A Hypermedia *Wickedary*: Feminist Adventures in the Web

by

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Abstract

With the Hypermedia *Wickedary*, I am paying tribute to Mary Daly. When I look at Daly's work, I am continually amazed by her ability to communicate incredibly complicated and radical philosophical arguments efficiently and in a way that is accessible to a wide range of people. She uses metaphors to bring not only meaning but play into a feminist understanding of the world. It is this element of play that I hope to enhance with my hypermedia version of her work.

As a scholar and an activist, Mary Daly has been on the forefront of feminist theory. Her 1987 parody of patriarchal dictionaries, the *Websters' First New Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language* (*Wickedary*), **is a** document written in hypertext. It may be confined to the printed page, but with its bits of information that is already cross-referenced, coded and annotated, its text occupies an intellectual space rather than a flat page. The *Wickedary* allows the reader to freely navigate among terms and concepts from her other books. She gives the readers connections to follow at their discretion and gives them notes that expand her text into other writers' works, making connections to the larger feminist community and an intellectual heritage. This step into hyper-space, while unfulfilled in the digital sense, fulfills her own demand for "Weaving" by "Websters," "Lusty Leaping," "Journeying" and occupying the "Otherworld," all words made up or modified by Daly.

These word plays and their various meanings keep the mind sharp and nimble for learning new things. The digital version of the *Wickedary* **is** also nimble in that I have added new words and new definitions. For example, I have added Donna Haraway's "Cyborg" and S. Paige Baty's "Matrix" to the digital *Wickedary*. I also added the word "Computer" to highlight cyber-feminist Sadie Plant's observation that computers were formerly groups of women who computed targeting coordinates for the military. Each of these additions participate in Daly's challenging of language and culture.

With this work I have an opportunity to "Weave" and "Spin," in Daly's terms, to become Haraway's "cyborg" occupying Baty's "matrix". I take this opportunity to participate in the play with metaphors, because metaphors enable the mind to cross boundaries, boundaries within feminist discourse as well as boundaries between feminist discourse and technology. The Hypermedia *Wickedary* enables the bringing together of divergent perspectives on "being," creating a space in which radical feminism can be "Dis-covered" rather than redeemed.

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Introduction

Mary Daly's primary contributions to her readers and students are her intellectual processes. These processes are tools with which she exposes the cultural phenomenon of patriarchy and its injustice. She developed a new language to expand the understanding of feminism and theology, and thus brought together the processes of language and ontology. She uses metaphors to make complicated philosophical arguments accessible to a wide variety of people, and she introduces her readers to feminist processes, such as Dis-covering and Spell-ing. Her subsequent works have built upon, revised and expanded her interpretation of ultimate reality. Using metaphors and word-plays as devices to communicate her perspective, she teaches her position to her readers. Her genius is not only in her astute observations, but also in her methods of communication.

Mary Daly is now, as she has always been, a controversial figure. Beyond being a feminist icon, Daly is also a scholar of substantial achievement and the author of seven books and countless articles and lectures. She received her first Ph.D. in religion at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. Unable to pursue a Ph.D. in Catholic theology in the

United States, she pursued her studies in Switzerland at the University of Fribourg. Her intellectual curiosity and tenacity made it possible for her to be the first woman to receive the highest degree in Sacred Theology possible, and with highest honors (*summa cum laude*). She remained in Fribourg to receive her third Ph.D. in Philosophy. When she returned to the United States, she took an appointment as an Assistant Professor at Boston College.

In response to the publishing of her first book *The Church and the Second Sex* in 1969, Mary Daly was issued a terminal contract by Boston University, i.e., her position would not be renewed once it had expired. Her situation became the cause for student protests, petitions, and teach-ins celebrating academic freedom. With student (all male at the time) and other popular support, not only was she taken on as full professor but also was given tenure. Now, in the year two thousand (archaic deadtime, in Daly's terms), she is yet again subject to dismissal from the college where she has taught for the last twenty-five years as a tenured professor. At this time, when Mary Daly is under attack and rigorous feminist debate is at a nadir in popular discourse, revisiting and reviving the work of Daly and others like her seems appropriate if not important.

As a scholar and an activist, Daly has been on the forefront of feminist theory. Not surprisingly, she took the step into hyper-communication

without necessarily being aware of its implications. Her 1987 parody of patriarchal dictionaries, the *Websters' First New Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language* (*Wickedary*), is a document written in hypertext. It may be confined to the printed page, but with its bits of information cross-referenced, coded and annotated, its text occupies an intellectual space rather than a flat page. It clearly fits the definition given to hypertext by Theodor Holm Nelson, the inventor of the term. When he discusses hypertext, and by extension hypermedia, he simply means "*non-sequential writing* – text that branches and allows choices to the reader." (Nelson 1992) This definition and the *Wickedary's* relationship to it are crucial to the understanding of its visionary nature.

With the *Wickedary*, Mary Daly positions herself among writers who have rejected the confines of the linear argument (or narrative) and the printed page. The Wickedary allows the reader to freely navigate among terms and concepts from her other books. She gives the readers connections to follow at their discretion and gives them notes that expand her text into other writers' works, making connections to the larger feminist community and an intellectual heritage. This step into hyper-space, while unfulfilled in the digital sense, fulfills her own demand for "Weaving" by "Websters," "Lusty Leaping," "Journeying" and occupying the "Otherworld." It is a

hypertext document, and therefore, an analysis in terms of current hypertext theories can only serve to illuminate its meaning, even beyond Daly's intention.

The *Wickedary* will be the object of my investigations, because it lends itself to a faithful transformation into hypertext. With Daly's other texts, an interpretation would have had to be created. With the *Wickedary*, "hypertextualizing" enhances features that she has already built into the text. Making her cross-references into hyperlinks, using visual elements to indicate the categories that Mary Daly has already assigned and making the dictionary format searchable fulfill the promise of the *Wickedary*. These modifications enhance the usability of the text and emphasize its anti-linear style of presentation without transforming the content in a substantive way. Her words and their definitions remain unchanged. Instead, hypermedia changes the text in a radical way. The promise of hypermedia in this project is to support Daly's desire for a new Sin-Tactics or Sin-thesis. Mary Daly's style has progressively departed from the academic essay since *The Church and the Second Sex*. The reader's experience of her metaphors is more powerful in illuminating her philosophy than is the academic architecture that she uses to present them. Hypermedia is an opportunity.

In this age of digital communication much has been written about the impact of this new form of media and industry. The proponents of hypertext as a democratizing medium cite the emergence of the World Wide Web (Web) as a source of information to underscore its power. Communication is changing due to this technology, and writing will never be the same. The translation of Mary Daly's *Wickedary* into digital hypermedia not only fulfills its potential, but also enriches the landscape of readily available knowledge in the electronic matrix with Daly's feminist perspective.

The culmination of this thesis is a hypermedia/hypertext version of the *Wickedary*. The hypertext *Wickedary*, Wickedary.com, is designed to provide a seamless experience of her philosophy. The user should be submerged in play with this website, and thus with Daly's philosophy. Wickedary.com provides visual keys that will make this experience more informative, but they are intended to be unobtrusive. For example, in the original *Wickedary*, Daly divides her words into three "word-webs." In the book, the differentiation between the webs is expressed physically. Each word-web is a separate section, like a chapter. In Wickedary.com, the word-web is indicated by the background image of the page. I created this project to investigate the potential of hypermedia as a medium for feminist argumentation and rhetoric, and to make Mary Daly's work more widely

accessible. These ambitions can only be evaluated after an engagement with Wickedary.com.

To prepare the reader/screener for an engagement with this "text," a series of issues will be addressed. First, I will review the body of Daly's work that is represented in the *Wickedary*, highlighting her principal ideas and methods. Second, I will identify redemption as a metanarrative in Daly's writings and introduce the work of Donna Haraway to explain the pitfalls of this approach. Expanding on this observation, I will address Daly's tendency to create "totalizing" theories, and explain how Haraway's cyborg metaphor could be a useful element to integrate into the Wickedary. Then, I will expand upon the discussion of Daly's methods and how a new set of technology savvy feminists such as Haraway and S. Paige Baty are Daly's legacy and therefore her future.

Having given an account of my interpretation of Daly, I will then focus on the impact of hypertext in particular as a digital medium, providing a review of some relevant hypertext theorists' work, and showing how their theories support an argument for the transformation of the *Wickedary* into hypertext. I will offer a discussion of the experience of "reading" the print *Wickedary* to buttress the argument that hypertext is its most suitable medium, while also arguing for the addition of words "Dis-covered" by

Haraway, Baty, and Sadie Plant, fulfilling my vision for the digital *Wickedary* as a common ground and launching point for new feminist metaphors. This argument is completed by a prototype of the digital Wickedary, therefore, Chapter Four is an explanation of the transformation of the *Wickedary* into Wickedary.com. This hypermedia *Wickedary*, itself, will be the fifth chapter, and to indicate this I have included printed sample pages, even though it is best experienced interactively. It is posted at http://www.wickedary.com for public display. I conclude with an explanation of Daly's concept of "Parthenogenesis," and how this thesis process has changed my relationship to her philosophy as well as to her text.

Chapter One: Mary Daly's Methods

The *Wickedary's* Heritage

Mary Daly's thought has evolved throughout her career. She is very aware of the transformations in her understanding and acknowledges its development. The **Wickedary** represents a culmination of her work. *The Church and the Second Sex*, *Beyond God the Father*, *Gyn/Ecology*, **and** *Pure Lust* laid the philosophical foundation for the *Wickedary*. **Placing the** *Wickedary* **in a historical framework and exploring it in terms of the heritage of her thought is an important step in understanding its, and thus Daly's, place in the future.**

Wanda Warren Berry discusses Daly's approach in *Beyond God the Father* in her article "Feminist Theology: The 'Verbing' Of Ultimate∕Intimate Reality in Mary Daly." Berry places Daly within the context of other feminist theologians; she illuminates Daly's theories on ultimate reality and how her "God as a Verb" metaphor operates as a philosophical position; and she illustrates the ways in which the "verbing" of the divine impacts the Be-ing (in Daly's terms) of women.

