

GOLD

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GOLD'S HEAVINESS AND MALLEABILITY

Assemblage 13, *December, 1990*, includes Ann Bergren's "Gold's Gym in Venice, Ca." In this text, Bergren, Associate Professor of Classics at the University of California and architectural theory teacher at Southern California Institute of Architecture, submits one eccentric work of architecture to a feminist poststructuralist reading. "Gold's Gym in Venice, Ca." exercises richness and poorness, excess and lack, beauty and grotesqueness, drugs, myth, and religion. It actively challenges architecture's practices of interpretation, definition, and ability to deal with difference. It is a complex, non-linear, and experimental text, highly articulated yet unambiguously heavy. Assemblage 15, *August, 1991*, includes Rob Miller's "A Punchlist for 'Gold's Gym': The Echoing of a Dumbbell." In this text, Miller, practising architect and teacher at Clemson University and Georgia Institute of Technology, directly responds to "Gold's Gym in Venice Ca." He enacts a so-called "re:assemblage" of "Gold's Gym in Venice, Ca." In so doing, he responds to the challenges that text presents architecture and architects of the type that Miller self-ascribes. This paper will examine Miller's article in relation to Bergren's and Miller's re:assemblage in relation to Bergren's assemblage. It will interrogate Miller's attempts to use conceptual apparatuses formed by Umberto Eco, most centrally the open work, to refigure Bergren's text. As such, the paper will trace an attempt at discursive remoulding. It will critique one architectural history text's attempt to control reading and writing of another text, and itself. In conclusion, the paper will reinforce the value of heavy, reflective, and reflexive texts for architectural discourse and disciplinary intellection.

Regarding Assemblage

This paper concerns other papers. This is not unique. The codes of scholarship largely require such a relation. Theories of intertextuality, presented by Julia Kristeva, Howard Bloom, Roland Barthes, and Umberto Eco amongst others, posit the relation of papers to papers as an inevitable product of discourse.¹ This paper, however, relates to other papers in a very direct manner. It primarily interrogates a paper written by Rob Miller in August, 1991: “A Punchlist for Gold’s Gym: The Echoing of a Dumbbell.”² Miller’s paper interrogates a paper written by Ann Bergren in December, 1990: “Gold’s Gym in Venice, Ca.”³ This current paper, thus, interrogates a paper that interrogates a paper. In interrogating Miller’s paper, it is also necessary for this paper to address Bergren’s paper, directly and indirectly. As such, this paper concerns a paper that has been interrogated by another paper, whilst interrogating that interrogative paper.

Both Bergren and Miller’s papers were published in issues of the journal *Assemblage*, principally edited by K. Michael Hays and Alicia Kennedy, and published by M.I.T. Press. The reflexivity of Miller’s paper is foregrounded by its siting within a special section of issue 15 of *Assemblage* titled “re:assemblage.”⁴ The section’s referentiality is reinforced by the titling of Miller’s paper. “A Punchlist for ‘Gold’s Gym’: The Echoing of a Dumbbell” contains the textual object “Gold’s Gym”, made conspicuous by its placement within inverted commas.⁵ As this current paper is not being published within *Assemblage*, as its terms of reference are less insular than those of Hays and Kennedy, and as its manner of interrogation is different from that of Miller, its title contains neither the prefix “re” nor inverted commas. As it is being presented at a conference themed “Gold,” it does include the semantically ambiguous word “Gold’s.”

This paper will examine the manner in which Miller conceptualises Bergren’s “Gold’s Gym in Venice, Ca.” It will question Miller’s framework, his text’s relation to Bergren’s text, and the motivations for and results of his attempted repositioning of that text within architectural discourse. It will address and hence involve discursive objects and operations that are intentionally conceptually dense, and develop a position critical of a certain definition of criticality. It will stress the significance of the materiality of architectural writing. To help mitigate its own thick and convoluted material, the structure of this paper will follow a strict sequence. The first section will introduce intellectual context. The second section will discuss Bergren’s paper. The third section will discuss Miller’s paper. The fourth section will analyse and challenge Miller’s reading of Bergren’s paper. The fifth section will use Miller and Miller’s Bergren to reflect on architectural theory discourse.

