*. The brand of Catholicism that embraced him was deeply reactionary, royalist, violently anti-Communist, strongly anti-Capitalist (Moscow and Wall Street being seen as two sides of the same Judeo-Masonic coin), unthinkingly imperialist. "Hey, the Belgian Empire allowed the missionaries to convert all those benighted pagan Blacks" (Buchet, 2010). Once these embarrassing anti-humanist influences are recognized, the whole work of Hergé will never stop trying hard to rebuild the relationship with the Other and to make the question mark the transitive sign that it should always have been and that Uderzo, playing with mock hieroglyphs, reinvents significantly in *Asterix the Legionary* (1967) in the mouth of the Egyptian Ptenisnet: with a sickle to separate known from the unknown and one eye to search but also to come into contact, the two key dimensions of the sign are thus highlighted.

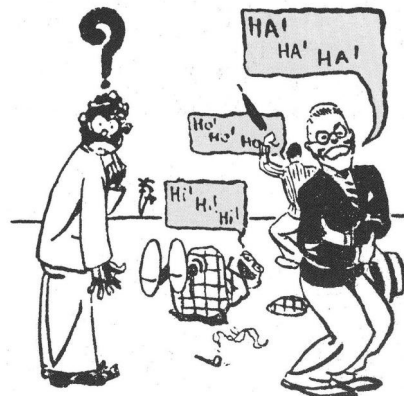Figure 6: *Boy Scout Totor*, 1927, Hergé. Permission by © Hergé/Moulinsart 2011

Figure 7: *Popokabaka* 1928, Hergé. Permission by © Hergé/Moulinsart 2011

If, as we have seen, the immediately expressive signs have always enjoyed a real success in the comics, what about the "lower classes" of the signs that are used to organize discourse and seem at first sight incapable of representing anything: comma, semicolon, period, parentheses. Do they have a claim to autonomy? And if so what for? The examples are indeed very rare outside the purely experimental scope. We will take three contemporary ones, which appear as complementary.

The first one is the very special use that Chris Ware makes of dashes and periods in some passages of *Jimmy Corrigan* (2000). In the story of the nightmare (*figure 8*) in which the abstract word gets material through the form of a night mare as in the famous painting by Fuseli, the text makes use of the symbolic value of different types of calligraphic letters but also of the delaying effects produced
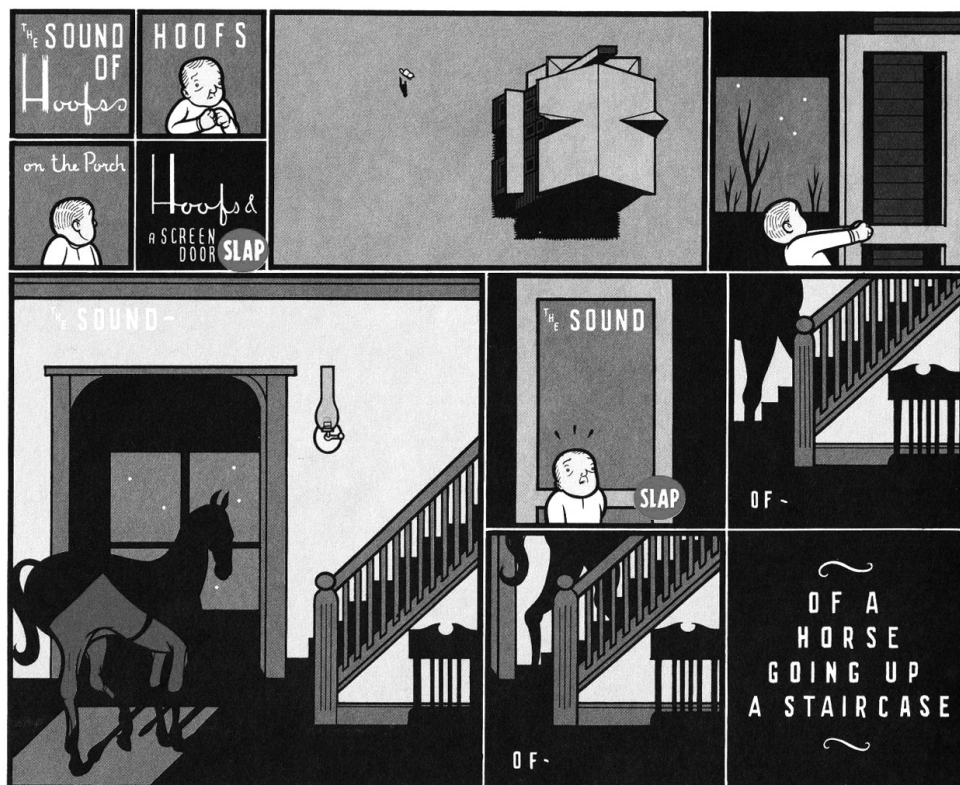
by dashes which progressively shorten as the presence of the mare in the house becomes more obvious: "THE SOUND— / THE SOUND / OF— / OF –." In the next page, punctuation disappears, which leads to the appearance of white balloons and strangely "naked" interjections ("HA HA") while the narrative indications are, conversely, *overpunctuated* with periods, including the strange "BUT." The disruption of the code helps to build a world that is both mute and awfully noisy, where images are extremely tight and at the same time cut one from the other by the authority of the written punctuation marks. It participates in the desire to make sensible by all means, and not just those traditionally allowed by the image and the narrative text, the very special unease and helplessness that one can feel during a nightmare.

The second one can be found in *99 Ways to Tell a Story* (*figure 9*). Imitating the style of some action manga, Madden uses above the predictable exclamation points,
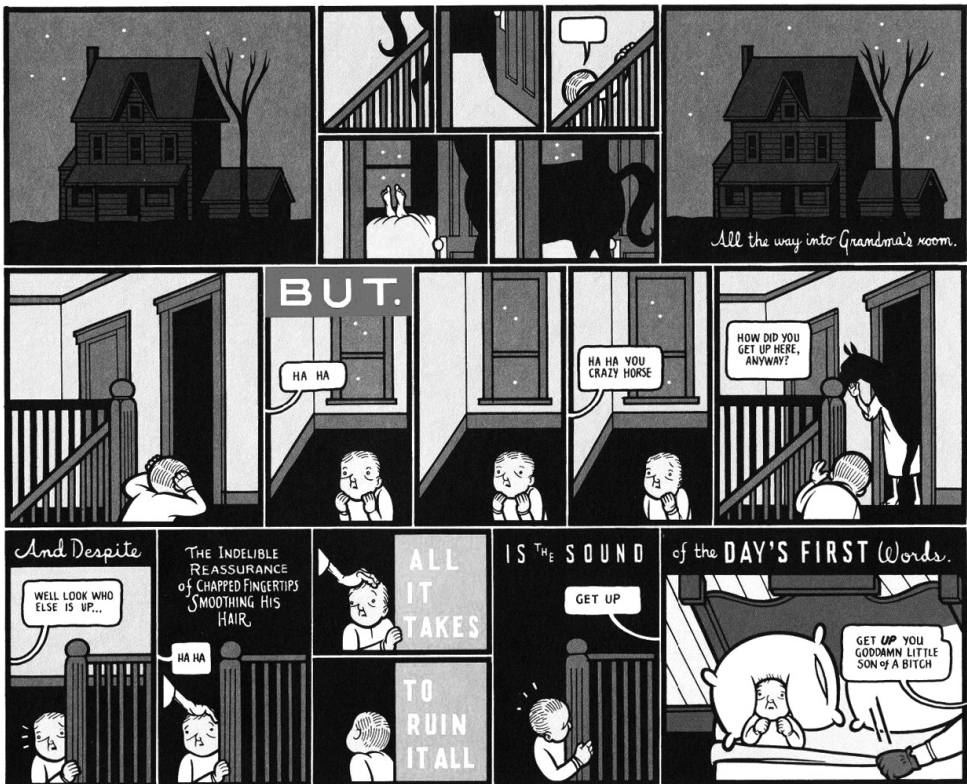

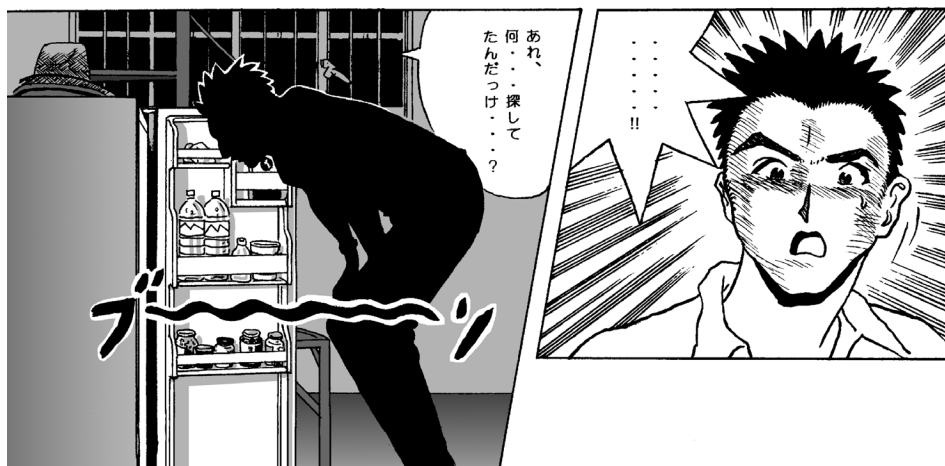Figure 8: *Jimmy Corrigan*, 2000, Chris Ware. Permission by © Chris Ware

Figure 9: *99 Ways to Tell a Story*, 2000, Matt Madden. Permission by © Matt Madden

rows of dots that are difficult to interpret immediately: they are usually two and replace the expected text without giving any clue of what it could be, so that the well-known autonomy of the expressive signs seems imitated, but without any effect. The very hyperbolic style of the majority of *mangas* thus allows the use of dots as a substitute for a text that does not need to say. The dot appears as the last step before a form of literature that would be wholly visual!

A third and final interesting example is provided by a sequence of the autobiographical *Yukiko's Spinach* (2001). Frédéric Boilet takes advantage of a special effect available in Japanese photo booths to place the couple he momentarily makes with Yukiko within a *manga* image (*figure 10*). The choice of the girl with glasses is due to a T-shirt similar to another worn by Yukiko and allows Frédéric to tell his girlfriend she would make a good comics character, accentuating her transformation into a two-dimensional figure. But what is yet more interesting is that the shade of a punctuation mark determines the organization of the representation. The freezing of the image gives the feeling that both characters are somehow locked inside parentheses consisting, left, of a script that mixes isyllabic *katakana* characters and alphabetic ones and, right, of a drawing which is both alien (since it was imposed by the machine) and close (through the fetish T-shirt). Parenthesis perfectly summarizes the temporary love situation that is depicted by an album that combines writing, drawing and photography. It is to be noticed that the text contained in the rudimentary *manga* scene refers to "battle" and "parties" as an ironic echo of what is at stake in the narrative and the form of the book. The very word *parenthesis* is used by Boilet after three balloons which reformulate, in an increasingly deteriorated
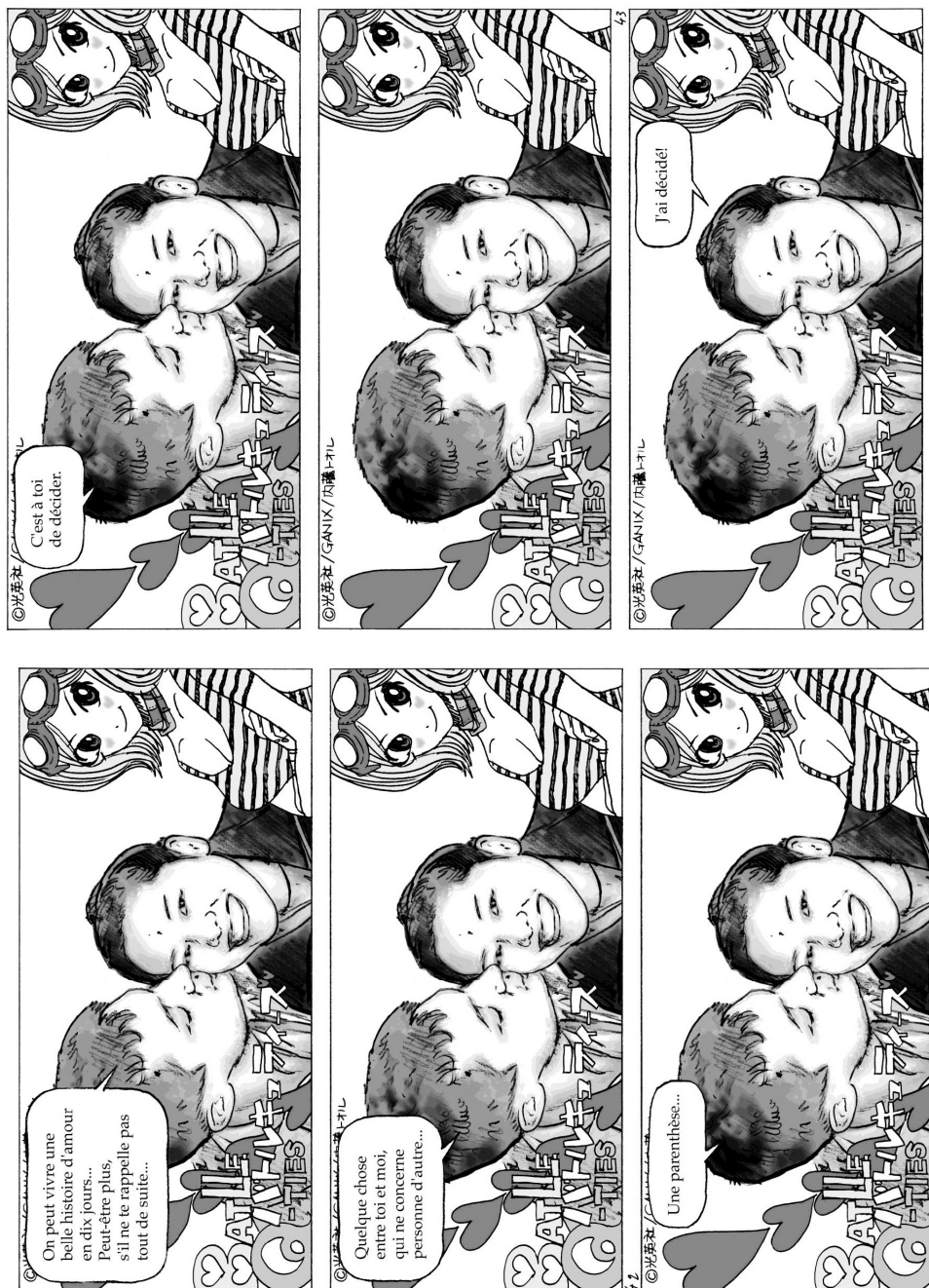
Figure 10: *Yukiko's Spinach*, 2001, Frédéric Boilet. Permission by © Ego comme X

way, the possibility of a lasting love affair: "a beautiful love story," "something between you and me," "a hiatus," while, concomitantly, the text occupies less and less visual space. On the opposite page, the composition of the page makes use again of the idea of parenthesis by enclosing a central mute image between two images with text. From the top balloon to the bottom one, the verb *decider* (to decide) changes from the infinitive, mood of all possibilities, to the indicative past tense, used for the accomplished, but goes also from the left to the right of the page. In between, the artificial pose that the two characters strike looks like a suspended moment.

The image that follows and takes the form of a calendar page (*figure 11*) reformulates the idea of parenthesis in four ways:

→ by repeating it in the form of a synonym ("limited duration");
→ by drawing it through the Western punctuation mark: ( );
→ by translating it (the Chinese ideogram itself appears to reproduce three times the sign of Western parenthesis);
→ by containing it in the zigzagging of the "real" bookmark that crosses a figure of Yukiko, herself caught between two palm trees as a parenthesis.

This saturation is indicative of the willingness of F. Boilet to make use of all the possible resources of image and writing to beautify the commonplace of romantic interlude and subtly make appear the inevitable failure of the meeting which gives its form to the album. Cinema needed to affirm the singular power of editing to get rid of the patronage of theater and photography; F. Boilet, because he is nourished by the example that the long tradition of Japanese *manga* provides, shows how the comics need to think about the problematic status of the sign, in all forms including punctuation, to become something other than "literature in prints" and play a real part in the contemporary aesthetics debate.

Figure 11: *Yukiko's Spinach*, 2001, Frédéric Boilet. Permission by © Ego comme X

CONCLUSION

In a text entitled "PONCTUATION ¿p (or) r, q-uo-i!" Laetitia Bianchi (2002) bases her work on a study made with pupils to try to understand the literary uses of punctuation:

D'ordinaire, les écrivains comme il faut italiquent bien les mots importants, soulignent à l'occasion. Le !?? paraît familier, malpoli, réservé à un emploi humoristique...

    — Si quelqu'un ici veut que je tombe raide mort, il n'a qu'à me parler de cette question. Elle me rappelle la plus effroyable période de ma vie...

    — !!!???...!!! nous écriâmes-nous simultanément. [Alphonse Allais, La logique mène à tout]

    ...ou à la bande dessinée :

    [Elève] n°3 — parce que dans la bande dessinée Tintin il y a une fois où il y avait Tintin il mettait une bombe une bombe atomique et alors Tintin il a un cheval il est dans le désert il craint et tout à coup la bombe atomique elle explose et

    Professeur — et alors il y a un point d'exclamation là

    n°3 — ben oui ils mettent toujours ça[5]

The visibility of punctuation clearly appears here: it is spotted by children, without interpretation. But if the exclamation point partakes now, somehow, in the "comics effect," it is time to try other things with other signs, as it is the case in poetry or in graphic arts. The attempts, still rare, of some major authors show the way: a whole area of creation remains to be explored.

5. *Usually, proper writers italicize properly important words, underline on occasions. The !?? sounds familiar, rude, limited to a humorous use...*
— If anyone here wants me to fall down dead, they just need to tell me about this issue. It reminds me of the most terrible period of my life...
— !!!???...!!! we cried simultaneously. [Alphonse Allais, Logic leads to all]
...or to comics:

[Pupil] n°3 — because in the Tintin comic book there's a time when there was Tintin he placed a bomb an atomic bomb and then Tintin has a horse he is in the desert he is afraid and suddenly the atomic bomb it explodes and
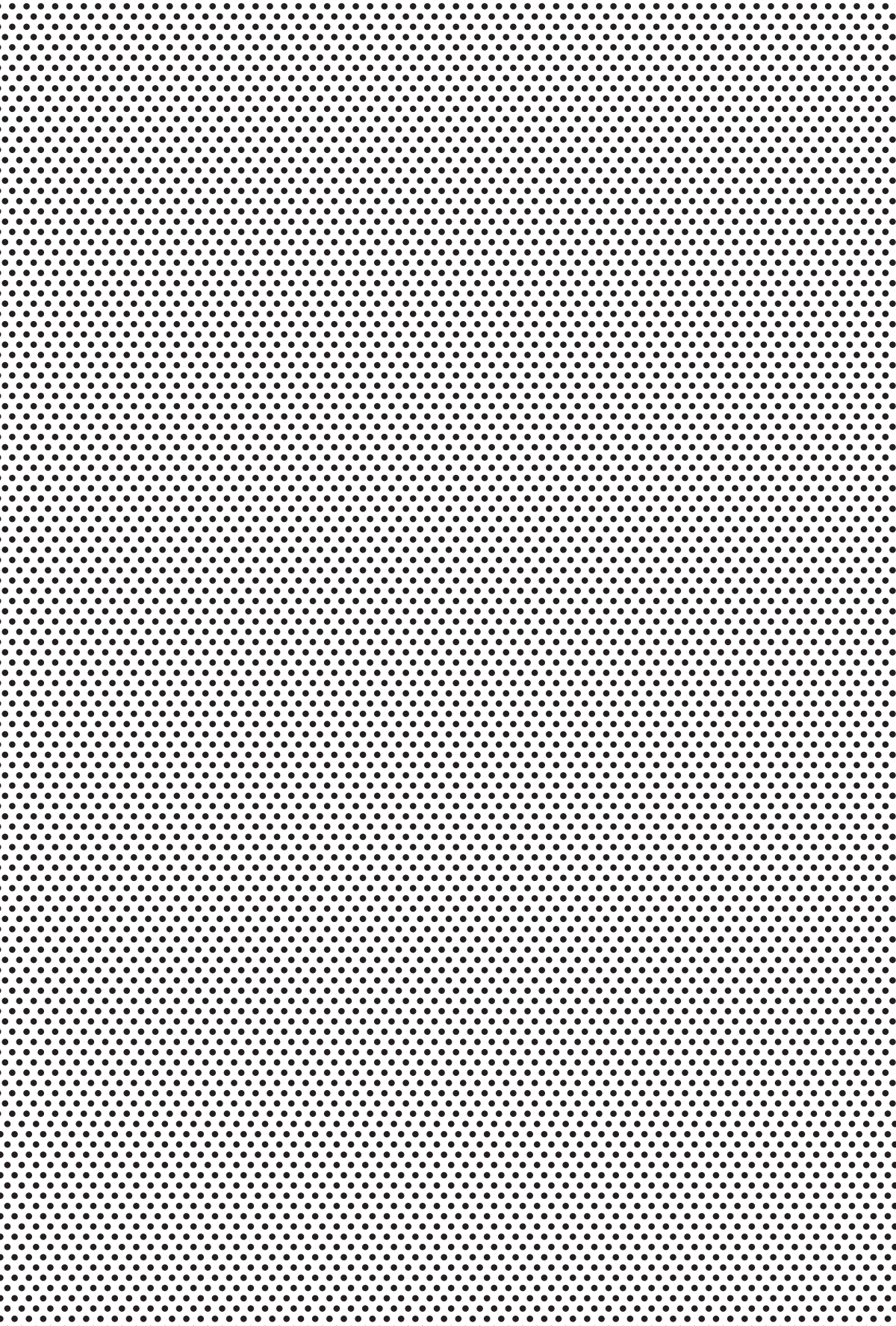*Teacher — and then there is an exclamation point*
n°3 — well yes they always put that

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AUTHOR NOTE

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Necessary Smileys
& Useless Periods

REDEFINING PUNCTUATION IN ELECTRONICALLY-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

;

Naomi S. Baron & Rich Ling

ABSTRACT

Communication is increasingly taking place through written messaging using online and mobile platforms such as email, instant messaging and text messaging. A number of scholars have considered whether these texts reflect spoken or written language, though less is known about the role of punctuation. In fact, it is commonly assumed that punctuation on such platforms is either random or absent. This study explores the nature of punctuation (including emoticons) in electronically-mediated communication by analyzing sets of focus group data from adolescents discussing text messaging and by assessing a corpus of text messages sent by university students. Some usage patterns are gender-based. More generally, there is evidence that young people are developing coherent strategies for how such marks should be used in messages created on new digital media.

Why do writers use punctuation marks? The history of punctuation (Parkes, 1993; Saenger, 1997) demonstrates an evolution not simply in the types of marks used but in their function. In the case of English punctuation, the major evolution was from rhetorical (also called correspondence) punctuation to grammatical (also known as logical) punctuation. English rhetorical punctuation derived from the classical model of using pointing to represent where to take a breath when reading a text aloud—and for how long. By contrast, grammatical punctuation marks give the reader clues as to the internal structure of sentences. This transformation went hand in glove with the transition to silent reading (Saenger, 1997) and the subsequent emergence of English print culture by the beginning of the eighteenth century (Chartier, 1989).

In more recent decades, punctuation (particularly in American English) has been undergoing a new set of changes. Written prose has increasingly come to record informal speech, rather than standing as an independent written genre (Baron, 2000). Evidence of this shift can be seen in the prose appearing in such previously formal publications as the *New York Times* or even *Time* magazine, or in the laissez-faire attitude towards proofreading written text (Baron, 2003). It is also manifest in the composition style of many university undergraduates (Danielewicz and Chafe, 1985), whose punctuation "errors" sometimes indicate a return to rhetorical punctuation. The move towards a casual prose style reflecting both informal speech and rhetorical punctuation provides the foundation for the specific punctuation issue that is the focus of the present analysis: punctuation in electronically-mediated communication.

Linguistic Issues in Electronically-Mediated Communication

Electronically-mediated communication (EMC) is the use of written language on hardware platforms such as computers and mobile phones.[1] In the literature, the term computer-mediated communication (CMC) is typically used to refer to historically computer-based software platforms such as email, listservs, instant messaging and blogs. However, with the profusion of mobile phones (and of text messaging), we need a broader term to encompass both computer-based and mobile

1. Speech is also possible in EMC (e.g., voice over internet protocols on computers and voice calls on mobile phones). However, when most scholars discuss contemporary EMC, they are referring to written communication.

phone-based technologies, particularly because it is increasingly possible to engage in all of the above types of communication on both computers and mobile devices.

Since the explosion of email and then instant messaging in the 1990s, the popular press has voiced concern that online communication, especially as used by teenagers and young adults, is leading to degradation of language standards. The linguistic culprits identified include misspellings, ungrammatical sentences, and, most noticeably, lexical shortenings, including abbreviations (e.g., *cuz* for *because*) and acronyms (e.g., *btw* for "by the way"). Parallel concerns have been voiced about misspellings and lexical shortenings in text messages (called SMS in much of the world) written on mobile phones (Thurlow, 2006).

As formal studies of electronically-mediated language consistently demonstrate, the linguistic character of such platforms as instant messaging and text messaging is not as worrisome as popular imagination might lead us to believe. In a study of instant messaging by university students, Baron (2004) found that in a corpus of 11,718 words, only 171 words (barely 1.5%) contained spelling errors. Of these errors, more than one-third were omissions of an apostrophe (e.g., *thats* for *that's*), and another third were simple omissions, additions, or errors of a single letter (e.g., *assue* for *assume*). As for lexical shortenings, there were only 31 cases of abbreviations that were specific to electronic communication (e.g., *cya* for "see you").[2] Similarly, there were only 90 EMC acronyms, of which 76 were *lol* (for "laughing out loud").[3] Moreover, very few emoticons (49) appeared in the corpus, of which 31 were a smiley face. Comparably sparse use of lexical shortenings and emoticons has been reported by Tagliamonte and Denis (2008) for instant messaging and by Thurlow and Brown (2003) for text messaging.

Beyond linguistic analyses of lexical shortening in instant messaging or text messaging, scholars have also explored the pedagogical consequences of engaging in such activity. Plester and Wood (2009) report a positive relationship between use of so-called textisms by young British children and success in traditional literacy skills. More generally, Crystal (2008) points up the linguistic creativity often involved in using abbreviations or acronyms when writing text messages.

While there is now a growing body of research on lexical issues in online and mobile media, we know far less about use of punctuation in EMC. To better understand the nature of EMC punctuation, this article draws upon two empirical studies involving text messaging by young people. Although both studies were

2. The tabulation excluded abbreviations common in everyday language used by this age cohort, e.g., *prob* for *problem*.

3. Common abbreviations such as *US* for "United States" were discounted.

conducted in the US, the literature that we review below suggests that some of these findings may be generalizable to other languages and cultures.

How do adolescents and young adults use punctuation in their text messages and, in the process, perhaps redefine the functions of traditional pointing? When we speak of punctuation in texting, we are including both traditional marks such as periods, commas, question marks, exclamation points, dashes and ellipses,[4] but also emoticons. Much like exclamation points, emoticons can express authorial sentiment (Dresner and Herring, 2010). Similarly, intentionally stylized spelling (e.g., repeating the <y> in *hey* to read *heyyyy*), though not technically part of punctuation, can function as an emotionally-tinged marker. We will explore this broader sense of punctuation, including both traditional marks and other written tools (e.g., lexical shortenings, emoticons and stylized spelling) that serve to indicate emotion, much as (single) exclamation points or use of multiple exclamation points or multiple questions marks (e.g., *!!!!* or *????)* can do.

In studying any linguistic aspect of EMC, it is important to be aware of potential variation in usage patterns, which may stem from a range of factors. One is age. For example, we would anticipate that teenage text messages employ different punctuation patterns than those of adults in their 50s or 60s, who would presumably be more likely to follow traditional written punctuation norms.[5] Another is culture. We cannot assume, for instance, that lexical shortenings or emoticons are used in the same way in the Philippines as in Germany. Rather, we need empirical data. Similarly, the particular EMC platform (e.g., instant messaging versus texting) may influence the type of punctuation used (Ling and Baron, 2007). Finally, gender may well make a difference, as it does in so many domains of language use (Baron and Campbell, 2010).

