

Peter Heft on “Noclipping Reality”

In May of 2020, I completed my master’s in Philosophy at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA. Before COVID locked down the city, I decided to revisit Crown Antiques & Collectibles on Fifth Ave (a veritable treasure trove of goodies). While on the fifth floor, amongst countless newspapers from every year imaginable, I found a small black and white composition notebook. Oddly enough, it was shrink-wrapped, but being only \$5, I purchased it despite not knowing its contents.

I returned to my apartment and left the notebook on my bookshelf where, while life got in the way, relationships ended, I virtually started my PhD at Western Ontario’s Theory Centre, etc., it sat unopened. Early in October, Graham Freestone got in contact with me (I had previously expressed interest in *Parasol*) asking if I had anything for him. Feeling horrible that I left him hanging, I frantically racked my brain for something to write. As I was thinking about the temporal juxtaposition between the new and the old, with the old reasserting its novelty through a new generation of people in the context of antique stores, I remembered the shrink-wrapped notebook.

Shocked that I forgot to open it, I dug through the papers and books atop my shelf and found it. Carefully removing the polymer film, I opened the cover and found in the notebook, the topic of my essay in this volume of *Parasol*.

The notebook belonged to a person named Helen Arenson (they/them) who seemingly worked at an unnamed motel outside Pittsburgh, along I-79. The contents of the notebook, all handwritten and including printed off pictures taped inside, baffled me as they explored themes I’ve attempted to study in a different capacity. Helen’s notebook, the entirety of which they titled “Noclipping Reality: A Journey to the Backrooms,” explored the dual phenomena of, as the title suggests, noclipping reality and the backrooms.

I tried to track down Helen to ask about the notebook, but my efforts were in vain. There are countless motels along I-79, and I couldn’t find them. Thus, I did the only things I know how to do: transcribe and edit.

Within this edition of *Parasol*, I have reproduced Helen’s entire essay, complete with digitalizations of the printed off pictures and editorial interventions. I’ve added citations for things I could find and notes, [in hard brackets], that might help a reader find further material to explore. While I very much doubt that Helen is a denizen of this weird-theory sphere, if

they see this, I encourage them to get in contact with me at pheft@uwo.ca. Until then, please enjoy Helen's essay.

-Peter Heft

Pittsburgh, PA

October 2020

Germán Sierra on "HYPERZONES"

Germán Sierra is a writer and neuroscientist living in Spain. He has authored seven books of fiction in Spanish, and one in English—*The Artifact*, published in 2018 by Inside the Castle. His new essay book in collaboration with Emanuel Magno, *Interstitial Artelligence: Escape Poetics in the Age of the Technical Debt*, is forthcoming in 2021 from the Centre for Experimental Ontology.

Editor's note: Yes, you read that right. Although Germán hardly needs a brief bio, with his presence in the journal predating mine as an editor and even contributor, he wanted to shout out our collaborative work coming from this very philosophical and literary refuge turned indie press. This surprised me and warmed my heart to know that he would like to use his editorial space to make this announcement, and it is an honor to be acknowledged as a worthy collaborator for a book project by someone who has essentially achieved what I wish I might, someday. And if you haven't yet, go read his instantaneous classic *The Artifact* (also, if you haven't yet, learn Spanish so that you may enjoy his back catalogue – whispers that there is a new novel in the making, but don't tell him I told you about that).

Noclipping Reality: A Journey to the Backrooms (Helen Arenson and Peter Heft)

As a kid growing up with pre-service model video games where you got what you paid for and patches weren't forthcoming, I always enjoyed pushing the boundaries of what the game engine would allow, by finding the thing that would finally 'break the world.' The so-called "Black Rooms of Death" in *Super Mario 64* where your character model could get stuck *within* the map, unable to escape/stuck looking at the world from an angle you weren't supposed to see it from (fig. 1); escaping Los Angeles in *Tony Hawk's Underground 2* where, by a series of moves highlighted by YouTuber CPGlitch, you can get out of the confines of L.A. and skate in the wide-open world (fig. 2); later in life, getting ahead of *Minecraft's* procedurally generated blocks to expose a "missing chunk" of land to navigate with the utmost care (fig. 3); and more recently, the absurd 27 minute speedrun of *DOOM Eternal* that makes use of, among other things, the game's skyboxes (fig. 4). All these instances of 'game-breaking' mechanics fascinated me as they showed me something I wasn't supposed to see but was, nevertheless, built into the fabric of the game.



