

Broken transitions

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Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Lisbon.
Used fonts : Roboto, Roboto Serif

*Vol. I : Accidental Failures
and Unintended Disruptions*

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and Unintended Disruptions*

Synopsis

Perfection is a myth and reality is messy. A perfectionist approach to design is therefore difficult, not to say impossible or unattainable. However, the digital and human errors inherent in the design process can open up unexpected perspectives. With this in mind, *Broken Transitions* is a trilogy of editorial artifacts that explores the creative potential of error. Based on the concept of transduction between media (between digital and physical formats), the project highlights how errors, often seen as anomalies to be corrected, can become poetic elements or engines of meaning and expression.

This editorial project is developed around three printed objects, which address different categories of error: *unintended*, unintentional errors, resulting from technical, human or material limitations; *reclaimed* or recovered errors, discovered by chance and deliberately preserved; *provoked* errors, resulting from deliberate sabotage or misuse of technology.

Each volume has its own graphic identity, shaped by its particular relationship with a typology of error, combining slants, misalignments, flaws, overlapping pages and experiments in typographic manipulation. Ultimately, the project questions the pursuit of perfection in design processes, inviting us to see errors and anomalies as creative opportunities.

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Windows XP Printer Test Page

Congratulations!

If you can read this information, you have correctly installed
Printer 3100cn PCL6 on RRAEFRASER-PC.

The information below describes your printer driver and port s

Submitted Time: 11:21:43 28/07/2010
Computer name: RRAEFRASER-PC
Printer name: Dell Laser Printer 3100cn
Printer model: Dell Laser Printer 3100cn PCL6
Color support: Yes
Port name(s): IP_192.168.102.12
Data format: RAW
Share name:
Location:
Comment:
Driver name: dlxbzrim.dll
Data file: dlxbzrp.ddd
Config file: dlxbzrii.dll
Help file: dlxbzihlp
Driver version: 16.04
Environment: Windows NT x86
Monitor: Status Monitor Language Monitor for Dell Laser
Default datatype: RAW

Additional files used by this driver:

C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlxbzrim.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlxbzrp.ddd
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlxbzrii.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlzddmf.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlzdnb32.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlznie1.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlzpmc2.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlzafonn.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlzar132.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlz3102.dll
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlxbz.cfg
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlxbz.cht
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlxbz.xls
C:\WINDOWS\system32\spool\DRIVERS\W32X86\3\dlxbz.cdu

This is the end of the printer test page.

Print Save Repeat Blog (2013) What To Do
If Your Laser Printer is Printing Too Light? [Online forum]

fuzzyscience2020 (2022) Brother laser printer leaving black smudges all over pages. Any idea how
to fix? I tried cleaning everything inside but still prints the same [comment in an online forum]

BAY AREA PRODUCTS AND SERVICES INC.

ME	22,132	
less return	22,132	
	57	
	22,132	
loss		
	7,630	
DEDUCTIONS		
Charitable contributions	468	16
Charitable deductions (less tax)	20,899	15
Repairs and maintenance	9,749	
Rents	5,386	
Taxes and licenses	0	
Depreciation	2,938	
Advertising	88,740	9
Pension, profit-sharing, etc. plans		
Other deductions	232,791	32
Total deductions	20,210	
Ordinary business income (loss)		
REFUND OR AMOUNT DUE		
Balance due	20,210	
SCHEDULE K - INCOME		
Ordinary business income (loss)	20,210	
Interest income	25	
SCHEDULE K - ITEMS AFFECTING BASIS		
Other tax-exempt income	0	
SCHEDULE K - OTHER INFORMATION		
Investment income	25	
Income (loss) reconciliation	20,235	
SCHEDULE L - BALANCE SHEET		
Beginning Assets	81,273	
Beginning Liabilities & Equity	81,273	
Ending Assets	91,127	
Ending Liabilities & Equity	91,127	
AMOUNT DUE		
	0	
SCHEDULE K - INCOME		
Ordinary business income (loss)	20,210	
Interest income	25	
SCHEDULE K - ITEMS AFFECTING BASIS		
Other tax-exempt income	0	
SCHEDULE K - OTHER INFORMATION		
Investment income	25	
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SCHEDULE L - BALANCE SHEET		
Beginning Assets	81,273	
Beginning Liabilities & Equity	81,273	

1.The hidden materiality of errors

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Technical and human
limits of transduction

1.1. The analog core

of digital system

10

Cramer, F. (2014).
What Is 'Post-Digital'?

11

“Technically, there is no such thing as ‘digital media’ or ‘digital aesthetics’ Media, in the technical sense of storage, transmission, computation and display devices, are always analog. The electricity in a computer chip is analog, as its voltage can have arbitrary, undifferentiated values within a specific range, just like a fretless violin string. Only through filtering can one make a certain sub-range of high voltages correspond to a ‘zero’ and another sub-range of low voltages to a ‘one’. Hardware defects can cause bits to flip, turning zeroes into ones and vice-versa.”