Berry outlines the feminist positions in the study of religion, which she separates into two groups, reformers and revolutionaries. She identifies Daly as a pioneer in the field and identifies the dependence of the movement,

consciously or unconsciously, on her early work.(Berry 1988, 213) Daly's early work is clearly reformist (e.g. *The Church and the Second Sex*); her later work is revolutionary. The 'reformist' feminists feel that religious traditions are not at their foundation sexist; they have just been corrupted by patriarchy and need to be reformed. The 'revolutionaries' intend to either seek ancient women-centered religions or to create new women-identified religious symbols from experience.(Berry 1988, 213) According to Berry, both of these branches of feminist thought "need to read Daly to find the rebirth of their concerns in the last third of the twentieth century which had managed to submerge the works of nineteenth-century religious feminists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Matilda Jocelyn Gage."(Berry 1988, 213) She credits Daly with reviving, reinvigorating and reestablishing the feminist theological movement.

Berry also notes Daly's influence as an ontologist, making the questions of what it is "to be" of concern to a wide range of readers. She credits Daly with "powerful imagery and linguistic strategies" which have "so shocked and delighted readers that they have opened radically new insights."(Berry 1988, 214) Her imagery not only impacted those with familiarity with modern philosophy, theology and science, but also those formerly shaped by traditional assertions. (Berry 1988, 214) It is the genius of

Daly's work that it engages readers of all levels of sophistication in the examination of issues of ontology.

Berry connects Daly's works with the larger tapestry of feminist theology. She positions her as a primary source of the movement, and she shows how the "verb" metaphor for transcendence/immanence represents the feminist position of reclaiming ontological subjective being. She shows how Daly's work is concerned with the perpetual development of the female self. In all of these aspects she is defending Daly against those who would criticize Daly for her radical feminist orientation and exposing these critics' prejudices about what radical means.

Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation has earned a place among the most influential feminist texts. It has awakened and inspired a broad range of feminist theologians giving an expression to historically marginalized discourse. Within these pages, she reveals the sexist history of the Christian church; she offers an alternative conception of god; she posits an anti-sexist morality; and she advocates sisterhood as an alternative to patriarchal religion.

To begin, she provides a thorough critical dismantling of Method. As her anti-intellectual tendency leads her away from the great thinkers, it also alienates her from the crystallized structures of the academy. For her,

method, as an academic discipline, "prevents us from raising questions never asked before and from being illuminated by ideas that do not fit into pre-established boxes and forms."(Daly 1985, 11) Her first step is to debunk and discard what she considers archaic forms.

Her new approach includes the use of women's accounts of their own needs and spirits. She finds the women's movement and its use of consciousness-raising to be a key force in the transformation and undermining of the established symbols of patriarchal religion. She notes that these symbols are powerful forces in society and therefore should be exposed as fraud, and dismantled.

Citing the social change brought about by radical feminism, she sees the potential for a "more acute and widespread perception of qualitative differences between the conceptualizations of 'God' and of the human relationship to God that have been oppressive in their connotations."(Daly 1985, 18) The trajectory of her argument leads her quickly to a new conception of God, one that is based in action. She, of course, rejects the popular images of God as father. She also rejects some feminists' attempts to reform theology by calling the "he" of God "she." Her interest is in a wholly new approach, departing radically from all previously existing symbolic systems. She derives from the thought of Paul Tillich the notion of God as

verb. "Why indeed must 'God' be a noun? Why not a verb - the most active and dynamic of all?"(Daly 1985, 33) In the process of turning God into a verb, removing from the notion of ultimate concern the baggage of objectification and personification, women may see themselves in terms of a non-objectified universe in which there is no "Other." She is instead free to proclaim, "I am."(Daly 1985, 34) Thus, redefining God redefines the universe for the purpose of giving women an identity apart from patriarchal forms and myths.

The next issue of interest for Mary Daly is morality. She deconstructs the patriarchal and phallic norms describing them as a "Most Unholy Trinity." She identifies these as rape, genocide, and war. The contradiction and horrible irony of the relative treatment of rapist and raped in patriarchal culture is examined in her analysis. She traces this attitude to pertinent verses in the Bible. She then uses her analysis of the culture of rape to show how genocide is a logical extension. "Rape is the primordial act of violation but it is more than an individual act. It is expressive of a basic alienation within the psyche and of structures of alienation within society."(Daly 1985, 117) Following genocide, in what Mary Daly describes as a "rapist" culture, is war. She believes that the culture has been so perverted by phallocentric power that it can no longer recognize the violence of war. In her account, it is

popularly associated with the "manly and adventurous virtues."(Daly 1985, 120) These three crimes of patriarchy are the foundation of the world, as she understands it. She offers as an alternative the "Most Holy and Whole Trinity: Power, Justice, and Love."(Daly 1985, 127) These elements are expressed in the activities of women in conspiracy - from the Latin, breathing together. (Daly 1985, 131) Therefore the false morality is replaced by unity.

The strengthening of the bonds between women is the next step in her philosophy. Women's accounts of their experience are of paramount importance in her paradigm. For example, she identifies a cultural and cross-cultural tendency, in this patriarchal world, of mothers and daughters being separated by manipulation. "Mothers in our culture are cajoled into killing off the self-actualization of their daughters, and daughters learn to hate them for it, instead of seeing the real enemy."(Daly 1985, 149) The "Antichurch" which she envisions is activist in nature. Its foundations are the experiences, voices, self-respect, and mutual respect of women.

Proclaiming "I am" is the first step in the establishment of a new covenant for women. (Daly 1985, 159) Being is the beginning and end of her analysis. For women, being is a problematic notion, as their experience is mediated by patriarchy. In *Beyond God the Father*, Mary Daly has given many women a place to begin their journey as Beings rather than objects.

In *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*, **Mary Daly looks at** some of the atrocities committed upon women in human history. She begins by deconstructing the myths and rituals of patriarchal religions. She then uses specific cultural practices to illuminate the "Re-enactment of Goddess Murder." Finally, she gives some ways in which women have united as models for the continuance of the struggle.

In the first section of this book, Daly posits the idea that patriarchy is the prevailing religion uniting the planet. "All of the so-called religions legitimating patriarchy are mere sects subsumed under its vast umbrella/canopy."(Daly 1990, 39) Using an image from Peter Berger, she claims, "women are the dreaded anomie."(Daly 1990, 39) As an illustration, she explains how fetal identification is a symptom of male terror of women. "Males do indeed deeply identify with 'unwanted fetal tissue,' for they sense as their own condition the role of controller, possessor, inhabiter of women."(Daly 1990, 59) She exposes how the oppression of women in myth reflects the reality of oppression in the world.

In the next section of this book, she explicates the many ways in which women have suffered from what she describes as the Sado-Ritual Syndrome. She examines the cultural practices of Indian Suttee, Chinese foot binding, African genital mutilation, European witch burnings and American

gynecology. In each account, she examines not only the practice, but in the case of cross-cultural accounts, she reveals the sexism of those who provide information. One example among many that she sites in these chapters can be found in the chapter on Indian Suttee. She reports that Joseph Campbell, a noted scholar in the field, commented that "we should certainly not think of the mental state and experience of these individuals after any model of our own more or less imaginable reactions to such a fate...*these sacrifices* [emphasis mine] were not properly, in fact, individuals at all."(Daly 1990, 116) Daly is exposing here how these women are robbed of every bit of their personhood and made complicit in their own torture and death with a stroke of the pen. In the eyes of "objective" observers and scholarly authorities women's suffering is dismissed by the assumption that they experience their own personhood in the same terms as their oppressors.

In the final section of the book, Mary Daly offers ways in which women may eradicate the perils of patriarchy. The three sections titled "Spooking," "Sparking" and "Spinning" are involved with the creation of a new Time/Space. Focusing upon language, she exposes the biases and the hidden meanings behind patriarchal language. Reclaiming words such as Hags, Harpies and Furies, Daly demonstrates how the woman-negative cultural meaning masks the true powerful meaning of these words. When

existing words are inadequate, she creates new words. She exposes criticisms of the variety of attempts at producing a feminist language as "revelatory reversals."(Daly 1990, 330) The critic accuses feminist language of being a Newspeak in Orwellian terms, but as Daly points out, Newspeak limits the range of thought, while feminist additions can only expand possible meanings, liberating words from their pejorative connotations and freeing them to support women rather than enslave them.

In her chapter on Sparking, she proposes a model for female friendship that would engage women in positive association. "Women loving women do not seek to lose our identity, but to express it, dis-cover it, create it."(Daly 1990, 373) In this context also words can act as pollutants in the attempts of women to join together. Using terms such as brotherhood to serve as models for Sisterhood only leads to misinterpretation. In Daly's account, Sisterhood "is totally different from male comradeship/brotherhood, in which individuals seek to lose their identity."(Daly 1990, 370) Thus when Daly advocates the connection between women, she means a mutually beneficial and self-actualizing relationship.

In the final chapter, entitled "Spinning: Cosmic Tapestries," she invokes many mythical images to help her reader recognize the threads of true being for women. Spinning, for Daly, is a feminine occupation. It has

dangerous and powerful implications, as already noted in *Beyond God the Father*; therefore it is a logical destination for her woman-identified philosophy. She engages the reader in a journey from word to word, expanding and illuminating her philosophy of language. Beginning with the word "span" - which means "to measure by or as if by the hand with fingers and thumb extended," she declares that women need to use their own measures for truth. (Daly 1990, 388) "Spanning requires spinning," because that is the way in which one may span the universe in the whirling movement of creation. (Daly 1990, 389) Using etymology, she shows how "spin" is connected with the Latin root meaning "of one's free will, voluntarily."(Daly 1990, 389) She then differentiates spinning from swinging, which would be a patriarchal farce and fantasy for the life of a "bachelor girl."(Daly 1990, 393) A Spinster (in Daly's terms one who positively spins) does not need to define herself using a sexual stereotype. Like an Eddy, she may spin contrary to the main current. (Daly 1990, 392) Daly has thus changed the whole meaning and context of common words to advance her woman-positive language. This discussion of spinning spans many permutations of the definition of spin. She invokes the image of the spider, the net, and labyrinth in order to illuminate the full implications of this feminine-positive approach to history, etymology and language.