Open and Closed

The intellectual weightiness of literary theory has been exploited by many architectural scholars to interrogate and challenge architecture in recent decades. These undertakings can be understood as focusing on two basic cultural activities: writing and reading.

Critical formulations of practices focused on writing arose to counter monotonous discursive and physical landscapes. Texts framed around ambiguity and metaphor can be seen within 1960s architectural discourse: Robert Venturi refers to English New Critic William Empson’s notion of “ambiguity” in his seminal work *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, 1966; and Charles Jencks refers to the works of Empson’s teacher I.A. Richards in his text “Semiotics and Architecture,” 1969.⁶ The practices of the so-called neo-avant-garde manifest Bloomian responses to their “anxiety of influence”:⁷ the heroic modern masters provided objects onto which critical literary theories of semiosis, double coding, and the aforementioned intertextuality could be operationalised.⁸ These works from the 1950s to the 1970s retain a fixed relation to their references. Each is left as a historical resource, filled with integrity but ready to be redeployed.⁹

Conceptualisations dependent on practices of active reading became more prominent during the 1980s and 1990s. Discourse-focused works by architectural scholars such as Mark Wigley and Stanley Tigerman show architectural theory dealing with challenges to what Marco Diani and Catherine Ingraham refer to as “the *transparency* promised by the ‘age of textuality’”,¹⁰ challenges to the common-sense understanding that writing can be based on texts that are simply decoded and understood.

The poetic function of the texts of Wigley and Tigerman is overt.¹¹ Acts of “respelling,” the use of the “under erasure or *sous rature* mark,”¹² and broader unconventional applications of punctuation and archaic and opaque units of lexicon are prevalent in these and other contemporaneous architectural texts. These usages imply semantic slippages in the text being produced, as well as in their references. Such texts are complicated by the inclusion of “the reader’s response as a possibility built into the textual strategy.”¹³ Texts are not objects implying linear interpretation, but sites of Peircean infinite semiosis.¹⁴

The pattern of architectural theory discourse loosely follows Eco’s periodisation of the evolution of semiotics. Eco presents a state “from the end of the [1970s] until ... [1981] and onward ... [in which] text[-focused] theories ... shifted toward pragmatics, so that the ... problematic [wa]s not the generation of texts but their reading.”¹⁵ Eco readily admits his “chronological cuts are made with a sort of Victorian irresponsibility.”¹⁶ But his periodisation is not only rough but misleading. Theorisations of active reading contributing to the constitution of texts can be traced back far further — at least to Eco’s own 1962 book, *Opera aperta (The Open Work)*.¹⁷

Eco’s *The Open Work* focuses on cultural productions that are distinguished by their interpretive tolerance.¹⁸ Eco contends that “the form of the work of art gains its aesthetic validity precisely in proportion to the number of different perspectives from which it can be viewed and understood.”¹⁹ He suggests that historically, the open work developed as a reaction to the increased significance of the interpretation of art. Eco claims “rather than submit[ting] to the ‘openness’ as an inescapable element of artistic interpretation, [the artist] subsumes it into a positive aspect of his [or her] production, recasting the work so as to expose it to the maximum possible ‘opening’” by employing a “syntactico-semantic-pragmatic device.”²⁰ Eco’s theorisation of the conditions of an open work thus not only implies the reader’s role in the ongoing production of the work, but also involves the future reader and their interpretation into the practice of the artist.

It is important to note that while Eco’s definition of the open work is based on “*difficult*”²¹ contemporary artworks and their producers, the theory is not intended to dichotomise the field of cultural products into “open” and “closed” works. Eco asserts that every aesthetic message “involves to some extent a rupture with (or a departure from) the linguistic system of probability, which serves to convey established meanings, in order to increase the signifying potential of the message,” but “the author of the message with aesthetic aspirations will intentionally structure it in as ambiguous a fashion as possible precisely in order to violate that system of laws and determinations which makes up the code.”²² All texts have a degree of openness; self-conscious texts inherently have more.