1.1. The analog core

of digital system

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"It would be too strong, perhaps, to state that Latour denied the specificity of the digital as such; rather, through a sophisticated form of 'bait and switch', he used a convincingly deployed visualization of what the digital 'really' is, courtesy of an image drawn from Cantwell-Smith (2003) to disprove notions of the digital as 'not-physical'. Indeed, this approach to the digital echoes his earlier statements from 1997 about the digital, arguing that he does not believe that computers are abstract. There is (either) 0 and (or) 1 has absolutely no connection with the abstractness. It is actually very concrete, never 0 and 1 (at the same time). There is only transformation. Information as something which will be carried through space and time, without deformation, is a complete myth. People who deal with the technology will actually use the practical notion of transformation. From the same bytes, in terms of 'abstract encoding', the output you get is entirely different, depending on the medium you use."

Berry, D. M. (2015).
The Postdigital Constellation.

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"Latour first outlined a rejection of the specificity of the digital as a separate domain, highlighting both the materiality of the digital and its complex relationship with the analogue. He described the analogue structures that underpin the digital processing that makes the digital possible (the materials, the specific electrical voltage structures and signalling mechanisms, the sheer matter of it all), but also the digital's relationship to a socio-technical environment. In other words, he swiftly moved away from what we might call the abstract materiality of the digital, its complex layering over an analogue carrier, and instead reiterated the conditions under which the existing methodological approach of actor-network theory was justified: digital forms part of a network, is 'physical' and material, requires a socio-technical environment to function, is a 'complex function' and so on."

Berry, D. M. (2015).
The Postdigital Constellation.

CHAPTER 9: RESTORATION..... 243-252

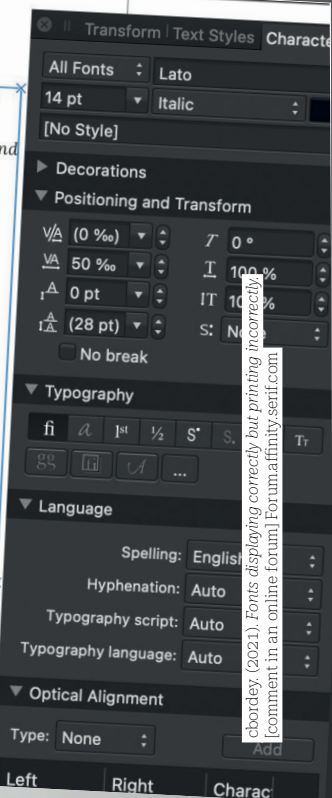
Through this chapter's work, you will begin to feel like yourself again, albeit a wiser and sturdier version of yourself. You will rewrite your story and set about finding the meaning in your suffering. Although grittier and more authentic, you will move from victim to victor.

CHAPTER 10: IS RECONCILIATION POSSIBLE? 253-263

In the words of Alcoholics Anonymous, "It works if you work it." In other words, relationship healing depends on how hard each person works on their trauma and emotional recovery. Exercises in the chapter enable you to discern your wants, needs, boundaries, and deal-breakers, preparing you to co-construct an honest, vulnerable, and healthy relationship.

CHAPTER 11: WHAT PEOPLE IN SEX ADDICTION RECOVERY WANT YOU TO KNOW 264-270

Those who have betrayed, lied and cheated share their experiences in the first few months after discovery. They have tremendous compassion for where you are right now and want you to know what was going through their minds when their cheating



Praise for *AMBUSHED BY BETRAYAL*

"Michele Saffier's and Allan Katz' *Ambushed by Betrayal* is an exceptionally well written and organized tour de force of describing the journey a betrayed partner takes from despair and confusion to hope and esteem in the recovery process. This book will quickly become an invaluable resource for anyone needing healing from the pain of betrayal."

~ **Kenneth M. Adams, Ph.D.** author of *Silently Seduced* and *When He's Married to Mom* and co-editor of *Clinical Management of Sex Addiction*, 2nd edition.

"If you are navigating the discovery of sexual addiction, *Ambushed by Betrayal* will be

AMBUSHED

CHAPTER 9: RESTORATION..... 243-252

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CHAPTER 11: WHAT PEOPLE IN SEX ADDICTION RECOVERY WANT YOU TO KNOW 264-270

Those who have betrayed, lied and cheated share their experiences in the first few months after discovery. They have tremendous compassion for where you are right now and want you to know what was going through their minds when their cheating was discovered. They make no excuses. Their writing is honest and from the heart, sharing their raw experiences hoping that there may be a nugget to help you make it through the pain.