In *Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy*, **Mary Daly** continues on her journey of re-creating ultimate reality. While in *Gyn/Ecology* her feminist journeyers are Spinsters, so in *Pure Lust*, feminists are the Lusty Lusters. She recognizes and acknowledges many new ways in which the "scripts" of what she calls the "Sado-society" are played out. In *Gyn/Ecology*, she revealed the connection between the astronaut and fetal infant. In *Pure Lust*, analyzing what were at the time current events, she extended the identification with fetal infancy to the hostages in Iran. (Daly 1992b, 84) Much of the same intellectual territory is covered to address other current affairs and media, adding new words and images and myths to deepen and broaden the impact.

Part of her play with language is in capitalization. Her use is irregular in the standard sense of usage, but it adds meanings to her words which otherwise could not be expressed. She acknowledges that because "the immediate context of a particular passage affects the meaning of the words it contains, my choices concerning capitalization are not rigidly consistent even with usage elsewhere in this book."(Daly 1992b, 31) Thus one can see the difference between lust - the patriarchal accusation - and Lust - the expression of women's strength and desire. Capitalization is another convention that Daly subverts to her own ends.

She also gives lengthy explanation of her use of metaphors. Her

metaphors are powerful imagination-expanders. She explains, "[w]hen...I say 'Spinsters Spin,' multileveled images of creation and change are evoked. If I say, 'Amazons are whirling our Labryses,' other dimensions of movement are conjured, such as images of battle."(Daly 1992b, 404) In this way she reveals her methods. She differentiates her metaphors from those culturally recurrent metaphors such as "God-the-Father" and "Great Mother," isolated from other and more daring images. They are distinct for what they "do *not* do: they do not transform, jar, stir, arouse, or inspire Dreadful Daring Acts."(Daly 1992b, 405) The purpose of her metaphors is to change and expand the way in which one can think about the world to the benefit of women.

One of the concepts from Daly's *Pure Lust* that Nancy R. Howell's article, "Radical Relatedness and Feminist Separatism" highlights is Be-friending. Daly created the term Be-friending to distinguish her concept of becoming friends with one's self from befriending which she characterizes as patriarchal seduction of women's selves. In befriending, women are assimilated and charmed into feeling as though they have a place in society, but with Be-friending women discover and explore their true selves. In Brewer's words, "Daly has constructed a transforming vision of female relating. Its value is precisely that women are creatively empowered and reunited with their Selves and other Female Selves from whom patriarchy has

alienated them."(Howell 1989, 123) Be-friending is a step in the process of reclaiming one's self as a woman.

Be-friending names a new way of looking at women relating to each other. According to Howell, patriarchy only recognizes hetero-reality. Hetero-reality consists of a battery of assumptions that are underscored by Daly's notion of Be-friending and separatism. These assumptions include: [1]the assumption that women are not really related to other women, [2]the absence of understanding men in relationship to women, [3]the refusal to acknowledge the homo-relational basis of hetero-reality, and [4]the ignore-ance of the connectedness with nature.(Howell 1989, 125) These are crucial areas in which hetero-reality fails women.

In *Pure Lust*, Mary Daly uses her strong feminist voice to expose the reversals and uncover the truly woman-identified at a relatively hostile time towards feminism. Her analyses cover political dramas, popular culture, and literary texts, and prove that she is a feminist who is still willing to be radical in the face of repression and assimilation.

Each of these works contributes to the evolution of the *Wickedary*. In the *Wickedary*, Mary Daly and Jane Caputi completely obliterate the fixed meanings of the English language by loosening patriarchal control. They compile the concepts that are explored in Daly's prior work into a dictionary

consisting of three groups of words with their definitions, called "word webs." They endeavor to open new possibilities in each woman's consciousness by expanding the meanings of words taken for granted and taken advantage of by patriarchal society.

This new dictionary that Daly and Caputi devised was "conjured" in order to free words from patriarchal patterns. In the preliminary chapters, the authors explain many of the ideas that Daly has already developed in previous works. Women's Elemental Powers to Communicate must be liberated in order to hear and say words that are true. Instead of using the term "self-satisfied", they use the alternative, "Sylph-satisfied." They take the image of an air spirit and give it the meaning "woman who clears the air of phallic pseudopresence."(Daly 1988, 170) By aural association, the Sylph is associated with the self, thereby not only freeing the imagined self from negative gender stereotypes, but also giving it an extra meaning and identity which is powerful and dynamic. One does not even have to care to adopt her wild words to be impacted by their metaphoric power. In the acts of Spelling (the Casting of Spells), Grammar (Our Wicked Witches' Hammer) and Pronunciation women can open new realities and engage in new discourses.

The power of the metaphor to educate and to illuminate complicated philosophic arguments is one of Daly's greatest strengths. Wanda Warren

Berry has noted how the use of metaphor engages women in the process of making themselves and their reality. She observes that Daly's interest in metaphor is ontological.(Berry 1988, 217) One crucial observation Berry makes is that "'Naming'/ 'verbalizing' is Daly's root-metaphor for feminist method."(Berry 1988, 219) It at once identifies the necessary step of expressing one's true experience and the precursor to that step of claiming one's own being. Berry has pinpointed the importance of language by this observation, but in a larger sense she has identified Daly's insistence that feminism be a process.

A few relevant themes and methods arise out of this discussion of her works. Daly uses metaphor, seeks evidence of an archaic past, and encourages women's networking. The content of her words may change, but her methods remain consistent: redemption narrative, wordplay (etymology, metaphor, etc.), and women's connections to each other. These themes and her application of them have been amply discussed in feminist and theological circles.

Chapter Two: Mary Daly's Limitations

Redemption Themes and Activist Cultures

The process of feminism is one of the most important issues that Daly's

work addresses. This begs the question – what process? Daly is widely

interpreted as having a tendency to use themes of redemption. Her focus on

"Dis-covering" suggests that she hopes to restore the truth to words and

meaning in terms of women's empowerment and the exposure of women's

oppression. In the articles discussed below, the interpretations of Daly's work

seem to focus on these themes. They cite ample evidence that redemption is

Daly's feminist process.

The first of these articles is "Women, Blacks, and Jews: Theologians of

Survival" by Michael Berenbaum from *Religion and Life: A Christian Quarterly

of Opinion and Discussion.*(Berenbaum 1976) In this article, Berenbaum shows

the ways in which theologians of three under-represented groups approach

issues of faith and reality. According to his analysis, "[b]lack theology,

women's theology, and Jewish theology are all pervaded by the overriding

concern for survival."(Berenbaum 1976, 106) They "base their theological

insights on the historical oppression of their people and dismiss as invalid

any process of abstraction or mystification which veils or ignores this

historical oppression."(Berenbaum 1976, 106) This historical context for analysis of theology causes thinkers in these categories to face issues of theodicy i.e. justifications for the acts or existence of the divine.

Berenbaum takes on Mary Daly's works as a representative of the women's theology position. He shows how Daly's work is a theology of survival and historical redemptive analysis. He shows how Daly is primarily concerned with language, noting that "the choice of God language must be judged by pragmatic principles…[for example], does [the language] reinforce sex-role distinctions or does it tear them asunder?"(Berenbaum 1976, 114) In this context, human beings have the ultimately important role of action. For Berenbaum, this "pragmatic principle dethrones the God of otherworldliness and the God who judges the sins of people. It also dethrones the God who serves as an explanation of the limits of our own knowledge."(Berenbaum 1976, 114) He explains the relationship with the divine that Daly proposes for women in these terms. "[T]he struggle of the woman to emerge from non-being toward intimations of Be-ing is a struggle to make God known and encountered in the world and in sisterhood as the covenanted community of the movement."(Berenbaum 1976, 114) He shows how Daly changes the terms of god-ness to fit a historical context of oppression, thereby increasing the role of human action in religious ideology.

Berenbaum likens women's theology with black theology in these terms. They both share a three-part system of reclaiming religion that shares characteristics of Biblical redemption themes. In his words, "[t]he dynamics of both movements entail a withdrawal from the oppressive society, a strengthening of one's individual and communal resources, and ultimately a renewal of contact with the majority culture albeit on very different terms."(Berenbaum 1976, 116) Both groups must experience exodus, covenant and redemption. He characterizes their religious terms as preapocalyptic, preredemptive, and messianic. He compares this to the somber and cautious mood of the Jewish theologians who face their theodicy in terms of a catastrophic historic event, the Holocaust. This hideous event causes some Jewish theologians to deem God anti-Semitic or impotent, because the Jewish tradition teaches that Jews have already experienced redemption and covenant with their god. Without judgement, he makes these distinctions, but he claims that "few Jews would care to return to the preredemptive moment, the moment before Israel, for we know that all those roads ran toward death."(Berenbaum 1976, 118) Perhaps he is implying that the energy in the black and women's theology movements is not as comforting as the certainty of the traditional and spiritual covenant.

The existential uncertainty that comes with changing the practices of

established religious traditions makes Berenbaum uneasy even though the changes reflect justice. He observes that Daly debunks the notion of "the God who serves as an explanation of the limits of our own knowledge" in his interpretation. If this is so, Daly is dismantling the foundations of one of the most important functions of religion in sociological terms. Sociologists such as Peter Berger and Talcott Parsons have noted that religion is a response to those things in life that are not rationally understandable and/or controllable.(Parsons 1979, 80) Religion allows individuals to face such uncertainty with a constructed reality. It protects the very existence of the individual from anomie.(Berger 1990, 80) If Daly substantially threatens this system of defense, it is only logical that a "normal" individual in a society would want to approach her work with skepticism, because the risk to the society's sense of reality is so great.

Berenbaum, as an academic, seems able to cope with the change in the role of the divine that the women's movement demands, but in the end he only sympathizes with its principles. He does not seem to believe that redemption will be achieved in the work of the movement. His conclusions seem specifically designed to be non-controversial and thus leave the reader with the feeling that nothing substantial is being asserted. He identifies similarities between the women's and the black theological movements such

as their apocalyptic and messianic tendencies,(Berenbaum 1976, 117) but

immediately states that Jews would not want to return to the "preredemptive

moment."(Berenbaum 1976, 118) It is not clear to me whether this is a value

judgement on the black and women's movements, or if it is a neutral

observation. He then asserts that "liberation is the key to Jewish survival even

if it entails the risk of doom. I strongly suspect that we are not alone in either

this key or this risk."(Berenbaum 1976, 118) I appreciate his observations on

the discourse of redemption found in the women's, Jewish and black

theological movements, but his conclusions do not offer a substantive

comment on the meaning of this discourse.