Eco celebrates the society based upon the problematic of openness. He argues “[w]hat makes a society ‘primitive’ is its inability to let its cultural patterns evolve, its unwillingness to interpret and exploit the original assumptions of its culture,” and what makes a society “superior ... is its plasticity, its flexibility, its capacity to respond to circumstantial challenges by constantly interpreting new experiences and elaborating new ways to adjust to them.”²³ Openness thus presents an auric malleability.

Eco never advocates open interpretation. Indeed, he argues against over-interpretation, as presented by, amongst others, Richard Rorty and Jonathan Culler.²⁴ By Eco’s assessment, “[i]f I interpret and define, as the alchemists did, certain elements as capable of being transformed into gold, ... and if at the final end I do not get gold in the crucible, every sane member of the community is entitled to say that my interpretation is ... unacceptable.”²⁵ He nevertheless judges a society’s value by their reactions to dense or so-called difficult challenges. With this in mind, it is to the first of two difficult texts that this discussion now turns with hopes of building a conceptualisation of discursive gold.

“Gold’s Gym”

As stated above, Miller’s article “A Punchlist for ‘Gold’s Gym’” analyses Bergren’s article “Gold’s Gym in Venice, Ca.”. Miller’s text imposes a series of vigorous and rigid structures onto Bergren’s text. While Bergren’s text shows signs of factoring the reader’s response into the production, the reader Miller’s formalised impositions should not be included in Bergren’s text. It is important to present Bergren’s text directly in as unprejudiced a manner as possible to set a new ground for this discussion.

“Gold’s Gym in Venice, Ca.” is twenty-eight pages long, three of which are endnotes. It is a heavily wrought text. At even the most superficial level, the conspicuousness of the textual construct is formally legible.

The layout is based on a three-column grid. The two outside or marginal columns are about half the width of the central column. The marginal columns contain smaller writing than that within the central column. The central column contains headings and indented quotations. The size of the font of the indented quotations is somewhere between the rest of the central column and the marginal columns. The marginal columns have neither headings nor indentations, but contain names and initialised names — rendered in bold and punctuated by colons — at the head of each paragraph. The marginal columns also contain most of the text’s figures.

The rigidity of the system, however, is challenged by some of the illustrative figures. The challenges are both subtle - where the figures extend from the margin to occupy the indentation of the central column - or more overt, a full-page figure, a page of six arrayed figures, a page of two opposing figures, and, perhaps most noticeable due to its awkwardness, two figures, one composed of two parts, that share a page with a central column stub, the spacing between the figures extending to the approximate mid-point of that column of writing.

Closer assessment reveals the graphic conspicuousness of the text reinforces a linguistic conspicuousness. The writing foregrounds the materiality of the text: the poetic function dominates the message. Grammatical conventions are ignored; lexical units are contorted; similes and metaphors litter the argument; digressions are framed as central; and the phrasing swings between the aphoristic and the labyrinthine. The images in the figures support the writing. They include amateurish photographs of objects of various scale and type: buildings-as-objects, object-parts of buildings, people working out within a built environment, equipment found within that environment, photocopies of figures of classical sculptures, and photographs of photographs. The six images on page 17 form a disjointed and discordant montage of the interior of Gold’s Gym. Communicative economy and extravagance in concert produce a slowing effect. As a result, the text is dense.

Even without the slowing effect of the poetic function of the text, “Gold’s Gym in Venice Ca.” is a heavy, tiring text. Its twenty-eight pages include a great deal of content: a contextualisation characterising Venice, California; a description and analysis of Gold’s Gym, its exterior and its interior; a discussion of image and identity relative to architectural elements and the interior architecture of Gold’s Gym; an analysis of Gold’s Gym employing Lacanian psychoanalysis; a discussion of the relation of gender to Gold’s Gym; a discussion of image and identity in relation again to Lacanian psychoanalysis; references to Greek mythology; and a theorisation of the relation of Gold’s Gym built form to the built form of the bodies that use Gold’s Gym. To add complexity to this accumulation of intellectual objects, the text involves not one but many voices: the voice of the author-function, Ann Bergren; the voices of the speaking subjects Ann Bergren, Jeffrey Kipnis, Ed Connors, Langston Hardaway, Michael Rotondi; the voice of Jean-Pierre Vernant, through quotation the voice of Claude Lévi-Strauss as translated by James Bell and John von Sturmer, the voice of Jacques Lacan as translated by Alan Sheridan, and the voice of St. Augustine as quoted by Lacan; and in the notes, the voices of Wolfgang Hermann translating Gottfried Semper, Homer characterising Odysseus, Vernant again, Ingraham, Kennedy, Eric Owen Moss, John P. Muller and William J. Richardson. The cacophony of voice and breadth of content is supported by the referents within the 30 figures. The text is loaded with subjects and objects.