CHAPTER 12: FOR THE BETRAVER 271-288

This chapter is for your betraying partner. Betrayed partners and the unfaithful offer their best suggestions for navigating the first three months and what is required to

1.2. Web to print

conversion failures

16

Ludovico, A. (2014). *Post-digital Publishing. Hybrid and Processual Objects in Print.*

17

“Print can be considered as the quintessence of the web: it is distributing a smaller quantity of information available on the web, usually in a longer and much better edited form. So the above mentioned practices sometimes indulge in something like a ‘miscalculation’ of the web itself — the negotiation of this transduction is reducing the web to a finite printable dimension, denaturalising it. According to Publishers Launch Conferences’ cofounder Mike Shatzkin, in the next stage “publishing will become a function... not a capability reserved to an industry.”

1.2. Web to print

conversion failures

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"Currently, one of the main constraints on the mass-scale development of hybrids is the publishing industry's focus on entertainment. Let's take a look at what is happening specifically in the newspaper industry: on the one hand we see up-to-date printable PDF files to be carried and read while commuting back home in the evening, and on the other we have online news aggregators which gather various sources within one application with a slick unified interface and layout. These are not really hybrids of print and digital, but merely the products of 'industrial' customisation — the consumer 'choice' of combining existing features and extras [...]. Even worse, the industry's best effort at coming to terms with post-digital print (print embedding some active digital qualities) is currently the QR code — those black-and-white pixelated square images which, when read with the proper mobile phone app, allow the reader access to content (usually a video or web page). This kind of technology could be used much more creatively, as a means of enriching the process of content generation. For example, since they use networks to retrieve the displayed content, printed books and magazines could include QR codes as a means of providing new updates each time they are scanned — and these updates could in turn be made printable or otherwise preservable."

Ludovico, A. (2014). *Post-digital Publishing. Hybrid and Processual Objects in Print.*