Berenbaum's observations on the redemptive and apocalyptic natures

of these movements highlight this aspect of Daly's method. The redemption

story which entails the fall from grace, the exodus and the apocalyptic

redemption and restoration can be identified in the mythos of Mary Daly's

philosophy. A major theme in her work is the uncovering of feminine positive

images from an idyllic past in which society did not bear the burden of

patriarchy. It is a philosophy that is redemptive to both women and men,

because both women and men suffer under patriarchy. Society has spent an

exodus under the control of patriarchy that has caused much suffering and

deprivation. In spiritual terms, the repentance of a culture for its sin of

patriarchally enslaving women will enrich the lives of men and women alike.

Women, being the oppressed group, must have faith and weather the exodus

of separating from the culture at large in order to bring it back to balance in

gender power. The redemption and liberation of women will restore society

to a happier and more ecologically sustainable future. Berenbaum's article

gives a useful foundation upon which to explore such issues and thus the

relationship of Daly's work to other theologians of different under-

represented groups.

Among the articles which deal with the existential implications of

Daly's work specifically for women is Kathleen Brewer's article, "The Self as

Temporalizer: Time, Space & Salvation for Woman."(Brewer 1974) In this

essay, Brewer uses the relationship to time to explain the existential being of

women. The sense of future is of paramount importance, because in her

analysis, women are expected to repress their understanding of future and to

relinquish their futures to gender role stereotypes. She uses Daly's

philosophy to expand upon and clarify her own thoughts on the nature of

transcendence and feminist theology.

For women, recognizing their oppression is the first step to reclaiming

selfhood. Brewer uses Daly to illustrate the religious nature of this step. The

revival of self not only debunks old myths of patriarchy, but also gives

women temporal presence. More specifically, in Daly's terms, "when women live on the boundary, we are vividly aware of living in time present/future."(Brewer 1974, 54) Women must separate from patriarchal influence in order to claim their place in space and time. Daly's notion of Being and her radical idea of "god as verb" describe this place.(Brewer 1974, 58) Brewer and Daly use terms such as exodus community, alienation, "other world," and boundary of nothingness to describe the existential territory that women must navigate to escape patriarchy, but they also agree that the alternative is existentially disastrous.

Brewer's discussion of the women's movement as an exodus community (Brewer 1974, 57) fits in well with the themes of Berenbaum's article. Brewer also insists that according to the ideas introduced by Daly, women must separate and strengthen their faith, solidify their understanding of their experience, and reject patriarchal society. If women must live apart from the culture to make such a change, at least it affirms their ontological hope rather than their objectified and commodified place in patriarchy.

Nancy R. Howell addresses the issue of women separating from the culture at large in her article, "Radical Relatedness and Feminist Separatism." In addition to her comments about "Be-friending," she argues for a kind of separatism that she derives from the writings of Daly. There are four most

noteworthy characteristics in the definition of this separatism. One is that separatism does not have anything to do with separating women from power and free association in the society. The second is that separatism in this case removes alienation. Third, a primary concern of separatism is the separating of false "feminine" selves from the true self. Finally, separatism involves liberating the inner self as well as liberation from external barriers to selfhood.(Howell 1989, 120) Howell hopes to explain the function of separatism in feminist methodology. This separatism serves to restore the original, in Daly's terms, "Archaic" bonds between women (restoration).

Howell concludes by differentiating between segregation and separatism. Segregation negates the power of women's experience and relationships, while separatism strengthens the bonds between women by magnifying the common elements in their experiences. In other words, separation is exodus – being driven from paradise. Women already experience a form of separation in patriarchal society. In contrast, separatism is a restoration to the right, just and divinely sanctioned reality. Separatism as a strategy restores the bonds between women that have been severed by a patriarchal culture. Howell shows how Daly's philosophy supports separatism as a strategy for battling injustice.

Berenbaum, Brewer and Howell all identify aspects of Daly's

methodology that incorporate a redemption model. They identify Daly's strategy in the same terms: separation (fall), exodus, and restoration (apocalypse). Their analyses reveal how "redemption" acts as a metanarrative in Daly's work. This is one aspect of Mary Daly's work that could be improved upon by bringing her approach into conversation with certain "cyberfeminists." In this conversation, the idea that there is a "fall from grace" or an "idyllic past" is irrelevant. It is the present and the future that constitute the reality for women. These new perspectives return attention to those parts of Mary Daly's work that address the active and dynamic aspect of resistance.

Donna Haraway debunks the redemption narrative in her widely read and influential article "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." A professor of the History of Consciousness at the University of California at Santa Cruz and a prominent scholar of the History of Science, Haraway focuses upon the scientific metaphors that establish and maintain structures of power and dominance in the global culture. This article offers an alternative to the redemptive model that many feminist thinkers, including Mary Daly, follow to their detriment. Haraway reveals the ways in which embracing technologies and our relationships to them can create new models for identity and feminist criticism. Her analysis takes into consideration the fluidity of

identity of bodies in terms of technological enhancement, from eyeglasses to high-tech sports footwear. She investigates the implications of these complicated relationships for gender identity, work, compensation, class status, and empowerment.

One of her points which is particularly relevant is about the technology of writing. She discusses in-depth the importance of writing as a means to power. She identifies the cyborg strategy of "seizing the tools to mark the world that marked them as other."(Haraway 1991, 175) She and Mary Daly would likely agree on this point, but to a limited degree. They would diverge on the issue of truth. While Daly merely rejects the current meanings ascribed to words, Haraway would reject even the possibility of "one code that translates all meaning perfectly." For Haraway, this assertion is inextricably bound to phallocentric thinking.(Haraway 1991, 176) The aim of the creation of the *Wickedary* was to reclaim words in positive terms for women. Haraway, on the other hand, would reject this strategy of taking words back to a theoretically pure time. Haraway does not accept purity. In her terms, "[i]t is not clear who makes and who is made in the relation between human and machine."(Haraway 1991, 177) Couplings of animal, human, and machine subvert the structure of desire, "and so [subvert] the structure and modes of reproduction of 'Western' identity, of nature and culture...body and

mind."(Haraway 1991, 176) She uses these messy couplings to open feminist discourse to the possibility of gender play in a technologically mediated field. Embracing technology will free feminist discourse from the perpetual return to patriarchal terms of discourse.

Exclusions in Daly's Work

Separatism, separation, and exodus should not imply a closing off of opportunities for understanding between women, and certainly should not mean excluding certain classes of women from discourse. The next two articles outline how two critics have interpreted Daly's exclusions as betrayals. The writers' perspectives are valuable in identifying how universal claims for women and reality can cause problems. Daly's is a powerful method, framing philosophical claims using religious metaphors, but with power come intense responsibility and expectations.

The first article that I wish to examine is an article that appeared in *Soundings* in Fall of 1982. Ann-Janine Morey-Gaines addresses the issue of metaphor in her article, "Metaphor and Radical Feminism: Some Cautionary Comments on Mary Daly's *Gyn/Ecology*." In this article, Morey-Gaines examines the meaning and function of metaphor to demonstrate problems with Mary Daly's use of metaphor. She cites the work of Jacob Bronowski in

asserting that human language is a multivalent system in which one's self is both subject and object. In order to deal with this paradox, she argues, we use metaphor as "the indispensable tool...to build connections and make sense of our experience."(Morey-Gaines 1982, 343) In her analysis, metaphor expresses complications in experience to which finite words do not have direct access. They function by making connections that express more than words. In the process of communication we "rehearse" metaphors, and they become part of the process of understanding and communicating. Using this fluid interpretation of metaphor, Morey-Gaines illustrates the pitfalls of Mary Daly's use of metaphor.

According to Morey-Gaines, Daly's metaphors have specific meanings, which undermine the function as metaphors, because "metaphor is the language of invention and process, not finality and ultimate destination." (Morey-Gaines 1982, 344) Daly is unable to control the multiplicity of meanings referenced by her metaphors and therefore tries to label "negative" ones as patriarchal perversions of the true meanings. Morey-Gaines uses many examples of how Daly's pointed ideological metaphors are undermined by the power of language. Her metaphors express stereotype and not the "richness of understanding" possible when metaphors' meanings are not explicitly outlined.

Morey-Gaines concludes that the feminist movement in general can learn from Mary Daly's mistakes. One of the lessons is that "we need to be clearer about what can be manipulated and what must grow in its own time."(Morey-Gaines 1982, 350) She argues that cultural changes must have time to develop, and that proclaiming that change has occurred does not mean that it is true. The other is that metaphor has far too much power to be enslaved to dogma. The varieties of meanings that emerge in metaphors are essential to their operation in the culture. In her evaluation, these are the pitfalls of Mary Daly's work.

Morey-Gaines does not give Daly the credit she deserves for taking great pains not to replace a sexist notion of the divine with another one. Daly is aware of the problems of creating divisions and dualism, and uses this knowledge to develop her notion of god as a verb. She gives women a right to be, but does not condone replacing a male god with a female god. As long as the divine can be gendered or otherwise characterized, it will be used to the detriment of classes of people. Daly took the radical step of divorcing god from modifiers.

Morey-Gaines also neglects the more pragmatic use of metaphor which is simply as a method of understanding concepts in clearer terms. In *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson give a thorough

account of the uses of metaphors. In their words, "because so many of the concepts that are important to us are either abstract or not clearly delineated in our experience (the emotions, ideas, time, etc.), we need to get a grasp on them by means of other concepts that we understand in clearer terms."(Lakoff, 1980, 115) Daly simply understands the impact of metaphor upon consciousness. Her popularity can be attributed at least in part to her insistence on explaining her very radical ideas in ways that enable a shift in understanding.

There is a clear dualism in Daly's philosophy which can be translated into gynocentric = good and patriarchal = bad. This dualism opens Daly up to justifiable criticisms. In terms of race, class and culture, good and bad change meanings from situation to situation. This is why it is important to see Daly's metaphors as part of a process that is dynamic. Morey-Gaines does not seem to appreciate the radical reversals and reclaiming of discourse in Daly's work. Morey-Gaines accuses Daly of exposing her "fear, anger and self-pity"(Morey-Gaines 1982, 349) in her rigid interpretations of metaphors, but Daly is fighting for women's existential being.