Figure 1: BRoD #5 (*Megadardery*) (https://www.mariowiki.com/File:SM64_BRoD8.png)

Parasol-Zones



Figure 2: THUG 2 Glitch (CPGlitch) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBA5pvvLIFg>)

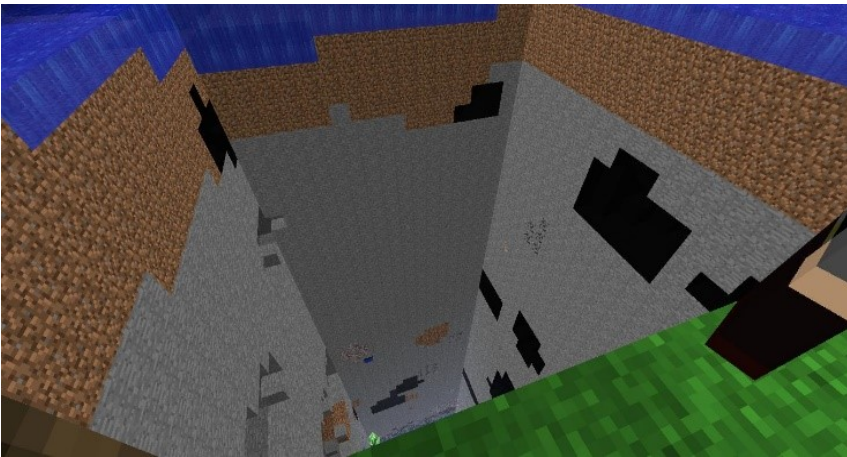


Figure 3: Missing Chunk (X-Layer2) (<https://www.moddb.com/groups/minecraft-community/images/missing-chunk>)

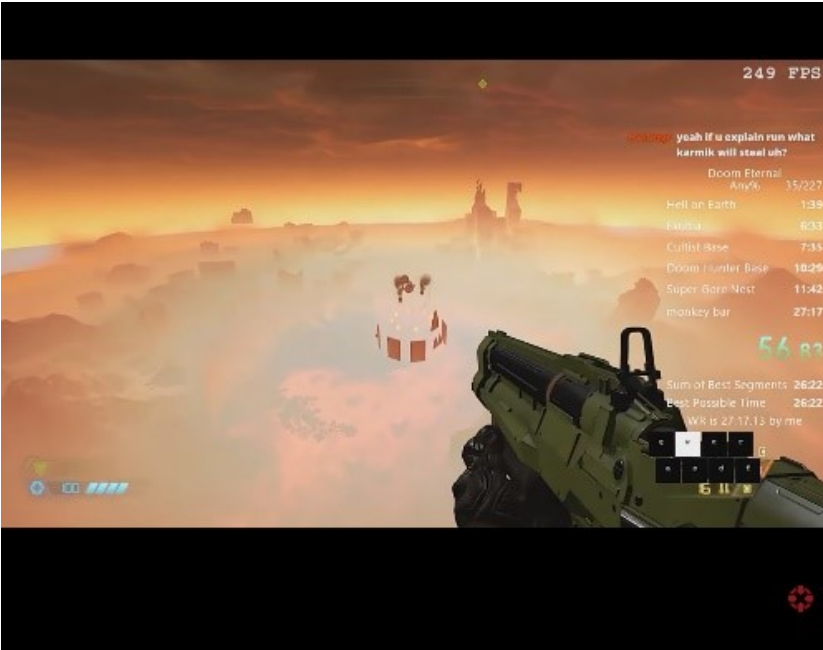


Figure 4: DOOM Eternal Speedrun (IGN) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH2-oM7IWpY>)

As my life went on and I began working as a concierge at a motel just outside Pittsburgh, PA, I spent less and less time playing games and more time watching speedruns (as was the case with *DOOM Eternal*). One night in late April, I was sitting behind my desk scrolling through 4chan on the Mimi app, when I came across a thread on /x/ (the paranormal board) that was discussing a phenomenon known as “the backrooms.” I had been off 4chan for a few years, but thankfully someone re-posted the original image (re-produced below) of an anonymous post from 2019 describing the same phenomenon I’d explored in the video games of my childhood being re-produced in the real world. According to the original post, much like the levels in video games, the real world requires a scaffold to hold it together – a series of unseen, ‘withdrawn’ objects that normally escape human cognition.¹ If one is not