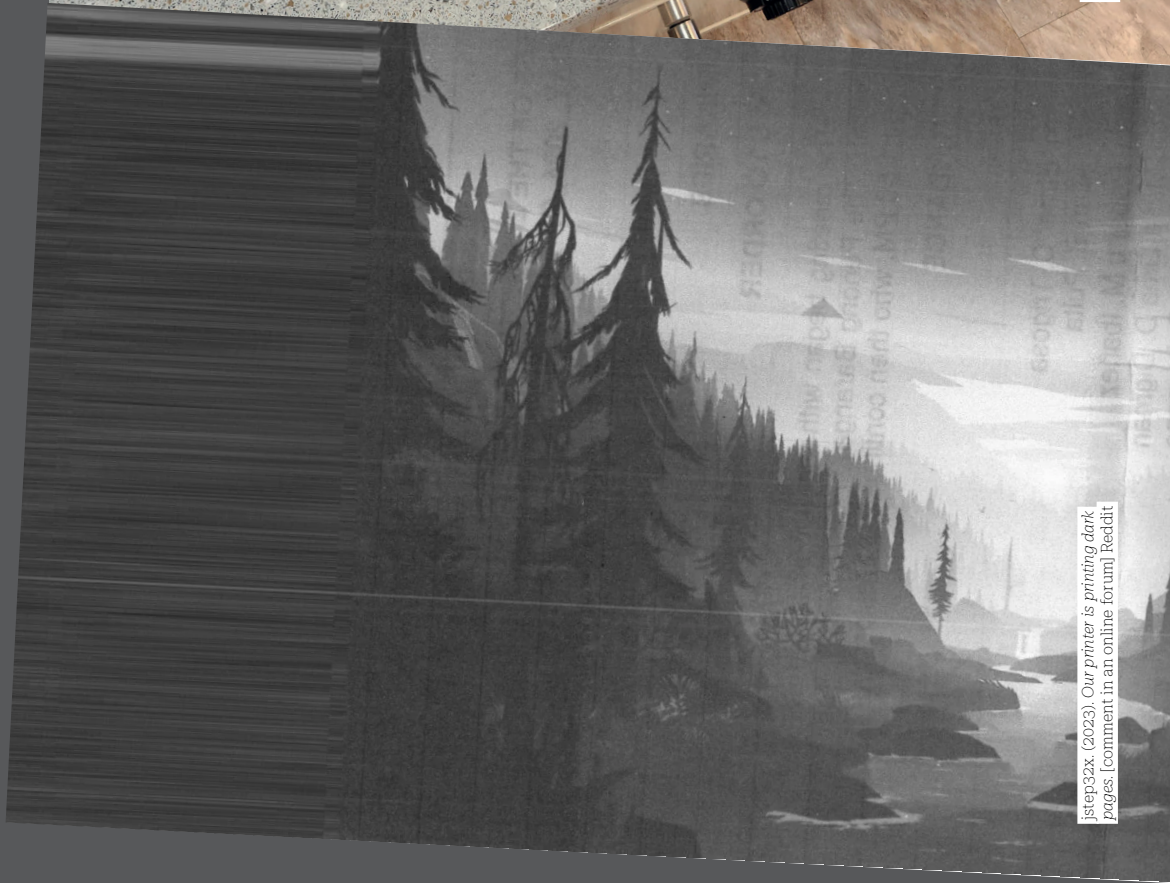
19

"The poor image is a copy in motion. Its quality is bad, its resolution substandard. As it accelerates, it deteriorates. It is a ghost of an image, a preview, a thumbnail, an errant idea, an itinerant image distributed for free, squeezed through slow digital connections, compressed, reproduced, ripped, remixed, as well as copied and pasted into other channels of distribution. The poor image is a rag or a rip; an AVI or a JPEG, a lumpen proletariat in the class society of appearances, ranked and valued according to its resolution. The poor image has been uploaded, downloaded, shared, reformatted, and reedited. [...] From this perspective, the poor image reveals the decline and degradation of the film essay, or indeed any experimental and noncommercial cinema, which in many places was made possible because the production of culture was considered a task of the state. Privatization of media production gradually grew more important than state-controlled/ sponsored media production. But, on the other hand, the rampant privatization of intellectual content, along with online marketing and commodification, also enables piracy and appropriation; it gives rise to the circulation of poor images

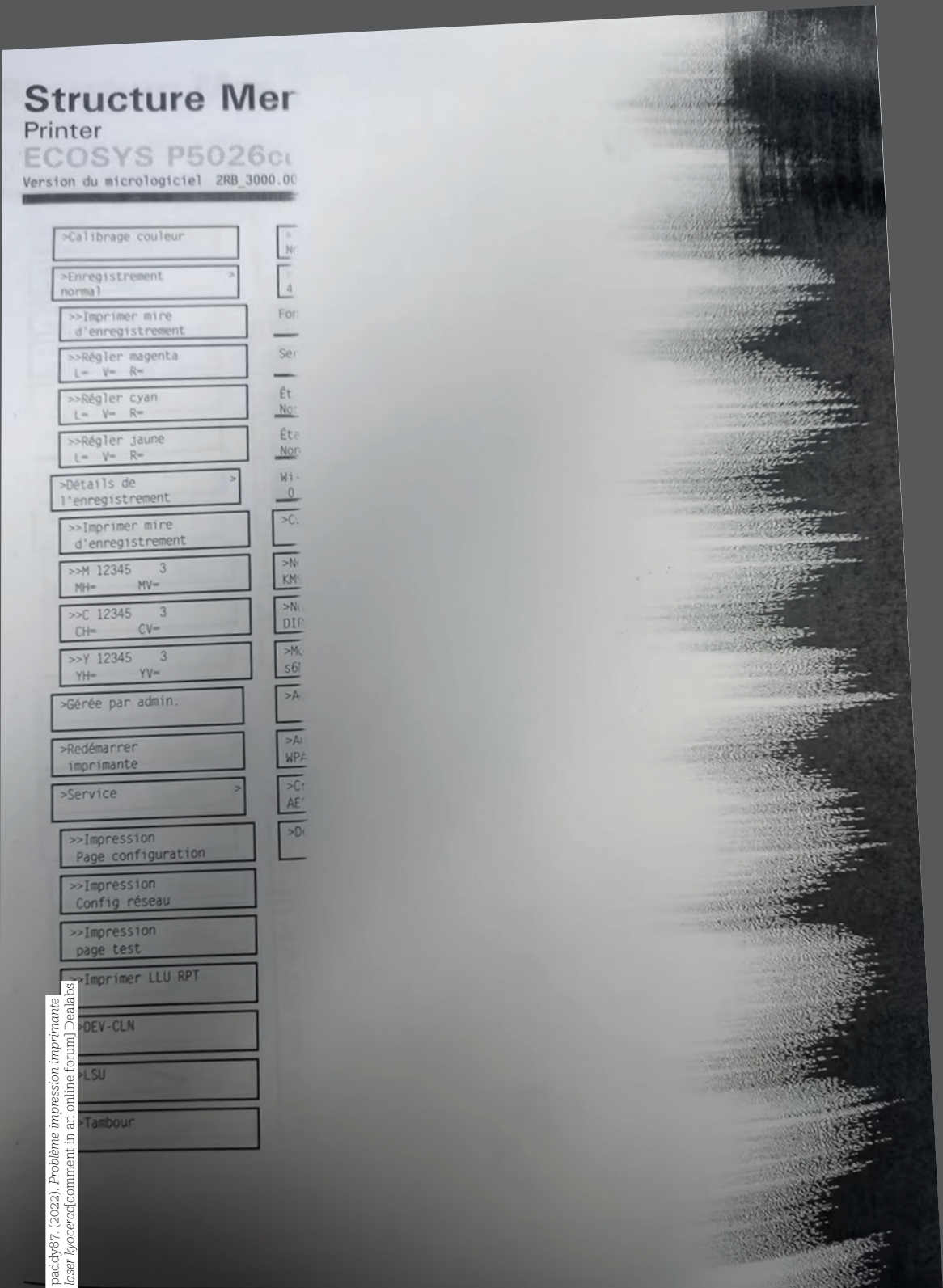
Steyer, H. (2013). *In Defense of the Poor Image.*