Structure and content thus combine in “Gold’s Gym in Venice, Ca.” to form a distended and somewhat monstrous article. While theses could be written on Bergren’s article, there is no time to go into finer detail here. For the purposes of this paper, there is also no need.

"For 'Gold's Gym'"

Several things are clear from the outset of Rob Miller's "A Punchlist for 'Gold's Gym': The Echoing of a Dumbbell." As stated above, referentiality is expressed in the titling of both section and paper. This referentiality is reinforced by the inclusion of the entire title - "Gold's Gym in Venice, Ca." - in the first sentence.²⁶ In this context, it is important to note the absence of any reference to Ann Bergren as author. No oversight, this is an overt translation of the Barthesian "death of the author" concept, discussed on page 91.

Aesthetic aspirations are also conspicuous. On the part of Miller, these are most overtly formalised in textual strategies including hyphenation, italicisation, parentheses, inverted commas, and a scientific citational system that inserts page number, column, and paragraph number between square brackets, e.g., "[8:C:2]."²⁷ On the part of editors Hays and Kennedy, the considered aestheticism is most evident in the three, even, well-spaced and ragged-edged columns, generally though not meticulously supported by the placement and sizing of the figures.²⁸ Together, these formal elements invoke overly literal links to structural and poststructural discourse with an ambiguity tuned for active reading.

The object of most significance to "A Punchlist for 'Gold's Gym'" is neither overt nor ambiguous. It is revealed in full — in the endnotes. Five of sixteen notes make reference to Umberto Eco; four texts are cited: "Lector in Fabula," "The Poetics of the Open Work," "Narrative Structures in Fleming," and *Foucault's Pendulum*.²⁹ The three articles form chapters in *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts*, cited as published in 1984 but originally published in 1979;³⁰ and *Foucault's Pendulum* was published in English the year prior to the publication of "A Punchlist for 'Gold's Gym'."

Eco has a long association with architectural theory discourse. His time at the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Florence inspired the radical architect groups Archizoom, Superstudio, and U.F.O.³¹ His presence within the mainstream of architectural discourse was established by the inclusion of two chapters - "Function and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture," and "A Componential Analysis of the Architectural Sign /Column/" - within the anthology *Signs, Symbols, and Architecture*, edited by Geoffrey Broadbent, Richard Bunt, and Charles Jencks, and published in 1980. These connections underscore the ambiguity of Eco's minimised yet essential presence in the text.

Miller's first note exposes the extent to which his paper leans on the work of Eco. The note begins, "[a]s suggested by this close paraphrase of the first paragraph of 'Lector in Fabula' ..., I am indebted to Umberto Eco for much of the meta-textual analysis applied herein."³² A comparison of the two paragraphs reveals the extent of the closeness of the almost word-for-word "paraphrase":

To the one-dimensional reader, Allais' *Une drame bien parisien* ... may appear to be a mere literary joke, a disturbing exercise in verbal *trompe-l'oeil*, something halfway between the engravings by Escher and a *pastiche* à la Borges (*ante litteram*). *Just because of this* it must be taken as a text telling its own unfortunate story. Since its misfortune has been carefully planned, *Drame* does not represent a textual failure: it represents a meta-textual achievement. *Drame* must be read twice: it asks for a naive and a critical reading, the latter being the interpretation of the former. ... But *Drame* has been assumed to be a meta-text. As such it tells at least three stories: (i) the story of what happens to its *dramatis personae*; (ii) the story of what happens to its naive reader; (iii) the story of what happens to itself as a text (this third story being potentially the same as the story of what happens to the critical reader). Thus my present essay is not an analysis of something happening outside *Drame* as a text ...: the present essay is nothing else but the story of the adventures of *Drame's* Model Readers.³³