Exploring Punctuation Patterns in Text Messaging

The present study looks to enrich our understanding of how punctuation functions in contemporary EMC by exploring two sets of issues. The first set (Part I) focuses on the question of whether gender influences use of punctuation in text messaging and, if so, how. The second set (Part II) offers empirical evidence regarding whether punctuation in texting is random or principled, as well as whether such punctuation diverges in function from traditional written usage. Following Parts I

[4] Colons, semicolons, parentheses and brackets are other forms of traditional punctuation. However, since they did not appear in our data, we exclude them from subsequent discussion. We also did not examine hyphens.

[5] However, we do not know of empirical studies to date regarding age and use of punctuation in EMC.

and II, we reflect upon the state of punctuation in both online and offline written communication.

The sociolinguistic literature has frequently reported that males and females tend to use language differently (e.g., Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2003; Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1994).[6] Linguistic distinctions run the gamut from who dominates the conversation to type of vocabulary, function of message, or use of politeness conventions. Scholars (e.g., Aries, 1996; Dindia and Canary, 2006; Tannen, 1993) have rightly observed that such differences in linguistic interaction sometimes reflect the relationship between interlocutors (including how long they have known one another and their relative position of status and power) rather than gender per se. Nonetheless, the correlations observed between gender and language are too strong to ignore, even if many are traceable to factors such as socialization and circumstance.

One domain in which studies repeatedly show usage distinctions associated with gender is in the overall purpose of communication. While women frequently use language to facilitate social interaction, men more commonly employ language for conveying information. This finding has been widely documented for face-to-face speech (e.g., Cameron, 1998; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) and written communication (e.g., Argamon et al., 2003; Biber et al., 1998; Mulac and Lundell, 1994).

Is gender also reflected in punctuation found in traditional writing? The obvious candidate in traditional writing is the exclamation point, which expresses emotion. Emotion is associated more closely with social interaction than with conveyance of information. And indeed, Rubin and Green (1992) report that in a comparison of writing assignments done by university students, woman used three times as many exclamation points as did men.

Previous Studies of Gender, Language and EMC

The tendency for females to use language for social interaction and males for conveying information has also been observed in a number of forms of EMC. Looking at traditional computer platforms, findings have been reported from studies of email

6. In all of the gender discussion that follows, we have only been able to take into account traditional gender roles.

(e.g., Boneva et al., 2001; Colley and Todd, 2002), instant messaging (Fox et al., 2007; Lee, 2003) and blogs (e.g., Argamon et al., 2007).

A gender dichotomy is evident as well in text messages sent on mobile phones. Studies of adolescent and young adult mobile phone use in Norway (Ling, 2005), Japan (Igarashi et al., 2005; Okuyama, 2009; Schiano et al., 2007), Korea (Yoon, 2003), Hong Kong (Lin, 2005) and Taiwan (Wei and Lo, 2006) indicate that females are more likely to send text messages for social purposes, while males more commonly engage in information-seeking or planning. In the US, Lenhart et al. (2010) report that while 59% of teenage girls age 12–17 text several times daily to "just say hello and chat," only 42% of boys do so. Horstmanshof and Power (2005) found that Australian males tended to become disenchanted with texting because they were less willing (than females) to follow contemporary social texting conventions, such as immediately responding to texts or sending "good night" messages to significant others. Yates (2006) reported that female messages expressed more "support" and "affection" than did male messages.

Previous studies of instant messaging conversations indicate some of the ways in which young people shape their messages to facilitate social interaction. Baron (2004) reported that conversational closings between American females took twice as long (both in number of turns and time on the clock) as closings between males. Similarly, in comparing IM conversations between females and between males, Lee (2003) found that females used explicit openings and closing about 80% of the time, compared with males—who used them in less than 30% of messages. Similar findings regarding use of openings and closings are documented for text messages in Norway (Ling, 2005).

Moreover, mobile phone studies indicate that females send more and/or longer texts, or are more likely to use texting, than males. These findings are robust across cultural contexts, e.g., Australia (Littlefield, 2004), Finland (Oksman and Turtiainen, 2004), Hong Kong (Lin, 2005), Italy (Herring and Zelenkauskaite, 2008), Japan (Boase and Kobayashi, 2008; Miyake, 2007; Okuyama, 2009; Schiano et al., 2007; Scott et al., 2009), Norway (Ling, 2005), the UK (Yates, 2006) and the US (Lenhart et al., 2010).

With the emergence of electronically-mediated communication, emoticons (which first appeared in 1982—see Baron 2009) became an additional written tool for expressing emotion. The literature consistently indicates that females are more likely than males to use emoticons (or their equivalent, e.g., Japanese *kaomoji*, *emoji* or *de-mo*—Okuyama, 2009), along with exclamation points, both in online communication (e.g., Baron, 2004; Colley and Todd, 2002; Colley et al., 2004;

Herring, 2003; Lee, 2003; Waseleski, 2006; Witmer and Katzman, 1997) and in text messaging (e.g., Miyake, 2010; Scott et al., 2009).

Gendered Use of Punctuation in Teenage Text Messaging

The literature on gendered language use, including gendered use of EMC, suggests that text messaging is a relevant platform for investigating variance in punctuation use between males and females. To explore this question, we drew upon data from American teenagers.

In 2009, the Pew Internet & American Life Project, working in conjunction with the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Michigan, explored how a random sample of teenagers in the US used mobile phones. Statistical results of this research are reported in Lenhart et al. (2010). Among the questions asked in qualitatively-oriented focus groups was whether participants perceived differences in the ways that males and females used text messaging.

Research Questions Regarding Gender, Texting and Punctuation

Our present interest in the focus group data[7] is on perceptions of gender differences regarding punctuation used in text messaging:

- → What do male and female users, respectively, believe are appropriate punctuation marks to use in text messaging?
- → How do males and females judge use of punctuation marks in text messages written by the opposite gender?

Methodology

Focus groups were conducted in four cities within the US, between June and October 2009. There were 75 participants, ranging in age from 12 to 18. All but one of the nine groups were clustered by age and by gender to encourage free conversational give-and-take. Topics relating to mobile telephony included interaction with parents, use while driving, use in school, and use with friends. The analysis that follows centers on interaction with friends.

[7.] Some of these findings were presented in Ling et al. (2010) at the Association of Internet Researchers meetings in Gothenburg, Sweden, in October 2010.

Findings

Some of the participants' comments involved general issues relating to texting, particularly regarding amount of text messaging and length of texts. For example, a group of older females indicated that males were not "involved" texters, e.g.,

Lydia: "Boys don't like to text at all…. I just think they are a different species completely."

Jeri: "Boys…want to get to a point, like texting is supposed to be to a point, not three pages of explanation."

Males confirm this perception, e.g.,

Jason: "Girls is [stet] basically like, … 'What you doing now?' Like they always want to know something, like really nosy basically. With guys it's just like 'OK', like, 'What are you doing?' 'Alright. Cool. You wanna do this?' 'OK.'"

However, some of the students' remarks related specifically to punctuation.

WHAT PUNCTUATION DO MALES AND FEMALES THINK THEY SHOULD USE IN TEXT MESSAGES?
Male focus group participants had little to say about the sorts of punctuation that text messages (in general) should have. By contrast, females stressed the importance of punctuation in constructing text messages (again, in general). Consider the following discussion about appropriate—and inappropriate—ways to end a text:

Natalie: "[We get into an argument] if [interlocutors] say something and put a period at the end. It'll be like really abrupt. And you'll be like oh that sounded like they are mad."

When the interviewer asked whether girls in the group used exclamation points (or, by implication, other discourse softeners) at the ends of messages rather than periods, the responses were affirmative:

Maria: "I always do that with my texts. There's always a 'ha' or an 'LOL' or a smiley face.
Natalie: "I probably say 'haha' in almost all my texts to friends because if you send one word answers that's kind of mean. You're either busy or you're mad, so I tend not to do that, so I put an exclamation mark or a smiley face. Keep it a light conversation."

The girls are describing what might be called a concluding courtesy symbol. Thus they show an awareness that punctuation (including emoticons) can function as a conversational softener, almost like adding a "please" to a direct request such as "Pass the salt."

JUDGMENTS OF PUNCTUATION USED IN TEXT MESSAGES WRITTEN BY MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX
In one focus group involving younger teenage boys, several participants observed that girls were more likely than boys to employ a variety of written conventions commonly described as typifying EMC, including lexical shortenings, stylized spelling, and emoticons, e.g.,

Carson: "Girls text really weird, like the spelling."
Ian: "They try to say like 'LOL'."
Lane: "Yeah, those short things, like smiley faces."

As we have seen, lexical shortenings (such as LOL) and stylized spellings can, like emoticons, be used to express personal sentiment, much like exclamation points.

Boys in a different focus group indicated they could judge the mood of a female interlocutor from her use of exclamation points and emoticons. In response to the interviewer asking how males could judge from a text message they received from a girl whether she was in a good mood, some of the responses were:

Carl: "Smiley face."
Thane: "A lot of exclamation marks."

Yet another group of males (this time somewhat older) indicated they could judge by the punctuation (or spelling) in girls' text messages if they were flirting:

Connor: "If there's more than one letter at the end of the word you can tell she's happy."
Hunter: "They say 'hey' with three *y*'s. And you can tell they're in a good mood."
Devin: "The winks."
(Several boys):"Smiley faces!"

When asked whether it was appropriate for males to send girls texts containing smiley or winky faces, the consensus was "no". In the words of one participant, "It's not a guy thing."

Girls participating in focus groups had their own observations regarding differences between the ways that males and females constructed text messages. Essentially, females complained that males had, in one participant's words, "No enthusiasm":

Hanna: "It's all like 'Yes,' and I don't know how to explain it. There's no enthusiasm at all."

When the interviewer asked if males ever used "any emoticons or smiley faces or something like that," one participant responded,

Grace: "You're lucky if you get something like that."

However, when the same interviewer inquired how girls knew if a boy was flirting with them in a text message, the response mirrored that of the males:

Hanna: "Like a wink face or a smiley face."

Conclusions Regarding Gender, Texting and Punctuation

Gender is clearly a relevant variable in shaping the punctuation practices in texting by American adolescents. Teenagers have clear ideas not only about how they should punctuate their text messages but also about the texting style of members of the opposite sex.

Female members of the focus groups were vocal about the importance of using emotion-tinged punctuation markers such as smileys, lexical shortening, or multiple exclamation points, both to express their "enthusiasm" for the communications they were crafting as well as to soften messages that might otherwise seem overly direct. By contrast, males were reluctant to engage in such practices (a fact noted by the females), and even complained about the excesses (e.g., use of emoticons, repeated letters in words) they observed in texts sent by females. These data support previous observations (for spoken language, traditional written language and EMC) that females are more likely to view communication as a form of social interaction, while males are more prone to see language as a medium for conveying information.

Having considered the role of gender in shaping use of emotion-tinged punctuation in text messaging, we now turn to questions concerning patterns of more traditional punctuation marks, this time in text messages sent by university students.

In Fall 2005, the authors collected a sample of text messages written by American university students. While the sample was small, and while texting was still a relatively new communication tool among young people in the US at the time, our study appears to have been the first linguistic attempt to quantitatively chart use of punctuation in texting.

Research Questions Regarding Punctuation Patterns and Functions in Texting

Two punctuation-related research questions addressed a complaint often voiced in popular media: that traditional punctuation in EMC is either non-existent or random. Our first question was therefore

→ Are there regularities in the use of traditional punctuation marks found in text messages written by university students?

We recognized that regularity might exist, even if it did not follow traditional conventions for punctuation use (i.e., as found in grammar handbooks or publication style sheets). Therefore, our second question was

→ Do university students composing text messages functionally re-purpose any traditional punctuation marks?

Methodology

A convenience sample of text messages was collected from undergraduates at a large, public university in the American Midwest. Methodological limitations restricted the participants to 22 female students. Subjects were asked to use a paper diary to record, verbatim, all text messages they sent over a 24-hour period. Admittedly, handwritten diaries of this sort are susceptible to errors (e.g., not including all text messages actually sent or "correcting" the punctuation used to make it look more like traditional punctuation). However, at the time the data were collected, paper diaries of this sort were the most efficacious way of gathering texting data.

The resulting corpus was 191 text transmissions. This number pales in the face of the explosion of texting that has taken place in the US over the past five years, with many young people now sending and receiving more than 100 text messages per day (Lenhart et al., 2010). However, our sample offers a window onto early punctuation

practices in American texting, though we cannot confirm that these same practices persist today.[8]

Coding of the data was done as follows:

→ Each text message was analyzed to see how many sentences it contained. (As we will see, some messages contained more than one sentence.)

→ Each sentence in the corpus was coded as a declarative (e.g., "Im at work til like 930"), interrogative (e.g., "Lunch 2day?"), imperative (e.g., "yes call me"), or exclamation (e.g., omg!!!)

→ The punctuation in each sentence was analyzed with respect to

  → marks we would expect to find (e.g., period at the end of a declarative sentence; question mark at the end of an interrogative)

  → marks actually used, especially at the ends of sentences

The punctuation we analyzed included periods, question marks, exclamation points, ellipses, dashes, commas and emoticons.

Findings

OVERALL PROFILE There was a total of 336 sentences in the texting corpus. That is, many of the 191 messages contained more than one sentence. Table 1 presents the punctuation data with respect to individual sentences. The table reports the percent of sentences in which a particular type of punctuation appeared.

No punctuation	61.4%
Period	9.1%
Question Mark	13.0%
Exclamation Point	4.7%
Ellipsis	8.8%
Dash	0.3%
Comma	2.1%
Emoticon	0.6%

Table 1. Percent of Sentences in Texting Corpus Having Punctuation Marks

8. To our knowledge, there have not been fine-grained studies of punctuation involving more recent texting corpora.

Many sentences within the texting corpus (61%) contained no punctuation at all. The most common type of punctuation was questions marks (13%), followed by periods and ellipses—each appearing in roughly 9% of sentences. (We return to the issue of ellipses in our discussion of re-purposing traditional punctuation marks.) While some exclamation points (nearly 5% of sentences) were used, commas appeared in barely 2% of the sentences. Emoticons and dashes each appeared in less than 1% of sentences. Note that the paucity of emoticons in the university-student texts (all from females) contrasts with reports of heavy usage from females in the adolescent focus groups (see Part I above). The discrepancy in emoticon use could reflect age differences (i.e., teenager girls may view emoticons as more vital than female university students). Alternatively, the discrepancy might reflect the fact that the university texting corpus was collected in 2005 (before texting became rampant in the US), while the focus groups with teenagers were done in 2009.

At first blush, the fact that so many sentences had no punctuation (including traditional end-mark punctuation such as periods or question marks) would appear to support popular perceptions that punctuation in text messaging is sparse. However, as we shall now see, there were interesting discernible patterns, especially in the way sentence-final punctuation was used.

REGULARITIES IN PUNCTUATION USE Nearly 60% of messages contained more than one sentence, with a mean of 1.8 sentences per text message. Therefore, it was possible to analyze sentence-final punctuation both for the end of the entire text message ("transmission-final") and, in more than half the text messages, for transmission-internal sentences. Examples of multi-sentence text messages include

> I'm here till Sunday, I can come by whenever
> So bored in class...what are you doing?
> I'm correcting this paper. Ill call when im done

Table 2 reports the percent of instances in which sentence-final punctuation (an "end-mark") was used, along with the percent of sentences for which either a question mark or a period was required by traditional punctuation rules.

overall sentence end-marks	39% of sentences
transmission-final end-marks	29% of sentences
transmission-internal end-marks	54% of sentences
use of required question mark (all sentences)	73% of questions
use of required period/exclamation point (all sentences)	30% of declaratives, imperatives, exclamations

Table 2. Percent of Sentences with End-Mark Punctuation

There was an imbalance in use of sentence-final punctuation. Of the total 336 sentences, 39% had sentence-final punctuation. However, use of end-mark punctuation was far higher (54%) when the sentence was not at the end of a text message than for transmission-final sentences (29%). These results suggest that creators of texts were following what we might call a Principle of Parsimony: Omit punctuation, especially periods, at ends of messages. Such transmission-final parsimony does not compromise message intelligibility, since the recipient understands the interlocutor is finished by virtue of the fact the message has been sent.

Similarly, analysis revealed a far higher use of question marks to end questions (73%) than use of periods or exclamation points to end other sentence types (i.e., declaratives, imperatives, exclamations). Periods and exclamation points were used at the ends of only 30% of such sentences. Here, we posit a Principle of Informational Load: Question marks carry more discourse information than periods or exclamation points because they signal a request for a response from interlocutors. (In the corpus, 18.6% of all sentences were interrogatives.)

RE-PURPOSING OF TRADITIONAL PUNCTUATION MARKS: ELLIPSES, EXCLAMATION POINTS AND SMILEYS
Given the substantial number of ellipses used in the corpus (29 in total, appearing in almost 9% of all sentences), we were interested to see how these ellipses were functioning. Examples included

> its fine…
> you still in class…call me when your home

In reviewing the data, it became clear that ellipses were replacing a variety of traditional punctuation marks (in the samples above: a period and a question mark, respectively). Table 3 reports the functions these ellipses were serving, that is, what traditional punctuation mark they appeared to be replacing.

Use of ellipsis instead of:

Period	80.0%
Question mark	6.7%
Comma	3.3%
Other type of pause	10.0%

Table 3. Percent of Ellipses Substituting for Traditional Punctuation Marks

In traditional formal writing, ellipses denote omitted text, such as in a quoted passage ("To be or not to be...is the question"). In more informal writing, ellipses are sometimes used to indicate speech trailing off (" I know what you mean..."), for dramatic effect ("and the winner is...Angelie Jolie."), or to separate sentences in lieu of a more standard period (e.g., "It's hard to read the gambler's motives... he's stalling for time."). Inasmuch as text messaging tends to be quite informal and commonly contains more than one sentential unit, it was not surprising to find ellipses appearing in the texting corpus, especially in lieu of periods.

Two other forms of punctuation, exclamation points (appearing in almost 5% of sentences) and emoticons (of which only two appeared), are also worthy of note in considering how punctuation is being redefined in text messaging. In the case of exclamation points, while the mark is obviously part of standard written punctuation, formal English conventions call for parsimonious use—and only one at a time. In our texting corpus, many of the exclamation points appeared in multiples (e.g., "omg!!!"). In other instances, a single exclamation point was accompanied by exaggerated spelling (e.g., "luckyyy!"). Both of the smileys occurred at the ends of sentences in lieu of a traditional period, i.e.,

> Ok:/
> or something :)

Seen in light of our earlier discussion of the teenage focus groups, the use of ellipses, exclamation points and smileys in the university-student texting corpus— mostly to replace periods—can be seen as a way of softening or adding emotion to messages. Recall Hanna's comment (from the focus groups) that male text messages lacked "enthusiasm" and Natalie's remark that "if [interlocutors] say something and put a period at the end...it'll be...abrupt."

Conclusions Regarding Punctuation Patterns and Functions in Texting

The corpus of university-student text messages clearly suggests that texting punctuation is not chaotic. While many texts lacked any punctuation, those in which punctuation did appear revealed rational choices about when to use traditional punctuation in sentence-final position (i.e., the Principle of Parsimony, whereby transmission-final punctuation tends to be omitted, and the Principle of Informational Load, whereby periods are more likely to be omitted than question marks). In addition, students re-purposed the traditional ellipsis to fill the role of periods, as well as using exclamation points and smileys to replace periods while simultaneously expressing emotion and/or softening the directness of the message.

DISCUSSION

Since text messages are written language, we logically anticipate they will contain punctuation marks. Yet is it reasonable to expect punctuation to function the same way in texting that it does in traditional written language?

As we have seen, text messaging is part of the broader phenomenon of electronically-mediated communication. Much has been written about the stylistic conventions of EMC (e.g., Baron, 2008; Crystal, 2001, 2008; Hale and Scanlon, 1999), including about its informality, its oral character and the fact it is often composed rapidly and with little editing. In light of the laissez-faire conditions under which most EMC is written, we should not be surprised if the punctuation that does appear in EMC has its own character.

In this study, we have explored two dimensions of punctuation in text messaging. First, we looked at whether gender influences punctuation patterns, particularly with regard to emotion-tinged punctuation such as emoticons, lexical shortenings and multiple exclamation points. We found it did, offering yet more evidence for previous discussion of distinctions in the ways males and females use

language. While the adolescent boys in the focus groups were comfortable ending their text messages when they had gotten their point across, teenage girls felt it was important to soften their messages with concluding courtesy markers so as not to appear rude or uninterested in the communicative exchange.

Second, we considered whether punctuation in texting is random or structured. The texting corpus we examined suggested clear patterns in the way that traditional punctuation was being used, which we attempted to capture with the notions of a Principle of Parsimony and a Principle of Informational Load. We also found evidence of re-purposing of traditional punctuation usage, particularly with regard to ellipses.

At the beginning of this article, we noted a general contemporary trend for written language to record informal speech, along with a concomitant tendency for punctuation to be used rhetorically rather than grammatically. These tendencies are reflected in the data we examined on text messaging, wherein EMC punctuation (at least among adolescents and young adults) can lend an oral tone to the messages. Female members of the teen focus groups were sensitive to the conversational need to soften the tone of their messages through smileys and the like, in some sense approximating intonation features or facial gestures they might use in face-to-face conversation. Similarly, among the university students, use of ellipses in lieu of periods, especially following transmission-internal sentences (e.g., "So bored in class...what are you doing?") suggests the kind of pauses familiar in speech.

EMC Punctuation in Broader Context

In our discussion of EMC punctuation, we have compared relevant data with other empirical studies of written corpora. What we have not yet considered is the state of punctuation education—or of punctuation itself—in broader social or linguistic context. However, to ignore such context runs the risk of making EMC seem more exotic than perhaps it really is.

It is true that people using text messaging are not "taught" what punctuation to use, but rather work out patterns themselves or adopt the punctuation style of their interlocutors. Yet we must also keep in mind that at least in the contemporary US, punctuation is often barely taught in schools, so that many current teenagers and adults have few offline norms against which to compare their texting style. Yes, young students are still instructed regarding periods, question marks, and capital letters. But the intricacies of commas, colons, semicolons, apostrophes, and hyphens are often left to chance. As a result, it is perhaps not surprising that many young people feel little external constraint in how they punctuate text messages.

Even authoritative voices—both in the US and the UK—are themselves increasingly conflicted about when (and whether) to use marks such as hyphens and apostrophes. The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* recently eliminated 16,000 hyphens from its sixth edition (e.g., *water-bed* is now *water bed* and *death-knell* became *death knell*) (McGrath, 2007). Similarly, in 2009, the city of Birmingham (UK) removed the apostrophes on many street signs, rendering the likes of "St Paul's Square" as "St Pauls Square" ("City Drops Apostrophes from Signs," 2009). Even if we do teach children punctuation, what do we teach? Equally difficult to resolve may be the question of whether such offline shifts in punctuation will find their way into EMC—and whether we will nonetheless "blame" EMC for degrading punctuation standards.

Perhaps the most important lesson deriving from our analysis is that the study of punctuation cannot be separated from a broader linguistic context. That context may be one of gender differences in language use or of the embeddedness of EMC in contemporary offline writing style. The future of punctuation in both online and offline contexts remains in flux, but the fates of each will, in all likelihood, be intertwined.

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AUTHOR NOTES

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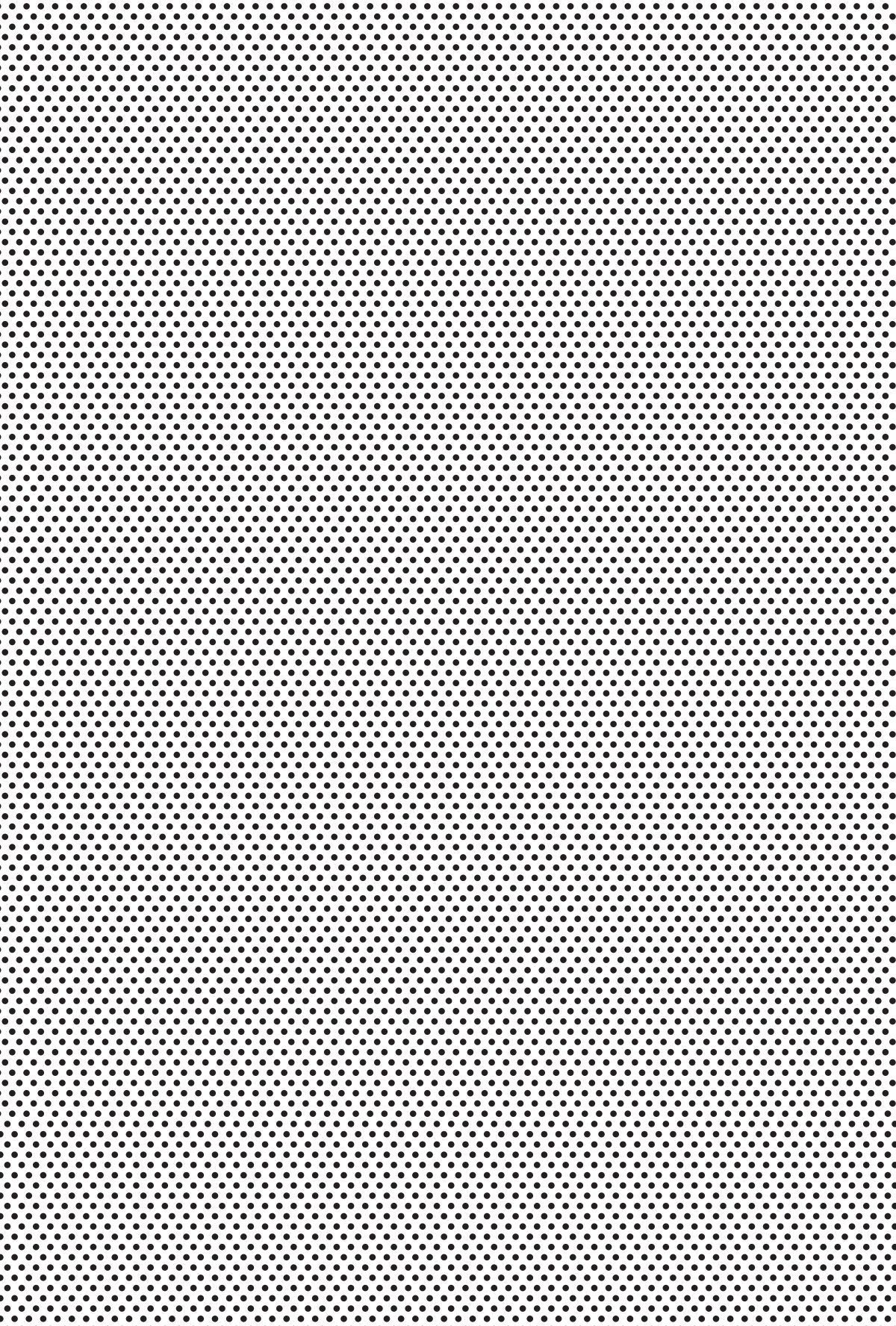
Seven- to Nine-year-olds' Understandings of Speech Marks

SOME ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

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Nigel Hall & Sue Sing

ABSTRACT

At first sight the speech mark would seem to be one of the easiest to use of all punctuation marks. After all, all one has to do is take the piece of speech or written language and surround it with the appropriately shaped marks. But, are speech marks as easy to understand and use as suggested above, especially for young children beginning their punctuation careers? Some readers may well at this point be asking, 'But what is a speech mark?' It is a good question, firstly, because outside of the UK the term is hardly ever used and secondly, because the term is extremely recent. The speech mark is simply an alternative title for those punctuation marks used to frame speech or quotation in written language and it is the latest in a long line of terms used to name them.

The contention that the punctuation of speech is unproblematic also appears to be supported by researchers and educationalists. Despite the centrality of punctuation to the writing process, and continual complaints about children's failures in learning to punctuate, researchers have largely ignored the topic. That there has been a general lack of research about children and punctuation was acknowledged by the author of a major evidence review produced to retrospectively justify the English *Framework for Teaching Literacy*, the document that since 1999 has directed how literacy should be taught in English schools. The author (Beard, 1999) commented about punctuation, "Punctuation has rarely been discussed at length in literacy education publications." While there has been an improvement in this situation since then, compared with other areas of literacy education the overall total is still very small, and is smallest of all for the punctuation of speech and written quotation. This comparative neglect hides many issues related to the punctuation of speech, and there are a number of reasons why the punctuation of speech may be more complex for children (and some adults) than has generally been considered.