One of the more high-profile criticisms of Mary Daly is from Audre Lorde in "An Open Letter to Mary Daly." In this article, Audre Lorde takes Daly to task for her treatment of African and African American culture and

women. She explicates the ways in which *Gyn/Ecology* excludes African and African heritage based religious expressions of the divine, while deriding the African practice of female genital mutilation. She highlights Daly's obvious omissions of African, Vodou, Dahomeian and Dan representations of powerful "black" goddesses and mythic figures. She believes such omissions, in the context of a work that uses African culture to paint women as victims or co-oppressors, distort the image of women of African heritage, and she terms this distortion racism.

She outlines in her essay the differences between black women's experience of sexism/racism and white women's experience of sexism. She shows that black women have been affected by sexism in a different way than white women. She claims that the impact of sexism is greater for black women,(Lorde 1984, 70) and that Mary Daly does not give sufficient attention to this fact. She feels that her introduction of African genital mutilation obliges her to give more attention to these issues.

Her argument becomes especially pointed when she asks Daly if she has actually read the works of women of color, "[o]r did [she] hunt through only to find words that would legitimize [her] chapter on African genital mutilation in the eyes of other Black women?"(Lorde 1984, 69) She accuses Daly of "dismissing" black women's experience in *Gyn/Ecology*. She states

that she feels compelled to dismiss Daly's work on that basis.

Mary Daly responds to Lorde's criticism in the "New Intergalactic Introduction" to *Gyn/Ecology*. In answer to Lorde's criticism that she neglected to identify female images of transcendent power from African culture, she says "*Gyn/Ecology* is not a compendium of goddesses. Rather, it focuses primarily on myths and symbols which were direct sources of christian myth."(Daly 1990, xxx) It seems to be a somewhat flimsy response in light of Lorde's reasoning, which indicts her for criticizing African practices but not highlighting feminine African power. However, the impression that her response gives is that she would rather not be involved in this kind of discussion at all, as one can see in her statement, "I regret any pain that unintended omissions may have caused others, particularly women of color, as well as myself."(Daly 1990, xxxi) The emotional element inherent in discussion of race seems to have left Daly trying to defuse the situation without launching into an extensive apologia.

This criticism does not take into consideration some important factors. All of Daly's references to goddesses are cosmetic in a way, because her concept of the divine is wrapped up in a radically neutral divinity, which was outlined in previous works as "God as a Verb." The section on goddesses was meant to show how patriarchal society has inverted and perverted the triple

goddess of antiquity into the triple god of Christianity. There is no particular

glory to be claimed for goddesses in this section. They are merely more

casualties in the war of man against woman in the existential arena. The

omission of African goddesses and myths seems therefore to be a product of

lack of context in the discussion rather than malice or ignorance.

    Gyn/Ecology is primarily an assault on the patriarchy. It delves into the

variety of ways in which women are victimized all over the world. There are

no winners here. Daly does not believe that white, European goddesses

should rule the earth over goddesses of color and gods of all types. The entire

notion of Goddesses has been usurped into the patriarchy. It is stuck

hopelessly in the dichotomies of the patriarchal culture. Perhaps it would

have been interesting for Daly to have addressed the phenomenon of the

Vodou appropriation of Christian symbols to express African religion's

presence of strong goddess figures, but it does not strike me as particularly

racist that she did not. If this aspect of religious history is relatively unknown

to her, she did well to avoid tokenizing the traditions. Perhaps also, Lorde

might have mentioned the many goddesses of Asian traditions, some of

which are still worshiped today. She might have taken Daly to task for their

omission in light of Daly's chapter on Chinese foot binding. If it were just a

mere matter of selective exclusion, it seems that Lorde is also guilty.

It is apparent that Lorde and Morey-Gaines are interested in a similar point. The scope and absoluteness of Daly's perspective make her an easy target, because it would be hard to address every aspect of every issue that she raises. The weakness to which they seem to be pointing is one that Donna Haraway also treats in her "A Cyborg Manifesto." Daly's claims and analyses are so broad that it seems she loses sight of material reality. Donna Haraway, taking the materialist socialist feminist perspective takes feminist theory like Daly's to task for this.

Haraway's cyborg metaphor exposes the weight of feminist totalizing interpretation of gender politics. "The cyborg body is not innocent…it takes irony for granted."(Haraway 1991, 181) Therefore it can handle the contradictions that arise in identities constructed of race, class, gender, and capital. The cyborg as a feminist identity allows for an emphasis on boundaries rather than pulling all women into one uncomfortable gender territory. The dispute between Audre Lorde and Mary Daly about *Gyn/Ecology* is an example of the destruction that comes from the implication that one theory or interpretation will resonate with all women. The cautionary comments offered by Morey-Gaines also address the inflexibility of Mary Daly's rhetoric. Haraway offers Daly and Daly's critics a way to understand each other as different products of a materially and

technologically determined intellectual world. For Haraway, the metaphor of the cyborg should replace the metaphor of the goddess as a feminist ideal.

Daly's Legacy and the Matrix

Daly used a variety of intellectual processes that have informed later feminists. Her use of metaphor and etymology arm contemporary feminists with powerful tools to dismantle the cultural assumptions that codify the oppression of women. Contemporary feminists concerned with technology such as Donna Haraway and S. Paige Baty have benefited from this legacy of inquiry. They also should benefit from a continued association with their intellectual heritage. The hypermedia version of the *Wickedary* could act as a bridge between adversaries who should be allies.

Women's experience of the Internet and the challenge brought by Haraway's cyborg metaphor add a new dimension to Daly's concept of "Verb-Goddess." The Verb-Goddess in Daly's words is "Metaphor for Ultimate/Intimate Reality, the constantly Unfolding Verb of Verbs in which all be-ing participates; Metaphor of Metabeing."(Daly, 1988, 76) Women are experiencing a shifting of their realities and knowledge to an integration of technological prostheses. Haraway's claims about a cyborg existence have never been more urgent than when a substantial portion of the culture's

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knowledge is housed in networked documents over the Web. Her claims about the intermingling of flesh and technology, especially with the broadening of popularity of the Internet, have never seemed so urgent and even comforting. Haraway asserts that not only should the meshing of identity with technology not be feared, but it should be embraced as a source of power.

Recently, the Internet access at my place of business was disconnected due to a security breach. Never before had I been so aware of my dependence on the Internet for my communication and knowledge base. I suddenly noticed that I could no longer just look something up over the Internet. Having become quite adept at using search engines, I had gotten used to immediately accessing information on the Internet upon hearing an unfamiliar term or something about an unfamiliar subject. It became clear that I had so closely associated knowledge with Web access that I felt dissociated from my own mind. I had no access to the information contained in the collective memory that the Web represents to me. Similarly, instant text communication could no longer be accomplished as email had been disrupted as well. The prosthetic voice that email afforded me could no longer be accessed. As the days passed, I did not shift back to other means of communication, I just became increasingly anxious. As I experienced in this

incident, for better or worse, the marriage of technology to human communication has already been consummated. Haraway would simply ask us to use it and its metaphoric implications to our (women and feminists) benefit. As Daly would have us tap into ontological power by reclaiming the process of the divine (Be-ing), Haraway would have us revel in the power of the machinery that creates our reality.

Daly and Haraway are intimately related in their use of metaphor. They are both battling for ontological understanding. They both describe larger arguments and assertions using singular terms for women's condition: Haraway's cyborg and Daly's "Verb Goddess." Haraway inherits the battle for an accurate pragmatic approach to women's being that Daly took up against patriarchal religion. Whether Haraway agrees with Daly's religious interpretation or Daly appreciates the integration of technology with identity, Haraway and Daly share a conceptual space. Thinking of their terms and metaphors in a hypertextual space together, they do not seem so incompatible.

Another of Daly's most compelling methods is the interpretation of radical etymology. The process of investigating the history of a word's meanings reveals interesting connections in meanings. Patching these new/old meanings together into a larger worldview has been one of the print

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Wickedary's functions.

S. Paige Baty, a former professor of Political Science at Williams College and critic of email as a prosthetic voice, uses this process to reveal the origins of the word 'matrix." This etymology is useful, because it not only uses the process that is familiar to Daly's own work, but also reveals a very interesting legacy for "matrix." Understanding the matrix in Baty's terms returns the power of the medium to women's control and understanding. For Baty, the process of uncovering matrix's former meanings explains the seductive lure of virtual correspondence, which Baty will ultimately reject. For Daly, Baty is "Dis-covering: …finding the treasures of women's Memory, Knowledge, History that have been buried by the grave diggers of patriarchal re-search."(Daly 1988, 118) Baty and Daly both use etymology to reveal new understandings of feminist realities.

The matrix, in its current use, describes the Internet and its various connections between documents, data, and people. However, according to Baty, the matrix derives from the "*late Latin* meaning womb, in older *Latin* pregnant animal, female animal used for breeding; app.f. *mater* mother, by change of the ending into the suffix of fem. agent-nouns. Cf. <u>matrice</u>." This root reveals a different interpretation of the Internet and its relationship to women. It is not merely the tool of the "Dissociated State: …patriarchy, the

state of separation from Biophilic purposefulness."(Daly 1988, 194) The hope for the matrix is to be a source of creation and connection, itself a possible source of Biophilic purposefulness.

In Haraway's cyborg world, a world in which bodies are fluid and boundaries are blurred, the matrix emerges as an appendage, a second womb for women, albeit an exploited womb, that needs protection from what Daly would call the "Sado-society," i.e. patriarchal culture. One may understand the matrix as another "illegitimate offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism" like the cyborg, but as Haraway notes "illegitimate offspring are often exceedingly unfaithful to their origins."(Haraway 1991, 151) Haraway uses a literary phenomenon in order to understand a new way to conceptualize political and material conditions of women. While Haraway does not mention the Internet in her analysis, she provides useful terms with which to understand the way in which we cannot and *should not* separate ourselves from our tools, especially ones that represent feminine powers. Adding the *Wickedary* to the Matrix (the Internet) helps to preserve its potential as a life-affirming phenomenon by accounting for the heritage of feminist thought.

Chapter Three: Hypermedia and Daly's Legacy

Hypertext Theories: A Sampling

George P. Landow argues for the importance of technology in his chapter on "The Politics of Hypertext" in *Hypertext 2.0.* He speculates on the relative empowerment of different segments of society as hypertext grows as a medium for communication. He questions the relationship between reader and writer, and he investigates the shift that this relationship will take as a result of hypertext.