Extension Board 250B (2023). Epson LS290 Scanner Problem. Please help! (comment in an online forum) Reddit



jstep32x (2023). Our printer is printing dark pages. (comment in an online forum) Reddit



paddy87 (2022). Problème impression imprimante laser kyocera (comment in an online forum) Dealabs

2. Misleading interfaces and systemic opacity

22

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How systems hide
their fragility

2.1. When interfaces

erase materiality

24

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Berry, D. M. & Dieter, M. (Eds.), (2015). *Thinking Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design*.

“That is, as ubiquitous computational infrastructures radiate data, they encourage tacit modes of knowing and the iteration of habit – and thus also create agnosis, or ‘not knowing’, through a form of agnotology. By ‘agnotology’ we are referring to the way in which computation facilitates a systemic production and maintenance of ignorance. Computational technologies direct us towards a passive trust in widely delegated, yet obfuscated, actions.”

2.1. When interfaces

erase materiality

26

"Inevitably, this paradigm for describing the relationship between software objects spreads outward, subsuming more of the universe outside of the immediate code. External programs, powerful computers, banking institutions, people, and satellites have all been "encapsulated" and "abstracted" into objects with inputs and outputs. Is this a conceptual reduction of the richness and complexity of reality? Yes, but only partially. It is also a real description of how people, institutions, software, and things are being brought into relationship with that defines what kinds of interactions are possible with an object. It maps out the public face of the object in a way that is legible and accessible to other objects. Similarly, computer interfaces like screens and keyboards are designed to meet with human interfaces like fingers and eyes, allowing for a specific form of interaction between person and machine. Any coupling between objects passes through some interface and every interface obscures as much as it reveals: it establishes the boundary between what is public and what is private, what is visible and what is not. The dominant aesthetic values of user interface design actually privilege such concealment as "good design," appealing to principles of simplicity, cleanliness, and clarity."

Dockray, S. (2013).
Interface, Access, Loss.