¹ As I write this, I am reminded of my time studying philosophy (fat lot of good that did me) at Eastern Pennsylvania State University where I wrote my senior thesis on the philosophy of Graham Harman. [For readers unaware, Harman’s work is focused around so-called ‘Object-Oriented Ontology,’ a subcategory of the speculative realist movement that seeks to decenter humans from philosophical investigation. For Harman, as diverse as people are, objects are more so. Indeed, objects ‘withdraw’ from human cognition and make up a world

careful, however, one can, just like glitches in video games, “noclip” out of reality itself and find oneself in a “six hundred million square mile” maze of “randomly segmented empty rooms.” Although I was deeply unsettled, I probed further and asked how, exactly, one noclips out of reality.

Anonymous

05/14/19(Tue)20:29:30 No.22672

The Backrooms



If you're not careful and you noclip out of reality in the wrong areas, you'll end up in the Backrooms, where it's nothing but the stink of old moist carpet, the madness of mono-yellow, the endless background noise of fluorescent lights at maximum hum-buzz, and approximately six hundred million square miles of randomly segmented empty rooms to be trapped in

God save you if you hear something wandering around nearby. because it sure as hell has heard you

Surprised by my seeming desire to enter the backrooms, yet eager to help nevertheless, a few anons posted and said that noclipping reality is often an unintentional act that occurs during sleep paralysis or other altered states of consciousness. Another anon linked to a post

all their own, with their own relationships, connections, etc. See Graham Harman, *Tool Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects* (Chicago: Open Court, 2002). For more on objects and their subterranean existence, see Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010). -PH]

on Reddit's /r/thebackrooms (much to the chagrin of the anti-Redditors, I might add) while another still mentioned that I ought to "Google Randonauts."

It was 11:33pm and no guests needed to be taken care of, so I looked through the Reddit post.

Redditor CharizardChop had the following advice:

That's how I did it. I just sprinted into the corner of my room and started crouch jumping into the corner. I recommend jumping on top of a desk and crouch jumping into a ceiling corner. Before I knew it, I fell through the wall and started falling into the void (like you said). I could see entrances into the backrooms. It was just like minecraft cave systems, but more organized. Before you know it, you'll fall into one of these entrances.²

While it was clear that they had been playing too many video games, my curiosity got the better of me. It should be to no one's surprise that when I went in the motel office and tried "crouch jumping" into the corner, the only thing I accomplished was scuffing the wall. Walking back to my chair, I felt like a moron. Were this a crappy horror novel, the next line would be, "but when I sat down, things weren't quite right..." This was real life, however, and really truly, nothing happened. I was in the same run-down motel off I-79 as before, and the clock on my desk now said 11:35pm. I then remembered the other comment: "Google Randonauts."

Since no guests were in the lobby and it looked like I'd have some free time, I did what the anon suggested. Upon Googling "Randonauts," I stumbled across *randonauts.com*, a website created by the "Fatum Project."³ The website hosted the first edition of the *Randonaut Reader* which proved incredibly helpful. In the journal, one of the authors, "comrade," in their essay

² CharizardChop, comment on "How do you "no clip" out of reality? Also, describe the sensory aspects of the travel to the backrooms. (sight, feeling, sound, ETC.]" published circa 2019.

[\(https://www.reddit.com/r/TheBackrooms/comments/bwho0t/how_do_you_no_clip_out_of_reality_also_describe/\)](https://www.reddit.com/r/TheBackrooms/comments/bwho0t/how_do_you_no_clip_out_of_reality_also_describe/)

³ [When Helen wrote this, the Fatum Project still existed and the Randonauts were still very much underground. In June of 2020, the Fatum Project (seemingly) ceased to exist and the website changed to *randonautica.com* with the parent company of being Randonauts LLC. The unknown had become formalized... -PH]

entitled “Randonauting is a poetic act of cybernetic *dérive*,” laid out what Randonauting was and what their intentions behind creating the project were.⁴