To the one-dimensional reader, "Gold's Gym in Venice, Ca." may appear to be a mere liter-airy joke, a disturbing exercise in verbal *tromp(e)-l'oeil*, something halfway between the engravings of Escher and a *pastiche* à la Borges. *Precisely because of this*, it must be taken as a text telling its own contorted story. Since its contortions have been carefully planned, "Gold's Gym" represents neither an architectural nor a textual failure: it represents a meta-textual achievement, albeit a derisive one. But "Gold's Gym" must be read twice to excavate its ridicule. It offers a naive and a critical reading, the latter being the interpretation of the former, the latter also being in disguise. Moreover, "Gold's Gym" can be read as at least three stories: the story of those who work out at Gold's Gym (i.e., the physical description of the building and its cast); the story of whether Gold's Gym is, or is not, architecture; and the story of those who work out at "Gold's Gym" (i.e., the story of what happens to the readers of the text "Gold's Gym"). ... This essay is nothing else but a play-by-play analysis of the punches taken by the reader within 'Gold's Gym'.³⁴

The reader of “A Punchlist for ‘Gold’s Gym’” is ostensibly expected to recognise the “closeness” of Miller’s paraphrasing of Eco’s “Lector in Fabula” without a single reference to Eco or his work the main body of writing. This seems unrealistically demanding.

The requirements increase as Miller continues his first note. He asserts that “the ... text is more an overlay of ‘Gold’s Gym’ with various texts by Eco than an original analysis, and therefore my role is more that of reader than of author.”³⁵ The projected reader of “A Punchlist” is accordingly expected be able to avoid conventional understandings of authorship and communication.

It is problematic for Miller to imply expectations within an ambiguous text without a theoretical framework. “A Punchlist for ‘Gold’s Gym’” is grounded on theorisations of the Model Reader developed by Eco. In speaking through (in the paper) and of (in the notes) his expectations regarding Eco, Miller both refers to the concept of and articulates his paper’s Model Reader: a reader who, according to Eco, is the reader “able to deal interpretively with the expressions in the same way as the author deals generatively with them.”³⁶

Miller’s analysis (or overlay) of “Gold’s Gym” explicitly casts two Model Reader roles: the “Naïve Reader” and the “Critical Reader.” But their relation to the openness of the text is somewhat counterintuitive. Confronted with a difficult text and armed with Eco’s conceptualisation of open works, the reader of “Gold’s Gym in Venice, Ca.” might expect an open text. But according to Miller, “the openness of ‘Gold’s’ is not quiddative, [and] only the Naïve Reader has been authorized to regard the text as an open work.”³⁷ Confronted with the same text and afforded “a second critical reading,” Miller’s Critical Reader sees its appearance as “an ‘open’ work” as a “cloaking.”³⁸ Thus, contrary to first impressions, “Gold’s Gym” is, to Miller’s Critical Reader, ‘closed’.

“A Punchlist”

Miller’s relation to Bergren may provide some rationale for the ambiguous framing “A Punchlist for ‘Gold’s Gym’” gives to “Gold’s Gym in Venice, Ca..” Miller’s analysis of the relation of Bergren to architectural theorist and theorised “Naïve Reader” Michael Rotondi presents a convincing critique of her disparagement of architects and architecture. “A Punchlist” might thus be conceived of as a counterattack by Miller, an “architect practising in Atlanta who regularly teaches at Clemson University and the Georgia Institute of Technology.”³⁹

On the other hand, given the interpretive “re:”-running of Bergren’s text on the pages of *Assemblage*, Miller’s article could be conceived of as a reaction to criticisms of “Gold’s Gym.” The reader of “A Punchlist” might assume Bergren’s article had been formally labelled ‘a failure’, and that Miller leapt to the defence. That the hypothesised defence is counterintuitive and seemingly counterproductive would remain a separate issue.

Regardless of the ascribed intention, the heavy-handed dichotomisation that underwrites Miller’s positioning of “Gold’s Gym” - the quasi-structuralist manner with which it addresses poststructuralist material - primes “A Punchlist.” Its posturing solicits a retaliation. Such a response, however, would devalue both papers and architectural theory discourse more broadly. To move beyond reductions, analysis must focus on the discursive implications of the assessment “A Punchlist” makes of “Gold’s Gym”.