One notable aspect of Landow's discussion is his assertion that information technologies tend to "democratize" information and power.(Landow 1997, 276) He uses Marshall McLuhan to explain the view that technologies both shape and are shaped by consciousness. As reading and writing enabled one to study without being subordinated to a particular individual, Landow proposes that hypertext will decrease the importance of the writer as owner and sole profiteer of ideas.

Hypertext enables the reader to choose the way in which s/he experiences a text. The links made available in the text will be options rather than part of a rhetorical trajectory. There may be links for citations that include the entire text of the relevant book. There may be links that explain in

detail the historical and social context of the work. Each of these documents may have different authors and come from different disciplines, but they are made available in the work for the reader to explore or not. As Landow points out, links themselves may be considered works, because they represent a particular type of supporting collection for the document in question. (Landow 1997, 303) The radical change in relationship between reader and writer will impact legal and political relationships in our culture.

The relevance to the discussion of Mary Daly's *Wickedary* lies in the relationship between hypertext and radical democratization of information. Feminist thought has struggled with a multiplicity of views and strategies. Daly's strategy in the *Wickedary* is the subversion and the revision of words in patriarchal culture. Her use of the dictionary format rather than a linear essay implies the same decentralization and pluralization that hypertext makes literal in Landow's terms. Other feminist theorists and artists from literary figures to film makers have attempted to make the same jump out of linear, phallic thinking and writing. The translation of Mary Daly's work into hypertext will graphically illustrate the potential of this medium for feminist politics.

In "Socrates in the Labyrinth,"(Kolb 1994) David Kolb investigates the impact of hypertext on philosophical rhetoric. He begins with a series of

questions addressing how philosophy and hypertext would affect each other. He reviews the various functions that hypertext could have in terms of philosophy. His analysis leaves him predicting a route for the development of hypertext philosophy that would best exploit the characteristics of hypertext, as a medium, while serving philosophical needs also. He concludes that hypertext might better enable the philosopher to reveal "conceptual landscapes."

Kolb begins by differentiating the traditional function of hypertext from the more experimental. The traditional forms would "be multilinear but would remain organized around the familiar philosophical forms of linear argument," such as making claims, giving backing, contesting claims, raising questions, and stating alternatives.(Kolb 1994, 324) These forms would express the majority of traditional philosophical exploration.

He then attempts to theorize how an alternative use of hypertext would function. Citing different forms of written philosophical inquiry such as meditation, the aphorism, the pensée, the diary, and the dialogue, he suggests that hypertext could be used in more innovative ways. Taking his cue from literary uses of hypertext,(Kolb 1994, 324) Kolb explores the metaphor of territories of thought.(Kolb 1994, 340) The philosopher may not be able to control every intellectual step her reader takes, but she could create

an impression of a whole intellectual picture. In Kolb's words, "[t]he enduring significance of the works of Plato, Aristotle, Kant and Hegel does not rest on our ability to locate their claims definitively but on the works' having opened up new territory for thought."(Kolb 1994, 340) Hence, he concludes that hypertext offers philosophers the option of expression based on spatial and territorial qualities rather than linear forms.

This interpretation of the potential of hypertext serves the translation of Mary Daly's *Wickedary* into hypertext very well. The *Wickedary* is not a literal dictionary; Daly did not mean it to function as a source in which to look up words. She chooses her words, and she creates words; therefore there is no way to discover these words. For example, the word "snool" is not in common usage, but it is one that Daly has included in the *Wickedary*. Even Daly herself is not likely to use the word "snool" without some account of the meaning within the essay. The *Wickedary* is a philosophical text in itself. On the surface it is a dictionary, but it functions as a conduit by which one can access Daly's feminist territory. Hypertext enables this transmission by allowing the user to customize the text according to a personalized encounter. The author (Daly) can devise a link or links for a word or a phrase, but she cannot control how a user will choose to encounter the text. Thus, she has created a territory for exploration rather than a road to be taken from

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introduction to conclusion. Kolb's essay offers a way in which to look at hypertext that takes into account the needs of philosophical inquiry and rhetoric using a spatial metaphor for argumentation.

Stuart Moulthrop's article, "Rhizome and Resistance: Hypertext and the Dreams of a New Culture," addresses the issues of a medium's impact on a text. Using Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Thousand Plateaus*, Moulthrop investigates the impact of hypertext on meaning in terms of their investigation of the rhizome. In Deleuze and Guattari's terms, a rhizome "has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*…the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance."(Deleuze 1987, 25) In practical terms, Moulthrop's interpretation seems to focus on rhizome as a set of nodes, which are linked, so that every point of reference has equal importance and has no absolute, linear, temporal characteristics. This is a useful interpretation when speaking about hypertext. Moulthrop explains that their experimentation has to do with a political relationship with knowledge that the rhizome, and also hypertext, encourages. The idea of the text as a rhizome was suggested in order to offer an alternative to the "logocentric, hierarchically grounded truth."(Moulthrop 1994, 301) Moulthrop's article is an account of this vision and its implications for this new way of communicating.

The idea that hypertext resists "logocentric, hierarchically grounded truth" would be very attractive to Mary Daly. In her discussions about academia, she is often critical of the status quo. From the beginnings of her radical feminist journey in *Beyond God the Father*, she explains "methodolatry" as a "sin" of the patriarchy. "The tyranny of methodolatry…prevents us from raising questions never asked before and from being illuminated by ideas that do not fit into pre-established boxes and forms."(Daly 1985, 11) This suspicion of traditional and academic forms can be traced throughout her career. She takes it further in the *Wickedary* noting that methodolatry "hid[es] threads of connectedness."(Daly 1988, 82) It is not clear that her resistance is particular to books and linear texts, but in the terms of hypertext theorists, print text does indeed constitute "boxes and forms." Her mention of "threads of connectedness" must be considered closely, because this is the aspect of argumentation that digital hypertext makes very simple and intuitive. Connections that Daly sees among issues and texts can be made not only literal, but also swift. As we have seen, the *Wickedary* is already a hypertext, one without digital fulfillment. Daly wants to use the connections to make a pattern apparent. The links, and enabling the links, give rise to new understandings of material. It as though Daly, by creating the *Wickedary*, already had discovered this important factor in her attempts to create

feminist texts.

Moulthrop explains Deleuze and Guattari's differentiation between types of writing spaces. They make distinctions between smooth and striated spaces. Print encourages an "objectified and particularized view of knowledge."(Moulthrop 1994, 303) It is a medium of striated space in which books are "totemic objects" celebrated for their "ordered, controlled, teleological, referential, and autonomously meaningful"(Moulthrop 1994, 303) properties. Striated space describes a perception of knowledge in terms of a linear and/or grid-like geometric structure. Print media exist in these terms. In contrast, hypertext is an example of a smooth space media that encourages "holistic, parallel awareness over particular and serial analysis."(Moulthrop 1994, 303) Smooth space is characterized in the "parataxis," meaning the placing together of sentences, clauses or phrases without conjunctive words, and "bricolage," which means the construction of something out of whatever comes to hand, "of broadcasting," rather than the "linearizing faculties of print."(Moulthrop 1994, 303) This distinction is the basis for his observations on the impact of hypertext as a medium.

Moulthrop's investigation into the relative characteristics of the smooth and striated space give a context for the observation that hypertext can be used to serve feminist ends. He has characterized hypertext as a

smooth medium implying that it is nomadic, mystic, and rhizomatic in the social space of writing.(Moulthrop 1994, 304) Many of the terms offered in his analysis of "smooth" media correspond to feminist, and particularly Mary Daly's rhetorical goals. He uses the metaphors of journeying to describe the way in which a reader must approach a hypertext document. Daly uses journeying as a metaphor for active living of one's life. He references Gregory Ulmer's term "mystories" as a "way of thinking about the matrix of ideas that cuts across cultural registers, mixing the disciplinary with the personal or the ludic."(Moulthrop 1994, 305) Combining the personal with the political has been a mainstay of Daly's practice of exposing insidious private practices of patriarchy. One of Moulthrop's conclusions from his review of social thinkers is that "any new culture will be as promiscuous as its texts, always seeking new relations, fresh paralogic permutations of order and chaos."(Moulthrop 1994, 317) Daly might reinterpret the terms "promiscuous," "order" and "chaos" in terms of the struggle between women's experience and male dominated society. The admission of women's perspectives into discourse on any terms whatsoever and on their own terms in culture has traditionally been equated to chaos. His labeling of hypertext and its impact on culture in terms of promiscuity and chaos in discourse is almost an invitation for exploration of hypertext in feminist terms.

Hypertext's contribution to a line of argumentation is that it obliterates the singular line. It creates a new space of understanding, and it requires that readers of a text participate in the process of unfolding the conceptual landscape. Emerging from a series of texts is a whole understanding of what reality is. As a student and teacher of religion, Mary Daly is deeply concerned with the communication of ideas that reflect ultimate reality. The multidimensional text is uniquely qualified to express this totality.

The terms in which these authors discuss hypertext closely resemble, and sometimes parallel, the terms of Daly and other feminists when criticizing current discourse or positing new approaches to expression. Landow's claim of hypertext "democratizing" information and discourse fits in well with Daly's concept of empowerment. Access to ideas and information enhances the knowledge and therefore power of "Nags," those women who are Biting Critics of cockocracy."(Daly 1988) Kolb's notion of hypertexts as territories of thought clarifies the relationship between "Journeyers," women who go on "multidimensional Voyages through the Realms of the Wild," and hypertext documents, like the *Wickedary*. Moulthrop also discusses the space that is created by hypertext using the metaphor of journeying. Daly's idea of Journeying demands the active reader and learner required by hypertext according to these theorists.

Hypertext Theory and the *Wickedary*

The *Wickedary*, as it stands, is material. However, it has multiple layers of impact. It is a parody, a game, an experiment, and an encounter with Mary Daly's philosophy. It behaves in some ways as a dictionary and plays with the idea of dictionary, but because of its content is completely unusable as a dictionary. As women are obscure to patriarchal culture, the *Wickedary* is obscure as a functioning dictionary. It is exactly its feminist content that separates it from usability in this culture. One does not encounter the *Wickedary* as a dictionary or even a book; one collects bits and pieces of meaning by browsing its content. It already occupies hyperspace (or in Daly's terms meta-space), but the words are glued cruelly to a page.