Randonauting, according to comrade, is “[d]iving headlong into the random and coming back with enough meaning for the rest of us.” An obtuse line, indeed. They wrote more, however. The project, they say, was created around the so-called “Fatum-Bot,” a “random location generator based on the ideas behind the Global Consciousness Project.” The goal seemed to be the usage of random numbers, supposedly quantumly generated, to conduct “research on the interactions between the holistic nature of the macro-world and quantum randomness.”⁵ As comrade explained further, the Fatum bot was a bot on the Telegram app that, if you input “/getanomaly” (or “/getattractor”), would spit out “a non-deterministic random location near you” where you could visit. Visiting such a place, as per comrade, “inject[ed] a bunch of novelty and synchronicity into your normal routine.”⁶

At this point, I had no idea what the hell “quantum randomness” was, nor did I understand how it could be used to generate numbers. From another Google search and an article on JSTOR, it seemed that quantum random numbers, as opposed to what we call ‘random numbers’ which still follow some pattern (even if it was unknowable to humans – e.g. air currents) and thus produce only “pseudo-random” numbers, were truly *random*. From my rudimentary understanding, quantum random numbers are numbers that are produced by the unpredictable and unknown fluctuations in “quantum entanglement.”⁷ While I can’t say I fully understand, another article in the *Randonaut Reader* shed some light on the issue. BlueSkies_HeavySighs, in “Randonauting for Dummies,” provided a useful definition of a quantum point.

Quantum Point: A single coordinate point generated using a quantum random number generator (qRNG). To generate a quantum point, truly random numbers

⁴ There are no page numbers in the *Randonaut Reader*, but I’ve taken the liberty to add them and cite it as best I can for any future readers of this journal. Comrade, “Randonauting is a poetic act of cybernetic *dérive*,” in *Randonaut Reader* 1 (2019): 27-40.

[Unfortunately, the *Randonaut Reader*, while still available for purchase on Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/Randonaut-Reader-Randonauts-Community/dp/1687249938>), is no longer available digitally from its original source. I did, however, purchase a copy and digitize it (adding page numbers following Helen’s schema). It can be found here: <https://www.peterheft.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Randonaut-Reader.pdf> -PH]

⁵ Comrade, “Randonauting is a poetic act of cybernetic *dérive*,” 27.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁷ Sidney Perkowitz, “The Quantum Random Number Generator,” on *JSTOR Daily*, published May 22, 2019. (<https://daily.jstor.org/the-quantum-random-number-generator/>)

are generated using a qRNG source which generates random numbers by measuring the electromagnetic field fluctuations of virtual particles in a vacuum.⁸

Makes sense... Returning to comrade, I learned that going to the randomly generated points allows one to enter the void – a random location – and derive meaning from the world around one. For comrade, randonauting allows one not only to “find meaning in the void,” but also to travel to “unknown spaces outside of the holistic predetermined world.”⁹ According to BlueSkies_HeavySighs, such acts of novel exploration allow one to enter so-called “reality tunnels,”¹⁰ “trees branching off into different life experiences,” wherein one can make meaning through the so-called “talking walls effect.”¹¹ As BlueSkies_HeavySighs says, once one clears one’s mind of presuppositions, one begins to notice “information in your environment that appears to correlate to your personal thoughts and beliefs.”¹² How much of this is mere projection (and that may not be a bad thing) vs. truly coming across a paranormal world is up for debate.

While there’s more that could be said about Randonauting, its relation to Jung’s concept of synchronicity and the paranormal as such,¹³ I’ll simply leave the description of Randonauting at this: one generates random numbers which are converted to locations on the surface of the Earth. One goes there and...things happen. Supposedly.

It was now 12:17am and there were still no guests to deal with so, of course, I opened the Telegram app, got in touch with the Fatum bot, and got myself a set of coordinates. The first thing that was odd was that I only got one set of coordinates. According to the guide, I was supposed to get two sets. Nevermind, it must have been a glitch. I popped the coordinates into Google Maps and saw that, conveniently enough, the location the Fatum bot gave me

⁸ BlueSkies_HeavySighs, “Randonauting for Dummies,” in *Randonaut Reader 1* (2019): 53-64, 55. (It appears as if revisions of this text were posted on *Medium*: <https://tinyurl.com/y5hcb4rs> and <https://tinyurl.com/y4x7sl6e>)

⁹ Comrade, “Randonauting is a poetic act of cybernetic dérive,” 34.