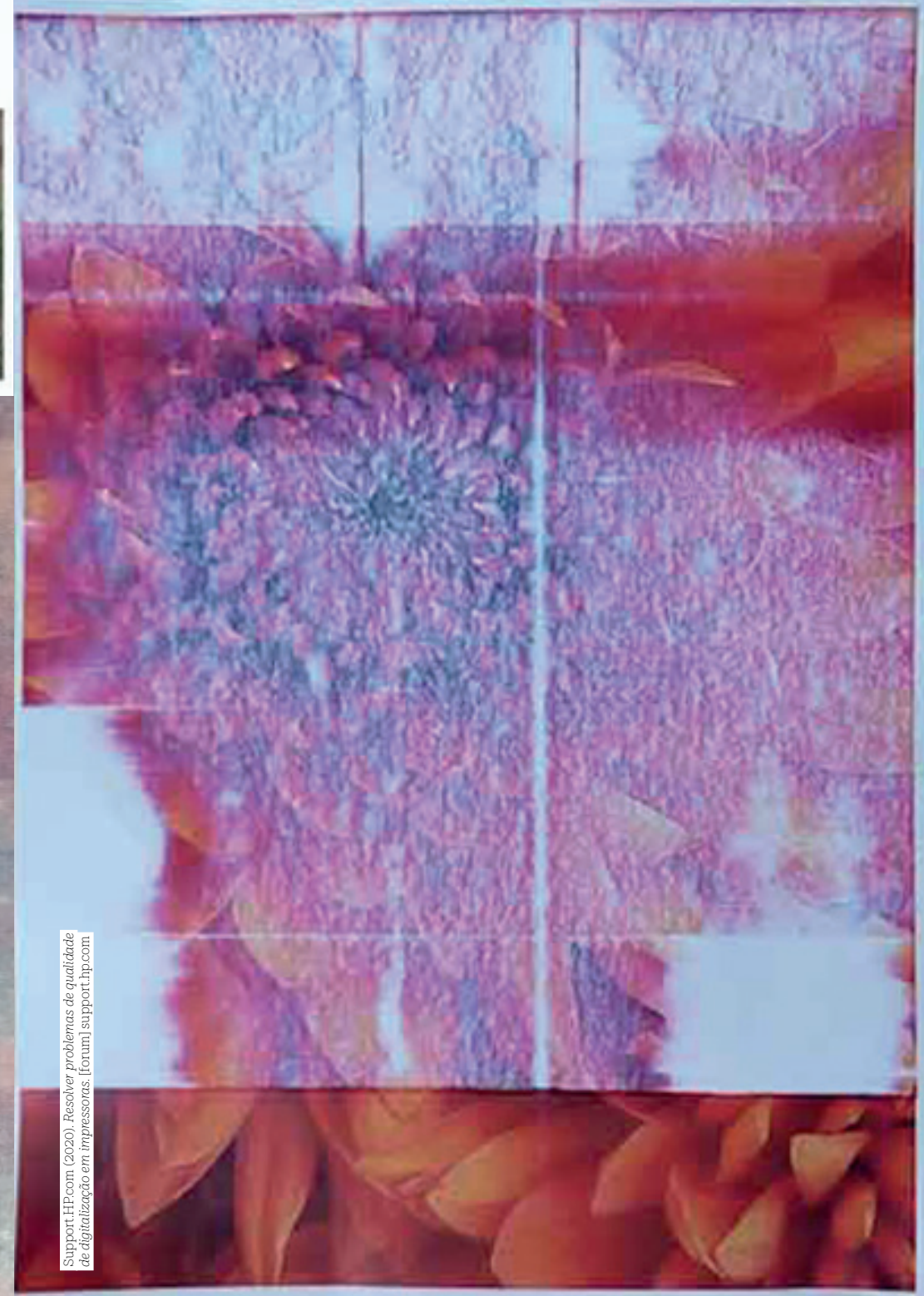
27

"Further, the postdigital itself can be understood as an aesthetic that revels in the possibility of revealing the 'grain of computation', or, perhaps better, showing the limitations of digital artefacts through a kind of digital glitch, or the 'aesthetics of failure'. In common with the new aesthetic, the postdigital has been linked to the extent to which digital media have permeated our everyday lives. We could, perhaps, say that the postdigital emerges from a form of 'breakdown' practice linked to the conspicuousness of digital technologies : not just through the use of digital tools, of course, but also a language of new media, the frameworks, structures, concepts and processes represented by computation, and the interplay of design and aesthetics inscribed on the faces of technical devices; that is, both in the presentation of computation and in its representational modes."

Berry, D. M. (2015).
The Postdigital Constellation.



Support HP.com (2020). Resolver problemas de qualidade de digitalização em impressoras. [forum] support.hp.com



Support HP.com (2020). Resolver problemas de qualidade de digitalização em impressoras. [forum] support.hp.com

2.2. Systemic bugs

as unintended features

30

Dockray, S. (2013).
Interface, Access, Loss.

31

“When a program is in the midst of being executed, the computer’s memory fills with data, some of which is obsolete (and no longer needed for the computer to run efficiently). If left alone, the memory would become clogged and the program would crash. It is the role of the garbage collector to “free up” memory, deleting what is no longer in use.”