Miller’s formalisation of a punchlist - a gymnastically-punning synonym for “defects list,” and thus a nod to the tedious realities of architectural practice - renders Bergren’s text a textual outcome able to be appropriated: a text over which he, an architect, takes command. “‘Gold’s Gym’” is the product of a construction process that has been completed to the builder’s (Bergren’s) satisfaction, but needs to be amended to comply with the architect’s (Miller’s). Miller looks to solidify “Gold’s Gym” with a scaffolding of theory. As a result, “A Punchlist” seems to work to reduce the inherent malleability of the original text.

Not only does Miller’s paper close Bergren’s text, it characterises that closure within an ideological framework. The characterisation “A Punchlist” makes of an open reading of “Gold’s Gym” as “Naïve” is discursively motivated. The object onto which the formulation of Miller’s Critical Reader projects is the persona of the architectural theorist, the discipline-specific variant of the ascetic “theorist” conceptualised by Ian Hunter’s in his “History of Theory.”⁴⁰ Miller’s theorist follows the lineage Hunter gives for the Christian metaphysician. He is a masochist, who focuses the difficulty of the difficult text onto him- or herself. “A Punchlist” presents this persona as a discipline-wide Model.

Yet Miller's text is itself difficult. The fundamental task it sets itself is potentially flawed from the outset. According to Giovanna Borradori, "[t]o attempt mediation between indeterminacy and systematic control, and yet keep the notion of the 'open system,' is a contradiction in terms."⁴¹ And "A Punchlist" adds to its challenges by showing concerns for language and textuality. It deals with the openness and closedness of "Gold's Gym" while itself establishing ambiguous signs of its own constitution. It is a delicate balance, and one whose results are challenging, provocative, and, importantly, difficult to assess.

Miller's text may be culpable for its limiting discursive projection onto Bergren's text. "A Punchlist" intervenes in the semiotic processing of "Gold's Gym." In *The Role of the Reader*, Eco asserts that "the text is nothing but the semantic-pragmatic production of its own Model Reader."⁴² Enforcing a Model Reader onto another text interferes with that semantic-pragmatic production, complicating it with a meta-semantic-pragmatic construction and production. "A Punchlist" might be taken as intruding on constructions and productions of "Gold's Gym"; as de-aestheticising "Gold's Gym" as it asceticises architectural culture. But such a reading would be naïve. Fittingly, "A Punchlist" demands a reader critical of the Critical Reader.

Ec()oing Dumbbells

The meta-level significance of Miller's "A Punchlist for 'Gold's Gym'" has two distinct components. The text promotes an imperative for criticality within architectural discourse. It implies all readers should be "Critical" and that all architects should take on the persona of the theorist. Balancing critical assessment with creativity and responding to an open text with an open text may require a certain level of masochism; but the self-harm is limited to the writer and to the reader of that specific text. "A Punchlist" seems to work towards enforcing blanket masochism. Imposing a transtextual mode of reading onto an audience - making a reader fit into a generic Model - would be a sadistic authoritarian act underwritten by a commitment to criticality that may be taken as naïve.

Yet the openness of "A Punchlist" assuages its discursive sadism. In his closing words, Miller suggests "perhaps even I, like Xerxes, am guilty of building a bridge across points that were never meant to be spanned."⁴³ It is a dramatised guilty confession worthy of the archetypal monkish theorist persona: certain grounds for self-flagellation. It is one example amongst many of the conspicuous constructedness of Miller's paper. With such acts of thick textuality, "A Punchlist" becomes useful. It becomes a heavy medium through which to exercise the practice of reading. Any such exercise is a valuable contributor to strong yet flexible minds.

With the help of "Gold's Gym in Venice, Ca." and "A Punchlist for 'Gold's Gym'" this paper has performed its own remoulding. It has suggested not the abandonment of cultural bridge building, but a mindful wariness of all construction methodologies, even those supported by the formidable persona of the theorist. In a truly non-critical final analysis, "A Punchlist for 'Gold's Gym'" might be assessed as mere pseudo-Eco. But this would be simplistic, and a missed opportunity. If, as Eco suggests, a superior society is one that is mutable and able to respond to challenges, perhaps it is the architectural-history-society reader's obligation to treat every self-conscious text as open and malleable: as gold.