¹⁰ [Reality tunnels, a concept originally formulated by Timothy Leary and expanded upon by Robert Anton Wilson, are effectively sets of beliefs about the world around us based on our own experiences. An easy way to understand reality tunnels, in their original sense, is to take Ruth Hubbard’s inversion of the old adage about beauty; “Truth is in the eye of the beholder.” I’ve written about reality tunnels in the context of fixed ideologies. See Peter Heft, “Against Ideology,” on *Guerilla Ontology*, published June 22, 2017. (<https://guerrillaontologies.com/2017/06/against-ideology/>) -PH]

¹¹ BlueSkies_HeavySighs, “Randonauting for Dummies,” 62.

¹² *Ibid.*, 63.

¹³ [See Carl Jung, *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, trans. R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973). -PH]

was just behind the gas station down the road from the motel on our exit. My boss was off doing whatever it is he does, and it was a quiet night, so I hung up a sign: “Will Return in 10 minutes.”

At 12:20am, I left the motel and walked South for a few minutes until I reached the gas station in question. There were no cars and it looked empty, but that wasn't my concern. I circled behind the station, meticulously comparing my location to the location given by the Fatum bot. Pushing back some shrubs that were overgrowing, I came to the location given to me.

There was nothing there. Or rather, nothing spectacular. I looked down and saw a milk jug. Instantly, I knew what it was: a piss jug from a trucker. How it came to reside *behind* the gas station was anyone's guess – likely it rolled down the hill from I-79 –, but I remembered a line from the *Randonaut Reader*: “The journeys can be rich in meaning, especially if you have an artistic eye for found-composition. Or you can get to the point and all that's there is a bottle of piss.”¹⁴ As I later learned, bottles of piss were a common occurrence when randonauting.¹⁵

Not wanting to waste a trip to the great out-of-doors, I leaned against the wall of the gas station and lit up a cig. As the warm smoke entered my lungs, I thought back on what had just happened. And that was precisely the thing; what *had* happened? Nothing. I walked for a few minutes, came across a bottle of piss, and didn't enter a different reality. Clearly randonauting was a bunch of bullshit. Finishing my cig, I walked back to the motel and put away the sign I had hung up. It was only then that I noticed the time on the large, digital clock above the concierge's desk: 2:37am.

What? That wasn't possible. I had *just* left the motel and I surely hadn't been smoking one cig for two hours! I'll unpack that later. Worried I had missed a guest and would be chewed out by my boss, I rewound the surveillance cameras to see if I had missed anything. As I watched the playback, I saw that the timestamp in the upper-right-hand-corner of the screen ticked by slower than normal and when the tape came to an end, indicating that I had reached the present, the timestamp read 12:35am. I walked out from behind the desk to look up at the clock and saw that it now read 12:36am. I looked at my phone. 12:36am.

¹⁴ Comrade, “Randonauting is a poetic act of cybernetic *dérive*,” 30.

¹⁵ Tamlin Magee, “I Tried to Glitch the Simulation and All I Got Was A Bottle of Pee,” on *The Outline*, published August 27, 2019. (<https://theoutline.com/post/7881/i-became-a-randonaut-to-try-to-glitch-the-simulation-and-all-i-got-was-a-bottle-of-pee>)

I had no idea what was going on. That better not have been a wet cig¹⁶ that I had just smoked (I thought I kept those separate) ... I didn't feel any other affects associated with one, so I chalked the whole incident up to fatigue, and sat back behind the desk and spent the rest of my shift scribbling down these thoughts and listening to music. Jacob came to relieve me at 3:30am, after which I drove home and passed out.

I returned to work the next night, sure that my mind had simply been playing tricks on me. It was Thursday, another slow night at the motel. As I sat behind the desk, I wondered whether there really was anything to randonauting, the backrooms, noclipping, etc. I decided to pull up the *Randonaut Reader* and look through it a bit more.