The metaphors that Mary Daly uses are playful and educational, but they are bound by printed page and binding glue. Enhanced by computer technology, the data that make up Mary Daly's *Wickedary* become infinitely flexible. A page metaphor must be *assigned* to data in computer space, because it is not an intrinsic feature of the medium. However, the printed page is not necessarily the metaphor under which the *Wickedary* would thrive. Hypertext frees the word from the page. Instead of the page metaphor, a web-like system resists convention in the way that Mary Daly's language resists

patriarchy. Hypertext enables the "screener" to experience a philosophical argument in a wandering way rather than the traditional linear way.

This process of journeying through a philosophical text fits perfectly Mary Daly's style and intention. One can find evidence of this throughout the *Wickedary*, as well as in her other texts. Looking at her terms of "Otherworld," "Journeying," "Labyrinth," "Verb Goddess" and "Spinning," among others, one recognizes her passion for an alternative way of thinking, speaking and communicating philosophy in feminist terms. Hypertext not only enables Daly to join the discussion of technology and feminism, updating her metaphors and addressing her critics, it also improves the *Wickedary*'s communication of its message as the culmination of Daly's work at that stage in her career.

Because the Internet does not exist without authors, it is important for there to be feminist authors. Using the Internet as a medium of resistance is still possible, because the Internet is being made with every file produced. File by file, women can conceivably change the shape of reality in virtual terms, because we create the Internet as we create new texts, hypertexts, and illustrations for it. Feminist visions and experiments can be added to the reality of the Internet to influence the way that we look at knowledge in the future. The creation of feminist texts to add to the knowledge on the web not

only changes the fabric of discourse, but it also creates the opportunity for women to participate in empowering processes of "Parthenogenetic Creation."

Hyper-Circuits in Daly's Meta-Dictionary

So far, a few terms have been cited and explained as evidence that hypermedia will reflect the content of the *Wickedary* appropriately. Daly coined various terms that are very similar to the terms in which the hypertext theorists and those creating metaphors describe digital reality. Certain circuits of words can be followed to support the argument that hypertext is an appropriate medium for the *Wickedary*. This chapter will discuss this group of words in order to give an understanding of the functioning of the *Wickedary* and its meaning.

The word, "network," might be a good place to start using the print *Wickedary*. However, one would immediately notice that if s/he searches alphabetically from the beginning, s/he will not locate "Network" until the alphabet has gone from beginning to end once, and begins again at "A." This is because "Network" is located in Word Web Two. The *Wickedary* is divided into three sections. Word Web One includes Elemental Philosophical Words and Phrases and Other Key Words; Word Web Two contains the Inhabitants

of the Background, Their Activities and Characteristics; and Word Web Three

contain terms that describe the inhabitants of the foreground, their activities

and characteristics. In Daly's work, capitalization is an important sign to

represent the relative virtue or value of a term. One can usually assume that

most capitalized terms are feminist and positive terms even though they may

seem negative (e.g. "Hag,") although sometimes particularly troubling

adversaries to women's rights will also be capitalized, e.g. "Big Brothers of

Boredom." Terms that are in lower-case reflect petty and usually sexist

concepts, people or behaviors. Thus, the reader should notice that Network is

capitalized in this dictionary.

According to the *Wickedary,* **The Network** (in this section, for clarity,

bold typeface signifies the word to be defined) is "the Gyn/Ecological

context; tapestry of connections woven and re-woven by Spinsters and

Websters; the Net which breaks the fall of Journeyers experiencing the

Earthquake Phenomenon and springing us into New Space."(Daly 1988,149)

Within this definition are quite a few terms that need to be unpacked. One

might wonder about the meaning of "Spinsters," "Websters," Journeyers,"

and "New Space," not to mention "Gyn/Ecological" and "Earthquake

Phenomenon." In a digital version of the *Wickedary*, each one of these terms

would be highlighted to indicate that they could be clicked to reach the

Wickedary's section on their meaning. Each adds vital understanding to the totality of Daly's vision.

Turning to Word Web One, a reader would then locate **New Space**, which is "Space on the Boundary of patriarchal institutions; Space created by women which provides real alternatives to the archetypal roles of fatherland; Space in which women Realize Power of Presence." (84) This would refer the reader to **the Boundary** or back to Word Web Two to find **Fairy Space**. **The Boundary** is "the location of New Time/Space; Time and Space created by women Surviving and Spinning on the Boundaries of patriarchal institutions; dimensions of be-ing experienced by Labrys-wielding Amazons who choose not only to combat the phallocratic order but also to wrench back our Archaic Heritage and Journey into the Background." (67) Cross-references provided in **the Boundary** definition would lead the reader to **Women's Space** which is defined as "Space created by women who choose to separate our Selves from the State of Servitude: FREE SPACE; …Space in which women Spin and Weave, creating cosmic tapestries; Space in which women find Rooms, Looms, Brooms of our Own." (101) The circle then closes, because the cross-referencing for **Women's Space** returns the reader to **New Space**. If from **New Space**, one chose to follow the reference to **Fairy Space**, s/he would learn that **Fairy Space** is "Space Dis-Covered by Fey Women who Spiral

beyond Stag-nation; Space where Weird Women gather and Gossip with Fairies." (123) The cross-references that Daly provides in the *Wickedary* send the reader right back to **Women's Space** and **New Space**, closing the circuit.

Emerging from this series of words and cross-references, is Daly's concept of Space with a capital "S." This space can be characterized as women-created, women-defined and separate from the dominant culture. It is not necessarily separate in a physical sense, but in psychic or psychological terms. The Space that Daly describes supports women's be-ing and Be-ing, "be-ing" referring to the ontological process and presence of women and Be-ing referring to god as Verb, Daly's concept of the divine. Her method of re-naming and re-defining almost every word creates attention for her argument. The reader is alert to the capitalization and spelling of each word, participating in the unfolding of a new reality. The "Leaps" that Daly wants her reader to make are possible, because the reader is involved with the text. Hypermedia also demands an alert "screener." One cannot engage a hypertext document without participating in its generation, link by link. The "Space" that hypertext creates must be "Journeyed," as Daly's *Wickedary* should be experienced as an **Otherworld Journey**.

Flipping back to Word Web One, the reader can see that **Otherworld Journey** refers to "Metapatriarchal Labyrinthine Journey of Exorcism and

Ecstasy, in the course of which patriarchal demons are dispelled by Voyagers." (87) This discovery leads to a search for the definition of **Voyager**. A **Voyager** is an Otherworld Journeyer, and a **Journeyer** is one who whirls through Other Worlds, Spinning/Spiraling on multidimensional Voyages through Realms of the Wild." (140) The Journeyer is a suitable metaphor for the "screener" of hypertext. Digital hypermedia is Wild in that it is multidimensional and offers a spatial metaphor. As the text unfolds into a New Space, the Journeyer creates her encounter with it.

However, the story does not need to end at Daly's analysis of Space. Returning to the definition of Fairy Space, the term **Gossip** might catch the reader's eye. Looking through the *Wickedary*, one would discover that Daly's term differs from the popular definitions. **Gossip** for Daly is to "exercise the Elemental Female Power of Naming, especially in the presence of other **Gossips**." (132) **Gossips** are Female Friends…especially Fates, Fairies and Friends "who invite themselves to be Present at any Female Act of Creation." (132) Taking a "Leap," one who knows Daly would be inspired to seek out her definition of Friends, but knowing that she prefixes these dynamic relationships with "Be," would, therefore seek **Be-Friending**. In the definition that Daly offers, in the third entry, the Journeyer will find that **Be-Friending** is "weaving a context/atmosphere in which Acts/Leaps of Metamorphosis

can take place." (65) One then might discover that **Weaving** is an "Original activity of Websters: creating tapestries of Crone-centered creation; constructing a context that sustains Sisters on the Otherworld Journey." (99) These terms describing processes invoke the understanding that women should be actively engaged in processes of creation.

Daly's use of the metaphor "weaving" to discuss women's creation is particularly interesting, because of observations made by Sadie Plant about the origins of the computer in *Zeros + Ones: Digital Women and the New Technoculture.*(Plant 1997) Plant is a digital culture analyst with a Ph.D. from the University of Manchester and has been a lecturer in cultural studies at the University of Birmingham and research fellow at the University of Warwick. In her account, "weaving of complex designs demands far more than one pair of hands, and textiles production tends to be communal, sociable work allowing plenty of occasion for gossip and chat. (Plant 1997, 65) Her analysis shows how textiles are the "software linings of all technology," and she concludes that women's "microprocesses" in weaving are the basis of all later great advancements in technological processes. "The interlaced threads of the loom compose the most abstract process of fabrication." (Plant 1997, 61) Unlike Daly, she speaks literally, not metaphorically, but it is telling how many terms are shared between Daly, Plant, and metaphors taken up by

digital technology. It is also interesting how industrial interests usurped a process that accounted for such a valuable function of women in the economy that resulted in women interacting with each other. Given the analysis of Plant, if for no other reason, the digital translation of the *Wickedary* should be achieved to reclaim women's proper place as weavers and networkers. Rather than being replaced by computers, women should be operating the computers. For this reason, the screener of Wickedary.com is likely to find references to Plant along with the words of Daly.

The purpose of this exercise is not to tediously review the definitions of all of the words in the *Wickedary*, but to give an account of the experience of using the *Wickedary*. I have outlined a couple of possible "readings" of the *Wickedary*, but the experience of other Journeyers may be vastly different. If one were to begin with "Pixylated," rather than "Network," she would have an entirely different experience of the text. This is a strength that would be sustained in a hypertext format. The terms discussed here are particularly relevant to this discussion, and presenting them in this way was intended to show why hypermedia would facilitate the function of this text.

Chapter Four: The Merry Merry Wickedary.com

Wickedary.com is currently a prototype that reflects my ambitions for hypermedia as a feminist tool. There were three steps in the process launching this project: database design, website design, and the integration of the two. This chapter is an account of that process, my intentions as my work proceeded and what opportunities this process presents for future development and use of the *Wickedary* in digital format. One may visit the site using most Web browsers at http://www.wickedary.com.

