Excursions Editorial: On Documents

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One of the wonderful things about a surveillance state is the volumes of documentation it produces, the totality of which is ungraspable. Modern filing practices have proved remarkably successful in stockpiling the documentation of the post-Napoleonic modern state: much of what we produce today will be preserved, in one form or another, in libraries; albums; filling cabinets and bottom drawers; underneath beds and wedged between washers and dryers; or saved on hard disks and servers.

The internet has only accelerated documentation, though not necessarily in a more reliable form. While apparently immunising data from fire and flood, it has opened it up to a whole new structure of "death" in dead links, corrupt files and outdated scripts. Wikipedia, riddled with errors and duplications, and burdened by a bloated apparatus for self-indexation, is the internet's most advanced arm of documentary production. Perhaps it is the Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy of the twenty-first century; a mere widening of the bureaucratic franchise. I happened upon this page, documenting the reasons the University of Sydney's general IP address has been blocked from editing the online encyclopaedia until the end of the year:

MARCH 2007
Regarding edits made during March 8, 2007 (UTC) to Man Booker Prize
Thank you for experimenting with Wikipedia. Your test worked, and it has been reverted or removed.

Please stop. If you continue to vandalize Wikipedia, as you did to Tofu, you will be blocked from editing. Gwernol 11:11, 15 March 2007 (UTC)

APRIL 2007
Your recent edit to Australia (diff) was reverted by an automated bot that attempts to recognize and repair vandalism to Wikipedia articles. // MartinBot 12:55, 27 April 2007 (UTC)

Please stop. If you continue to vandalize Wikipedia, as you did to St Andrew's College, Sydney, you will be blocked from editing. MER-C 13:01, 27 April 2007 (UTC)

This is your last warning. The next time you <u>vandalize</u> Wikipedia, as you did to <u>The Women's College</u>, you will be <u>blocked</u> from editing. <u>MER-C</u> 13:02, 27 April 2007 (UTC)

You have been temporarily <u>blocked</u> from editing Wikipedia as a result of your disruptive edits.

MAY 2007
Please stop. Continuing to add <u>unsourced or original content</u>, as you did to <u>Flying Spaghetti Monster</u>, is considered <u>vandalism</u> and may result in a <u>block</u>. <u>John Vandenberg</u> 06:39, 2 May 2007 (UTC)

This issue of *Philament Excursions* – comprising a short essay, poetry, prose, multimedia, and hybrids of above – is a wide exploration of the experience of surveillance and surveying, and the documents produced in the process. Matthew Allen writes on *City of Shadows*, an exhibition of early twentieth century Australian crime photography dug up from old files. He considers the manner in which these intriguing documents have been projected (like Ern Malley's poetry) with fantasised narratives. Meg Mundell's piece *The Smell of Good Luck* considers the surveyor as artist; while Miranda Heckenberg and Robin Dixon's *Footfalls* conveys the feelings of being followed. We hope you enjoy it – with a touch of terror.