Issues Relating to Naming

The first issue is that the naming of the mark used to denote the introduction and closure of speech or quotation is currently inconsistent, and has been for centuries. While the term 'quotation' has been used in English since at least 1456 when, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Sir G. Hay wrote, "Here efter followis the chaptiris of the ferde buke after the quotacions of the Rubricus," what many people know as the quotation mark has been given many titles. It has been termed a 'note of Citation' (Anon, 1680, p.18), a 'double-comma turned' (Care, 1687, p.61) or 'a double comma reversed' (Hawkings, 1692, p.79), a 'quotation quadrat' (Moxon, 1683), a 'quotation' (Brown, 1700, p.16), an 'inverted comma' (Anon, 1702, preface) and a 'quotation mark' (Jones, 1704, p.143). This variety of names forced Luckcombe, writing in 1770 (p.265), to comment, "But why we have hitherto found no proper name for French Guillemets, though so much used in England, cannot be counted an impertinent question." However, the naming game continued with a 'quotation justifier' (Jacobi, 1881) and a finer distinction 'open quotes' and 'close quotes' (Shaw, 1996, p.118). One of the more unusual but very interesting usages seems to have been coined by P.B. Ballard in 1930 (p.22) when in a primary school textbook he uses the term 'lip mark': "Note that when a speaker opens his mouth to speak, two lip marks

(commas) are placed in the paper, and two more are placed when he finishes and closes his lips." The more vernacular and child-oriented term for speech punctuation marks has long been 'sixty-sixes' and 'ninety-nines.' Finally came the term 'speech mark' of which the earliest written use traced so far is Ledgard, published in 1977. So recent is this term that it does not even appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Despite this recency, by 1999 it was the only term specified for use in the *National Literacy Strategy: Framework for Teaching,* the document that now directs how literacy should be taught in all schools in England (D*f*ES, 1999). As will be seen below, the above list of names is not exhaustive, for children have managed to add to it.

Issues Relating to Boundaries and Voices

Understanding and using speech marks depends on being able to (a) identify the boundaries of speech, and (b) distinguish between direct and reported speech. However, all teachers of younger children know that identifying the boundaries of direct speech is not easy for them (Cordiero et al., 1983), although one parent (Robinson, 1989) started to play a game with his two and a half-year-old son, when by accident the father said, "What's that thing up there said Daddy?" and the child replied, "Another aeroplane said Joseph." These kinds of jokey exchanges continued for a couple of weeks before dying out. One of the last times it occurred was the child's complicated construction, "What's the matter with your head Daddy the doctor wondered said Joseph." Such precocity is rare. Hall observed a six-year-old who started putting new and apparently random marks in his writing. When these were discussed, the child said they were speech marks, objects that he had been learning to identify in his reading material. When asked why he had used them the child said he had put them in because it was him doing the talking, an explanation the other children instantly adopted and they then started to use these marks in their writing. On one level the children were incorrect because they had confused authorial voice with character voice, but on another level they could be viewed as correct; after all, almost all children's writing is read out aloud by them to the teacher.

Ferriero and Zucchermaglio (1996) found that Argentinian and Mexican seven- and eight-year-olds used more punctuation during direct speech than in the rest of their story texts, but little of this involved quotation marks. When speech boundaries were marked it was often by other punctuation marks such as full stops or exclamation marks. Even with reading, despite the frequency with which direct speech appears in books for young children (Baker and Freebody, 1989) and despite some enthusiastic intonation in reading some direct speech ('Who's been sleeping in my bed?'), children often have difficulty in working out who is speaking, and when

there is a change of speaker (Perera, 1996). This is particularly the case when there is no straightforward signalling of direct speech by reporting clauses (e.g., 'he said' or 'she shouted').

Issues Relating to Representation

Conventionally, punctuation of direct speech or written quotation is today often signalled by multiple punctuation marks, possibly a comma or colon preceding the speech, maybe capitalization of the first letter and the use of speech/quotation marks to enclose the quotation. Inevitably, punctuation manuals vary considerably in what they claim about standard practice and, anyway, the evolution of the marks that signify quotation is anything but straightforward (Mitchell, 1983). While the enclosing of speech or quotation is natural today, in earlier times usage was quite different. Speech marks were set outside the margins of the text, and were placed at the beginning of every line on which the quotation appeared (Parkes, 1992). But even disregarding what manuals have to say about standard practice, how conventional is conventional? Relatively recently, James Kellman, a Booker prize winner, avoids using any punctuation of speech in his book *The Busconductor Hines*, published in 1994. Frank McCourt's Booker prize-winning novel, *Angela's Ashes*, ignored convention—no speech marks are used and all speech is introduced by a hyphen. In the same year, 1996, Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* contains whole chapters in which speech is not distinguished by the use of punctuation marks. Curiously, while choosing to do this Atwood nevertheless uses all the other punctuation marks. While many will argue that great writers can make choices like this and that children still have to learn the basics of punctuation, it nevertheless demonstrates that punctuation is a tool to be used by authors rather than a device to control them.

The situation becomes much more problematic when one surveys books designed for very young children. If ever there was an arena within which authors, illustrators and designers play around with the marking of direct speech, it is young children's literature, and it can sometimes seem as if the more popular is a children's book, the more likely it will have unconventional use of speech punctuation. Speech is frequently signalled by color, by typeface, by typestyle (bold, underlining, etc.), by type size, by space, position on page, or by combinations of these features (plus others we have not mentioned). Thus when young children read, they are offered considerably more than the conventional speech punctuation marks beloved of traditionalists.

Even if the discussion is restricted to speech marks alone and to their conventional representation, there is a problem—they still appear in different forms.

Even conventionally we have to get used to 'curly' speech marks or 'straight line' speech marks. Modern typography allows the creation of many more shapes for speech marks. Then, of course, in conventional speech punctuation the marks can occur in single or double forms (and we will not even get into the stylistic problems of speech within speech). It might be argued that these are largely irrelevant as issues, and that children can easily cope with understanding how a range of marks can be equivalent. The trouble is that these equivalences in other circumstances become significant differences as several punctuation marks share some of the graphic characteristics of speech marks. Faced with the comma, the apostrophe and the 'curly' speech mark all being very small marks and often containing a tiny blob with a tail, and distinguished only by orientation or height on line, is it surprising if children experience some confusion? This might be particularly the case when some educationalists have used the terms 'little raised comma' (Moughton, 1925, p.67) and 'lifted commas' (Ballard, 1954, p.36) to designate the apostrophe. In passing, it is interesting that the speech mark seems to be the only punctuation mark that has developed a manual version, as when people lift their fingers in the air, although this is usually used to designate emphasis rather than speech.

Despite these issues, England's *National Literacy Strategy: Framework for Teaching* seem to operate as if there is no problem at all. The document demands that even six-year olds can 'identify speech marks in reading, understand their purpose, use the terms correctly' and that seven-year-olds can 'use the term speech marks' and 'use speech marks and other dialogue punctuation appropriately in writing and to use the conventions which mark boundaries between spoken words and the rest of the sentence.' (DfES, 1999) Are these assumptions valid?

THE STUDY

Almost all previous studies of children's punctuation behavior have been based on strategies that make children's own perspectives on punctuation invisible. Within the limited pool of studies on children's punctuation development, the majority are based upon retrospective analysis of children's marks in their writing, although sometimes with the aid of some teacher or researcher notes (Cordiero et al., 1983; Cazden et al., 1985; Wilde, 1996; Ferreiro and Zucchermaglio, 1996). Some studies have adopted a more experimental and statistical approach based on written data (Bryant, Devine, Ledward and Nunes, 1997; Bryant et al., 2000 and Stuart et al., 2004), while another group are essentially observations of single children, either

by a teacher (Anderson, 1996) or a parent (Ruiz, 1996). It is only in a series of studies carried out within the remit of *The Punctuation Project* based in the Faculty of Education at Manchester Metropolitan University that the research focus shifted towards much greater observation of and sustained conversation with and between children (see Sing and Hall, 2009).

The principal reasoning behind the approach of *The Punctuation Project* lay in the strong belief of the project team that young children did have the ability to talk freely about punctuation in ways that would offer insights into how they thought about it. Hearing what they had to say about it was critical to understanding how they made sense of it. The methodological problem was to find ways of allowing children to voice opinions within school environments where typically children's behavior and language are carefully managed to suit the pedagogic process. This kind of social and hegemonic positioning, where the adult's role affords them the power to define the limits of 'acceptable' child behavior (e.g., see Edwards and Mercer's work in this area, 1987; Mercer, 1995) invariably situates children subordinately and in a position of compliance and obedience.

The critical technique developed for the project was to have children in groups of three who then had to make an agreed decision about whether or not punctuation was needed in a text. The group faced a large whiteboard on which was a short, simple text. Inserted into the text were some blank boxes (see below) and if the children thought a punctuation mark was needed they could write it in, but only if they all agreed. Thus the children had to discuss and debate their choices. It did not matter whether their decisions were right on wrong; what mattered was how they were arrived at. A much fuller discussion of the methodological rationale for this project can be found in Sing and Hall (2009) and evidence of its success can be found throughout this article. The project involved children from 7–11 and texts contained possibilities for a wide range of punctuation marks. Only the responses of the 7 and 8-year olds related to speech are dealt with here (for detailed discussions of other areas see Sing, 2006; Wassouf, 2007).

The study was based in four English primary schools and from each of the four participating schools four classes were selected from each of the four Key Stage 2 year groups (Years 3–6), forming 16 classes in all and a total of 408 children. All children first took a simple punctuation insertion task and the scores were used to select two groups of three average scoring children in each class (one of girls and one of boys). The task was explained to all the children and they were asked individually if they wanted to participate. All children were eager to do so (possibly partly because it got them out of a class lesson for half an hour). Sessions

were videoed and a back-up audio recording was made. Each group came out of the classroom to another space in the school and sat around a semi-circular table facing the whiteboard with the text. On the table were whiteboard pens for the children to use when they had made their decision. The atmosphere was deliberately very relaxed and there was quite a lot of laughing as the children discussed the task. A researcher, whose role was to facilitate discussion if necessary and respond to any procedural questions, sat with them. The researcher never answered a question about their choices, but simply reminded them that it was their choice to make any decision they liked. They children were never told if they were right or wrong and any decision they made was affirmed.

In the rest of this article we first discuss the responses of the Year 3 children and then the Year 4 children.

YEAR 3

According to England's *Framework for Teaching,* on entry to Year 3 (around seven years of age) all children should be able to "...identify speech marks in reading, understand their purpose, and use the terms correctly." This would appear to imply that the children will know what speech marks looked like, will understand their function and will know when to use the term 'speech mark' correctly. How did the Year 3 children in this study match up to these expectations?

The data used in this paper derives from the discussions of the seven- and eight-year-old children as they completed the task. As indicated above the children were asked to look at the boxes (*figure 1*) and come to a joint decision about whether or not a punctuation mark was required at these points.

Some of these boxes offer the opportunity for the children to consider the punctuation of speech. The extracts used below mostly relate to discussion about what should go in box 7 (although this then leads to discussion of adjacent or related boxes). In the following extracts R represents a researcher, while the other initials represent individual children, except for C, which represents more than one child answering together. Any text that is underlined is a quotation from the task text, and all italicized text represents nonverbal behavior. The turn numbers refer to the turns in the complete transcripts.

We will begin by using several extracts from the single long discussion of one group; this illustrates a number of issues in relation to the Year 3 children's thinking about speech marks. This is a very typical example of how the Year 3 discussions

Simon was having a bad day. First, he had a dream□[1] about some things he really didn□[2]t like□[3] carrots, wet□[4] sloppy kisses□[5] and early morning□[6]s. Then, he heard his mum shouting, □[7]Get up□[8] Simon□[9] Do you want a lift to Tom□[10]s house□[11]"

Figure 1: Text as arranged on the exercise sheet. The number identifies the box in the main text below.

proceeded, although it is slightly longer than most. The discussion starts with trying to respond to box 7, ran for eight minutes and contained 94 turns. It starts at turn 163 of the complete session:

(A-Y3-Tb/Ex. 1)

163   R   let's carry on then/ "Then, he heard his mum shouting, ☐[7] Get up Simon☐[8] /
           so what have we got/we've got loads of boxes here/E

164   E   full stop *(referring to box 7)*

165   R   E thinks it should be a full stop

166   E   yeah/because that's a capital letter *(pointing to capital 'g' on 'Get up')* /
           yeah that's right/...

167   S   ...there wouldn't be a full stop after a comma

168   Re   oh yeah there would/well how come there's a that there then *(points to the capital*
           'g' on 'Get up'; E laughs)

Despite having read the text aloud twice with the researcher, having reread the whole text several times, despite forward reading being experienced several times previously during this discussion and despite the researcher reading forward to the end of the first part of the direct speech, the children stop dead at box 7. By failing to read or think further forward they ignore the possibility that a punctuation mark might affect what comes after it, and as a result do not even link it to the speech that follows. They do however see something only very slightly forward—the capital letter—and like the children in most of the Year 3 groups, automatically assume that anything before a capital letter has to be a full stop. This is something they have learned from teachers who tend to ritualistically reinforce over and over again that a full stop needs a capital letter following it. It is not surprising that children can see how that should work both ways. There is a preoccupation with the mark rather than with the relationship between the mark and text. A few turns later one of the children seems to be getting closer to recognizing speech:

173   Re   ...is it because we start shouting it and it put a capital/...

174   E   ...no actually/...

175   S   .../yeah/yeah

176   R   what's S saying/what are you saying 'yeah' to? *(all three children laugh)* /
           you tell me in your own words S

177   S   well isn't it like she's shouting it

| 178 | E | full stop/ □⁷ Get up □⁸ |
| 179 | S | so it's a capital letter |

This is a rather ambiguous extract, for Re notices that there is shouting going on, and S agrees with Re, adding 'so it's a capital letter.' Does S mean that the capital letter is there because it is speech and therefore is not necessarily preceded by a full stop, or is S reverting to the claim that all capital letters are preceded by a full stop? Certainly there is no suggestion here that any special mark other than a full stop might be placed in box 7. It is not until 15 turns later that one of the children suddenly realizes what is needed with speech:

201	Re	...or should that be one of them/I can't remember what they're called
202	S	number nines
203	Re	yeah 'cos like shouting/like that/no 'cos there's one there/you wouldn't have three/...

Neither of these two children say 'speech marks'; they instantly go along with the more graphic notion of 'nines.' Thus we see a second issue, for these children, despite the demands of the National Curriculum documentation, there is a lack of a shared technical term for the mark that denotes direct speech. It might be argued that this does not matter. After all if the children understand what they are, does it really matter what they call them? The two problems with the lack of technical knowledge are (a) that communicating an idea becomes more difficult if children do not share precise terminology, and perhaps more significantly (b) that some of the child-based terms for speech marks may lead to or derive from confusions with other punctuation marks that do not denote direct speech. Within twelve turns a different term is introduced:

215	R	forgetting what they're called/we won't worry about what they're called/but should they go in there? *(R asks, pointing to box 7)*
216	Re	no/'cos there's one there/...
217	E	...yeah so/commas /...
218	S	...they're not commas/...
219	E	...they are/...
220	S	...they're not/...
221	Re	...they can't be commas because she's not speaking it/it's telling you what she's saying *(all three laugh)*

222   S   they're not meant to be commas

223   R   hang on/let Re say something/hang on a minute

224   Re   well I think those shouldn't go there because you only put them/'cos there should
              be two there if she was speaking so there can't be two there/'cos that's when
              they're speaking and it said <u>Then, he heard his mum shouting</u> and that's not people
              saying it

225   E   yeah/that's telling what his mum said to him

This represents a potentially significant move as Re is beginning to sort out the boundaries between speech and other text. She clearly understands that it is speech that needs the 'commas' and that there needs to be two of them. However, we still see the term 'commas' being used instead of the prescribed term 'speech marks.' Twenty-five turns later, these three children are still debating:

254   Re   saying □[7] <u>Get up</u>□[8]

255   E   but that's a name isn't it? (referring to 'Simon')

256   S   oh yeah

257   Re   and the mum's saying □[7] <u>Get up</u>□[8] /commas/exclamation mark and commas
              'cos there would have been two there/ wouldn't there/oh God

One can feel huge sympathy with these seven-year-olds getting exasperated, but Re, while getting some things right, introduces yet another conundrum for the group. If we consider her use of 'commas' as meaning speech marks, she successfully surrounds some direct speech with marks, but what she still fails to do is recognize that the speech continues until the end of the end of the passage.

Somewhat unusually for the seven-year-old groups this group of children did not, like many other children, use the terms 'ninety nines' and 'sixty sixes' to designate speech marks (although 'nines' was used). Across this age group the term 'speech mark' was only used successfully a few times, while the terms 'ninety nines' and 'sixty sixes' were used thirty-one times. The children in another Year 3 group were also very oriented to the visual appearance of the marks:

314   N   I'm putting '66' in this color/do a '66' and then color the little thingies in

315   J   what?

316   N   color them little things in

317   D   color them little dots/those little things in the middle 'cos you normally do that

When children were not using number names to denote speech marks, they mostly settled on the names of other punctuation marks such as the comma, but sometimes even made up their own.

If the children were finding some of the issues complex while discussing them as a group, how did they cope on their own? At the beginning of the year all the Year 3 and Year 4 children individually responded to a short task of inserting missing punctuation in a text. This text provided two instances of direct speech. The ends of both instances were fairly clearly marked textually—in the first instance the direct speech was followed by the reporting clause 'asked Jane' and the second by 'shouted Spot':

> jane and spot sat looking at
> a tiny bit of cheese shall i
> eat it asked jane a tear ran
> down the dogs face the dog
> looked so sad soppy and
> gloomy jane let him have
> it im so happy now shouted
> spot

The 24 Year 3 children took the test twice, once at the beginning of the academic year and once at the end. On the first administration 19 children failed to insert correctly any punctuation of speech. Only one child of the 24 correctly marked the speech in both places in the text, and four marked one of the two examples (in all cases the first of the two examples). The percentage success rate across the whole year group was 12.5%. On the second administration at the end of the year, after a lot of classroom teaching about the punctuation of speech, 13 children still failed to mark either of the speech items, six marked only one example and five marked both, giving a success rate across the whole age group of 33%. While this is clearly an increase in the success rate, it still leaves two-thirds of the group failing to mark any of the speech in the text, despite it being clearly flagged by reporting clauses.

YEAR 4

The Year 4 groups worked with the same text used by the Year 3 children. As with the Year 3 children, we will start by examining the discussions of one typical group to illustrate their thinking about speech marks. This group had by far the longest discussions relating to speech, over one hundred turns. At first their response was to see box 7 as a trick:

166	A	it's tricky
167	R	could there not be anything in there/nothing?
168	C	no (all said in unison)

However, when asked if they were sure, one child realized that speech was involved, but like many of the Year 3 children they confused the name of the required mark:

175	R	"Then, he heard his mum shouting, Get up Simon"
176	N	is that apostrophe there like that because it's saying "Get up" but just adding the name on?
177	L	no/ I don't think it's an apostrophe there
178	N	I'm not sure now/think it could be but…

A few lines later child L comes up with the correct term, but the response of the other two children is to make claims for different punctuation marks:

188	L	I know what could be there *(pointing to box 7)*
189	R	go on L
190	L	could have speech marks
191	R	speech marks?
192	N	question mark/his mum shouts/no
193	L	no
194	N	exclamation mark

At this point they revert to a tried and tested formula and invoke '66' and '99,' but recognize that they need a pair of marks:

| 196 | A | '66' and a '99' *(points to boxes 7&8, for open and closed speech marks)* |

197	L&N	yeah because
198	N	she's shouting/his mum is shouting and I think there should be a question mark
199	L	no because it isn't a question is it?
200	R	ah/so what d'you think L?
201	L	I think it's got speech marks
202	N	yeah
203	R	think so?/why's that then?
204	A	because you've got…
205	L	I think it's got them there *(points to box 7)* /that is a trick box *(points to box 8)* /and then it's got them there *(in box 9)*

One child having earlier confidently identified the need for speech marks and using the correct term, now shows less confidence when it comes to writing them:

210	N	how do you do speech marks/I've forgot how to do speech marks
211	L&A	'66' and a '99'
212	N	oh yeah/that's it/like that *(roughly points towards the board, but at no punctuation mark in particular)* /where does it say the others? /where does it say '66' for there? *(pointing to the speech mark at the end of the story)*

The child is also confused about where they are to go, has seen the speech marks at the conclusion of the piece and recognized that they come in pairs, but is unable to locate where they should go at the start of the speech. The group think about box 9 but are temporarily corrected, until the association between full stops and capital letters interferes:

215	N	'66' there because it's…
216	L	no/ that should be there *(pointing to box 7)*
217	N	no/ that should be a full stop shouldn't it because that is a capital/that should be a full stop 'cos that's a capital
218	L	yeah 'cos that's the end of the sentence

They appear to have made up their minds, and seem to agree:

220	R	OK/shall we do this one first *(referring to box 7)* /and then we'll do the others/ yeah?
221	L	'66'

222	A	'66'
223	R	yeah?/do you agree with that N?
224	N	yeah

But later, when thinking about box 9:

349	N	I think it's a '99'/'66' and/no/'cos there's a '99' isn't it? *(here she points to box 7, saying there should be speech marks here, and the same for box 9, but then changes her mind when she sees the speech marks at the end of the story)*
350	L	no it could be there because/ "Get up Simon"/it's still saying it
351	N	that's what I thought/I think a '99' now
352	R	do you?/so you've gone from full stop to a/to a '99'?
353	N	a full stop or a '99'
354	L	yeah
355	N	'99' I think
356	A	"Get up Simon" *(said quietly)*
357	L	I know but…
358	N	'99' I think
		(Pause 1)
359	L	but how come them ones are there then? *(pointing to the speech marks at end of story)*
360	N	yeah/that's for there/I think it's a full stop again because '66' *(for box 7)* and '99' now *(for box 9)*
361	R	you're not sure are you N?
362	N	no/ because/might be for there
363	L	no/ but I know what it could be
364	N	a full stop I think again
365	L	would she say "Get up Simon"/'cos if she did that could be '99' there *(for box 8)* / if she didn't/then it could be 66 for there *(for box 9)* /and then that's a '99' *(points to the speech marks at end of story)*
366	A	that can't be a '99' 'cos then she's still saying it *(pointing to box 9)*
367	N	a full stop I think that is now
368	R	right so that can't be a '99'
369	N	a full stop
370	L	I know but why are them there then? *(again pointing to the speech marks at the end of the piece)*
371	A	because "Get up Simon Do you want a lift to Toms house"

Discussion in the other Year 4 groups was similar, although not quite as long, and in many groups there was at least one child able to call up the term 'speech mark.' Nevertheless, still mostly used were the terms '66' and '99.' One group was adamant that it was OK to use '66' and '99' and were not bothered about having the correct term:

```
205  R    do you remember what a '66' is called?
206  K    no/haven't got a clue
207  S    we just call it '66'
208  K    yeah/that's what we do in our class/we just put a '66'/say '66'/we don't say
          the word
```

And seek to use the teacher as a justification for their choice:

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210  K    we don't even say '66'/we just put
211  N    two '66s'
212  K    yeah/if she's asking us we'll just say '66'
213  N    we don't have a name for it/we just call it '66'
214  C    we don't use the name/we just call it '66'
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Four of the eight groups used only the terms '66s' and '99s,' although one group believed the box was a trick box and so failed to recognize the speech at all. On the other hand only one of the remaining groups used the term 'speech mark' regularly and naturally through their discussion. The other two mostly pointed or used more general terms: 'them,' 'those' etc. It would seem that even in Year 4 instinctive use of the correct terminology is a long way off.

The confusion of the group seen in the longer extracts was more extended than that exhibited by most other Year 4 groups. However, the issues they discussed were reflected in the discussions of all the other groups. In several groups there was a much greater recognition than in Year 3 groups that speech marks existed at the end of the piece, so they need a corresponding set somewhere else. But in these cases such discoveries did not necessarily lead to insertion of speech marks in box 7, or if they did, other marks were strongly considered, possibly because of the presence of boxes 8 and 9.

In another group it needed recourse to other knowledge about punctuation to sort this out:

175	Ay	"Then, he heard his mum shouting"/ and then full stop *(takes a deep breath)* /
		"Get up"
176	Ac	yeah 'cos.../it doesn't make sense
		(Pause 1)
177	Ac	yeah 'cos/ no because you take a breath there don't you?
178	Ay	and then a big breath *(laughs)*
		(Al takes really deep breath)
179	Ay	not that big
180	Ac	"he heard his mum shouting" *(takes breath)*

The 24 eight-year-old focus children in Year 4 did the same punctuation insertion test as the younger children, and did so twice, once at the beginning of the academic year and once at the end. On the first administration only five children successfully marked both speech items. In all, 15 children failed to mark the first item and 19 failed to mark the second item, giving a success rate across the whole year group of 31%. On second administration at the end of the year 11 children failed to mark speech item 1, and 18 children failed to mark speech item 2. Still only five children successfully marked both, but rather surprisingly four of these were not the children who achieved this on the first administration of the test. The success rate for the year group on the second administration was 40%.

DISCUSSION

The Year 3 children approached the problem-solving with considerable enthusiasm. They argued with each other and searched for evidence in the text but for them there was a more graphic focus in the way they approached the task. They rarely used the technical term they were being taught, preferring to represent them by their visual similarity to numbers and had considerable problems with the boundaries between speech and the other parts of the texts. All the time they are brought up against things that are for them contradictions and they lack the technical knowledge to find ways round them. An example of this is the children having been taught that after a full stop you always have a capital letter. Thus when faced with a capital letter at the beginning of speech they are in a dilemma. Should box 7 contain a full stop? This may seem a bizarre example but it occurred as part of several groups discussions. The children are not being stupid; the fact that they debate it at all is

evidence that they realize there is an issue here, but they lack the experience to weigh the different possibilities. Time and time again the children are caught in dilemmas that would not for the most part even have been recognized as dilemmas by more experienced, older children. The younger children do not always have ways of balancing competing claims because of lack of experience rather than stupidity. They draw on their experience but that experience lets them down.

The Year 4 children mostly appear to recognize that speech marks need to come in pairs, but having spotted the final speech mark, seem uncertain about where the other one should go. Attempts to put it at the beginning of the speech meet the problem of the capital letter. Even when there are some decisions that box 7 is the correct place for the opening speech marks they cannot decide whether they are related to the final pair or whether additional speech marks are needed. They still seem somewhat uncertain about recognizing that there is a continuous run of speech and that other punctuation marks may be inserted in this run. Hypothesis gets set against hypothesis, and the children often seem to be going round in circles and revisiting issues. This time the cause cannot be failure to look and read ahead as there are several comments about the speech marks at the end of the text. The children do sometimes get there in the end and the debate, in exploring so many possibilities, eventually moves towards clarification.

Clearly the Year 4 children were more successful at reasoning about punctuation than the Year 3 children. However the task results, especially those of the end of year task did not show a huge difference from the results of the Year 3 children, and overall there did not seem to be large gains made. The children were still largely locked into descriptive language, and while more successful at recognizing the full length of the speech in the text, many groups still sought for other places to close the speech marks they inserted into box 7. The main difference between the Year 4 children and most of the Year 3 children is that the older children were sometimes able to persist beyond the confusions and eventually generate a correct response based upon good reasons. With an extra year's schooling they were able to draw on a wider range of linguistic resources and display greater certainty in justifying their decisions.

The major background context for this project was the punctuation demands made by England's National Curriculum. This meant that across the four schools involved all the children were receiving explicit teaching designed to achieve the targets set by *The Framework for Teaching English*. All the schools involved followed the specifications of this document, and punctuation, and particularly the

punctuation of speech, was a highly visible curriculum element in all the classes, a statement that could not have been written a few years earlier when the teaching of punctuation was either very vague or left until much later in school life. Thus the children in this project were being explicitly and regularly taught about punctuation for its duration. The research project was not set up to evaluate the success of this teaching, but to try and explore how young children were thinking about punctuation. Nevertheless, this teaching was a major information resource for the children, and there is clear evidence in the data of this, both directly and indirectly. There were some explicit references to children having been told specific things by teachers and some more implicit references, such as when the children worked backwards from teacher reminders that full stops were followed by capital letters to extrapolate that capital letters therefore always need a full stop before them, a strategy that could be very misleading.

However, the influence of explicit punctuation teaching does not and could not create for the children a clear and systematic understanding of punctuation. This is partly because punctuation, as in the punctuation of speech, involves issues that are probably not even thought about by teachers, but also because teachers have to face the problem that the language needed to fully explain punctuation often depends upon concepts that the children have yet to learn.

One of the most revealing aspects of this study was the persistence of these very young children when working on the tasks. The average time spent by each group was around twenty-five minutes and in many cases the activity had to be drawn to a close by the researcher. This was not because the children had run out of things to say but because of promises made by the researchers to teachers that the children would not be kept away from the classroom for too long. The discussions were extremely vigorous and dynamic, and always utterly focused on the topic of punctuation. They also contained a lot of humor and far from having the dour characteristics of more formal teaching sessions there was real interest in the problem-solving demanded by the tasks.