Endnotes

- 1 See, for example, Julia Kristeva, "The Bounded Text," in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 36–63; Howard Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); Roland Barthes, "Theory of the Text," in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (London: Routledge, 1981), 31–47; and Umberto Eco, *Postscript to The Name of the Rose*, translated by William Weaver (New York: Harcourt, 1984).
- 2 Rob Miller, "A Punchlist for Gold's Gym: The Echoing of a Dumbbell," *Assemblage* 15 (August 1991): 89–98.
- 3 Ann Bergren, "Gold's Gym in Venice, Ca.," *Assemblage* 13 (December 1990): 6–33.
- 4 The other articles within this sections are Daniel Sherer, "re: The Politics of Formal Autonomy", 99–102; and Ken Hayes, "re: Ockman's Reinvention of Jefim Golyscheff," 103–104. Note the unconventional punctuation.

- 5 This is not the case with “re: The Politics of Formal Autonomy”, which addresses Preston Scott Cohen, “Two houses”, published in *Assemblage* 13, or “re: Ockman’s Reinvention of Jefim Golyscheff,” which addresses Joan Ockman, “Reinventing Jefim Golyscheff: Lives of a Minor Modernist,” published in *Assemblage* 11.
- 6 Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966) employs William Empson’s *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1930); Charles Jencks extends notions of metaphor and symbolism discussed in I.A. Richards, *Coleridge on Imagination* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1934) and C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning: A Study of the Influence of Language Upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1923) in “Semiology and Architecture,” in *Meaning in Architecture*, eds. Charles Jencks and George Baird (London: Academy, 1969), 10–25.
- 7 See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).
- 8 The clearest example of this process can be seen in the work of the so-called New York Five, Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, Charles Gwathmey, John Hejduk, and Richard Meier, as expressed in *Five Architects* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1975). Mark Crinson and Claire Zimmerman, eds., *Neo-Avant-Garde and Postmodern: Postwar Architecture in Britain and Beyond* (New Haven: The Yale Center for British Art, 2010) explores many versions of the neo-avant-garde position in post-World War II Britain, and their terms of reference.
- 9 See Charles Jencks, “Isozaki and Radical Eclecticism,” *AD* 47 (January, 1977): 42–8 for an analysis of appropriation in the work of Arata Isozaki.
- 10 Mark Wigley, “The Translation of Architecture, the Production of Babel,” *Assemblage* 8 (February 1989): 6–21, and Mark Wigley, “Jacques Derrida and Architecture: The Deconstructive Possibilities of Architectural Discourse” (PhD Thesis, University of Auckland, 1986), developed into Mark Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida’s Haunt* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993); Stanley Tigerman, *The Architecture of Exile* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988); in Marco Diani and Catherine Ingraham, “Introduction: Edifying Projects: Restructuring Architectural Theory,” in *Restructuring Architectural Theory*, eds. Marco Diani and Catherine Ingraham (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989), 1. This book was originally a special issue: *Threshold* 4 (Spring 1988).
- 11 Margaret Softan claims Tigerman “has made something of a speciality out of steamrolling audiences of humanities types with a combination of unreadable slides of architectural plans and his own inscrutable English”. See Margaret Softan, “Architecture as a Kind of Writing,” *American Literary History* 3, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 411.
- 12 See Diani and Ingraham, “Introduction,” 4–5. The *sous rature* mark was developed by Martin Heidegger, but made popular in works of the deconstructive works of Jacques Derrida.
- 13 Umberto Eco, “The Theory of Signs and the Role of the Reader,” *The Bulletin of Midwest Modern Language Association* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 35.
- 14 See Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, Vol. 1: Principles of Philosophy*, eds. Charles Hartshorne, Paul Weiss and Arthur W. Burks (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931–58), 339.
- 15 Eco, “The Theory of Signs and the Role of the Reader,” 35. The then-current stage is Eco’s third: it follows a first stage of semiotics during the 1960s “concerned with structures, systems, codes, paradigms, semantic fields, and abstract oppositions”; and a second stage “during the seventies ... a violent shift [in analysis] from signs to texts, where texts were considered as syntactico-semantic structures generated by a text-grammar”. See Eco, “The Theory of Signs and the Role of the Reader,” 35.
- 16 Eco, “The Theory of Signs and the Role of the Reader,” 35.
- 17 Umberto Eco, *Opera aperta* (Milan: Bompiani, 1962). “The Poetics of the Open Work” was first published in Italian in 1959. Other important related texts from the 1960s and 1970s include Roland Barthes, “La mort de l’auteur,” *Mantéa* 5 (1968): 12–17; “The Death of the Author,” *Image–Music–Text*, translated by Steven Heath (New York: Hill & Wang, 1977); Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1970) : *S/Z: An Essay*, translated by Richard Miller (New York: Hill & Wang, 1975); Roland Barthes, *Le Plaisir du Texte* (Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1973); *The Pleasure of the Text*, translated by Richard Miller (New York: Hill & Wang, 1975). Theorisations of active reading practices that occur after the text can be extended further back, to New Critics W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley’s conceptualisation of the ‘intentional fallacy’ and beyond.
- 18 Umberto Eco, *The Open Work*, translated by Anna Cancogni (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).
- 19 Umberto Eco, “The Poetics of the Open Work,” in *The Open Work* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 3.
- 20 Eco, “The Poetics of the Open Work,” 5; Umberto Eco, “Introduction: The Role of the Reader,” in *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 3.
- 21 Michael Caesar, *Umberto Eco: Philosophy, Semiotics and the Work of Fiction* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999), 27.
- 22 Eco, “Openness, Information, Communication,” in *The Open Work* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 58, 66.
- 23 Eco, “Openness, Information, Communication,” 79.
- 24 Stefan Collini ed., *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) contains chapters by Eco (“Interpretation and history”; “Overinterpreting texts”; “Between author and text”) as well as responses by Richard Rorty (“The pragmatist’s progress”) and Jonathan Culler (“In defence of overinterpretation”).