2.2. Systemic bugs

as unintended features

32

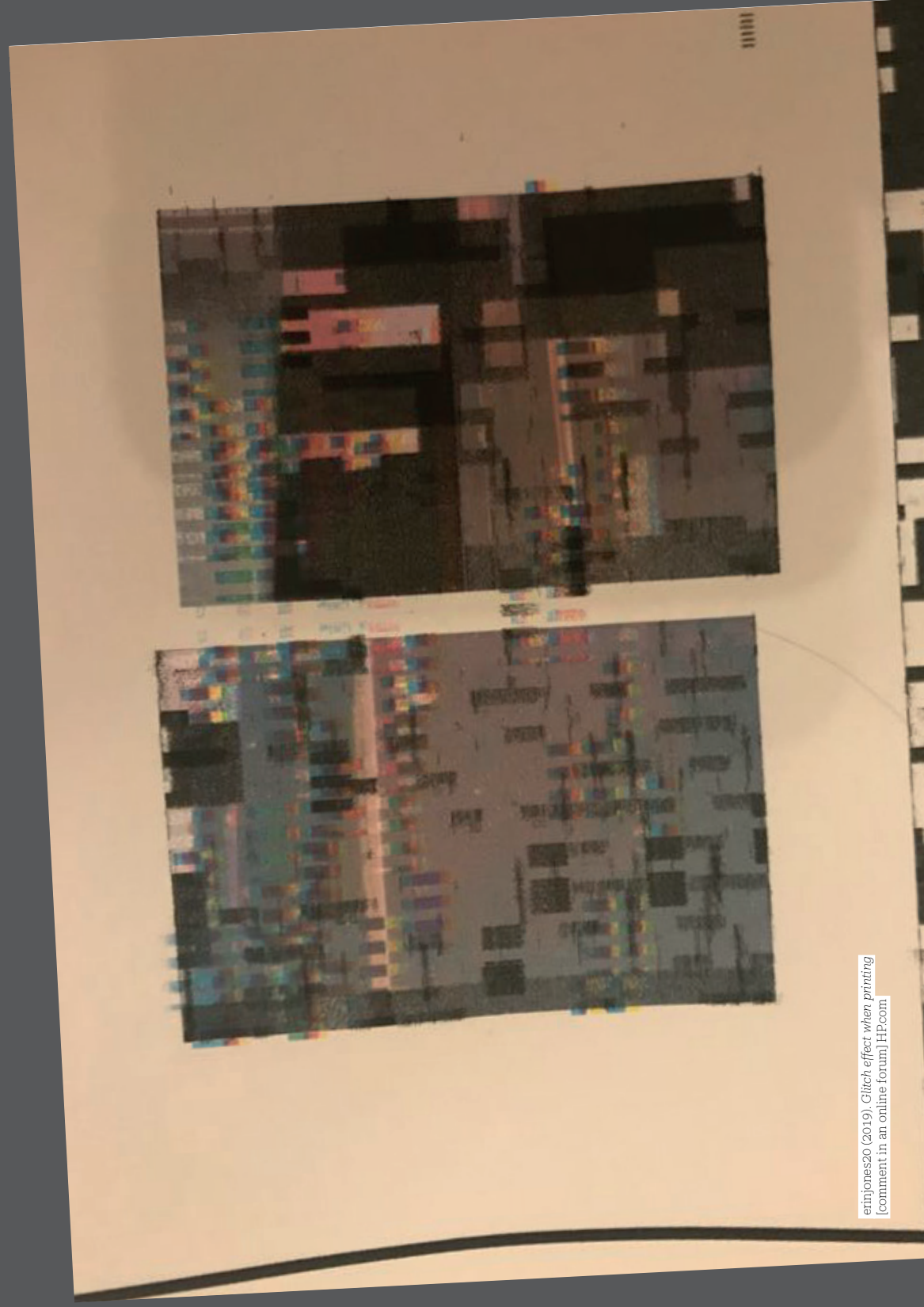
"It is a new enclosure, and it is a familiar story: things in the world (from letters to photographs to albums to books) are digitized (as e-mails, JPEGs, MP3s, and PDFs) and subsequently migrate to a remote location or service (Gmail, Facebook, iTunes, city of jobs that will be created in a new constructed data center, and that pitting "food on the table" against "access to knowledge" is both a distraction from and a legitimization of the forms of power emerging in the cloud. It is a distraction because it is by policing access to knowledge that the middleman platform can extract value from publication, both on the writing and reading sides of the book; and it is a legitimization because the platform poses itself as the only entity that can resolve the contradiction between the two sides. When the platform recedes behind the interface, these two sides comprise the most visible antagonism: they are in a tug-of-war with each other, yet neither the "producers" nor the "consumers" of publications are becoming wealthier or working less to survive. If we turn the picture sideways, however, a new contradiction emerges between the indebted, living labor of authors, editors, translators, and readers on one side, and on the other, data centers, semiconductors, mobile technology, expropriated software, power companies, and intellectual property."

Dockray, S. (2013).
Interface, Access, Loss.

33

"Glitch aesthetics, corruption artefacts, retro 8-bit graphics. The terms 'glitch' and 'corruption artefacts' in the broadest sense refer to images and objects that have been tampered with; their creation relates to the core of the media apparatuses used to store, produce and relay information. These corrupted images can be created by adjusting or manipulating the normal physical or virtual composition of the machine or software itself, or by using machines or digital tools in methods different from their normative modalities. From the 1960s onwards, early glitch material or artefacts were created in both video and sound art. Video artists such as Nam June Paik, Woodie and Steina Vasulka, Vito Acconci and Jacques Guyonnet were creating glitches within their video work, and informed contemporary practitioners such as Rosa Menkman. At the same time, artists such as John Cage, Phil Morton and Dan Sandin created sound and visual syntheses through their experimentation with traditional and modern outboard equipment such as modular synthesizers. The framework, processes and output of this practice forever shifted the landscape of electronic aesthetics."

Paul, C. & Levy, M. (2015).
Genealogies of the New Aesthetic.



erinjones20 (2019). *Glitch effect when printing*
[comment in an online forum] HP.com



erinjones20 (2019). *Glitch effect when printing*
[comment in an online forum] HP.com

3. Glitch culture

36

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Towards a creative
reappropriation

3.1. The art

of dysfunction

38

Apperley, T. (2015). *Glitch Sorting :
Minecraft, Curation and the Postdigital*.