Early on in this article it was suggested that the punctuation of speech may be more complex for children (and some adults) than has generally been considered. In particular we asked whether the assumptions and expectations about learning to punctuate enshrined within the English National Curriculum were valid. There is also a long history of people writing about how punctuation should be taught and overwhelmingly they have proceeded on the assumption that punctuation, and in particular the punctuation of speech is relatively unproblematic (Hall, 1996). This

is despite the fact that complaints about people's ability to punctuate go back several hundred years.

Our study demonstrates clearly that punctuation of speech is complex and it is risky practice for adults to make claims about how easy or difficult it is to learn; after all, these claims are nearly always made by people who succeeded with learning, rather than those who had difficulties. It is certainly clear that the expectations of the English National Curriculum relating to rate of learning about the punctuation of speech were not going to be met by many of the children studied as part of this project.

The majority of children in Years 3 and 4 in this study clearly did not have the term 'speech mark' as a regular part of their vocabulary. It was much easier for them to continue with '66' and '99' as they had such great graphic power and other children knew exactly what was meant. Despite often resorting to these number terms they would sometime invent terminology (for instance 'speech comma' and 'flying comma' which were coined by children in this study). It might be argued that it doesn't matter that children fall back on '66s' and '99s'; after all the children know them and there is no communication failure from using them. But, the English National Curriculum says that by the end of Year 3 they must be using the term speech marks. So entrenched are these number names, that we even found many ten and eleven year-old children using them.

Many of the children in Years 3 and 4 in this study clearly did not have a clear idea of the boundary between speech and other parts of the text. There was usually one child in a group who had some sense of these boundaries but they often had to work hard to try and convince the others. Working out who was 'saying' something was not easy for many of the children, thus using capital letters for introducing direct speech becomes rather difficult.

Not only were children largely ignoring the term 'speech mark,' in many cases they were unsure what it looked like, and children found themselves asking the others for help. The naming of the mark was often confused with two other punctuation marks—the comma and the apostrophe. This is not really surprising as all of them are pretty small and they all have a comma-like quality (hence the term 'speech comma' noted above).

It is clear that in several ways the issues examined in the introduction to this article do intrude into the children's thoughts about the punctuation of speech, and certainly contribute confusion to the task. It is also clear that the level and timing of expectation in the English National Curriculum may not be helpful to many children who have justifiable reasons for decisions that ultimately turn out to be incorrect.

We need to make clear that we are not arguing that teachers avoid teaching children aged 7 and 8 about punctuation. It is clear from this study and others that even younger children can be fascinated by punctuation and what it does (Hall and Holden-Sim, 1996; Hall, 1999). However, there must be recognition that learning about the punctuation of speech is more complex than has been previously recognized, and that allowances must be made for children approaching the task with conflicting evidence. Attaching arbitrary ages to learning particular elements of punctuation fails to reflect the huge efforts that children are putting into making sense of speech punctuation and the amount of time they might need to be comfortable in conquering the task.

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Early-Modern "Speech" Marks

;

Nick Blackburn

ABSTRACT

The essay presents a revised history of the punctuation
mark ["], drawn from the earliest communities who
made it their own. By situating the development of ["]
in its historical context, from first uses of the diple [>]
by the Greek scholar Aristarchus, it explains how it
was the general applications which persisted into the
sixteenth century and beyond, before the mark finally
settled into its modern use to enclose quotations. While
literary and bibliographical scholars have suggested that
emphatic marking was primarily attached to rhetorical
figures such as sententia, it is shown that printed marks
were used by authors to achieve a rich variety of semantic
effects and by their readers to create personal editions.

Beginning with a modern comparison, the adoption
of [/] as a new mark of punctuation for modern British
drama, the essay explains how peculiarities in the
deployment of ["] in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century
texts—including works as central to the literary canon
as Shakespeare's *Hamlet*—are situated at a transition
point between a small or 'privy' group and what the
Shakespeare folio called 'the great variety of readers.'

A stroke (/) indicates the point of interruption in overlapping dialogue.
(Author's Note, in Sarah Kane, *Cleansed*, 1998)

Here is to be noted, that such partes and chapters which be marked and noted
' with such semy circles at the head of the vearse or line, with such other
' texts, may be left unread in the publique reading to the people, that therby
' other chapters and places of the scripture makyng more to their edification
' and capacitie may come in their roomes. '
(Editor's Note, in Matthew Parker, *The holie Bible*, 1568)

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Signposts respond to something new in the landscape. Sometimes though, that new feature turns out to be visitors. As time passes it can be hard to know whether a sign appeared at a certain time because of a physical addition or because the local community expanded to a point at which not everyone could be assumed to know their way to the post office. As with visitors, so too with readers. A word or symbol begins its life in a language or a genre of literature with a small group of innovators and spreads through the work of those who share their values; gaining its meaning in both cases from the transactions of a community of users. The two explanatory notes above both appeared in print around the time their chosen mark of punctuation was gaining authority in English printed books. Providing a narrative for the stroke [/] and those 'semy circles' in Parker's margin ['] is harder than might be expected, but in both cases the results are rewarding. Shared behavior is one of the things that helps observers to define one community from another. With punctuation, observing these shared forms and how their usage changes over time also makes it possible to distinguish normal practice from that which is more unusual.

In the case of [/], its appearance in the Author's Note to *Cleansed* was printed sixteen years after the initial printed use of that mark in a play-text, the first edition of Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* in 1982. The mark was introduced as follows:

when one character starts speaking before the other has finished, the point of interruption is marked / .

eg. ISABELLA: This is the Emperor of Japan? / I once met the
                 Emperor of Morocco.
     NIJO: In fact he was the ex–Emperor.[1]

Churchill had actually begun to use oblique lines in her 1980 play *Three More Sleepless Nights*, a short work that was not to be published until ten years later:

> I wrote the dialogue in the first scene as two columns, with the slashes. I'd got the idea from some sociology book I'd read which used slashes when transcribing actual conversations of teenagers I think. But I can't remember what book. Soon after I realised how useful slashes would be for the dinner party in *Top Girls*.[2]

The slashes Churchill encountered were one of the transcription conventions for conversation analysis developed by Gail Jefferson in the mid-1960s and subsequently adopted across the social sciences. Jefferson's story might have appealed to her. She was enrolled as a dance student at UCLA when she began her first transcriptions as a typist at the Department of Public Health. Her transcriptions became part of the material for the sociologist Harvey Sacks's research on conversation and Jefferson became his Ph.D. student. It was the beginning of a life's work spent excavating the minutiae of the human voice, culminating in ten years spent transcribing the Watergate tapes. Jefferson had used double obliques [//] to represent 'the point at which a current speaker's talk is overlapped by the talk of another.'[3] This has since been replaced in conversation analysis transcriptions by the use of a left bracket to indicate 'the point of overlap onset' as follows:

Louise: 'N how tall [are you, Al,
Roger: [How tall 'r you Al.[4]

In this way Churchill's note records a moment of exchange between two communities at particular times in their development. There is a specific social and literary

1. Caryl Churchill, *Top Girls* (London: Methuen, 1982), 4.
2. Email correspondence from Caryl Churchill received 9th September 2010. I am grateful to both Caryl Churchill and her literary agent Mel Kenyon for clarifying this point.
3. Gail Jefferson, 'Glossary of transcript symbols' in Gene H. Lerner, editor, *Conversation Analysis, Studies from the first generation* (Amsterdam, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004), 13–31, 24.
4. Jefferson, Glossary of transcript symbols.

context for the markings, rooted in one artist's attraction to the work of scientists. Placed alongside similar notes in the work of Martin Crimp, Mark Ravenhill, Kane and others it is possible to chart the way that interest spread and some networks of sympathy between those writers. As Beckett and Pinter had used [...] as a way of exploring breaks or breaking-points in on-stage relationships, so playwrights of the 1980s and 1990s were drawn to the possibilities for overlapping speech.

It will also be possible for future bibliographers to make use of unusual instances of [/] and the absence of explanatory notes in a particular edition. For example, the use of [/] without further explanation is one of several features of the 1996 edition of Ravenhill's *Shopping and Fucking* which suggests it was put together in particular circumstances.[5] It may be that these circumstances arose out of a need for late revisions to the play; the relatively low priority of producing a spotless text for what would probably first have been a version to be included in the program for the premiere; some other deadline; the author's other commitments or personal life. These concerns may be much closer to the reasons for what Shakespeare scholars once dismissed as 'bad' quartos of plays like *Hamlet* and *King Lear* than was once supposed.[6] The inverted comma also spread across the English printed page according to patterns of emulation. Emulation of both marks had a primary visual cue. As the editions of previous writers were circulated and approved in the 1980s and 1990s, so too were landmark editions of dramatic and other texts circulated and used as models for *mise-en-page* throughout the early modern period.[7] ["] is also a mark of punctuation locked in time and to sets of social and bibliographical conditions. Its early life in English is also tied to dramatic texts and reveals a narrative quite different to the one that is usually written.

The earliest name for ['] and ["], the Greek word 'diple' (from 'diplous' meaning 'double'), refers to its two-pronged shape. The prongs are easier to identify in the earliest, arrowhead form of the markings which survive in the French guillemets [«]. Diplai were developed as part of a new series of more precise editorial

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5. Mark Ravenhill, *Shopping and Fucking* (London: Methuen, 1998). Incorrect attribution to 'Lulu,' 39; '*ofver*' for 'over,' 48. Changes of direction are often indicated to the actor or reader by unusual parentheses or dialogue beginning on a new line.
6. For a spirited commentary see Randall McCloud, writing as Random Cloud, 'The Marriage of Good and Bad Quartos,' *Shakespeare Quarterly* 33.4 (1982), 421–31.
7. The most famous early-modern document recording this kind of emulation is John Harington's note to the printer of his *Orlando Furioso*, asking him to include 'some pretty knotte' after the final canto and to set the prose sections 'in the same printe that Putnam's book ys'; the book in question being *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589, printed two years before *Orlando Furioso*). Both instructions were followed. See British Library, Additional MS. 18920, fol. 336ʳ. For a fuller discussion see Simon Cauchi, 'The "Setting Foorth" of Harington's Ariosto', *Studies in Bibliography*, 36 (1983), 137–68. Robert Estienne's editions of the tragedies of Robert Garnier were emulated in Mary Sidney's translation of his tragedy *Antonius* and the examples of ["] in the French margins were translated through to the English version.

conventions in the second century BC by the Greek scholar Aristarchus, the sixth librarian at Alexandria, and are preserved in his annotations to the earliest surviving copies of Homer's *Iliad*. At this point in history (in which manuscripts themselves were primarily official records of a work rather than copies for readers) text and commentary were contained in separate papyrus rolls, each fragile and difficult to navigate. Diplai were a way of sounding a general note of caution in the margins of the text which could then be cross-referenced with the commentary if it was available. ["] was a way of highlighting a passage, the meaning of which might be doubtful or thought to be a corruption. The marks continued to be used in Greek manuscripts throughout the medieval period and when Aldus Manutius included them in his widely emulated printed edition of Aristotle (1495) he ensured their transmission across Europe. The form of printed diplai soon began to alter the manuscript conventions which had prompted them: curved-form uses multiplied in sixteenth-century examples, used by Thomas More in his *de Tristitia Christi*, Sir John Cheke in the copy of his Latin version of two Chrysostom homilies presented to Henry VIII and later by the scribe used to prepare the manuscript copy for Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*.[8] The general applications of the diple which lent itself to use in Parker's 1568 bible were absolutely in line with the life of the mark over nearly two-thousand years.

Information gathered from the earliest uses of the diple makes two major contributions to the understanding of ["] as it appears in texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. First, it makes clear that the meaning of these markings was always specific to context, a general mark of emphasis comparable to a change of color, the addition of a pointing hand or star or a shift into italic. The second contribution derives from that early separation of text and commentary. As contact was lost with the individuals and the intellectual milieu which made the marks, hypersensitivity developed towards the importance of retaining the marks themselves. Edited texts tended to outlive their commentaries and as print culture began to exist in parallel with manuscript culture, diplai were sometimes reproduced out of context, fossilized in the margins of printed books. As manuscript texts were taken up by printers, marks which were originally the reaction of an individual or privy group were broadcast in print to the great variety of readers. I have found exactly the same process at work in the medieval and the early-modern periods.

8. See Malcolm Beckwith Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 58. His plates 55–6 compare the scribal copy of Hooker's Book V, marked up in pencil for the press, with the printer's text.

Misunderstanding general, context-specific marks had been a longstanding problem for editors but the scale of transmission afforded by print increased its range. As a result, sporadic annotations to a text were sometimes given more respect by printers than one might expect. Joseph A. Dane has described in detail the ways in which a particular group of English printers reacted to annotations in their copy texts in his study of Chaucer folios from the 1530s to the 1600s.[9] Dane's study follows a continuing struggle on the part of the folios' publishers and printers to provide a context for the marks which integrated them into the overall edition. In the edition of 1532, the following three marks occur in the center of fol. 316, part of the second book of Chaucer's *House of Fame* (sig. 316ʳ).

The marks appear to relate to lines 837, 848, 858, but it is difficult to be sure whether to apply them to the left or right column of the text, to the text with which they share a line or to a larger passage (*figure 1*). In the edition of 1542, the same section is marked, and the marks are also made by combining round brackets and colons (*figure 2*), but the marks relate to different lines (848 and 853, sig. 2I3ᵛ).

The pattern of marking follows the general application of emphases customarily employed by medieval scribes, where what was preserved was an essentially personal scholarly encounter with the text.[10] The earliest Chaucer folios fossilized a particular moment of confusion, in which printers had to bring an unruly text into conformity with the rigid lines of the galley and the available repertoire of metal type. It is with some care that the preceding text has avoided referring to marks which do not mark speech as 'speech marks.' In an early-modern context, however, it is usual for scholars to classify all instances of ["] as drawing the reader's attention to short, pithy phrases or aphorisms, thus calling them *sententiae* marks or the equivalent word in Greek, *gnomai*. The problem with classifying ["] according to these descriptions was noted by John Lennard in 1991:

> G.K. Hunter appears to consider that marked *sententiae* should not be mistaken for anything else: "eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scholars seem to know little of [the practice of marking]. Even in the early years of this century one finds considerable scholars interpreting

9. Joseph A. Dane, 'Fists and Filiations in Early Chaucer Folios 1532–1602,' *Studies in Bibliography*, 51 (1997), 49–62, 55. Here references are to Thynne's edition of 1532 (STC 5068) and an edition of 1542 adding the Plowman's Tale (STC 5069-5070). Images © The British Library Board (G.11623 and G. 11624 respectively).

10. John Stowe is known to have accurately reproduced what he found in medieval manuscripts such as Trinity College MS R.3.19. See Bradford Y. Fletcher, 'Printer's Copy for Stowe's *Chaucer*,' 186; Gavin Bone, 'Extant Manuscripts Printed from by W. de Worde with Notes on the Owner, Roger Thorney,' *The Library*, fourth series, 12 (1932), 303–304; Alexandra Gillespie, 'Stowe's "Owlde" Manuscripts of London Chronicles' in *John Stowe (1525-1605) and the Making of the English Past*, 57–68.

Nowe haue I tolde/if thou haue mynde
Howe speche or sowne/of pure kynde
Enclyned is vpwarde to meue
This mayst thou fele wel by preue
And that some stede ywys
That euery thynge enclyned to is
Hath his kyndlyche stede
That seweth it without drede
That kyndly the maunypoun
Of euery speche of euery soun
Be it eyther foule or fayre
Hath his kynde place in eyre
And syth that euery thynge ywys
Out of his kynde place ywys
Moueth thyder for to go   (:):)
If it away be therfro
As I haue before proued the
It seweth euery soune perde
Moueth kyndely to pace
As vp in to his kynde place
And this place of whiche I tel
There as fame lyst to dwel
Is set amyddes of these thre
heuen/erthe/and eke the see
As most conseruatyfe the soun
Than is this the conclusyoun   (:):)
That euery speche of euery man
As I the tel first began
Moueth vp on heyght to pace
kyndly to fames place
  Tel me this nowe faythfully
Haue I not proued thus symply
Without any subtylte
Of speche/or great prolyxite
Of termes of Philosophie
Of fygures of Poetrie   (:(:):)
Or coloures of rethoryke
Perde it ought the to lyke
For harde langage /and harde matere
Is encombrous for to here
At ones /wost thou not wel this
And I answered and sayd yes
  Ah ha (quad he) so so I can
Leudly vnto a leude man
Speke/ and shewe hym suche skylles
That he may shake hem by the bylles
So palpable they shulden be
But tel me this nowe pray I the

Howe thynketh the my conclusyon
  A good persuasyon
(Quod I) it is and lyke to be
Right so as thou hast proued me
By god (quod he) and as I leue
Thou shalte haue yet or it be eue
Of euery worde of this sentence
A profe by experpence
And with thyne eares heren wel
Toppe and tayle/and euerydel
That euery worde that spoken is
Cometh in to fames house ywys
As I haue sayd/what wylte thou more
And with this worde vpper to sore
He began/and sayd by saynt Iame
Nowe wyl we speke al of game
  Howe farest thou nowe (quod he) to me
Wel (quod I) nowe se (quod he)
By thy trouth yonde adowne
Where that thou knowest any towne
Or house/or any other thynge
And whan thou hast of aught knowynge
Loke that thou warne me
And I anone shal tel the
Howe farre that thou arte nowe therfro
  And I adowne gan to loken tho
And behelde feldes and playns
Nowe hylles/and nowe mountayns
Nowe valeys/ and nowe forestes
And nowe vnneth great beestes
Nowe ryuers/nowe cytees
Nowe townes/nowe great trees
Nowe shippes saylynge in the see
  But thus soone in a whyle he
Was flowen fro the grounde so hye
That al the worlde as to myne eye
No more semed than a pricke
Or els was the eyre so thycke
That I myght it not deserne
  With that he spake to me so yerne
And sayd:Seest thou any token
Or aught/that in this worlde is of spoken
  I sayde nay/ No wonder is
(Quod he) for neuer halfe so hye as this
Nas Alexander of Macedon
kyng : Ne of Rome dan Sapion
That sawe in dreme at poynt deuyse
heuen and erthe/ hel and paradyse
                  Ne she

Figure 1 (above) and Figure 2 (opposite)

By experience, for yf that thou
Threwe in a water nowe a stone
well wost thou it wyl make anone
A lytle roundle as a cercle
Parauenture, as brode as a couercle
And ryght anone thou shalte se well
That whele cercle wyl cause another whele
And that the thyrde, and so forthe brother
Euery cercle causynge other
Broder than hym selfe was
And thus fro roundel to compas
Eche aboute other goynge
Causeth of others sterynge
And multeplyeng euermo
Tyl it be so farre go
That it at bothe brynkes be
Al thoughe thou may it not se
Aboue, yet gothe it alway vnder
Though thou thynke it a greate wonder
And who so saythe of trouthe I vary
Bydde hym proue the contrary
And right thus euery worde ywys
That loud or pryue yspoken is
Moueth first an eyre aboute
And of his mouynge out of doute
Another eyre anone is moued
As I haue of the water proued
That euery cercle causeth other
Right so of eyre my leue brother
Eueryche eyre in other stereth
More and more, and speche vp bereth
Or voyce or noyse, worde or sowne
Ayr through multiplicatiowne
Tyl it be at the house of fame
Take it on ernest or in game
nowe haue I tolde, yf thou haue mynde
Howe speche or sowne, of pure kynde
Enclyned was vpwarde to meue
Thys mayst thou fele well by preue
And that some stede ywys
That euery thynge enclyned to is
Hath hys kyndlyche stede
That seweth it wythout drede
That kyndly the mancyoun
Of euery speche of euery soun
Be it eyther foule or fayre
Hath hys kynde place in eyre
And syth that euery thynge ywys
Out of hys kynde place ywys
Moueth thyder for to go
If it awaye be stertfro
As I haue before proued the

It seweth euery soune perde
Moueth kyndly to pace
As vp into his kynde place
And thys place of which I tell
There as fame lyst to dwell
Is sitte a myddes of these thre
Heuen, erth, and eke the see
As moost conseruatyfe the soun
Than is thys the conclusyoun (:X:)
That euery speche of euery man
As I the tell fyrst began
Meueth vp on heyght to pace
kyndly to fames place
   Tel me this nowe faythfully
Haue I not proued thus symply (:X:)
wythout any subtylte
Of speche, or great prolixite
Of termes of Philosophie
Of fygures of Poetrie
Or colours of rethoryke
Perde it ought the to lyke
for harde langage, and harde matere
Is encombrous for to here
At ones, wost thou not well thys
And I answered and sayd yes
   Ha ha (quod he) lo so I can
Leudly vnto a leude man
Speke and shewe hym suche skrylles
That he maye shake hem by the bylles
So palpable they shulden be
But tell me thys nowe praye I the
Howe thynketh the my conclusyon
   A good persuasyon
(Quod I) it is and lyke to be
Ryght so as thou hast proued me
By god (quod he) and as I leue
Thou shalte haue yet or it be eue
Of euery worde of thys sentence
A profe, by experience
And wyth thyne eares heren well
Toppe and tayle, and euery dell
That euery worde that spoken is
Cometh into fames house ywys
As I haue sayde what to pite thou more
And wyth thys worde vpper to sore
He began, and sayde by saynt Iame
Nowe wyll we speke all of game
   Howe farest thou nowe (quod he) to me
well, quod I, nowe se (quod he)
By thy trouth yonde adowne
where that thou knowest any towne
Or house, or any other thynge
                                        And

commas and inverted commas as quotation marks indicating indebtedness." Less than a page later, however, Hunter concedes that, "gnomic pointing frequently shades into other kinds of emphatic printing, e.g. to indicate a proverb or a quotation or lines important by position, and the distinction is bound to be affected by personal bias." A part of the problem is that although Hunter appears to understand a *sententia* as something specific, neither proverb nor quotation, he gives no definition of the term, except to imply in his opening sentence that it is a rhetorical figure and a maxim. Although he later distinguishes between books in which "a majority of the *sententiae* are marked" and "those which are sporadically marked," a distinction which implies that it is not the mark which marks the *sententia*, it is impossible in practice to identify what Hunter considers to be *sententiae* other than by reference to the typographical conventions which he specifies as having been used to mark them.[11]

Lennard identified that G.K. Hunter's enquiry, still the main authority for discussions of *sententiae* or gnomic marking in recent criticism, lacked a clear definition of either the thing that was being marked or the marks themselves. A *sententia*-mark: the mark which usually marks a *sententia*. A *sententia*: a phrase most easily defined when marked with *sententia*-markings. In fact the precise definitions of 'sententia,' 'gnome,' 'proverb' and 'maxim' vary according to context. As Mary Thomas Crane has written, 'all of the writers in antiquity who thought carefully about these small forms knew that their connection to truth and rationality was riddled with problems, problems inherent in any product of human thought and language.'[12]

It is a problem for those interested in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama that, out of around a hundred early-modern printed books and manuscripts that contain what has been described as this 'gnomic pointing of one kind or another'—many of which are pieces of comma type being placed in the margins of printed plays at no little expense of time by the compositor—the vast majority are marked in a sporadic and confusing way that seems to have little relevance to rhetorical dissection. Marked, contemporary editions of works by Shakespeare offer a particular challenge to interpretation. They also give a sense of the arbitrary quality that was to define the majority of uses of ["] in the period. The challenge, however, is not how to define the markings but how to provide a context for their presence in a particular edition.

In modern editions the sections marked in the quartos of Hamlet all appear in the third scene of the first act. The quarto does not include act and scene divisions (this was not unusual) and so the reader experiences different movements of the play

11. John Lennard, *But I Digress: The Exploitation of Parentheses in English printed Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 29. The parentheses are Lennard's own.

12. Mary Thomas Crane, 'Proverbial and Aphoristic Sayings: Sources of Authority in the English Renaissance,' unpublished doctoral thesis (Harvard University, 1986), 80.

as a series of entrances and exits. Act one, scene three is the scene before Hamlet meets the ghost of his father for the first time. It is to be the moment at which it is revealed that the old King Hamlet was murdered by his brother Claudius, who is now married to Hamlet's mother. His insistence that Hamlet remember him and avenge his murder channels events towards their tragic conclusion. The previous scene is slower and lighter in tone in order to give the audience more of a sense of transition into what is to follow. Both scenes are centrally about giving and receiving advice from family. First Laertes, who is returning home to France now that Claudius has been crowned, warns his sister Ophelia to guard herself against Hamlet's advances. She agrees, warns him to listen to his own advice and to act with equal virtue, and their father Polonius arrives (named Corambis throughout the quarto), who is a member of the Danish privy council. With comic effect, Polonius gives his son a great deal of advice to take away with him, and then proceeds to reiterate Laertes's advice to Ophelia, also at length. 1.3 is an interesting scene given that Ophelia goes on to succeed in resisting Hamlet sexually, but is driven to madness and suicide by his rejection of her love. *Hamlet* is a play in which people are constantly saying 'Pay attention to this'; 'Remember this'; 'I must write that down'— these senses of the word 'mark' occur fifteen times over the course of the play, more than anywhere else in Shakespeare's work. But using what is marked in order to live a long and happy life is not something any of the characters achieve within the frame of the play.

Both quartos of *Hamlet* are marked with diplai and both are marked only in the C gathering, although different phrases are chosen in each case.[13] In the first quarto it is the recto and verso of the second leaf of C. A run of ten lines is emphasized with diplai (*figure 3*).

The second quarto of *Hamlet* contains only three sets of diplai, on the verso of the third leaf of C (*figure 4*). Here Laertes warns his sister about the dangerous effects of Hamlet's desire:

> Feare it *Ophelia*, feare it my deare sister,
> And keepe you in the reare of your affection
> Out of the shot and danger of desire,

13. William Shakespeare, *The tragicall historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke by William Shake-speare*. (London: [Valentine Simmes] for N[icholas]. L[ing]. and Iohn Trundell, 1603); *The tragicall historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke. By William Shakespeare* (London: I[ames]. R[oberts]. for N[icholas]. L[ing]., 1604). Images © The British Library Board (C.34.I.16).

Enter Corambis.

Cor. Yet here *Leartes?* aboord, aboord, for shame,
The winde sits in the shoulder of your saile,
And you are staid for, there my blessing with thee
And these few precepts in thy memory.
" Be thou familiar, but by no meanes vulgare;
" Those friends thou hast, and their adoptions tried,
'· Graple them to thee with a hoope of steele,
" But do not dull the palme with entertaine,
" Of euery new vnfleg'd courage,
" Beware of entrance into a quarrell; but being in,
" Beare it that the opposed may beware of thee,
" Costly thy apparrell, as thy purse can buy.
" But not exprest in fashion,
" For the apparell oft proclaimes the man.
And they of *France* of the chiefe rancke and station
Are of a most select and generall chiefe in that:
" This aboue all, to thy owne selfe be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,

                        C 2   Thou

Figure 3

Cor. Ofelia, receiue none of his letters,
" For louers lines are snares to intrap the heart;
" Refuse his tokens, both of them are keyes
To vnlocke Chastitie vnto Desire;
Come in *Ofelia,* such men often proue,
" Great in their wordes, but little in their loue.
     Ofel. I will my lord.   *exeunt.*

Figure 4

" The chariest maide is prodigall inough

If she unmaske her butie to the Moone

" Vertue it selfe scapes not calumnious strokes

" The canker gaules the infants of the spring

Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd,

And in the morne and liquid dewe of youth

Contagious blastments are most iminent[.]

The only other marked quarto is *Troilus and Cressida*, which contains four sets of diplai on two leaves.[14] The first is the recto of B3:

Yet hold I off: women are angels woing,

" Things woone are done, ioyes soule lies in the dooing.

That shee belou'd, knows naught that knows not this,

" Men price the thing ungained more then it is,

That she was neuer yet that euer knew

Loue got so sweet, as when desire did sue,

Therefore the maxim out of love I teach,

" Atchiuement is command; ungaind beseech,

Then though my hearts content firme loue doth beare,

Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appeare.

The second example is on the verso of leaf K3:

What error leads must erre: O then conclude,

" Mines swayed by eyes are full of turpitude.

There is also an emphasized phrase on B4ᵛ, where a line has been set in italic type but not otherwise marked:

Strength should be Lord of imbecilitie,

And the rude sonne should strike his father dead.

Force should be right or rather right and wrong,

(*Betweene whose endlesse iarre Iustice recides*)

Should loose their names, and so should Iustice to ?

14. William Shakespeare, *The famous historie of Troylus and Cresseid*. (London: G. Eld for R. Bonian and H. Walley, 1609).

When the folio was printed by William Jaggard in 1623, the only two marked couplets were from different plays. They are emphasized in italics, as is common for songs and foreign phrases throughout the work, but further emphasized with diplai.[15] This happens once in the third play, concluding a speech by Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (sig. D5ᵛ):

> " *Loue like a shadow flies, when substance Loue pursues,*
> " *Pursuing that that flies, and* flying what pursues.