- 25 Umberto Eco, "Reply," in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 149.
- 26 Miller, "A Punchlist," 89.
- 27 This system is elaborated in Miller's third endnote: "My cartography of "Gold's Gym" is based on the following reference system: [page number: column (Left, Center, Right): paragraph number (counting a partial paragraph at the top of a page as number 1)]" – Miller, "A Punchlist," 98.
- 28 The endnotes and figure-credits page employs four columns.
- 29 Miller, "A Punchlist," 98.
- 30 "Le strutture narrative di Fleming" was written in 1965; a translation by R.A. Downie was included in *The Bond Affair*, ed. Oreste Del Buono and Umberto Eco (London: MacDonald & Co., 1966), 35–75.
- 31 See Amit Wolf, "Superurbefimero No. 7: Umberto Eco's Semiologia and the Architectural Rituals of the U.F.O.," *California Italian Studies* 2, no. 2 (2011).
- 32 Miller, "A Punchlist," 98.
- 33 Umberto Eco, "Lector in Fabula," in *The Role of the Reader* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 204-5.
- 34 Miller, "A Punchlist," 89.
- 35 Miller, "A Punchlist," 98.
- 36 Eco, "Introduction," 7.
- 37 Miller, "A Punchlist," 91.
- 38 Miller, "A Punchlist," 89.
- 39 Miller, "A Punchlist," 89.
- 40 Ian Hunter, "History of Theory," *Critical Enquiry* 33, no.1 (Autumn 2006): 78–112. See also Ian Hunter, "The Time of Theory," *Postcolonial Studies* 10, no.1 (2007): 5–22; and Ian Hunter and Conal Condren, "The Persona of the Philosopher in the Eighteenth Century," *Intellectual History Review* 18 (2008): 315-17. See Andrew P. Steen, "The Figures of Charles Jencks, 'Semiology and Architecture'" (PhD Thesis, University of Queensland, 2016) for a detailed examination of this persona in architectural discourse.
- 41 Borridori, "Towards an Architecture of Exile," 13.
- 42 Eco, "Introduction: The Role of the Reader," *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 10.
- 43 Miller, "A Punchlist," 98.