39

“The glitch aesthetic may also be understood as part of a larger aesthetic shift towards the postdigital, which is characterized by what Kim Cascone describes as ‘the aesthetics of failure’. He writes: Indeed, ‘failure’ has become a prominent aesthetic in many of the arts in the late 20th century, reminding us that our control of technology is an illusion, and revealing digital tools to be only as perfect, precise, and efficient as the humans who build them. New techniques are often discovered by accident or by the failure of an intended technique or experiment.”

3.1. The art

of dysfunction

40

"The New Aesthetic as a project was started by James Bridle, a London-based writer, publisher and artist, upon launching a new personal website in May 2011. Nowadays this 'vibe' can be generally described as a cross-disciplinary approach to the consequences of human-technology interaction and new non-anthropomorphic agents, forces and computational patterns, present both in the digital sphere and in the physical world. They manifest themselves through visual digital media and new social and cultural practices involving humans and technological artefacts. Bridle's initial focus on the visual manifestations of the New Aesthetic prompted the blog's horizontal stream layout containing several types of digital visual media: images, movies, graphics, GIFs – examples of the postdigital which he incorporated into his project. In his first entry, James Bridle wrote: [...] The New Aesthetic is not a movement, it is not a thing which can be done. It is a series of artifacts of the heterogeneous network, which recognizes differences, the gaps in our distant but overlapping realities. I started noticing things like this in the world. This is a cushion on sale in a furniture store that's pixelated. This is a strange thing. This is a look, a style, a pattern that didn't previously exist in the real world. It's something that's come out of digital. It's come out of a digital way of seeing, that represents things in this form. The real world doesn't, or at least didn't, have a grain that looks like this."

Mirocha, Ł. (2015). *Communication Models, Aesthetics and Ontology of the Computational Age Revealed*.

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"'DIGITAL' = LOW-QUALITY TRASH? There is a peculiar overlap between on one hand a post-digital rejection of digital high tech, and on the other hand a post-digital rejection of digital low quality. Consider for example the persisting argument that vinyl LPs sound better than CDs (let alone MP3s); that film photography looks better than digital photography (let alone smartphone snapshots); that 35mm film projection looks better than digital cinema projection (let alone BitTorrent video downloads or YouTube); that paper books are a richer medium than websites and e-books; and that something typed on a mechanical typewriter has more value than a throwaway digital text file (let alone e-mail spam). In fact, the glitch aesthetics advocated by Cascone as 'post-digital' are precisely the same kind of digital trash dismissed by 'post-digital' vinyl listeners."

Cramer, F. (2014). *What Is 'Post-Digital'?*



3.2. Error

as a visual language

44

Benjamin, W. (2002). *The work of art
in the age of its technological reproducibility*

45

“ Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence. This includes the changes which it may have suffered in physical condition over the years as well as the various changes in its ownership.”

3.2. Error

as a visual language

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"The New Aesthetic is 'collectively intelligent.' It's diffuse, crowdsourcey, and made of many small pieces loosely joined. It is rhizomatic, as the people at Rhizome would likely tell you. It's open-sourced, and triumphof- amateurs. It's like its logo, a bright cluster of balloons tied to some huge, dark and lethal weight. [...] Perhaps this state is captured by Sterling's distinction between the diffuse and 'shareable concept' (low-res poor image) and the 'theory object' (high-res politicized image). The New Aesthetic may masquerade as singular, but its nature is pluralistic. As Cloninger points out, the New Aesthetic is not a single aesthetic. Drone technology produces its own visual aesthetics. Google Maps produces its own visual aesthetics. Generative Processing code produces its own visual aesthetics. Glitches across various media, compression algorithms, and hardware displays produce their own visual aesthetics."

Andersen, C. U., & Pold, S. B. (2015). *Aesthetics of the Banal – 'New Aesthetics' in an Era of Diverted Digital Revolutions.*

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"The New Aesthetic, in its visual sub-genre, is particularly interested in glitches and signal-processing errors that result in image artefacts and deformations. If pixelization, considered as an aesthetic pattern, reveals the 'grain of computation' in digital media, glitches and errors also unveil the very fact of media softwarization and the limitations of these processes. In a chapter entitled 'Glitch' in *Software Studies, A Lexicon*, Olga Goriunova and Alexei Shulgin write that : In electrical systems, a glitch is a short-lived error in a system or machine. A glitch appears as a defect (a voltage-change or signal of the wrong duration – a change of input) in an electrical circuit. Thus, a glitch is a short-term deviation from a correct value and as such the term can also describe hardware malfunctions."

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