And once in a reply by Posthumus in *Cymbeline* (sig. 3B3ʳ), the last play of the collection, where the emphasized section makes a couplet of the Lord's previous line:

> *Lord.* This was strange chance:
> A narrow Lane, an old man, and two Boyes.
> *Post.* Nay, do not wonder at it: you are made
> Rather to wonder at the things you heare,
> Then to worke any. Will you Rime upon't,
> And vent it for a Mock'rie? Heere is one:
> " *Two Boyes, an Oldman (twice a Boy) a Lane,*
> " *Preseru'd the Britaines, was the Romanes bane.*

These emphases coincide with an additional shift of voicing in the passages (something the speaker was taught to say; a rhyme Posthumus makes out of what is said to him), but the way the emphasis has been executed is still unusual. Use of diplai for any purpose was rare for Jaggard's press and its occurrence may represent special circumstances of some kind.[16]

In each case, the marked lines draw the reader's attention to the kinds of general precepts or useful phrases that might be noted by a reader and added to a commonplace-book. But does attributing the emphasis of fourteen marked lines in a text from a choice of over a thousand from 'the readiness is all' to 'a cat will mew, a dog will have a day' say more about the printers of *Hamlet* or its readers? On the recto of leaf C2, does the run of diplai break in order to give priority to Corambis's most important precept: 'This aboue all, to thy owne selfe be true,' or because

15. William Shakespeare, *Mr. VVilliam Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies. Published according to the true originall copies* (London: Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount [at the charges of W. Iaggard, Ed. Blount, I. Smithweeke, and W. Aspley], 1623).

> *players* I warrant you my Lord.
> *Ham.* And doe you heare ? let not your Clowne speake
> More then is set downe, there be of them I can tell you
> That will laugh themselues, to set on some
> Quantitie of barren spectators to laugh with them,
> Albeit there is some necessary point in the Play
> Then to be obserued: O t'is vile, and shewes
> A pittifull ambition in the foole that vseth it.
> And then you haue some agen, that keepes one sute
> Of ieasts, as a man is knowne by one sute of
> Apparell, and Gentlemen quotes his ieasts downe
>   F 2   In

Figure 5

> *The Tragedy of Hamlet*
> In their tables, before they come to the play, as thus:
> Cannot you stay till I eate my porrige? and, you owe me
> A quarters wages : and, my coate wants a cullison:
> And, your beere is sowre : and, blabbering with his lips,
> And thus keeping in his cinkapase of ieasts,
> When, God knows, the warme Clowne cannot make a iest
> Vnlesse by chance, as the blinde man catcheth a hare:
> Maisters tell him of it.

Figure 6

setting two commas before 'And they of *France* of the chiefe rancke and station'
would have pushed the end of the line further to the right than space would allow?

Annotations present in the known printed copies actually complicate these
questions more than they ease them. There are only two known copies of *Hamlet*
Q1: one held by the British Library and the other by the Huntingdon. In the British
Library copy a reader has chosen to underline a number of different phrases,

16. There is also one passage emphasized in
this way in Jaggard's printing of Augustine
Vincent's *Discourse of Errors* (sig. 4D3ᵛ). The
printing of Vincent's work is known to
have led to a break in the production of the
Shakespeare folio, although E.E. Willoughby
showed that this took place at the end of
Quire B on the second leaf of *Richard II* (before
Cymbeline but long after *Merry Wives*. See
E.E. Willoughby, *An interruption in the printing
of the first folio* (Chicago, IL: University of
Chicago Press, 1928), 262–6. Compare Peter
W. M. Blayney, *The First Folio of Shakespeare*
(Washington, D.C.: Folger Library Publications,
1991). There are no diplai in Andre Favyn,
The theater of honour and knight-hood (London:
William Jaggard, 1623), printed at the same
time as F1.

comparable but different to those emphasized in print, furthering that emphasis in two cases with manicules in the margin on the recto and verso of leaf F2 (*figure 5*).

Manicules (the pointing hands with neat Elizabethan cuffs) are not uncommon in renaissance books (*figure 6*).[17] These examples are worth dwelling on, however, because of their involvement with a stance that is specific to the first quarto.[18] Robert Weimann has noted that Hamlet's audience get the best of both worlds from this version of his advice to the players: 'humanistically sanctioned, mimetic precepts associated with Donatus and Cicero' and some of the best lines of the clowns he is censuring.[19] Hamlet impersonates those he sets out to criticize 'in the teeth of their rejection': but are the markings on one side of the divide or the other?[20] One might read them as written in the teeth of a rejection of Hamlet's advice; as remembering a particularly artful impersonation witnessed in performance; as reading the reference to gentlemen quoting a clown's jests 'In their tables' (against or oblivious to the context in which Hamlet utters the lines in the scene) as an instruction to do the same. While a number of other words and phrases are underlined in the same copy, there are only three instances in which noticing something of interest in the text led the annotator to stop for long enough to draw pointing fingers, complete with their hand and the cuff of a shirt.

One way forward for interpretation of the quarto emphases is to take these ambiguous and personal manuscript annotations as our guide to the marks in print. It seems likely that the copy for *Hamlet* Q1 may have contained similar marks in ink, a suggestion which allows the book an earlier life as a circulated text. If, as Roger Chartier and Peter Stallybrass have suggested, the copy-text for Q1 was provided by individuals, who became famous for a particular mode of reading, it is possible that the manuscript they handed over would have contained traces of that reading.[21]

The peculiar annotations which found their way into Chaucer folios proves that it was possible for the voices of authors or editors and the more private sounds of readers to be treated as one in the printing house, there is also contemporary evidence for how a Shakespeare play could have been marked up in as sparse a way

17. See William H. Sherman, 'Toward a History of the Manicule' in Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote, editors, *Books on the Move: Tracking Copies through Collections and the Book Trade* (London: Oak Knoll Press and The British Library, 2007).
18. This is not to establish a date for the annotations themselves. The first annotation (sig. B1ʳ, against the opening stage direction '*Enter two Centinels*') provides names for the Centinels: 'now call'd Bernardo +Francisco—.' While this was first specified in Q2, the set round-hand in which the words are written is Caroline or later seventeenth-century.
19. Robert Weimann, *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice: Playing and Writing in Shakespeare's Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 21–8, 23. George Ian Duthie has described how the speech draws on specific jests associated with the clown Richard Tarlton, *The 'Bad' Quarto of Hamlet: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1941), 232–7.
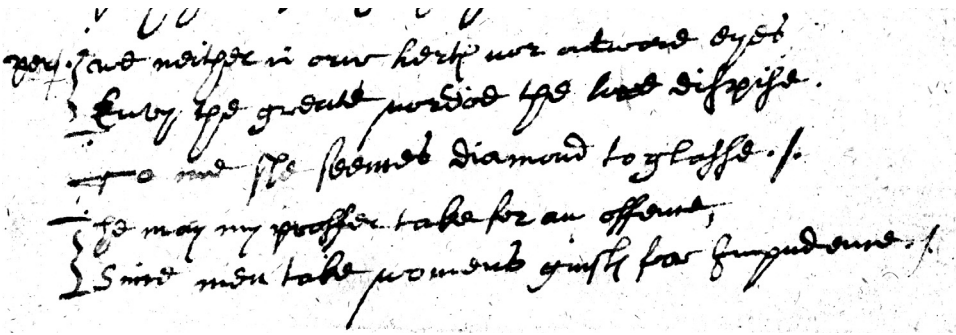20. Weimann, *Author's Pen*, 23.

Figure 7

as the *Hamlet* quartos. British Library MS Add. 41063 contains a slip of paper used as a bookmark, found in a German book of the 1620s (*figure 7*).²²

Written in a neat Elizabethan secretary hand, it contains a couplet from *Pericles* followed by eight quotations from *Richard III* and then a further three from *Pericles*. Given that *Hamlet* Q1 carries emphases only on leaves in close proximity, it is interesting to note that the *Pericles* excerpts are also taken from a small area of the book: the verso of leaf U3 and the recto of U4 (facing pages in a bound quarto) and overleaf on U4ᵛ.

There is certainly evidence to suggest that *Lucrece* was emphasized under the pen of a variety of private hands. Lennard has already contrasted the eleven printed diplai in the 1594 *Lucrece* with the seventy-nine manuscript commas and points in the Bodleian copy, owned by Malone (for example, sig. B1ᵛ, below).²³

, Beautie it selfe doth of it selfe perswade,

,.The eies of men without an Orator,

What needeth then Appologie be made

To set forth that which is so singuler?

, Or why is Colatine the publisher

 , Of that rich iewell he should keepe unknown

 , From theeuish eares because it is his owne?

21. Peter Stallybrass and Roger Chartier, 'Reading and Authorship: The Circulation of Shakespeare, 1590–1619' in Andrew Murphy, editor, *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare and the Text* (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 35–56.

22. The variant 'Envy' in this version of 3.2.25–6 suggests the reader was probably using Q4 (1619). The quotations are slight variants on *Pericles* 2.2.56–7 (not pictured) and 2.3.25–6, 36 and 68. All line references are to *The Riverside Shakespeare*, second edition, G. Blakemore Evans *et al.* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997). Image © The British Library Board (MS Add. 41063).

23. Lennard, *But I Digress*, 30.

The number of marks in the printed editions of *Lucrece* were also subject to variation. Q3 added a further seventeen, whereas from 1616 onwards only the first two diplai were preserved (sig. B5^r, below):

> This earthly *Saint* adored by this *Diuell*,
> Little suspecteth the *false worshipper*:
> " For thoughts unstain'd do sildome dreame on *euil*,
> " *Birds* neuer limb'd, no secret *bushes* feare[.]

As with the changing emphases of the *Hamlet* editions, there are more motives for inclusion or excision than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

The circulation of poetry is already well documented: the work of Woudhuysen, Harold Love, Beal and others has illuminated manuscript as an important means of publication with professional services and networks of transmission in place to support it.[24] Less work has been done on how dramatic texts may have formed part of this circulated material. Controversial manuscripts like Middleton's *A Game At Chesse* have tended to be viewed as more exceptional than may have been the case:

> This, which nor Stage, nor Stationers Stall can showe,
> (The Common Eye maye wish for, but ner'e knowe)
> Comes in it's best loue wth the New–yeare forth,
> As a fit present to the Hand of Worth.[25]

Manuscript transmission is, however, a known source for printers' copy. Shakespeare's sonnets were apparently drawn together in part from those circulated among 'private friends' and later in the century the printer Humphrey Moseley also made a selling-point of the provenance of the manuscripts for the Beaumont and Fletcher folio: they were derived both 'from such as received them from the

24. Mary Hobbs, *Early Seventeenth-Century Verse Miscellany Manuscripts* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1992); Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Arthur F. Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Peter Beal, *In Praise of Scribes: Manuscripts and Their Makers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). Donne and Sidney have been important centers of gravity for less specialist approaches.

25. Bodleian Library MS Malone 25, fol. 20^r. See T. H. Howard-Hill, '"Nor Stage, Nor Stationers Stall Can Showe": The Circulation of Plays in Manuscript in the Early Seventeenth Century' in *Book History*, 2 (1999), 28–41: 33. More recent accounts including Hill's essay have sought to erode a sense that authors of works circulating in manuscript disdained print, for which the central essay was J.W. Saunders, 'The Stigma of Print: A Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry' in *Essays in Criticism*, 1 (1951), 139–64. See also Steven W. May, 'Tudor Aristocrats and the Mythical "Stigma of Print",' *Renaissance Papers*, 10 (1980), 11–18.

Authours themselves' and from the actors who 'when private friends desir'd a Copy' had transcribed versions of what they had to hand.[26]

The kinds of things those private friends did to their copies of privy manuscripts, circulating in a text's first years of life, could contribute importantly to the forms later materialized in print. The Countess of Pembroke had what Woudhuysen describes as 'a cache of manuscripts' from which the 1598 edition of Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* was printed. The early history of these documents remains obscure but many of them remained at Penshurst until the beginning of the nineteenth century.[27] However the first, 1590 edition now referred to as the *Old Arcadia*, was a radically different text produced without either Mary's cache or its deceased author. That first edition is the only contemporary printing in which passages are emphasized with diplai.[28]

When Fulke Greville received troubling news from a publisher about the imminent, unauthorized publication of the *Arcadia*, he decided to write a letter to Sidney's influential father-in-law, Sir Francis Walsingham:

> Sr this day one ponsonby a bookebynder in poles church yard, came to me, and told me that ther was one in hand to print, sr philip sydneys old arcadia asking me yf it were donn, with yor honours cons{} or any other of his frends, I told him to m{y} knowledge no, then he aduysed me to giue wa{rn}inge of it, ether to the archebishope or doctor Cosen, who haue as he says a copy of it to pervse to that end[.][29]

The conversation with Ponsonby had suggested to Fulke Greville that an existing problem of supply and demand was about to take a damaging turn for those who wished to control Sidney's legacy. Copies of both the *New Arcadia* and the *Old Arcadia* were circulating in manuscript, in various forms but in different quantities. Greville was in possession of a corrected copy of the *New Arcadia* which he had just sent to Walsingham's daughter, 'a correction of that old one donn 4 or 5 years since w{h}ich he left in trus{t} w{i}th me wherof ther is no more copies, & fitter to be printed then that first w{hi}ch is so com{m}on'.[30] There were no more copies of

26. See Howard-Hill's discussion, "'Nor Stage, Nor Stationers…'" On the privacy of manuscript as compared to the public nature of print, see for example the introductory matter to Sir W. Cornwallis, *Essayes* (STC 5775, 1600), A2ʳ/ᵛ; B1ʳ: 'The World is a booke: the words and actio's of men Com[m]entaries vpon that volume: The former lyke manuscriptes priuate: the latter common, lyke things printed.'

27. H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 223.
28. Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia, written by Sir Philippe Sidnei* (London: John Windet for William Ponsonby, 1590).
29. National Archive, SP 12/195, fols 51ʳ-52ᵛ: fol. 51ʳ. See Woudhuysen's revised transcription and discussion, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 416-21: 416.
30. H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 416-21: 416.

the *New Arcadia* and Greville had just sent his own to Philip's widow. Before his death and over the space of about two years, Sidney had allowed at least eight copies of the *Old Arcadia* to be made and it is these and their offspring which are now 'so com{m}on.'

The eight known manuscript copies of the *Old Arcadia* show that Sidney's work was transmitted in a variety of forms. The work of different scribes, a variety of bindings and formats and the attentions of different groups of owners contrived to make each copy a separate materialization of the text. One of these versions was annotated by readers who chose to emphasize *sententiae* and other phrases. It is the Helmingham Hall manuscript and Woudhuysen describes its emphases as follows:

> A large number of sententiae are marked throughout the manuscript by double inverted commas or two points. Other marginal marks may reflect the scribe's copying habits, but it is hard to make much of them. However, one comment is of some interest. On fol. 24ʳ the word 'incomparable' (*OA*, p. 68, 19) has been underlined, and in the left-hand margin, in a hand which does not appear to be that of Hm's scribe, has been written 'thus farr is coppid out'. This cannot apply to the copying out of Hm, because it would be obvious if the copying had only got to that place in the text; rather it supplies powerful evidence that a copy was taken from Hm.[31]

While it may be related to the manuscript which was used to produce the 1590 printing, *Hm* is not the manuscript itself. It is simply one marked copy in which readers thought it useful to mark passages of interest.

When printed copies became available readers treated them in similar ways to the manuscript copies. Some are marked with emphases. There is a copy of the 1590 *Arcadia* in the Bodleian library in which both short, more sententious phrases and passages of more general interest are underlined on the same page: for example '(like a rose out of a brier) an excellent son of an euill mother' and 'in my presence their tongues were turned into eares, and their eares were captiues vnto my tongue.'[32] As there was nothing particularly unusual in the annotation of Sidney's works to a variety of purposes, it seems like overstatement when Fred Schurink describes the 1590 emphases as evidence of a desire to educate the reader:

> The paratextual apparatus of the first edition of Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590), for example, guides the interpretation of the text by its readers in ways similar to schoolmasters directing the

[31] H.R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney*, 395.
[32] Bodleian shelfmark Buxton 6, sig. X1ʳ.

understanding of a classical text by their pupils, both orally in the classroom and through notes and commentary in printed books. The marks in the margin of *sententiae* and the chapter headings, in particular, are significant in this respect.[33]

This may be one effect of the edition on certain readers: whether or not it was the edition's intention is less clear.[34]

T.H. Howard-Hill has suggested that manuscript circulation of poetry and the conception and circulation of dramatic manuscripts are not comparable.[35] This is less true for University plays and the few dramatic texts which were performed on the public stage but also seem to have circulated within the same literary milieu. It should also be noted that in drawing modern parallels with the best ancient dramatists, Frances Meres in 1598 shifts without distinction from manuscript tragedies of the Universities (the work of Edes and Legge), private and public drama (sig. 2O3ʳ).[36] Of a number of marked, manuscript plays for which there are variant copies, several reproduce what Woudhuysen's examples show to have been the case for manuscripts of the *Arcadia*. Of the multiple versions of Legge's *Ricardus Tertius*, only two copies are marked with emphases. BL Harleian MS. 2412 is unmarked save for two sets of diplai which emphasize a couplet (fol. 4ʳ). However, in the other copy owned by Henry Lacy over a hundred lines are emphasized: written in red ink, underlined or marked with three dots, in the following manner (*figure 8*).[37]

It is not unusual for several of these techniques to be brought to bear on the same lines. The two marked lines in the Harleian copy are also marked in Lacy's version, where they are underlined and marked with three dots. That Lacy was held to be the author of his manuscript for many years is in a sense not an error: the manuscript was Lacy's creation and punctuated to serve his turn.[38] He is the author of this material artifact although he was not the author of the text known as *Ricardus Tertius*.

As with many of his contemporaries at the Universities, Inns of Court and aristocratic country houses, Henry Lacy fashioned a text he valued into a material

33. Fred Schurink, 'Education and Reading in Elizabethan and Jacobean England,' unpublished doctoral thesis (Oxford University, 2004), 182.
34. Compare Victor Skretkowicz, 'Building Sidney's Reputation: Texts and Editors of the Arcadia' in Jan V. Dorsten, Dominic Baker-Smith and Arthur F. Kinney, editors, *Sir Philip Sidney: 1586 and the Creation of a Legend*, (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 111–124: 112–13 on the use of headings to structure reading. On the political aims of the *Arcadia* Schurink follows Blair Worden, *The Sound of Virtue: Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia' and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

35. T. H. Howard-Hill, '"Nor Stage nor Stationer's Stall",'36–37.
36. Francis Meres, *Palladis tamia. VVits treasury being the second part of Wits common wealth. By Francis Meres Maister of Artes of both Vniuersities* (London: P. Short, for Cuthbert Burbie, 1598).
37. Image © The British Library Board (MS Harleian 6929), fol. 38ᵛ.
38. There is an informative discussion of Lacy and other Cambridge manuscript owners in Douglas Paine, 'Academic Drama at Cambridge,' unpublished doctoral thesis (Cambridge University, 2008), chapter four: '"Bookes for the Tragedy": Cambridge Plays in Circulation,' 120–163.

Actus primus.

Brackenburius ordinis Equestris. Tirellus

O rector alme cælitū, et terræ decus
quisquis gubernas parce Brakenburio
clemens furorem siste duri Principis
Hanaq; certā libera gratis fidem.
. horrere magna cessat miseri sitis.
. curis nec ungua solvitur ægra ambitio.
regni metu Richardus æstuat ferox
iniusta sceptra possidet trepida manu
novasq; suspicatur insidias sibi
stisante dum magna raterna rex suam
miseret Glocestriam famam anenhans
incerta sortis cogitans ludibria
. quamq; facile ruit iniusta impetu potentia
. regniq; lubricū nimis statum tremens
O w spiritu vescatur ætherio nesos
mox vt suo raddat dolori spiritum.
gemimus nesos, et sanguine exfinguat suo
regni metu pueri ferox fratruus studet.
nuper Ioannes Preemius intentus sacris
mihi traditas a rege literas dedit.
parare tristem regulis iubet necem
Et principibus afferre crudeles manus
quos vinculis præfectus arcis comprimo
solus potest mactare Brakenburius
natos tuos Eduarde? solus perdere
stirpem tuam? mandata regis exequar
lubens, tibi Richarde promptus servio.
necare stirpem fratris ah pietas vetat
intus iacent squalente miseri carcere
solusq; castimis ministrat carnifex.

Figure 8

form that suited his needs. His is one of the 'microhistories' by which Heidi Brayman Hackel has suggested early-modern reading must be interpreted in order to capture its true range, 'stories of many readers, who have left material traces of both the common and idiosyncratic practices in which they engaged.'[39] Lacy might be a marginal figure easily forgotten, but it may be that his traces and those of his peers have been fossilized in print in the margins of editions held central to the canon of renaissance literature in English.

Anthony Grafton's account of the humanist reading experience provides cues for an account of why private marks were retained in subsequent editions of a text:

> The humanist text celebrated its editor and its benefactors as eloquently as its author. And it led the reader to look—much as the modern reader does in a critical study of a major writer—for two sorts of narrative in a single book. An annotated text naturally had as its core a classical tale told by an ancient, which might be poetic or historical or philosophical. Alongside that, however, it wove a double modern narrative by the editor, which might be dutifully rhetorical and philological in its manifest content, but was often alluringly autobiographical in its subtext. Annotated copies of such books reveal the eagerness with which readers—especially those in remote places—scrutinized them for evidence not only about the ancient world, but also about the modern literary circles that graced the Florence of the Medici or the Louvain of Erasmus. [... H]umanist commentary became the warrant that a text belonged to the high culture of its day; it also linked that text, as firmly as the glosses of Accursius had, to a specific literary and pedagogical regime.[40]

The element of 'alluringly autobiographical' display that Grafton describes in early fifteenth-century texts continued to be an important motive for later editorial and authorial behavior regarding the literary 'high culture of its day.' As attempts at humanist commentary, diplai have appeared poorly executed, to be included by authors and editors garlanding their work as a kind of intellectual ballast, reproduced or not as dictated by the higher priorities of the printing house. As markers of alluring subtext however they read much more effectively and this is the case even where they occur in small numbers. English authors could have encountered these visually and conceptually, either in editions of the French and Italian tragedies set with emphases or in poetical treatises celebrating the virtues of *sententiae*.

39. Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 141.

40. Anthony Grafton, 'The Humanist as Reader' in *A History of Reading in the West*, Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, editors, Lydia G. Cochrane, translator (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), pp. 179–212: p. 205.

Differing from the anatomical interest of treatise-writers, marked works displayed personal and autobiographical elements of the text, energizing the role of an edition within its social milieu. For the reader with the knowledge to pick up on it, a marked text offered a narrative that was not only 'double' but triple: text, marginal commentary and the personal or autobiographical secondary comments implied by the commentary itself. Each formed part of a contemporary reading experience: in displaying in public a phrase that could only fully be interpreted by a private group, a mark simultaneously offered the purchaser something exclusive and a chance to eavesdrop on a private world.[41]

Critics like G.K. Hunter have struggled to find concrete terms in which to describe the relationship between a genuinely anatomical, 'dutifully rhetorical and philological' attention to the text and behavior that spills over into more personal, autobiographical and conversational territory.[42] Grafton adopts a metaphorical approach with Freudian vocabulary—his 'manifest content' if not also his choice of the word 'double' itself—which has some benefits and some disadvantages.[43] These choices are motivated in part by the language of his sources, which locates the unconscious at the center of associative modes of reading. Machiavelli records a reflective state as a natural element of his encounter with an author. In his letter to Vettori he writes of an encounter with Dante, Petrarch, Tibullus or Ovid: 'I read about their amorous passions and about their loves, I remember my own, and I revel for a moment in this thought.'[44]

It was Freud's work on dreams that led him to ascribe manifest and latent content to narratives and Grafton suggests that annotations arise in a comparably discursive way from the pauses between periods of reading.[45] It is a space for thinking both about personal associations and about those within the text: 'their loves' and 'my own.'[46] Both dreaming and annotation are abstract modes of

41. Compare Stanley Fish, 'Authors-Readers: Jonson's Community of the Same' in *Lyric Poetry*, Chaviva Hošek and Patricia Parker, editors (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 132-147: 146, 'Although the poems restrict access to the community, at the same time and in the same action they *generate* the community by providing a means of identifying its members, both to themselves and to each other.'
42. Compare Hunter's phrase, 'gnomic pointing frequently shades into other kinds of emphatic printing,' G.K. Hunter, 172.
43. Sigmund Freud, *The interpretation of dreams, by Prof. Dr. Sigmund Freud. Authorized translation of 3d ed. with introduction, by A.A. Brill*, A.A. Brill, translator (London: G. Allen & Unwin, Ltd, 1913). Freud discusses his concept of the double in "The 'Uncanny'" (1919), see for example Sigmund Freud, *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud*, James Strachey, editor and translator, 24 vols (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74, this volume, 1954), XVII, pp. 217-56.
44. 'leggo quelle loro amorose passioni e quelli loro amori, ricordomi de' mia, godomi un pezzo in questo pensiero': see Grafton, 179-80.
45. For a lucid account of the personal element of annotation see H.J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1991), in particular 83-100.
46. A.S. Byatt and Ignes Sodre prompt a number of associations between dreaming and annotation in their chapter 'Dreams and Fictions' in *Imagining Characters: Six Conversations about Women Writers* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1995), 230-57.

interpretation, most potent in their private significance to readers and dreamers but often of compelling interest to outsiders, thrilled by an unrealized capacity for interpretation. In a personal, psychologically-inflected context it is less surprising that a marked edition should be doing a number of different things in different places, or that certain markings should appear arbitrary or contradictive, marginalia being no less prone to over-examination than dream narratives. Such a framework prepares the ground for conclusions to be drawn which admit the more complicated, more human, desires and projects of their authors.[47]

A mark on the page celebrates and cements the relationship between a reader and an area of text. The nature of such a desire to leave a trace of the personal effects of a reading experience is an important but understudied element of emphatic behavior. This personal attachment was a valued element of renaissance reading, and Grafton notes that sixteenth-century scholars might even go as far as to copy out an entire work in order to foster a closer relationship with the text:

> Just as the schoolboy might know his text word for word because he had memorized and recited it, the mature scholar often knew his because he had copied it out line by line—and enjoyed consulting it not in a form that he shared with others, but in that imposed by his own script as well as his own choice of readings.[48]

A piece of text which has affected the reader leads that reader to create the double of that effect, a mark on the page. Grafton's readers 'in remote places' who annotated their books 'with eagerness' are eager for the companionship of a book as well as its news of more exciting lives lived in the city.[49]

Machiavelli's reflective experience finds a companion in the mid-seventeenth-century scholar P.D. Huet, who as a member of an age of humanists swept aside by the advances of mathematics 'felt like a revenant, a ghostly witness to the lost world of his youth.'[50] As that age passed, both the annotators and their textual

47. Compare Wittgenstein's comments on Freud's work in *Wittgenstein: Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology, and Religious Belief*, C. Barrett, editor (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966), 46: 'In considering what a dream is, it is important to consider what happens to it, the way its aspect changes when it is brought into relation with other things remembered, for instance.' For a discussion see Steven S. Osheroff, 'Wittgenstein: Psychological Disputes and Common Moves' in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 36 (1976), 339–63.

48. Grafton, 207.
49. Grafton, 205.
50. Grafton, 211.

Figure 9

markings were cut off from later audiences. Marks that cannot be reunited with their original milieus stand as the revenants of lost readers: ghostly witnesses on the page. Diplai were used to emphatic effect in Pope marking 'shining passages' which the editor recommends to the reader and evidently this practice had become unusual enough by Malone's time that he should spend decades trying to attribute them to previous authors.[51] Observed in the wider context of his work, Pope's emphases start to look more antiquarian than state-of-the-discipline: Edmund G.C. King has highlighted Pope's approval of both ancient and Erasmian annotation practices and his desire to emulate them.[52] Emulation and the diple travelled together well into the eighteenth century.

51. Alexander Pope, editor, *The Works of Shakespear*, 6 vols. (London, 1723–25), I, 23.
52. Edmund G. C. King, 'In The Character of Shakespeare: Canon, Authorship, and Attribution in Eighteenth-Century England,' unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Auckland, 2008). See in particular King's section 'Pope, Erasmus, and Humanistic Reading Practices,' 80–85: 84. A version of the chapter has been published in essay form, see 'Pope's 1723–25 *Shakespear*, Classical Editing, and Humanistic Reading Practices', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 32 (2008), 3–13.