While there's a lot of interesting stuff in there, one article by Nick Hinton stood out to me. Titled "What Does Being a Randonaut Mean?" Hinton humbly suggests that, among other things, it merely means "being curious [and] open minded," able and willing to look at the world in a new light.¹⁷ While this sounded like New Age nonsense, I read further. Hinton didn't seem to think that, in contradistinction to those anons on /x/ with whom I had interacted the night before, as one explores, one enters a different reality. Rather for Hinton, using the quantum weirdness of the Fatum bot means "exploring the hidden worlds that have persisted unnoticed underneath your nose for your entire life"; it means exploring the mundane and the same but "from another angle [sic], another dimension."¹⁸

With this newfound knowledge, I, of course, had to explore more. With no guests coming to pester me and my boss off getting drunk (most likely), I pulled out my phone and began talking to the Fatum bot again. I entered "/getanomaly" and was again greeted with a singular set of coordinates (as opposed to the promised two). That was the least odd thing that happened, however. When I placed the coordinates, supposedly generated completely randomly by a quantum number generator, into Google Maps, the location I saw was *the motel*. That couldn't be right, however. The entire motel couldn't be an attractor.

I zoomed in and tried to narrow down *where*, exactly, I was being told to go. After a bit of number crunching, I found that the coordinates given were not for the motel itself, but rather a specific room within the motel. Not a guest's room, mind you (had that been the case, I

¹⁶ [A wet cigarette is a cigarette that is dipped in PCP. -PH]

¹⁷ Nickhinton333, "What Does Being a Randonaut Mean?" in *Randonaut Reader* 1 (2019): 41-42, 41.

¹⁸ Nickhinton333, "What Does Being a Randonaut Mean?" 42.

would have been sure that the entire Randonaut project was some pervert's game), but a storage closet opposite the pool room.

12:19am on a quiet Thursday night, I figured that there would be no harm in exploring. I put up my sign and left my desk. Walking across the lobby, I entered hallway adjacent to the pool room. I stopped to listen. Far to my left, I heard the 20-year-old ice machine chugging along, sputtering out cubes as it devoured the motel's electricity. Paying no mind to it (save for noting the excessive noise it produced), I turned toward the terrarium like pool room. It was at that point that I was sure I saw something.

Through the foggy glass enclosing the pool room, I was sure that I saw a shimmer just above the water. Pushing open the door, I scanned my surroundings. There was clearly no one in there with me, but I felt something, nevertheless. It must have been the humidity – inside a glass dome with a heated pool, I could practically see the fog hovering on top of the water. As I walked around, I began to get an eerie feeling. The only light was coming from the underwater lights in the pool which created a beautiful, if admittedly slightly 'lady of the swamp'-like scene.

As I walked across the room, I looked into the pool and noticed a few leaves and twigs floating around. Curious since I was indoors. I paid it no more mind and continued to walk the length of the pool when – there it was again! I was sure there was something glistening in the fog rising from the water! Bending over to look closer, I heard splashing. That couldn't be right, though. The water was still as could be. I could even see some coins sitting on the bottom of the pool!

As I clambered back to my feet, I finally noticed that it was the ambient light that had changed. It was somehow darker. Trying to determine what light went out, I looked around the room again and noticed that I could no longer see the hallway I had entered from. Had someone turned off the lights? I looked up, cheerfully anticipating the sight of the moon through the glass roof. Nothing. Cloud cover? Where is it? Then I noticed that there were no stars either. It was as if the sky had become a plate of obsidian, reflecting nothing back but an infinite abyss.

Ready to get out of there as soon as possible, but still keen on reaching the coordinates, I hurried toward the maintenance door on the opposite side from where I had entered. Pushing it open, I suddenly emerged into to the brightly lit maintenance corridor. All was as it should be. Looking down at my phone to verify that the coordinates were, in fact, located in the

pool storage closet, I proceeded down the hallway. Coming to the door to the storage room, I quickly glanced over my shoulder to make sure no one was watching (this was where we kept the chlorine for the pool, after all), unlocked the door, and smuggled myself inside.

The room was dark and damp. A bit chilly, it smelled of chlorine and mold. Running my hand along the wall, I found the light switch and flicked it on. Only one of the two florescent lights flickered slowly to life. Looking back at my phone, I was in the correct location. No piss jug this time! Wandering around the surprisingly large storage room – indeed, it was larger than I had remembered –, I looked for anything odd, any ‘talking walls.’

Passing piles of stacked up tubing, replacement lightbulbs, and pool noodles, I noticed precisely nothing. And then I saw it. A door. Since when was there another door in this room? Prudence be damned! I went to the door, pausing for a second, half expecting to find something special behind it, and swung it wide open.