What Malone failed to realize in the years he spent trying to trace sources for these supposed quotations was that the marks in Pope's edition of Shakespeare were as personal and context-specific as they had been for more than a thousand years (*figure 9*).[53] Arbitrary though they were in their placement, Pope's marks honored the traces of the earliest editors of Shakespeare in print: his readers.

[53] Illustration from Alexander Pope, *The Works of Shakespear*, I, sig. D1ᵛ.

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In/visible Punctuation

;

John Lennard

ABSTRACT

The article offers two approaches to the question of 'invisible punctuation,' theoretical and critical. The first is a taxonomy of modes of punctuational invisibility, identifying *denial, repression, habituation, error* and *absence*. Each is briefly discussed and some relations with technologies of reading are considered. The second considers the paragraphing, or lack of it, in Sir Philip Sidney's *Apology for Poetry*: one of the two early printed editions and at least one of the two MSS are mono-paragraphic, a feature always silently eliminated by editors as a supposed carelessness. It is argued that this is improbable and that one form the *Defence* may have taken at Sidney's hands (and those of his literary executors) was monoparagraphic, a matter affecting tone, genre and the understanding of his argument. A short conclusion considers the current state of punctuational invisibility in relation to digital awareness.

The general thesis of this special issue, as of much work on punctuation drawing on the seminal studies of Malcolm Parkes,[1] might be cogently summarized in the proposition that 'punctuation remains too readily invisible.' It is of course ubiquitous, its presence before the eye co-extensive with the acts of reading and writing, but whether in textual studies or textbooks direct attention to punctuation remains unhappily rare. Two generations of post-/Parisian semioticians, loudly determined to grapple with every nuance of linguistic structure, have all but ignored it *tout court*, while the pedagogical practice of using 'fully modernized' texts, increasingly institutionalized since 1945 even at under/graduate level, obscures awareness of its historical development.

One way of seeing the issues involved is simply to ask in what ways punctuation can be 'invisible.' The idea of invisibility, seemingly simple, in any case tends to exhibit both paradox and displacement, as those who recall Poe's 'The Purloined Letter,' Freud's *fort–da* game, or any film 'showing' invisibility will understand; any taxonomy of punctuational invisibility registers similar problems. Various approaches could be adopted, but all are likely in the end to come down to five heads that might be labelled *denial, repression, habituation, error* and *absence*.

Denial (in a legal rather than psychoanalytical sense) covers invisibility by definition—that is, exclusion from received definitions and hence awareness governed by such limitation (*definire* meaning 'to limit'). The most obvious and important example of invisibility arising from such denial is spaces of punctuation, and the problem begins etymologically. 'Punctuation' derives from Latin *punctus*, a participle of *pungō*, 'to puncture, prick (a hole),' once a literal piercing of parchment with a sharpened point, most probably in tallies, but transferring to use of a stylus on wax. Most modern definitions of the English word (including *OED2*'s) consequently insist that 'punctuation' is synonymous with 'punctuation marks,' i.e., that it comprises only points and other non-alphabetic marks interspersed among words. This ignores the Latin extension of the term from a point in space to a point in time, usage reflected in modern English 'to punctuate' (*inter alia*, to "interrupt at intervals: intersperse *with*," *N.Sh.OED* 4. *v. t. fig.*), in 'punctual' and its cognates, and in the common compound noun 'punctuation marks' (or 'marks of punctuation')—which would be needless if there were no other kinds of punctuation to distinguish. Even if one is unaware that unspaced *scriptio continua* was normative for most of the first millennium CE, it is self-evident that strings of written or printed letters are

1. See especially *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (London: Scolar Press, 1992) and the essays collected in *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Mediaeval Texts* (London: Hambledon, 1991).

now most frequently punctuated by space—simply between words, in conjunction with full-stop and capital letter between sentences, and more complicatedly between paragraphs, sections, chapters and other internal structural divisions, as well as in margins—but, paralleling the unwarrantably narrow dictionary definitions limiting punctuation to marks, these spatial features tend to be lumped together as 'layout,' and kept distinct from whatever understanding one may have of 'punctuation.'

Repression (this time in a political rather than psychoanalytical sense) covers invisibility through imposition of (supposed) unimportance—the belittlement and marginalization of punctuation as unworthy of scholarly attention, proper pedagogy and critical investigation. This was until the dissemination of Professor Parkes's work the general situation, involving the continuing lack of any proper theory and pedagogical praxis for punctuation, ridicule of those attempting work in the field, economic marginalization and denunciation, lack of resources and intellectual dismissal. Alas, almost everyone who has undertaken university-based literary work on punctuation will recognize these phenomena, from friendly joshing by colleagues ('You're working on *what*?') to a far more consequential impatience with 'pedantry' and 'minutiae' among teachers and students alike.

There has been progress as the work of Professor Parkes and others following him makes inroads, and those recently trained in or practicing book history are more likely to attend to punctuation (especially if unconventional) than those who espouse more theoretical approaches to literature. Punctuation has figured in arguments about re-editing Jonson,[2] and was raised as an issue by Henry Woudhuysen in his 2003 British Academy Lecture on the 'foundations of Shakespeare's text.'[3] There are also encouraging signs of wider theoretical and contextual thinking, engaging with technology and extending to performance.[4] There has even been some explicit funding, notably in the UK by the Economic and Social Research Council of Nigel Hall's Punctuation Project, a much needed study of a neglected aspect of school pedagogy.[5] All this is to be warmly welcomed, but there is the consideration that the undoubted punctuational bestseller of recent decades, Lynne Truss's *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* (2003), if perfunctorily citing Professor Parkes, ignores his conclusions in favor of a continuing promulgation of supposed rules, absolute meanings and limited,

2. See David Bevington, Why Re-Edit Herford and Simpson?, in Martin Butler, editor, *Re-Presenting Jonson: Text, History, Performance* (London: Macmillan, 1999) and Sara van den Berg, Marking his Place: Ben Jonson's Punctuation, at http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/01-3/bergjons.html.
3. H.R. Woudhuysen, The Foundations of Shakespeare's Text, in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 125, 69–100.

4. Naomi S. Baron, *Alphabet to Email: How Written English Evolved and Where It's Heading* (London & New York: Routledge, 2000) and *Always On: Language in an Online and Mobile World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jennifer DeVere Brody, *Punctuation: Art, Politics, and Play* (Durham, NC, & London: Duke University Press, 2008).
5. Nigel Hall and Anne Robinson, editors, *Learning About Punctuation* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1996).

limiting definitions devoid of theoretical thought; the book's popular success thus represents a defeat for punctuational scholarship as much as a raising of the subject's profile, and its jokey tone, however imposed by commercial presumptions, is not merely sales pitch but continuing deprecation of its topic.

Habituation covers invisibility through familiarity of convention, and is for many reasons the commonest and most complicated of these categories. As Professor Parkes and others have repeatedly shown, punctuation (in any form) does not have absolute but only relative meaning, dependent on the particular repertoire of marks, spaces and other forms employed in a given culture at a given time, and typically operates through repertoires of contradistinguished conventions and regulated display. A full-stop, for example, is differentiated from the identical suspension-mark and low decimal-point through its physical and grammatical position with associated conventions of following space and initial capital letters. A full-stop that appears falsely, even if accompanied by properly associated conventions, becomes visible—but do readers notice the mark otherwise? Was your attention equally given to those following 'capital letters' and 'falsely'? To that last question?mark and the one after it? The difference measures the habituated invisibility of punctuation-marks and spaces employed according to commonly received conventions; a further measure is offered by the subcategory of *deictic* punctuation—differential faces, fonts and display, including capitalization, italicization, bolding, underlining and color, which precisely draw particular attention through specific emphasis.

Such habituation to conventionality is a function of efficiency, much as standardized letterforms and orthography assist the rapidity and reliability of written communication, and in everyday usage that is fine; any punctuation requiring special attention imposes delay, as an unfamiliar word might, and increases the chances of miscommunication. Only in works with a literary or other aesthetic dimension, seeking to convey original and unusual perceptions, may a profit readily be turned on usage of punctuation outwith or against current conventions—as in the cases of the Shandean and Dickinsonian dashes, the work of e e cummings and the last forty or so pages of *Ulysses*. The problem, however, is that while these examples are notorious, meaning most readers are cued to pay attention, observing lesser and unpredicted deviations from or exploitations of convention is inhibited by habituation, and as Randall McLeod has often demonstrated in his witty papers a great deal about the printed page typically passes before a reader's eyes quite unnoticed.[6]

6. See especially Random Cloud, 'FIAT *f* LUX', in R.M. Leod, editor, *Crisis in Editing: Texts of* *the English Renaissance* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1994), pp. 61–172.

What this means in practice is outlined by asking whether, as someone is 'reading' a text, they 'read' punctuation as well as letters? In some sense, if words, clauses or members, periods or sentences, and paragraphs have been correctly identified, the answer must be 'yes,' but while many readers (including most students and professional critics) might be able immediately to report on the imagery, motifs or structure of a text they have 'read,' very few (I speak from experience) are able to offer any serious comment about its punctuation. The various marks, spaces, faces, etc. have (supposedly) been registered, but only in passing; they have functioned to mean but not accumulated meaning, and have neither system nor general significance beyond the conventional; just as one explicit purpose of modernization is to remove any punctuation that might oblige a reader to think, and to replace it with punctuation that will be as habituatedly invisible as possible.

Error covers invisibility through misreading—the failure to register punctuation or to register it correctly, either through tiredness of mind and/or eye, or through failure of display in the text being read. The habit of putting spaces *before* as well as after colons, semi-colons and sometimes other marks, common in higher-quality editions of fiction and nonfiction before the mid-twentieth century, was a means of forestalling such error ; its efficacy is especially evident if letter- and interword spacing is in any way reduced (as often in columnar text). The commonest errors are almost certainly missing a colon, misreading one as a full-stop, or misreading a semi-colon as a comma, when the mark follows a letter that has a minim on the (far) right of the letterspace, as 'n' and 'm' do, or a minim, limb, or headstroke that terminates close to the mark's upper point, as 'r,' 't,' 'k,' 'w' and 'f' may. In serifed fonts a full-stop may also be lost through proximity to a terminal minim. Font design and quality of printing may of course lessen or compound the difficulty, while reading on backlit screens typically increases it, especially if ergonomics have not been considered and the screen is being read at an awkward angle or is small. If a reader is being consistently careful in parsing grammar the error should rapidly be manifest, and prove correctable with backtracking—if s/he bothers to do so, a bigger 'if' than scholars and teachers might care to think. The modern decline of the colon and semi-colon may reflect the loss of typographical practices intended to make them easily identifiable, but their abandonment seriously impairs the possibilities of meaning and does nothing to help us with the prose of Jane Austen, Henry James, William Faulkner or Paul Scott.

Finally, *absence* covers the particular circumstance described by T.S. Eliot when he insisted that punctuation in *Four Quartets* "includes the absence of punctuation

marks, when they are omitted where the reader would expect them."[7] Only conventional punctuation can be so invisible, for if there is no reason to expect a given mark—or space, or other punctuation—the absence of that punctuation cannot sensibly be registered. The problems mentioned under 'habituation' and 'error' also apply, for such absence may be misidentified as error, consciously or otherwise, and so ignored, or may wrongly pass unseen—as anyone will understand who has had the experience of discovering a typo only on re-reading a particular copy, and thought through what such a discovery implies about the quality of first reading and the handy-dandy of eye and mind when dealing with expectable conventions and their observance.

These five categories are, at root, ontological, modes in which invisibility may manifest, and as such subject to the epistemological variations of technology—as some of my examples register. Although in a broad sense the clarity of display of written and printed texts has risen over time, with discontinuous improvements occasionally introduced by new technologies, the process has not been regular or consistent. In some places particular considerations apply—the German retention of Fraktur into the 1970s, for example—but in all there was and is a commercial trade-off between desirability and cost. As a general rule, greater clarity in cold- or hot-metal printed material requires (within practical limits) larger fonts, heavier leading and/or higher quality paper; which mean more pages and/or greater page-size and weight, and hence higher costs of production and distribution. During the British eighteenth century, when the means of production was still the hand-press (limiting print-runs) and printers enjoyed the extraordinary advantages of high monopoly,[8] books of exceptional clarity were produced—including *Tristram Shandy* (1759–67), the conception, execution and reception of which *depend* on such clarity. By the mid-nineteenth century, conversely, with machine-presses at work, monopolistic advantage diminishing, and interior lighting improving by orders of magnitude, many books show far smaller, cramped type in which the possibility of invisibility by error is massively greater. It has yet to be proven, but the great nineteenth-century development of the combinate marks (dubbed by Nicolson Baker the colash, commash &c.[9]) was probably partly a response to that problem, as were the increased use by mainstream publishers of additional spacing before certain medial punctuation marks, and the evolution of such conventions of typewriting

7. Sleeve-notes to the recording of *Four Quartets*, quoted in Christopher Ricks, *The Force of Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 342.
8. See William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), especially chapters 1–4.
9. See Nicolson Baker, The History of Punctuation, in *The Size of Thoughts* (London: Chatto, 1996).

as the double-space sentence break; certainly the fairly abrupt demise of combinate marks during the first third of the twentieth century coincided with a renewed attention to space characteristic of Modernism as well as mass re-setting of older texts occasioned by the forced melting down for munitions, during WWI, of many tens of thousands of stereotype plates.

One aspect of that attention, the advent of the typewriter, is a primary example of technology influencing epistemology, but while there is some awareness among scholars of the consequences of typewritten quantization of the page-measure, and of some proto-/Modernist literature as profoundly revealing the presence of typewriters and typescripts in its processes of composition,[10] that awareness has not been much extended. Even scholars of contemporaneous work, perforce aware that digital technologies may radically affect literary composition, publication and/or distribution and reception, often fail to consider the effects of differing screen technologies and sizes on rate and accuracy of data-absorption and -retention.[11] In other words, it seems universally assumed that ink-on-paper (handwritten, typewritten or printed), electron-beam projection, LED, LCD, e-ink and all other reading platforms are uniformly equivalent, transparent, neutral media without effect of any kind on data-production, -transmission, or –reception—and this despite commercial experience plainly demonstrating that 'identical' texts do not fare equally in deadtree, PDF and re-flowable formats, nor on laptops, iPads and equivalent, e-readers like the Iliad and Kindle and palmtop devices like the Blackberry and iPhone. Nor does anything much seem yet to have been said about the kinds of easy, web-mediated contacts that are increasingly normative between writers and readers of fiction as a standard aspect of digitally-based marketing, and that exhibit a reversion from the relative isolation of authors and top-down control of twentieth-century publishing to models variously resembling subscription and serial publication.

The technological context, in other words, is as critical for scholarship as for scholars, for authors as for readers. Professor Parkes, born in 1930, learned to see punctuation primarily as a palaeographer, but there have down the centuries been many palaeographers who did not so learn, and it is not coincidental that he had the advantage of living in an age of photographic (and latterly digital) facsimiles and rapid, affordable long-distance travel. Most who have followed him in punctuation studies are of the digital age, and have long internalized the kind of control over

10. Leon Edel devoted a chapter to the advent of partly typewritten composition, A Fierce Legibility; see *The Life of Henry James* (definitive edition, in 2 vols, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), II. 230–4. There is a useful chapter, What Remington Wrought, in Baron's *Alphabet to Email*, pp. 197–215; for technical detail see Wilfred A. Beeching, *Century of the Typewriter* (Bournemouth: British Typewriter Museum Publishing, 1974).
11. See, for example, David Ciccoricco, *Reading Network Fiction* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2007).

display that word-processing makes possible. From this point my argument could be pursued in many directions, but serious investigation of punctuational invisibility in digital texts is grossly complicated—the effects of what happens if you tell your word-processing program to 'reveal formatting' provide one set of problems, and the variegated multitude of hardware and software involved many more. I therefore turn to a different analytical approach, taking a specific example of a punctuation that has been rendered all but wholly invisible, with deleterious consequences for readings of the host text.

Sidney's *Defence of Poesie* (or *Apologie for Poetrie*, or, latterly, *Defence of Poetry*) is the most widely cited (and frequently read) work of sixteenth-century English criticism. A founding document of Anglophone literary studies, much edited and anthologized, it survives in two manuscripts and two early editions that Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan van Dorsten, in their Clarendon *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney* (1973), label 'Pe,' 'N,' 'P' and 'O.' Pe is a scribal manuscript (De L'Isle 1226) once belonging to Robert Sidney and still owned by Viscount De L'Isle of Penshurst Place, N a scribal manuscript (MS10837) once belonging to the antiquarian Francis Blomefield and now in Norfolk County Record Office, P an edition titled *The Defence of Poesie* printed by Thomas Creede for William Ponsonby in 1595 (STC 22535) and O an edition titled *An Apologie for Poetrie* printed (anonymously) by James Roberts for Henry Olney in the same year (STC 22534). Introducing the *Defence* in the *Miscellaneous Prose*, van Dorsten says "variants prove [...] that no known text descends directly from one of the other three, and that no simple stemma can be reconstructed," and the Clarendon editors adopted Pe and P as "the two most authoritative texts"—Pe as an MS close enough to the original to have remained in the Sidneys' possession, and P because Ponsonby was "the established printer of Sidney's literary remains," who "obtained his copy [...] directly from the author's sister and [...] literary executor, Greville," and whose legal claim to the text was explicitly recognized when Olney's entry in the Stationers' Register was cancelled sometime in the summer of 1595.[12]

Ponsonby's *de facto* 'authorized' edition is not adopted as sole authority because (says van Dorsten) "Regrettably, P is such a carelessly produced book that it cannot be used independently" and must be "handled with particular caution because of its tendency towards sophistication"—by which is meant P's repetition (relative to Pe) of a quotation to illustrate the figure of repetition, correction of a phrase, addition of

12. *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney* Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan van Dorsten, editors, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 69, 66, 68. Ponsonby's entry in *S.R.* is dated 29 November 1594, Olney's 12 April 1595; copies of O with the title-sheet of P show Olney's stock was surrendered to Ponsonby.

two more and addition of a gloss. Elsewhere van Dorsten remarks that "Unlike [P, O] was edited and printed with great care. The text is divided into paragraphs, the punctuation is fairly accurate, mistakes and misprints are rare, and a short *errata* list and some preliminary matter were added."[13] This is the only direct reference by the Clarendon editors to punctuation, but is sufficient to invite some pointed questions.

To begin with, how is it possible for the punctuation of an independent textual witness to be deemed 'accurate' or 'inaccurate'? The copy-text being by definition unknown, compositorial fidelity of reproduction from copy cannot be meant—but what else is possibly in/accurate about any such punctuation? 'Common sense' suggests van Dorsten did not in fact mean 'accurate' but something like 'recognizably conventional by what I believe and understand to have been prevailing contemporary standards,' but questions remain begged and the qualification—"the punctuation is *fairly* accurate"—poses an intractably *ad hominem* problem. More generally, I confess to considerable surprise on first encountering van Dorsten's characterisation of P as "carelessly produced," for it is a text with which I am closely familiar as a reader (and owner) of the Scolar Press facsimile (1968), which photographically reproduces in original size the copy in the British Museum (shelf-mark C.57.b.38). There are certainly features I would identify as errors—an omitted full-stop or colon preceding a capitalized "But" on B1r, 'nay' for 'may' on B2r, etc.—but the text as a whole does not seem remotely to deserve such swingeing condemnation and many passages demonstrate precise, printerly care:

> Marry these other pleasaunt fault-finders, who will correct the *Verbe*, before they understand the *Nowne*, and confute others knowledge, before they confirme their owne, I would haue them onely remember, that scoffing cometh not of wisdome ; so as the best title in true English they get with their meriments, is to be called good fooles *:* for so haue our graue forefathers euer tearmed that humorous kinde of iesters. But that which giueth greatest scope to their scorning humor, is ryming and versing. It is alreadie said (and as I think truly said) it is not ryming and versing that maketh *Poesie :* One may be a *Poet* without versing and a versefier without *Poetrie*.
> [F3v, omitting ligatures and substituting short- for long-s]

Much may seem odd to modern sensibilities, but the *only* thing here that could remotely be supposed "careless" is the use of italic colons after "fooles" and "*Poesie*," and cases can be made that the second is perfectly proper (it follows an italicized word) and that the face of marks was not sufficiently policed either in

13. Duncan-Jones and van Dorsten, pp. 68, 66.

setting or redistributing type to warrant labelling any variant-faced punctuation 'in error.' The structurally emphatic upper-case letter after the second ("One") is unexceptionable in any printed Elizabethan period, such medial capitalization is practiced throughout P, and like italicization is in general, as here, exactly deployed. The other marks in this sample are equally conventional and normative, and the orthography, if mildly inconsistent by modern standards, is entirely unexceptional by contemporary ones; nor is there any manifest grammatical problem or textual crux, though one might desire a comma after the opening "Marry." Additionally one might note (though there is no instance here) that tittles (indicating omitted 'n' or 'm') appear consistently where they ought, though the difficulty of setting them (which requires type-letters incorporating the tittle that must be distinguished in composing and redistributing type from those that do not, or a second terrace of type that complicates interlineal leading) suggests they should be among the first victims of careless setting.

What, then, earns P such dismissive scorn as a witness? The probable answer is implicit in van Dorsten's observation of O that the "text is divided into paragraphs"—for it is, astonishingly, the case that the text of P is *not* so divided (*figure 1*). Excluding pre- and postlims, the text is in P arranged on 67 pages, normally of 32 lines (plus running-head and catchword), amounting in all to 2135 lines (including the two-line title and terminal 'Finis'); and all 67 pages, though justified to both margins, constitute a single paragraph, to the best of my knowledge far and away the longest in English literature.[14] *That*, one might well think, cannot be right—but it seems equally impossible to suppose, as I must presume van Dorsten to have done with Duncan-Jones's consent, that 'carelessness' is a plausible explanation. Can the same compositors and printer who deployed italics, capitals and tittles with persistent precision, who knew they were working on an 'authorized' edition that would be scrutinized by noble patrons, and who took steps to secure their legal rights against a piracy, really be supposed to have composed and imposed 2132 lines of main text on 67 pages without noticing or caring that (what would in the normal course of things be) *scores* of missing paragraph-breaks? Can the dullest compositor/s be supposed to make such an error of omission not once

14. Beside whatever may happen in the last pages of *Ulysses*, Sidney's nearest competitor is probably Faulkner, especially in *Absalom, Absalom!*, wherein (in the Library of America edition) several paragraphs exceed five pages; there is also the 33-page *sentence* that begins Act III of *Requiem for a Nun*, but it is divided into multiple paragraphs. In French, Jean-Christophe Valtat's monoparagraphic and monologic novella *03* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005; Mitzi Angel, translator, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2010) runs to 81 pages in translation; in German, Friedrich Christian Delius's *Bildnis der Mutter als junge Frau* (2006; Jamie Bulloch, translator, as *Portrait of the Mother as a Young Woman*, London: Peirene Press, 2010) is a single, multi-paragraphic sentence running to 117 pages in translation.

flowers, and then we muſt beleeue the ſtage to be a
garden. By and by we heare newes of ſhipwrack in
the ſame place, then we are too blame if we accept
it not for a Rock. Vpon the back of that, comes out a
hidious monſter with fire and ſmoke, and then the
miſerable beholders are bound to take it for a Caue:
while in the meane time two Armies flie in, repre-
ſented with foure ſwords & bucklers, and the what
hard hart wil not receiue it for a pitched field. Now
of time, they are much more liberall. For ordinarie
it is, that two yoong Princes fall in loue, after many
trauerſes ſhe is got with childe, deliuered of a faire
boy: he is loſt, groweth a man, falleth in loue, and
is readie to get an other childe, and all this in two
houres ſpace: which howe abſurd it is in ſence, e-
uen ſence may imagine: and Arte hath taught,
and all auncient examples iuſtified, and at this
day the ordinarie players in *Italie* will not erre in.
Yet will ſome bring in an example of *Eunuche* in
Terence, that conteineth matter of two dayes, yet far
ſhort of twentie yeares. True it is, and ſo was it to
be played in two dayes, and ſo fitted to the time it
ſet foorth. And though *Plautus* haue in one place
done amiſſe, let vs hit it with him, & not miſſe with
him. But they will ſay, how then ſhall we ſet foorth
a ſtorie, which contains both many places, and ma-
ny times? And do they not know that a Tragidie is
tied to the lawes of *Poeſie* and not of Hiſtorie: not
bounde to follow the ſtorie, but hauing libertie ei-
ther to faine a quite new matter, or to frame the Hi-
ſtorie to the moſt Tragicall conueniencie. Againe,
many things may be told which cannot be ſhewed:
if

Figure 1: A random opening from P, H4v–I1r, photoquoted from the Scolar Press facsimile (Menston, 1968), which reproduces BM C.57.b.38. The absence of paragraph-breaks and

The Defence of Poesie.

if they know the difference betwixt reporting and
reprefenting. As for example, I may fpeake though I
am here, of *Peru*, and in fpeech digreffe from that, to
the defcription of *Calecut* : But in action, I cannot re-
prefent it without *Pacolets* Horfe.   And fo was the
manner the Auncients tooke, by fome *Nuntius*, to
recount things done in former time or other place.
Laftly, if they will reprefent an Hiftorie, they muft
not (as *Horace* faith) beginne *ab ouo*, but they muft
come to the principall poynte of that one action
which they will reprefent.   By example this will
be beft expreffed.   I haue a ftorie of yoong *Poli-
dorus*, deliuered for fafeties fake with great riches,
by his Father *Priamus* , to *Polmineſter* King of
Thrace, in the *Troyan* warre time.   He after fome
yeares, hearing the ouerthrowe of *Priamus*, for
to make the treafure his owne, murthereth the
Childe, the bodie of the Childe is taken vp, *He-
cuba*, fhee the fame day, findeth a fleight to bee
reuenged mofte cruelly of the Tyrant.   Where
nowe would one of our Tragedie writers begin,
but with the deliuerie of the Childe ? Then fhould
hee faile ouer into *Thrace*, and fo fpende I know
not howe many yeares, and trauaile numbers of
places.   But where dooth *Euripides* ? euen with
the finding of the bodie, the reft leauing to be to!d
by the fpirite of *Polidorus* .   This needes no fur-
ther to bee enlarged, the dulleft witte may con-
ceiue it .   But befides thefe groffe abfurdities,
howe all their Playes bee neither right Trage-
dies, nor right Comedies, mingling Kinges and
Clownes, not becaufe the matter fo carrieth it, but

I   thruft

the general care of the printers with regard to capitalization, italicization, tittles and other punctuation are equally evident.

but dozens of times, while attending to all other detail and justifying every line—a laborious, finicky process involving hair-spaces during which the final lines of paragraphs, requiring no right-justification, are warmly welcome?

From the various modern editions one must believe so, for though their (supposed) copy-text is almost always primarily P, every one I have been able to examine is paragraphed (if variously), and no introduction or criticism that I can find among them discusses at any length (if it even mentions) what is far and away the strangest feature of that edition. The *absence* of paragraph-breaks, that ought to register forcefully, is wholly obliterated by their supply, and the question that should follow, concerning the possible reasons for such a strange invisibility, is not even asked. But if that absence is not a result of 'carelessness' it must be a fruit of care, and the only conceivable reason for a professional printer to take such strange care is an instruction to do so. One might also note at this juncture, first, that P does have one other absence, much less peculiar but in context intriguing—it prints no page-numbers and so enhances the uniformity of sequent openings, only signatures and variant catchwords registering one's reading progress; and second, that N, a folio MS of 19 leaves in a "late sixteenth-century hand,"[15] is also unparagraphed.[16] The provenance of N is unknown before it was bound with other MSS by Francis Blomefield, probably in 1722–6,[17] but it is a fair copy with neat margins, the hand is small and precise, and capitalization is carefully observed—considerations that collectively make it improbable the unknown scribe willfully omitted paragraph-breaks (without even noting them, as a space-saver might), and so suggests with some force that his or her copy-text was also unparagraphed.

There are, then, reasons (that seem compelling) to accept the single paragraph of P as intentional, to presume it authorized by Sidney's literary executors, and to believe that at least one text anterior to N (and perhaps to Pe) was also mono-paragraphic—so what purpose might such a wilfully unconventional and hyper-extended trope serve?

Paragraphing dates to at least the second century BCE, and while the relations of paragraphs with periods are considerably more uncertain and complex than those with sentences, all involve the paragraph as a unit both of argument and, in narrative, of emotion, tone, register or some combination of these. The experience of reading P's 2132-line, 67-page paragraph forcefully brings to mind the apparently

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15. *Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney*, p. 65.
16. Pe, the Penshurst MS bearing Robert Sidney's autograph, may also be unparagraphed: I have been unable to consult it but the recollections of those who have are that it is monoparagraphic. If so, of the early witnesses *only* the pirated O would be paragraphed.
17. This dating is that of the Norfolk Records Office, which has extensive holdings of Blomefield materials because of his importance as a topographic historian of the county.

rambling style and content notoriously deployed in the slightly later prose pamphlets of Nashe. Certainly one is invited by the sheer continuity of un-paragraphed prose, and by jumping, tumbling associations amid accumulating argument, to suppose a loquacious oral discourse filled with expansive language (and gestures) rather than the closely reasoned, logically articulated treatise as which the paragraphed *Defence* is always presented and annotated in modern editions. This generic context might explain more happily than earnest logic the frequent conjunctions of high learning with vigorously colloquial phrasing ("But what? methinks I deserue to be pou[n]ded for straying from *Poetrie*, to *Oratory*," I4r), the somewhat shotgun invocation of at least 68 named authorities (as well as both Testaments) in 67 pages, and the license Sidney took to end with a "Curse" on those who despite his instruction still scorn or Platonically condemn poetry—"that while you liue, you liue in loue, and neuer get favour, for lacking skill of a Sonet, and when you die, your memorie die from the earth for want of an Epitaphe" (K2r). Against this may be set Sidney's oft-observed and very elegant deployment of the standard mediaeval model of formal scholastic argument (exordium, proposition, division, examination, refutation, digression and peroration)—but is a witty irony so inconceivable? Of a kind Sidney might presumably have intended in concealing such careful argumentative propriety within an absurd torrent of a paragraph?

The scholarship that surrounds the *Defence*, with all Sidney's work and life, is formidable, invoking and variously deploying an enormous range of supposed or demonstrated courtly necessities, social sensitivities, literary models, aesthetic ambitions and public or private agendas—so any non-specialist properly hesitates. Prominent among them, however, are responses to the tone of the *Defence* that confront a problem neatly summarized by Duncan-Jones in her biography:

> Despite the many ironical strategies used by Sidney in the *Defence*, we need not question his jokey assertion that the most powerful reason for writing it was 'self-love.' More than poesy was on trial: he was defending himself. Finding that he had 'slipped into the title of a poet' he sought to elevate the standing of this, his 'unelected vocation.' As he reached his late twenties and prepared to become Walsingham's son-in-law he was acutely conscious that 'my knowledge bring forth toys.' Writing imaginative fiction and love poetry was not what he had been primarily groomed for by his 'Dutch uncles.' An inessential social grace in a courtier had become for him a serious and central activity, lacking that 'recklessness,' or apparent carelessness, that should mark the incidental recreations of the true courtier.[18]

18. Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney:* 1991), p. 233.
Courtier Poet (London: Hamish Hamilton,

'Apparent carelessness' is a more inviting observation than van Dorsten's derogation of P, and if nuances might be eternally debated there seems to be no fundamental problem with the notion that *one* form the *Defence* took at Sidney's hand or direction—not necessarily the only form but the posthumously authorized form— was monoparagraphic; carefully seeming careless in its displayed articulation, and revealing beneath and through that levity such a gravity that levity and gravity alike commended (and in print accurately memorialized) their creator.

The proof of the pudding lies, as ever, in the eating. Before publication of the Scolar facsimile of P, and even then, access to the idea of a monoparagraphic *Defence* was extremely restricted, not least because in taphonomic bias far fewer copies of P than of O survive; but P has been known to serious scholars for decades, if not centuries, and in these web surfing days the problem is in any case obsolete. As early as 1992 Risa Bear transcribed P as a monoparagraphic text for Renascence Editions, and—with the possible advantage of no page-breaks—the monstrous whole can be read in scrolling view online.[19] I urge readers, especially those long familiar with paragraphed modern editions, to try Sidney's argument—diatribe? tease? performance?—in monoparagraphic form, preferably at a sitting and at speed. In a modern font, with backlighting, Elizabethan orthography and punctuation, if unfamiliar, need present no serious obstacle; and there is a good case (as with the poetry of Donne and more complex speeches in Shakespearean drama) that it is easier to parse the intricacies of periodic grammar reading at speed (thus building up the authorities and analogies at a clip that allows them to chime) than proceeding at a plod. Then compare the experience with that of encountering the (supposedly) logical modern progression of paragraphs; at the least there should be, amongst it all, a renewed appreciation of the invisible again made visible by removing the visible invisibilities of the paragraph-breaks ... or to that effect.

Argument by example brings me full circle, returning from cultural and personal to technological factors determining the visibility and nature of invisibility, and so to digital in/visibility. In many ways any punctuationist—'one who studies or treats of punctuation'—has prolific occasions for hope in the digital revolution; certainly the availability and accessibility of such transcriptions as Bear's trumps technological, financial, commercial and practical limitations on intellection, making possible as never before a genuine, sustained scholarship of punctuation. Yet there is little sign of any desire to abandon automatic modernization, or to do our past the favor of

[19] See http://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/iemls/ resour/mirrors/rbear/defence.html.

understanding that it punctuated things differently, with all that implies about how it formulated observation and argument.

One good thing is that an ever increasing percentage of scholars and students are regularly exposed to displays of text that, in one or another way, make (irritatingly) visible punctuation that has long been invisible, in one or another modality. It might be the process of onscreen proofreading, with medial dots, paragraphs, arrows, etc. indicating inter-word spaces, returns and tabs, or the appearance of an ' ' or equivalent in an email; creating one's own texts in html rather than rtf, reverting to laborious parenthesization of '<i>' and '</i>' (as when Amstrads were king), is also sensitizing, as every contributor to Wikipedia knows. But in conversation and teaching it often seems that for every student or critic of literature who has become aware of these considerations, there are several others for whom ' ' is immediately familiar once mentioned, but to whom it has never occurred that it is a straightforward abbreviation (in this case for 'non-breaking space') and readable source of information.[20] Close attention to text is yet in some disfavor, close attention to its metasystems a step beyond and attention to invisible metasystems taken as patently absurd, the authorities of T.S. Eliot and Professor Parkes notwithstanding. Most potent opportunities remain, but the powers of denial, repression, habituation and error remain more than sufficient silently to compromise Sidney and the critical tradition descended from him, in his absences as in his presence.

20. The problem arises because html uses angled brackets, ampersands, slashes and various other marks as part of its metalanguage and therefore requires a special means of indicating such characters when they occur in the language of a text; thus, an ampersand becomes '&', where the actual ampersand and the semi-colon merely indicate the beginning and end of a character definition, and the abbreviation 'amp' is what actually causes an ampersand to be displayed—or not, if the character-string has become corrupted (which may affect *everything* downstream) or the client software controlling textual display for whatever reason fails to recognize an html code and therefore displays the whole character-string as text. A comparable problem with a LISP bug is reported in Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 626 (ch. XVIII). I am grateful to Michael R. N. Dolbear for this reference and for technical advice about the workings of e-mail systems.

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Marks, Spaces and Boundaries

PUNCTUATION (AND OTHER EFFECTS) IN THE TYPOGRAPHY OF DICTIONARIES

;
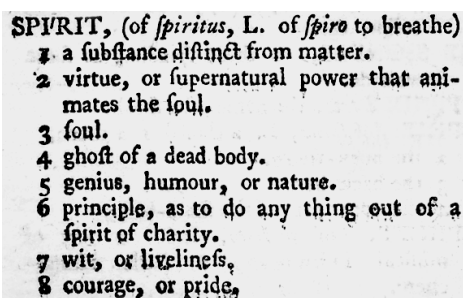
Paul Luna

ABSTRACT

Dictionary compilers and designers use punctuation to
structure and clarify entries and to encode information.
Dictionaries with a relatively simple structure can
have simple typography and simple punctuation; as
dictionaries grew more complex, and encountered the
space constraints of the printed page, complex encoding
systems were developed, using punctuation and symbols.
Two recent trends have emerged in dictionary design:
to eliminate punctuation, and sometimes to use a
larger number of fonts, so that the boundaries between
elements are indicated by font change, not punctuation.
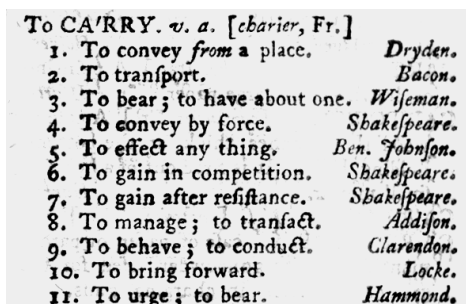
We think of the simplification of typographic presentation as a recent development, and this certainly applies to reducing the amount of punctuation in a text: road signs contain no punctuation, and normally only one size of lettering; the title-piece of the *Wall Street Journal* with its closing period is a quaint nod to a vanished past of metal type and fussy Victorian title-pages; salutations and initials have lost their stops. We are now used to the numerals in lists and newspaper headlines not being followed by full-stops. We expect dashes in text to be regularized to en- or em-rules, and not to have the rhetorical variation in length that we see in eighteenth-century fiction. So to learn that this dictionary entry, with simple un-stopped numerals and lower-case definitions, dates from the eighteenth century may come as something of a surprise.

Figure 1: Benjamin Martin, *Lingua Britannica Reformata*, 1749

And it is something unusual for its period. Here is a more normally capitalized and punctuated edition of another text of the same period (a condensed edition of Johnson's *Dictionary*).

Figure 2: Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary*, octavo edition, 1760

Or more complex still.

To CA'RRY. *v. a.* [*charier*, Fr. from *currus*, Lat.] 1.
To convey *from* a place ; oppofed to *bring*, or convey *to*
a place : often with a particle, fignifying departure ; as,
away, off. 2. To tranfport. 3. To bear ; to have about
one. 4. To take ; to have with one. 5. To convey by
force. 6. To effect any thing. 7. To gain in compe-
tition. 8. To gain after refiftance. 9. To gain ; with
it ; that is, to prevail. [*le porter,* Fr.] 10. To bear
out ; to face through : with *it.* 11. To continue ex-
ternal appearance. 12. To manage ; to tranfact. 13.
To behave ; to conduct ; with the reciprocal pronoun.
14. Sometimes with it ; as, fhe *carries it* high. 15. To
bring forward ; to advance in any progrefs. 16. To
urge ; to bear forward with fome kind of external im-
pulfe. 17. To bear ; to have ; to obtain. 18. To ex-
hibit to fhow ; to difplay on the outfide ; to fet to view.
19. To imply ; to import. 20. To contain ; to com-
prife. 21. To have annexed ; to have any thing joined :
with the particle *with.* 22. To convey or bear any thing
united or adhering, by communication of motion. 23.
To move or continue any thing in a certain direction.
24. To pufh on ideas, arguments, or any thing fuccef-
five in a train. 25. To receive ; to endure : not in ufe.
26. To convey by means of fomething fupporting. 27.
To bear, as trees. 28. To fetch and bring, as dogs. 29.
To carry off. To kill. 30. *To carry on.* To promote ;
to help forward. 31. *To carry on.* To continue ; to
put forward from one ftage to another. 32. *To carry on.*
To profecute ; not to let ceafe. 33. *To carry through.*
To fupport ; to keep from failing, or being conquered.
  (1.) When he dieth, he fhall *carry* nothing *away.*
                                                Pf. xlix. 18.
  And devout men *carried* Stephen to his burial. *Acts,* viii. 2.
  I mean to *carry* her *away* this evening, by the help of thefe
two foldiers.   *Dryden's Spanifh Fryar.*
    As in a hive's vimineous dome,
  Ten thoufand bees enjoy their home ;
  Each does her ftudious action vary,
  To go and come, to fetch and *carry.*   *Prior.*
  They expofed their goods with the price marked, then re-
tired ; the merchants came, left the price which they would give
upon the goods, and retired ; the Seres returning *carried off*
either their goods or money, as they liked beft.   *Arbuthnot.*
  (2.) They began to *carry* about in beds thofe that were fick.
                                                 Mark, vi. 55.

Figure 3: Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary*, quarto edition, 1777

And if we are expecting punctuation, indeed dictionary presentation as a whole,
to get simpler and more open over the centuries, we may be disappointed when we
arrive at the early twentieth century, and find an example like this (*figure 4*).

Note how much typographic coding is applied to an entry such as *Puseyism*.
Almost every word is in a different font (some in more than one), abbreviations are
freely used and parts of the entry are bracketed. A plus sign is used. And Figure 5 is
an example of almost impenetrable typographic coding from the 1970s.

So what are dictionary compilers and printers trying to do with punctuation—
indeed with typography generally? Does complex information have to be presented
with a complex typography? And is that complexity always the same as obscurity?
Have dictionaries been getting more complex?

porsievre, f. L PRO(sequere, -ire, pop. varr. of sequi follow)]

pursu'er, n. In vbl senses, also: (Civil & Sc. Law) prosecutor. [-ER¹]

pursu'it (-ūt), n. Pursuing, esp. in p. of (animal, person, one's object); profession, employment, recreation, that one follows. [f. AF PURseute, fem. p.p. & n. as PURSUE]

pur'suivant (-sw-), n. Officer of College of Arms below herald; (poet.) follower, attendant. [f. OF porsivant (as PURSUE, see -ANT)]

pur'sy¹, a. Short-winded, puffy; corpulent. Hence **pur'siNESS** n. [earlier -ive f. OF polsif (polser breathe with labour as PULSATE)]

pur'sy², a. Puckered. [f. PURSE¹ + -Y²]

pur'tenance, n. (archaic). Inwards, pluck, of animal. [earlier form of PERTINENCE]

pūr'ulent, a. Of, full of, discharging, pus. Hence or cogn. **pur'ulENCE,-ENCY**,nn.,**pur'ulENT**LY² adv. [f. L purulentus (PUS, see -LENT)]

purvey' (-vā), v.t. & i. Provide, supply, (articles of food) as one's business; make provision, act as purveyor, (for person, army, &c.). [f. AF PURVEier PROVIDE]

purvey'ance, n. Purveying; right of crown to provisions &c. at fixed price & to use of horses &c. [f. OF porveance, as PROVIDENCE]

purvey'or, n. One whose business it is to supply articles of food, esp. dinners &c. on large scale, as P. to the Royal Household; (Hist.) officer making purveyance for sovereign. [f. AF purveour (as PURVEY, see -OR²)]

pur'view (-vū), n. Enacting clauses of statute; scope, intention, range (of act, document, scheme, book, occupation, &c.); range of physical or mental vision. [f. AF purveu provided, p.p. as PURVEY]

pŭs, n. Yellowish viscid matter produced by suppuration. [L, gen. puris]

Pu'seyism (-zi-), n. (Hostile term for) TRACTARIANISM. So **Pu'sey**ITE¹ n. [E. B. Pusey d. 1882 + -ISM]

push¹ (pŏŏ-), v.t. & i. Exert upon (body) force tending to move it away; move (body up, down, away, back, &c.) thus; exert such pressure, as do not p. against the fence; (Billiards) make push-stroke; (of person in boat) p. off, p. against bank with oar to get boat out into stream &c.; (bibl.) butt (t. & i.) with the horns; (cause to) project, thrust out, forth, &c., as plants p. out new roots, cape pushes out into sea; make one's way forcibly or persistently, force (one's way) thus; exert oneself esp. to surpass others or succeed in one's business &c., whence **pu'sh**ING² a., **pu'shing**LY² adv.; urge, impel, (often on, to do, to effort &c.); follow up, prosecute, (claim &c., action on); engage actively in making (one's fortune); extend (one's conquests &c.); p. (matter) through, bring it to a conclusion; press the adoption, use, sale, &c. of (goods &c.) esp. by advertisement; press (person) hard, as do not wish to p. him for payment, esp. in pass., as am pushed for (can scarcely find) time, money; p.-pin, a child's game. Hence **pu'sh**ER ¹(1, 2) n. [f. F pousser as PULSATE]

push², n. Act of pushing, shove, thrust; (Billiards) stroke in which ball is pushed, not struck; exertion of influence to promote person's advancement; thrust of weapon as of beast's horn; vigorous effort, as must make a p. to get it done, for home; continuous pressure of arch &c.; pressure of affairs, crisis, pinch; enterprise, determination to get on, self-assertion, whence **pu'sh**FUL a.; (slang) gang of thieves, convicts, &c. [f. prec.]

pu'shtoo, -tu (-ŏŏ), n. Afghan language. [f. Pers. pashto]

pŭsillă'nimous, a. Faint-hearted, mean-

spirited. Hence or cogn. **pusillani'm**ITY n., **pusilla'nimous**LY² adv. [f. eccl. L pusillanimis (pusillus petty + animus soul) + -OUS]

puss (pŏŏs), n. Cat (esp. as call-name); (quasi-proper name for hare, tiger; colloq.) girl, as sly p.; p.-moth, large European moth. [cf. Du. poes, Norw. puse, perh. orig. a call]

pu'ssy, n. (nursery). P.(-cat), cat; (nursery) soft furry thing, e.g. hazel catkin. [-Y³]

pu'stŭlāte, v.t. & i. Form into pustules. So **pu'stul**ATE² (-at) a., **pustula**TION n. [f. LL pustulare, as foll.]

pu'stule, n. Pimple; malignant p., disease caused by anthrax bacillus; (Bot., Zool.) wart, wart-like excrescence. Hence or cogn. **pu'stular**¹, **pu'stul**OUS, aa. [f. L pustula (PUS)]

put¹ (pŏŏt), v.t. & i. (put). 1. Propel, hurl, (the weight, stone) from hand placed close to shoulder as athletic exercise; thrust (weapon), send (missile), as p. a knife into, stab, put a bullet through, shoot; (Naut.) proceed, take one's course, back, forth, in (to harbour &c.), out, in ship; move (thing &c., lit. & fig.) so as to place it in some situation, as p. it in your pocket, on the table, up the chimney, down the well, p. (mark, write) a tick against his name, your signature to it, p. the horse to (the cart), harness him, p. bull to cow or cow to bull (for breeding), p. (convey) him across the river, p. the children to bed, p. him in prison, cannot p. (deliver) Russian stock at present prices, has p. (infused) new life into him, will p. (present) the matter clearly before her, p. a SPOKE in his wheel, p. the words into his MOUTH¹, p. one's FOOT¹ in it, one's SHOULDER to the wheel, hand to the PLOUGH¹; (with less or no idea of physical motion in space) bring into some relation or state, as p. yourself, the matter, in(to) my hands, time he was p. (began to go habitually) to school, p. it to (offer it for) sale, on the market, p. Othello on (the stage), produce it, p. (add) milk to your tea, should p. (price) it at 2/6, puts (estimates) the circulation at 60,000, p. (translate) it into Dutch, cannot p. it into (express it in) words, what a way you have of putting things!, puts (sets) no value on my advice, I p. (base) my decision on the grounds stated, p. (apply) it to a good use, p. (imagine) yourself in his place, p. (substitute) the will for the deed, p. a good FACE¹ on it, p. an end, period, stop, to it, stop it, p. a check or stopper on it, a veto on it, check it, forbid it, p. an end to (destroyed) himself or his life, p. (stake) money on a horse, p. his money into (invested it in) land, p. (submit) the case to him, to the vote, I p. it (appeal) to you, I p. it to you (invite you to acknowledge) that you were after no good, dues were p. (imposed) on cattle, every insult was p. (inflicted) on him, don't be p. upon (victimised) by him, p. (lay) the blame on me, p. him (caused him to be) at his ease, in fear of his life, out of temper, on his guard, on his mettle, p. him (make him speak) on (his) oath, p. the servants on (allow them) board wages, p. the proposal into shape, p. his NOSE¹ out of joint, a few words will p. (make) the matter right, always manages to p. me (make me appear) in the wrong, p. out of COUNTENANCE¹, must have p. (made) the clock fast (by advancing hands), p. (subject) them to death, torture, ransom, expense, inconvenience, the test or trial, the rack, the sword, confusion, shame, land was p. into or under (sown with) turnips, p. (set) him to mind the furnace, what has p. him on meddling (induced him to meddle)?, on this wild scheme?, p. my horse to or at (invited him to jump) the fence, (of horse & fig. of person) must be p. through (made to perform) his paces, p. him (make him read) through

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Figure 4: *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1st edition, 1911

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găme² a. Like a gamecock, spirited (DIE² ~; as ~ as Ned Kelly, (Austral. colloq.) very brave); having the spirit or energy to do; ready for. [f. GAME¹ in obs. sense 'fighting spirit']

găme³ v.i. & t. Play at games of chance for

Figure 5: Specimen page prepared for *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 6th edition

Punctuation marks indicate the boundaries in text, and in continuous prose may be the only guide to the reader of the text's structure, dividing sentences into clauses and indicating the rhetorical value of a string of words. Complex typography can indicate structural boundaries in additional or alternative ways, even if the text has to be presented in a linear fashion, and conventional punctuation marks can to some extent be eliminated if the reader can infer how to read from the typographic presentation. In displayed typography, where there is relatively little constraint on the space that can be occupied, vertical space—between heading and text, between different kinds of paragraph—is the most effective form of typographic articulation, partly because it can be carefully graded—so we can tell the difference between the larger space above a heading and the smaller space below, and understand the heading's closer connection with the material that follows. Where space is limited, the paragraph indent allows for segmentation of a column of text without the need for additional vertical space between paragraphs. The standard paragraph indent has come to be the minimum indication necessary of a break in the text's structure in print, one that we can recognize but glide over with ease, one that does not disrupt the reader's sense of the continuity of the text.

In a continuous printed text it is less easy for the reader to infer continuity when paragraphs are set full out and divided by vertical space. The spaced, full-out paragraphs favored by some designers in the mid-twentieth century for books can work in specific contexts where space is not at a premium, and where it is important for the reader to understand clearly the paragraph structure of the text—web pages are a good example of this—but in print such spaces often imply too much fragmentation of a text for continuous reading. They emphasize the unit of the paragraph at the expense of the whole. The indented paragraph minimizes the individual paragraph's status relative to the whole text; vertical space (or a hanging indent) emphasizes the paragraph's separateness. And the hanging indent has greater power to indicate a significant division because of the potential emphasis it places on the first word.

Dictionary entries have experimented with a variety of devices to indicate the whole text's division into entries, and the division of those entries into their constituent parts—headwords, grammatical information, etymology, pronunciation, senses, definitions, examples and notes. As dictionaries have grown in complexity, the need for easy access to component parts of an entry has grown, and the solution to this has been found in the careful mapping of distinctive typography to constituent elements.

Not surprisingly, dictionaries with relatively simple structures can be accommodated by relatively simple typography. The earliest dictionaries were glossaries, essentially simple lists. The conventional use of roman and black letter could be used to separate the Latin (roman) and vernacular (black letter) visually with absolute certainty, removing the need for punctuation (the example is Coote's *English Schoole-maister*, 1596).
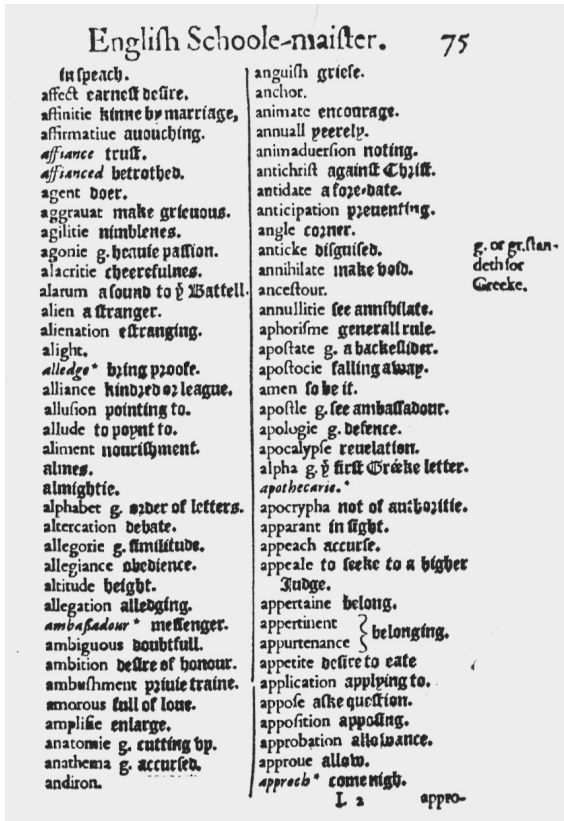
Figure 6: Edmund Coote, *The English School-maister*, 1596

The work of Robert Estienne (1503–59), who was both a lexicographer and a printer, can be seen as a turning point in using typography effectively to allow complexity in dictionaries.

Conduco, condúcis pen. prod conduxi, cóductum, conducere Plaut. *Emmener, Mener auce soy.*
¶Conducere, Congregare. Cic. Virgines in vnum locum conduxerunt *On assemble en un lieu.*
Exercitus in vnum conducere. Tacit.
Partes conducere in vnum. Lucret.
¶Conducere. Plaut *Acheter.*
Nimium magno conducere. Cic. *Acheter trop cher.*
¶Códucere aliquem. Plaut. *Louer aucun a faire quelqui chose.*
Aliquem ad cædem faciendam conducere. Cic.
Hortum conducere. Cic.   Domum conducere. Cic.
Alicui locum in proximo conducere. Cic.
Nauigium conducere. Horat.
Conducere mercede Cic.
Conducere nauem. Plaut. *Louer, ou prendre a louage.*
¶Conducere, etiam dicitur is qui pretium accipit prore aliqua facienda Iulianus Iureconsultus. *Entreprendre quelque besongne a faire pour quelque prix.*
Ad pecuniam numeratam conducere. Caius *A l'argent.*
Redemptor qui columnam illam de Cotta & de Torquato conduxerat faciendam. Cic. Id est, à Cotta, &c.
Multitudo conducta. Cic. *Assemblee de mercenaires.*
¶Conducit, in tertiis personis, pro Vtile est. Plaut. Cic. — *Vtile & proufitable; il dort, il est duisant.*
Ea maxime conducunt, quæ sunt rectissima. Cic.
Neque homini infanti aut impotenti iniuste facta conducunt. Cic.
Conducit hoc tuæ laudi. Cic.
Proposito conducere res dicitur. Horat. *Qui conuient au propos.*
Rationibus nostris conducit id fieri. Cic.
Conducit hoc Reip. rationibus. Cic.
Saluti tuæ conducunt. Cic.
Conducunt hæc ad ventris victum. Plaut.
In rem quod recte conducat tuam. Plaut.

Conclamo, as, are, a.p. Simul clamare, clamare. συμβεᾷν. { Ital. *Gridare insieme, gridare.* Gall. *Crier ensemble, s'escrier.* Hisp. *Liamar dando uoces.* Germa. *Mitschreien, zusamen schreien.* } Cic. 6. Phil. Quum vos uniuersi una mente atq̃ uoce iterum à me conseruatam esse Rempub. conclamastis. Tacit. lib. Conclamant patres, corpus ad rogum humeris Senatorum ferebdum. ¶Conclamare, pro simplici Clamare. Cæsar 1. bel. Gallic. Qnos quum apud se in castris Ariouistus conspexisset, exercitu suo præsente conclamauit quid ad se uenirent. ¶Conclamare uasa, militaris est locutio, pro denunciare inter milites, ut uasa colligant: quod fiebat quum exercitus moturus erat castra. ἀνασυγὴν σημαίνειν. Cæsar lib. 1. bell. Ciu. Quo cognito, signum dari iubet, & uasa militari more conclamari. ¶Cõclamatum est, hoc est, transactum & finitum est. πῖπρα κται. { Ital. *Egli è finito.* Gall. *Tout est fait.* Hisp. *Le cosa esta acabada.* Germ. *Die sach ist schon vber hin, es ist schon beschehen.* } Quod locutionis genus ab ijs tractum putatur, qui morientibus assistũt. Solent enim illi cadauerum recens exanimatorum faciem identidem frigida abluere, nomenq̃ eorum clara uoce inclamare, ne forte syncope correptos pro mortuis funerarent. Nam qui animi deliquium patiuntur, mortuis simillimi sunt: unde & nonnullos pro mortuis claros, & à rogo relatos accepimus. Quum itaq̃ affusa sub inde frigida, nomineq̃ sæpius inclamato nihil proficeretur, post ultimam conclamatiohem re iam desperata comburebãtur. ¶Hinc corpora conclamata dicuntur, hoc est, deplorata, quibusq̃ extremum hoc conclamationis præstitum est officium. Luca. -corpora nondum Conclamata iacent.
Conclamatio, onis, uerbale καταβοὴ, καταβόησις. { Ital. *Crido di piu genti.* Gall. *Cri de plusieurs gens.* Hispan. *Aquello llamado con bozes.* Ger. *Das zusammen schreien viler.* } Clamor multorum. Seneca quum aliqua conclamatio est quomodo exeat, non quid efferat, quærit.