If life were a cheesy pulp story, then what came next would, of course, be my entrance into a different realm. (Un)fortunately, life is not a cheesy pulp story, and what I saw when I opened the door was the motel’s parking lot. The door was an unmarked fire escape. I spat on the ground and went back inside.

As I exited the storage room into the maintenance corridor, I heard something to my left. Intrigued, I followed the sound. As I was walking down the corridor, I noticed that a thin stream of water was developing on the floor. Approaching the source of the stream, I heard the pattering of the ice machine. While a normal sound in the motel, the machine was supposed to be in the hallway on *the other* side of the pool room. How did it get here?

As I approached it, I noticed that it was spitting out ice cubes faster than usual and then, turning around, I noticed that the corridor had changed. I could no longer see the end, and there were no doors. The entrance to the pool and storage room were gone! Panicking, I turned back to the ice machine only to notice that it too was gone and, in its place, a puddle of water.

Things were getting weird. Trying to stay calm, I took a few deep breaths. I was here...wherever ‘here’ was, and I might as well make the best of it. Thus, I walked down the seemingly never-ending hallway.

While there were no doors, there was an abundance of windows, each looking out (or in) on/to a room. Some of the rooms looked like rooms in the motel and others looked like

apartments. As I walked along, I saw a couple making love, an eGirl streaming on Twitch, a man reading his bible on his motel bed, and a student working, among others. I felt like a voyeur...

Continuing along, I thought back to Nick Hinton's explanation of randoauting as, and I paraphrase here, experiencing the ordinary in an *unordinary* way. I remembered what he said: randoauting was a means to explore "the hidden worlds that have persisted unnoticed underneath your nose for your entire life. It means illuminating the hazy shadowy corners of your own reality."¹⁹

Such a view, a view not necessarily devoid of the supernatural, but not foregrounding it either, was appealing. As I thought about the 4chan discussions surrounding the backrooms (while continuing to walk the endless hallway), I realized that they were singularly focused. Specifically, the discourse surrounding the backrooms was primarily focused on the supernatural as such – a world one slips into that exists outside our own. As I continued to explore this hall of windows, each looking in on another's life, I determined that there was a significantly simpler way to think of the backrooms.

When one noclips reality and enters the backrooms, one does not enter a world *outside* our reality, as those on /x/ seemed to think. Rather, upon reflection, I came to believe that the backrooms were the scaffolds of reality as such. They were what made our reality possible. Kant be damned, the conditions of the world we inhabit on a day-to-day basis *could* be experienced, one just had to go about it circuitously. I thus came to the understanding that the backrooms were merely another category of cognition (albeit a purely physical one). They were physical structures that held our – and I'll lapse into Kantian language here – 'phenomenal' world in place. Exploring them was not tantamount to exploring an-*other* world, rather it was tantamount to exploring the deepest recesses of our own world. This was an area ripe for theory... physically transcendental conditions of the world? A hidden buffer that holds our world together? Was it also keeping something out? These are questions to which I did not have the answers.

As I continued walking down the dimly lit corridor, I realized that where I was, a 'backroom,' was not another dimension – I had not noclipped into a radically different world –, I had simply entered the unseen, yet extremely powerful sub-section of our own world that props up our everyday understanding. I was *in the walls of reality*, so to speak.

¹⁹ Nickhinton333, "What Does Being a Randoaut Mean?" 42.

I have no idea how long I walked for, but at some point, exhaustion got to me and I simply sat down on the floor. Suddenly very sleepy, I closed my eyes for but a brief moment (or so it seemed). Opening them, I found myself face down on my desk with a guest complaining that they had locked themselves out of their room. It was 12:20am (what the hell was going on with the time here? – “Hotel rooms have their own approaches to time”)²⁰ and I shook my head, apologized for being asleep, and helped them to their room. When I returned to my desk to wait out the rest of my shift (making sure not to fall asleep this time), I wondered what had happened? Had all this been a dream?

Unlocking my phone, I looked at the recently used apps and saw only one: camera.

Opening it, I saw that there was a new photo in my camera roll. I have no recollection of taking it nor can I explain who this is or how the angle was achieved. All that being said, perhaps I really had looked in on the world from the ‘outside’...



²⁰ Kristen Alvanson, “incognitum hactenus,” in *Cyclonopedia: Complicity With Anonymous Materials*, by Reza Negarestani (Melbourne: re.press, 2008), ix-xx: xiv.