Figure 7: Robert Estienne, *Dictionarium Latino–Gallicum,* 1552

Figure 8: Ambrogio Calepino, *Dictionarium*, Basel edition, 1550

The clarity of Estienne's entries is achieved by the use of three sizes of type, and his contrast of roman and italic fonts (here, roman for Latin and italic for French), but punctuation plays its part, with the paragraph mark being used to indicate the main sense divisions. When a printer has to make his entries more compact, as in Calepino's multilingual dictionary where the entire entry is set as a single paragraph, the boldness of the paragraph mark becomes an even clearer organizing principle in the entry.

Because we can easily discriminate different tonal values within a block of text, bold marks and bold letters are the most effective way of picking out a section or a word for our attention; they act as a form of visual punctuation. We might even perceive italic as a variant (as in the examples above) because we perceive the tonal and rhythmic disruption of the text rather than because we perceive the type as sloped.

Figure 9: Webster's *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1886

Up to the nineteenth century only roman, italic and small-capital fonts were available to printers; the only bolder letterforms were black-letter, which had a distinct rhetorical meaning: that the text was in the vernacular, in English, not in Latin or another of the international languages of learning. The *English Schoole-maister* is a book of hard words, that is it introduces the reader to an aspirational vocabulary of Latinate and French forms: Latinate 'active' for the Anglo-Saxon 'nimble,' French '*affianced*' for 'betrothed.' Black-letter could therefore be useful for headwords and other emphasis, but only where its use coincided with its association with the vernacular; headwords are shown in black-letter as late as Kersey's 1706 edition of Phillip's *World of Words*. In Francis Junius's etymological dictionary (published 1743) the different Germanic languages are set in different black-letter fonts to identify them, and the visibility they achieve through their boldness is accidental. Black-letter was replaced by headwords in capitals or a combination of capitals and small capitals. The introduction of bold styles of type in the nineteenth century allowed clear articulation of entries on the page, and headwords achieved a new prominence. Bold type (shown above in an 1886 edition of Webster's) would become the main visual punctuation of the page for the reader, and the main signal of the start of a new entry.

The structure of a dictionary entry is essentially a list with nested sub-lists, and this is clearly revealed in the presentation of Johnson's *Dictionary*. Each entry consists of a headword section (including grammatical and etymological information), then one or more definitions, each followed by one or more illustrative quotations (*figure 10*).

The text of Johnson's dictionary was relatively unmarked, as paragraphing, indenting and alignment did the work of articulating the structure of an entry. Robert Hunter (*Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, 1879) and James Murray (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 1884–) (*see figures 11, 15 and 16*) added a range of typographic cues for various elements, but these were large format dictionaries, and were able to retain spatial organizing features.

Figure 10: Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755

Figure 11: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1884–1933

The need to save space in printed dictionaries means that the linear separation of elements below the level of the entry is not always observed; in compact dictionaries senses and illustrative quotations are generally run on. Compact dictionaries began to appear at the end of the nineteenth century with the publication of Chambers's *Twentieth Century Dictionary* (1901), and titles such as the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1911) came to dominate the popular market. They contained huge amounts of information, but the need to compress this volume of material, and the decision to make every entry, however complex its structure, into a single paragraph compromised accessibility. These run-on dictionaries removed the overall visual structuring that had oriented the reader within the entry, and meant that the reader had to rely on decoding the increasingly complex coding of typography and punctuation in which they were set. The need to rely on typographic coding rather than spatial organization was compounded by the introduction of mechanical typesetting, which placed a limit on the number of different fonts that could be set at any one time. The example in Figure 12 is from the *COD* 6th edition (1976).

With space no longer an option, modern compact dictionaries would have to rely on typographic cues—font changes and graphic marks—to do this articulation.

~ **point,** state of game when one side needs only one more point to win it; ~**-preserver,** landowner etc. who breeds game and applies game laws strictly; ~**-tenant,** lessee of shooting or fishing; ~(s) **theory,** mathematical analysis of conflicts in war, economics, games of skill, etc.; ~**-warden,** person locally supervising game and hunting. [OE *gamen,*=OS, OHG, ON *gaman*] **găme²** *a.* Like a gamecock, spirited (DIE² *game*; **as ~ as Ned Kelly,** (Austral. colloq.) very brave); having the spirit or energy *to* do; valiantly ready *for*; hence ~'LY² (-mlĭ) *adv.,* ~'NESS (-mn-) *n.* [f. GAME¹ in obs. sense 'fighting spirit'] **găme³** *v.i.* Play at games of chance for money, gamble; **gaming-house, -table,** (frequented for gambling); hence ~'STER (-ms-) *n.* [ME, f. GAME¹] **găme⁴** *a.* (Of leg, arm, etc.) lame, crippled. [18th c. dial., of unkn. orig.] **gă'melăn** *n.* E. Ind. orchestra, mainly of percussion instruments; kind of xylophone used in this. [Jav.] **gă'mes|man** (-mzm-) *n.* (*pl.* ~**men**). Exponent of gamesmanship; hence ~**man**SHIP *n.,* art or

Figure 12: *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, **6th edition, 1973**

Brackets and parentheses can be used to divide an entry into component parts, or to indicate a special status for the surrounded word, usually it is an example, or some kind of coded information. In many dictionaries, brackets have a catch-all function for any annotation or categorization of the definition, for example editorial comments ('Not in use') or subject field labels ('Botany,' 'Pharmacy'). An early user of such labels was Nathan Bailey and his *Dictionarium Britannicum* (1730) (*left*) that uses square brackets for these and exactly the same style for etymologies. Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828) (*right*) also uses square brackets indiscriminately for etymologies, simple annotations and cross-references.

Figure 13: Nathan Bailey, *Dictionarium Britannicum*, 1730

Figure 14: Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828

Etymologies, conventionally placed immediately after the headword or at the very end of the entry, have been surrounded by brackets from the earliest printed dictionaries. *A Table Alphabeticall* (1604) includes single-letter codes in parentheses such as (g) for a word of Greek origin. Nathan Bailey's *Universal Etymological Dictionary of English* (1727) and *Dictionarium Britannicum* use square brackets around etymological information, and these become the norm, used by Johnson (1755) exclusively for etymologies. Noah Webster (1828) uses square brackets for any editorial note, but the association of square brackets with etymologies was reinforced and improved by James Murray's use in the *OED* (1884–) (*figure 15*).

Murray's *OED* layout features were prefigured by Robert Hunter's *Encyclopædic Dictionary* (1879), including the use of bolder square brackets to surround etymologies (*figure 16*). Hunter and Murray both used bold slab-serif type for headwords to

Brigandine, brigantine (bri·gǎndīn, tīn). Forms: 5 brigantyn, (bregandyrn, -ardyn), brig-, bryga(u)ndyn(e, (Sc. brikcane-, brekanetyne), 5-6 brigandyne, 6 bregendine, (?7 brigintine), 6- brigandine, -tine. [Late ME., a. OF. brigandine (15th c. in Littré): i. e. armour for a brigand (in the original sense): see -INE.] 1. 'Body armour composed of iron rings or small thin iron plates, sewed upon canvas, linen, or

āid, *āyde, s. [From the verb. In Fr. aide; Sp. ayuda; Port. ajuda; Ital. aiuto; Lat. adjutus.] A. Ordinary Language: I. The act of helping or assisting. II. The state of being helped. ¶ In aid: To render assistance. "Your private right should impious power invade, The peers of Ithaca would arm in aid."

Figure 15: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1884–1933

Figure 16: Robert Hunter, *The Encyclopædic Dictionary*, 1879

contrast with the lighter roman used for text; the bolder square brackets give clear boundaries to the etymology which, in these dictionaries, can include many different fonts, and run on for several lines within the headword paragraph. The bold square brackets have a unifying as well as delimiting function.

Parentheses can be used to indicate examples, either to indicate usage options within a definition, or to separate off illustrative quotations. The use of parenthesized words in a definition is intended to offer the reader the opportunity to substitute any appropriate word ('**abandon ...** to yield (oneself) without restraint'), or indicate a specifier or modifier of some kind ('**pitch ...** To hit (a golf ball) in a high arc ...'). The parenthesized words may themselves be highlighted by a font change.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate uses angle brackets to distinguish illustrative examples from the parenthesized modifiers (*figure 17*); this is necessary because the illustrative examples are set in roman, and therefore have to be set off from the definition. *Collins English Dictionary* (2000) simply italicizes the examples (*figure 18*), introducing them with a colon, a much less fussy and more elegant solution. (Colons in the *Collegiate* and other Merriam-Webster dictionaries have a special function: to introduce the senses and sub-senses of a definition. This allows unnumbered sub-sub-senses to run on.)

³**pitch** *vb* [ME *pichen*] *vt* (13c) **1** : to erect and fix firmly in place ⟨∼ a tent⟩ **2** : to throw usu. with a particular objective or toward a particular point ⟨∼ hay onto a wagon⟩: as **a** : to throw (a baseball) to a batter **b** : to toss (as coins) so as to fall at or near a mark ⟨∼ pennies⟩ **c** : to put aside or discard by or as if by throwing ⟨∼ed the trash into the bin⟩ ⟨decided to ∼ the whole idea⟩ **3** : to present or advertise for sale esp. in a high-pressure way **4 a** (1) : to cause to be at a particular level or of a particular quality (2) : to set in a particular musical key **b** : to cause to be set at a particular angle : SLOPE **5** : to utter glibly and insincerely **6 a** : to use as a starting pitcher **b** : to play as pitcher **7** : to hit (a golf ball) in a high arc with backspin so that it rolls very little after striking the green ∼ *vi* **1 a** : to fall precipitately or headlong **b** (1) *of a ship* : to have the bow alternately plunge precipitately and rise abruptly (2) *of an aircraft, missile, or spacecraft* : to turn about a lateral axis so that the forward end rises or falls in relation to the after end **c** : BUCK 1 **2** : ENCAMP **3** : to hit upon or happen upon something ⟨∼ upon the perfect gift⟩ **4** : to incline downward : SLOPE **5 a** : to throw a ball to a batter **b** : to play ball as a pitcher **c** : to pitch a golf ball **6** : to make a sales pitch *syn* see THROW — **pitch into 1** : AT-TACK, ASSAIL **2** : to set to work on energetically

losing ('lu:zɪŋ) *adj* unprofitable; failing: *the business was a losing concern.* **losings** ('lu:zɪŋz) *pl n* losses, esp. money lost in gambling. **loss** (lɒs) *n* **1** the act or an instance of losing. **2** the disadvantage or deprivation resulting from losing: *a loss of reputation.* **3** the person, thing, or amount lost: *a large loss.* **4** (*pl*) military personnel lost by death or capture. **5** (*sometimes pl*) the amount by which the costs of a business transaction or operation exceed its revenue. **6** a measure of the power lost in an electrical system expressed as the ratio of or difference between the input power and the output power. **7** *Insurance.* **7a** an occurrence of something that has been insured against, thus giving rise to a claim by a policyholder. **7b** the amount of the resulting claim. **8 at a loss. 8a** uncertain what to do; bewildered. **8b** rendered helpless (for lack of something): *at a loss for words.* **8c** at less than the cost of buying, producing, or maintaining (something): *the business ran at a loss for several years.* [C14: noun probably formed from *lost*, past participle of *losen* to perish, from Old English *lōsian* to be destroyed, from *los* destruction] **loss adjuster** *n Insurance.* a person qualified to adjust losses incurred through fire, explosion, accident, theft, natural disaster, etc., to agree the loss and the

Figure 17: *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th edition, 1998

Figure 18: *Collins English Dictionary*, 5th edition, 2000

> countries for teaching children to count.
> **abandon** /əbændən/, **abandons, abandoning,**
> **abandoned**. 1 If you **abandon** something such as a   v+o
> place or object, you leave it permanently or for a   ≠ stay with
> long time, especially because you do not want to look
> after it any longer. ᴇɢ *You're not supposed to aban-*
> *don your car on the motorway.*
> **2** If you **abandon** someone, especially someone you   v+o
> have responsibility for, you leave them and never go   = desert
> back to them. ᴇɢ *He then abandoned her and went off*   ≠ stay with
> *to live in Nigeria.*
> **3** If you **abandon** something such as a piece of work,   v+o
> plan, or activity, you stop doing it before it is   = give up, quit
> finished. ᴇɢ *I had abandoned the search.*   ≠ continue
> **4** If you **abandon** an idea or way of thinking, you stop   v+o
> thinking in that way. ᴇɢ *Reputable scholars have now*   = give up
> *abandoned the notion... I have abandoned the idea of*
> *consistency.*
> **5** If you **abandon ship**, you get off it because it is   PHR : VB
> sinking.   INFLECTS
> **6** If you **abandon** yourself to an emotion, you feel and   v+o (REFL) +A
> think only about that emotion and nothing else. ᴇɢ   *(to)*
> *She abandoned herself to grief.*   ⇑ release
> **7** If you do something with **abandon**, you behave in a   N UNCOUNT : USU
> wild, uncontrolled way and do not think or care   *with* +N

Figure 19: *Collins ᴄᴏʙᴜɪʟᴅ English Language Dictionary*, 1987

Parentheses can be avoided if the writing style of the dictionary is changed from a telegraphic one to one that is more expansive. The Collins ᴄᴏʙᴜɪʟᴅ dictionaries (*figure 19*) pioneered this approach. All the contextual information is contained within the narrative definition, and the illustrative quotation runs on directly, introduced by ᴇɢ.

CUSTOMIZED PUNCTUATION:
BULLETS, WINGDINGS AND ARROWS

If we think of a punctuation mark as an indicator of a text element's boundary, then we can consider bullets and other arbitrary marks as a form of punctuation. Meaningful graphic devices that categorize entries or senses, such as the pictograms in the *Oxford Dictionary of New Words* (*figure 20*) and the *Oxford Starter Dictionaries*, are substitutes for subject field labels and are visual text rather than punctuation, despite their prominence. Similarly, the dash, either swung (*COD, Merriam-Webster's Collegiate*) or plain (*Concise Cambridge Italian Dictionary*), as a marker for the headword, is a text symbol, not punctuation (*see figures 17, 21 and 24*).

Dictionaries use square, round and triangular bullets, both solid and open, to draw attention to the start of some sub-sections, but there is no standard convention between dictionaries to assign these to any hierarchy. Not quite symbols (because they do not categorize) and not quite abbreviations (although they are compact

graphics card 🖥 see CARD²

gray economy 〜 see GREY ECONOMY

graymail 〜 see GREENMAIL

graze /greɪz/ *intransitive verb* ✕ 🍴
To perform an action in a casual or perfunctory

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bright *adj.* lucido, risplendente; vivido; — *red*, rosso vivo; — *and early*, di prima mattina; gioioso; vivace; intelligente; *a — girl*, una ragazza sveglia; *the — side of things*, il lato buono delle cose; *to look on the — side*, vedere tutto rosa; essere ottimista; *adv.* luminosamente; allegramente. *-en intr.* brillare; *things are brightening up*, l'avvenire si annuncia più sereno; *tr.* far

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compound¹ ▶ noun /ˈkɒmpaʊnd/ a thing that is composed of two or more separate elements; a mixture of two or more things: *the air smelled like a compound of diesel and petrol fumes.*
■(also **chemical compound**) a substance formed from two or more elements chemically united in fixed proportions: *a compound of hydrogen and oxygen | lead compounds.* ■ a word made up of two or more existing words.
▶ **adjective** /ˈkɒmpaʊnd/ [attrib.] made up or consisting of several parts or elements, in particular:
■(of a word) made up of two or more existing words or elements: *a compound noun.* ■ (of interest) payable on both capital and the accumulated interest: *compound interest.* Compare with **SIMPLE**. ■ Biology (especially of a leaf, flower, or eye) consisting of two or more simple

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enough ● det. & pron. as much or as many as is necessary or desirable. ● adv. **1** to the required degree or extent. **2** to a moderate degree.
– PHRASES **enough is enough** no more will be tolerated. **enough said** all is understood and there is no need to say more.
– ORIGIN OE *genōg*, of Gmc origin.
en papillote /ɒ̃ ˈpapɪjɒt/ ● adj. & adv. (of food) cooked and served in a paper wrapper.

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lovely /ˈlʌvli/ *adj.* (-lier, -liest) **1.** BEAUTIFUL AND PLEASING beautiful and pleasing, especially in a harmonious way **2.** DELIGHTFUL very enjoyable or pleasant **3.** CARING loving or friendly and caring **4.** ATTRACTING LOVE attracting or inspiring love in others ■ *n.* (*plural* -lies) SB OR STH GOOD-LOOKING sb who or sth that is very good-looking, especially a woman (*often used in the plural; sometimes considered offensive*) ○ *Farewell, my lovely!* The word originally meant 'affectionate' and 'lovable'; the modern sense 'beautiful' did not develop until the late 13thC.] —**loveliness** *n.*

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a·ban·don¹ (ə banʹdən), *v.t.* **1.** to leave completely and finally; forsake utterly; desert: *to abandon one's home; to abandon a child; to abandon a sinking ship.* **2.** to give up; discontinue; withdraw from: *to abandon the cares of empire; to abandon a research project.* **3.** to give up the control of: *to abandon a city to a conqueror.* **4.** to yield (oneself) without restraint or moderation; give (oneself) over to natural impulses, usually without self-control: *to abandon oneself to grief.* **5.** *Law.* to cast away, leave, or desert, as property or a child. **6.** *Insurance.* to relinquish (insured property) to the underwriter in case of partial loss, thus enabling the insured to claim a total loss. **7.** *Obs.* to banish. [ME *abando(u)ne* < MF *abandon(er)* for OF (*mettre*) a *bandon* (put) under ban, equiv. to *a* at, to (< L *ad*; see AD-) + *bandon* < LL *bandum, var. of bannum* interdict < Gmc; see BAN²] —**a·banʹdon·a·ble,** *adj.* —**a·banʹdon·er,** *n.* —**a·banʹdon·ment,** *n.*

Figure 20: *Oxford Dictionary of New Words*, 1991

Figure 21: *Concise Cambridge Italian Dictionary*, 1975

Figure 22: *New Oxford Dictionary of English*, 1998

Figure 23: *Encarta Concise English Dictionary*, 2001

Figure 24: *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 10th edition, 2000

Figure 25: *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged Edition*, 1966

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substitutes for a word), arrows and directional markers are used to indicate derivatives, variant forms and cross-references.

The *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (1966) uses a less-than sign to introduce an etymological formation, to imply 'formed from'; because the most recent form is given first, the arrow direction is right to left, indicating the development of the etymology (*figure 25*).

Various forms of respelling the headword are used to indicate pronunciation. For English language learners' dictionaries, transcription using the International Phonetic Alphabet is standard, but respelling systems using length signs and stress marks are used for 'home market' dictionaries in the US and UK. There are conventions that the slash is used to surround phonemic transcriptions and that square brackets are used for phonetic transcriptions, but publishers seem to choose their own styles. Oxford uses slashes, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate* uses backslashes, *Collins English Dictionary* uses parentheses.

TRANSLATION AND COMBINATION: SYMBOLS AS VISUAL PUNCTUATION

While the plus sign has regularly been used in etymologies and to explain compound forms, the use of the equals sign to indicate a translation was pioneered by the *Oxford Starter* bilingual dictionaries (1997) (*figure 26*). This decision faced some opposition, as it can be argued that a translation may not be the exact equivalent

fall
1 *verb*
• (*if it's a person*) = tomber (**!** + *être*)
   she fell to the ground = elle est tombée
     par terre
• (*to come down, to be reduced*) = baisser
• (*other uses*)
   to fall asleep = s'endormir (**!** + *être*)
   to fall ill = tomber malade (**!** + *être*)
   to fall in love with someone = tomber
     amoureux/amoureuse de quelqu'un
2 *noun*
• (*in prices, temperature*)
   a fall = une baisse
   a fall in prices = une baisse des prix
• (*US English*) (*autumn*)
   fall = l'automne (*masculine*)
fall down
• (*if it's a person*) = tomber (**!** + *être*)
• (*if it's a building*) = s'effondrer (**!** + *être*)
fall off = tomber (**!** + *être*)
   to fall off a chair = tomber d'une chaise
fall out
• (*from somewhere*) = tomber (**!** + *être*)
   the letter fell out of his pocket = la lettre
     est tombée de sa poche
• (*to quarrel*) = se brouiller (**!** + *être*)

Figure 26: *Oxford Starter French Dictionary*, 1997

that the equals sign implies. But for a range of simple dictionaries with vocabulary stripped down to what was essential for the school language curriculum, the clarity of the symbol seems entirely appropriate. The *Starter French* shows extreme paragraphing, no abbreviations, the use of bullets to identify different translation contexts and the equals sign to reinforce the start of the translation; parentheses surround the contextualizing information in the original language, and grammatical information in the target language. The bold exclamation mark functions as a warning code that the verb in the translation takes *être* rather than *avoir*.

ARE DICTIONARIES ABANDONING PUNCTUATION?

More recent dictionaries such as the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2001), the *Collins English Dictionary* (2004, *below*), and the *Oxford Compact English Dictionary* (2008, *below*) have significantly reduced the amount of punctuation on the page. End of sentence full-stops have been abandoned at the end of senses (except in the Oxford), and full-stops avoided after abbreviations and sense numbers; the articulation depends almost entirely on font changes.

keynote ('kiːˌnəʊt) *n* **1a** a central or determining principle in a speech, literary work, etc **1b** (*as modifier*): *a keynote speech* **2** the note upon which a scale or key is based; tonic ▷ *vb* **keynotes, keynoting, keynoted** (*tr*) **3** to deliver a keynote address to (a political convention, etc)
keypad ('kiːˌpæd) *n* a small panel with a set of buttons for operating a teletext system, electronic calculator, etc
key punch *n* **1** Also called: **card punch** a device having a keyboard that is operated manually to transfer data onto punched cards, paper tape, etc ▷ *vb* **key-punch 2** to transfer (data) by using a key punch
keyring drive *n computing* another name for **pocket drive**
key signature *n music* a group of sharps or flats appearing at the beginning of each stave line to indicate the key in which a piece, section, etc, is to be performed

key¹ noun (pl. **keys**) **1** a small piece of shaped metal which is inserted into a lock and turned to open or close it. **2** an instrument for grasping and turning a screw, peg, or nut. **3** a lever pressed down by the finger in playing an instrument such as the organ, piano, or flute. **4** each of several buttons on a panel for operating a typewriter or computer terminal. **5** a means of achieving or understanding something: *discipline seems to be the key to her success.* **6** an explanatory list of symbols used in a map or table. **7** a word or system for solving a code. **8** a group of musical notes based on a particular note and comprising a scale. **9** roughness on a surface, provided to assist adhesion of plaster or other material. • **adjective** vitally important: *he was a key figure in the civil war.* • **verb** (**keys, keying, keyed**)

Figure 27: *Collins English Dictionary Desktop Edition*, 2004

Figure 28: *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd edition, 2005

Digital text composition has removed the constraint that existed throughout the period of mechanical and photomechanical composition: the limit on the number of fonts that could be set together economically. Hand-setting had no such constraint; the *OED*'s rich typography might not have existed had its composition started some

twenty years later, after the introduction of the Monotype machine. A wider range of typographic resources, such as the ability to use both a serif and a sanserif typeface family in several weight and width variants means that dictionary designers can contemplate a one-to-one relationship between text element and typographic presentation. This was simply not possible in earlier times, when the same italic had to do service for a variety of functions. Multi-font dictionaries can eliminate inter-element punctuation because the mapping of typography to structure is clear. Typically designers can allocate sanserif fonts to the metalanguage of the dictionary, and serif fonts to the plain text of definitions, adding a separate dimension to the weight axis that can indicate headwords, derived forms, phrases and cross-references. Careful use of type designs that can stand extreme degrees of condensing allows grammatical and subject labels to be spelled out in full, and not be reduced to abbreviations. Types (typically sanserif) with extreme tonal ranges (extra bold to extra light) can provide color contrast. A comparison of a limited typographic range and an extended one are shown in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*'s 4th and 5th editions (*figures 29 and 30*). In the 4th edition, a single italic font has many functions; in the 5th edition these functions are differentiated by font.

Online dictionaries are absolved of the fundamental constraint of a printed dictionary: space. There is no need for elements in an entry to be run on to save space, and a return can be made to text articulated by space; less dependent on

vastidity /'vɑːstɪti/ *n. rare.* E17. [Irreg. var. of VASTITY, after wds in *-idity*.] Vastness.
   SHAKES. *Meas. for M.* A restraint, Though all the world's vastidity you had, To a determined scope.
vector /'vɛktə/ *n.* E18. [L = carrier, traveller, rider, from *vect-* pa. ppl stem of *vehere* carry, convey: see -OR.] † 1 *Astron.* = *radius vector* s.v. RADIUS *n.* Only in 18. **2 a** math. A quantity having direction as well as magnitude, denoted by a line drawn from its original to its final position. Cf. SCALAR *n.* M19. **b** *Math.* An ordered set of two or more numbers (interpretable as the coordinates of a point); a matrix with one row or one column. Also, any element of a vector space. E20. **c** *Aeronaut.* A course to be taken by an aircraft, or steered by a pilot. M20. **d** *Computing.* A sequence of consecutive locations in memory; a series of items occupying such a sequence and identified within it by means of one subscript; *spec.* one serving as the address to which a program must jump when interrupted, and supplied by the source of the interrupt. M20. **3 a** *Med. & Biol.* An organism, esp. an

vastidity /vɑː'stɪdɪti/ *noun rare.* E17.
   [Irreg. var. of VASTITY, after wds in *-idity*.]
   Vastness.
   📖 SHAKES. *Meas. for M.* A restraint, Though all the world's vastidity you had, To a determined scope.

vector /'vɛktə/ *noun* E18.
   [Latin = carrier, traveller, rider, from *vect-* pa. ppl stem of *vehere* carry, convey: see -OR.]
   † 1 ASTRONOMY = *radius vector* s.v. RADIUS *noun* Only in 18.
   2 a MATH. A quantity having direction as well as magnitude, denoted by a line drawn from its original to its final position. Cf. SCALAR *noun* M19. ▸**b** MATH. An ordered set of two or more numbers (interpretable as the coordinates of a point); a matrix with one row or one column. Also, any element of a vector space. E20. ▸**c** AERONAUTICS. A course to be taken by an aircraft, or steered by a pilot. M20. ▸**d** COMPUTING. A sequence of consecutive locations in memory; a series of items occupying such a sequence and identified within it by means of one subscript; *spec.* one serving as the address to which a program must jump when interrupted, and supplied by the source of the interruption. M20.
   3 a MEDICINE & BIOLOGY. An organism, esp. an insect or other arthropod, which causes the transmission of a pathogen

Figure 29: *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, **4th edition, 1993**

Figure 30: *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, **5th edition, 2002**

visual punctuation by change of font or special character. Indeed, the (continuing) lack of a wide range of standardly available fonts for online browsing militates against over-complex typography (Apple's on-screen implementation of the *New Oxford American Dictionary* is shown). Webfonts accessed from a server and not dependent on the reader's browser, may provide the solution. When dictionary websites can efficiently use webfonts to render their contents as subtle and effective as the best of those used in print, the typography of the online dictionary will have come of age.
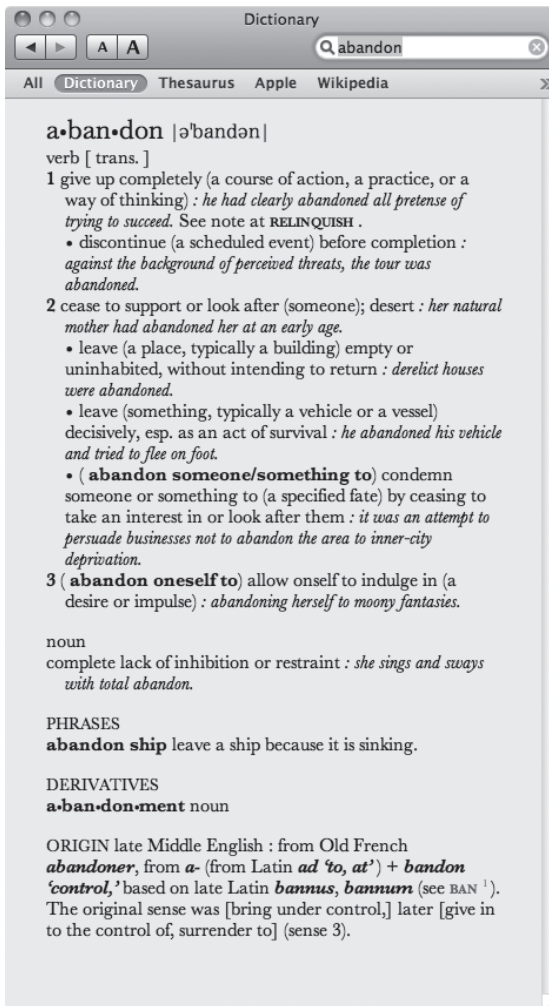

Figure 31: *New Oxford American Dictionary*, Apple OS 10.6 implementation, 2011

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