Wickedary.com was the result of two gut feelings that I had. The first is that it is no coincidence that the metaphors that are used for the Web and the metaphors that Daly uses are often the same. This thesis does not intend to make this case, but it was part of my impetus in developing Wickedary.com. The second feeling was that it could be done, and that it would be meaningful, or at least interesting. It is these impressions that shaped my original conception of the Wickedary.com.

The design for the *Wickedary* from the very beginning was simple. Each word for the *Wickedary* would have its own page. Each word could have a definition, part of speech , etymology, "Canny" or "cockaludicrous" comment, and cross references with other words in the *Wickedary*. Also, Daly

lets her reader know in which book each word was first discussed. The *Wickedary* is also divided into three sections, which she calls "Word Webs," and each word web has a distinct meaning. I wanted to account for all of these features in order to make a suitable translation of the *Wickedary* into hypermedia.

For Wickedary.com, I wanted to use as much information from the original *Wickedary* as possible and to create a separate "page" for each entry. However, with hundreds of words, it would have been impractical to create an individual page for each word. Dividing up the *Wickedary* into "data" for a database enables the dynamic generation of pages using common gateway interface (CGI) scripts. I designed the database and its interface in FileMaker Pro, an "off-the-shelf" database development product. This database has a field for word, part of speech, web number, attribution, etymology, book, background definition, foreground definition, see cross-references, compare cross-references, canny comment, cockaludicrous comment, and graphic for each entry. Therefore, each of Daly's *Wickedary* entries will eventually be divided up into its constituent parts as a part of this Wickedary.com project. This makes the data of Daly's philosophy fluid and flexible for other possible uses.

The first ongoing challenge of this process is simply getting hundreds

of words with definitions, cross-references, et cetera into digital form. It is a tedious process simply entering the information into the database. To make this less painful, I am using an Optical Character Recognition (OCR) program and a scanner. OCR programs recognize text within images, providing editable text and graphics documents from scanned documents. For instance, I have taken the *Wickedary* book and scanned pages into computer images that the OCR program will analyze, providing me with mostly accurate text. I can then copy and paste this text into the database. It has been a relatively efficient way to populate the database with *Wickedary* information.

Once I had filled the database with about one hundred words, it was time to begin developing an interface. Because one of the purposes of this project is to provide a relatively seamless experience of the *Wickedary*, I indicate certain characteristics of the particular words in graphical terms. As I mentioned in the Introduction, Mary Daly divides her *Wickedary* into Word Webs. Word Web One contains Elemental Philosophical Words, Phrases and other Key Words. Web Two consists of the Inhabitants of the Background (Feminist Reality), their Activities and Characteristics, and Web Three has the inhabitants of the foreground (the patriarchal majority), their activities and characteristics. These distinctions are important for Daly. She intentionally uses these webs as physically distinct chapters to differentiate between

ideologically opposed terms. In the Wickedary.com, I chose to make these distinctions with the background image of the page. Pages that are generated from data of Word Web One have backgrounds images of a spider web in soothing blue and purple. Word Web Two's pages have a sunny yellow image of a spider web in the background. In contrast, I chose a gray image for Word Web Three, suggesting cobwebs and decay. As the screener is clicking through Wickedary.com, s/he should be able to get the subtle impression of the meanings of these graphical elements, but there is a key in a "How to use the Wickedary.com" section.

I made other similar design decisions. Daly often quotes relevant statements from various sources as either "Canny" or "cockaludicrous" comments. For the Canny comments I specified green color type, and I chose red type for the cockaludicrous comments. These distinctions give the screener information about the content of the page before s/he even begins to read the text. I chose blue text for the foreground definitions, because the foreground definitions were as often positive as negative, and blue, like black, is a color of ink, suggesting communication rather than quality or value. Text color is just another of the many ways in which I offer the screener clues to the understanding of Mary Daly's philosophy, as presented in her *Wickedary*.

In response to Daly's use of phases of the moon symbols to indicate in

which book the term was first discussed, I offer the screener a thumbnail picture of the book's cover. Daly quite nicely and subtly made it clear in the *Wickedary* which book was associated with the word by providing a new moon symbol for her first book, first quarter for her second, half for her third, and full for her fourth. Her symbols not only communicate the information, but also give the impression of progress and development in her intellectual life. My solution, while lacking the grace of Daly's method, requires no keys. It supports my goal of giving the screener quick visual information that might result in an almost osmotic assimilation of radical feminist history as well as Daly's ontological insights.

This thumbnail feature also quietly lampoons the conventions of eCommerce sites, providing a thumbnail illustration of a commercially available book. Screeners who are frequent users of eCommerce sites might be tempted to click on the icons for more information or to buy the book, which is a behavior that is worth examining. The title of the site is also meant to invoke the assumptions surrounding the current "dot com" phenomenon putting into question proliferation of commercial ventures on the Web. What does "dot com" mean to people today: mail order shopping, quick money, early retirement on stock earnings? I am aware of these issues even though they fall beyond the scope of this particular project.

The pages that one encounters when using Wickedary.com are hypertext markup language (HTML) documents. I designed one HTML document to be a template for all of the pages that make up the "dictionary" part of Wickedary.com, using the visual elements discussed above. The interaction between the database and this template enabled by CGI scripts provides all of the pages.

Navigation is also a continual consideration for Wickedary.com. Aside from the basic navigation bar at the top that directs the screener to background information about the project and other basic functions, the site needed solutions for allowing the user to hop from word to word. At this time, I supply only one lengthy alphabetical scroll down menu for this purpose. This solution will become cumbersome as the number of words added to the Wickedary.com increases. The number of words will make this menu daunting for the screener. The navigation method that I have chosen to eventually replace this system is a variation on the scroll down menu. There will be a form in which the screener may type letters. With each letter typed, the menu will scroll down automatically to the matching first entry in the alphabetical list. This will enable the screener to "search" for words with which they are already familiar or simply explore the list at random. Another navigation feature that adds to the Wickedary.com's function is hyperlinked

terms. Daly sometimes give "see" or "compare" cross-references in her

definitions. Those are designated as hyperlinks, even though, at this time,

some of these words have not been entered into the database. Words within

definitions have also been made into hyperlinks, if they appear as *Wickedary*

terms in the database. Thus, the screener can go from word to word, using

words as navigation devices, getting lost in the train of thought brought

about by this process.

As mentioned above, the interaction between the Wickedary.com

database and my HTML template was made possible by CGI scripts. Lisa

Mackie, a Research Scientist at New York University Center for Advanced

Technology, programmed these scripts, in the Practical Extraction and

Reporting Language (PERL). PERL was designed to handle, process and

format text, and is a very popular language for CGI scripts. PERL is a

particularly apt tool for text processing making the hyperlinks and cross

references within the definitions pages possible.

Each "page" that the screener requests is the combined work of three

distinct computer processes: designed template, database and their

interaction, but the pages that the user sees are ephemeral. There are no pages

until the moment the screener requests a page by entering Wickedary.com or

navigating the site. The Wickedary.com is not a document; it is a process. I

appreciate this point, because it is not the particular words that are important

for the Wickedary.com. It is Daly's intellectual processes that I intend to

communicate. Wickedary.com is a metaphor for what I am trying to

accomplish with Daly's work. As the machinations of software and data are

generating new pages, the screener is being infused with what Daly has done,

providing her/him with the opportunity to learn a new system by which to

approach the world. Emerging from an encounter with a series of *Wickedary*

words is a way of approaching reality i.e. Daly's radical feminist ontology. I

am seeking to enfranchise feminists using Haraway's cyborg metaphor

offering them radical feminist processes by which they may be empowered,

not exploited.

Chapter Five: http://www.wickedary.com

Below is a "screen shot" of one page generated from the *Wickedary*

database for Wickedary.com as discussed in the previous chapter. This is just

an illustration of the look and feel. For the experience, please see

http://www.wickedary.com.
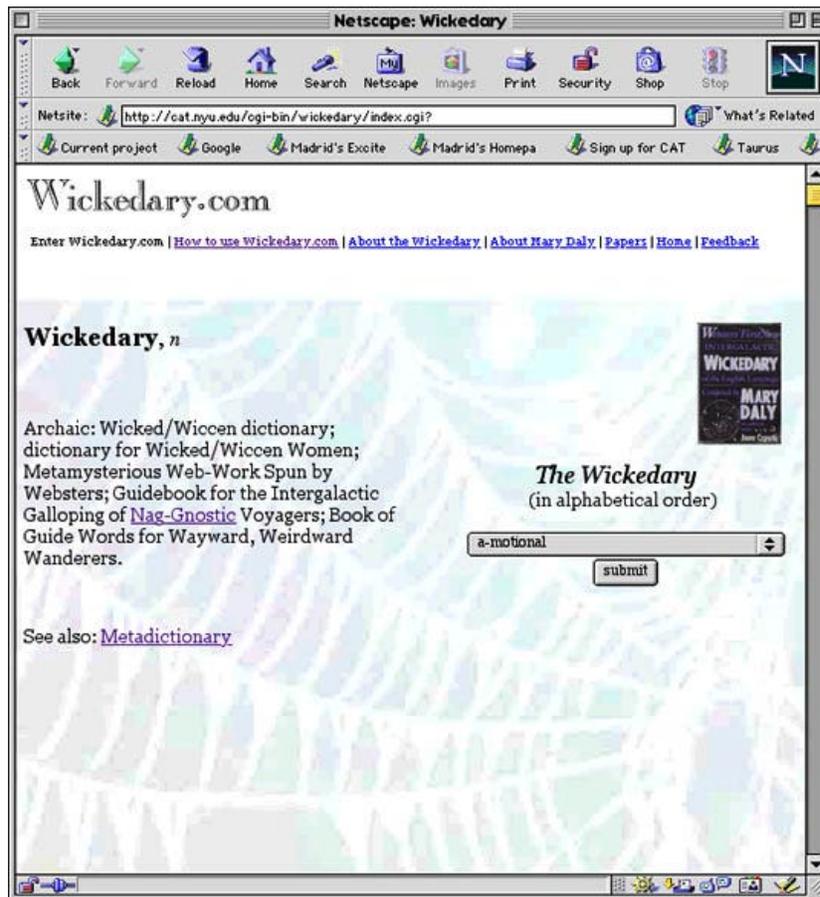
Conclusion

Parthenogenetic Creation: Websters in the Web

I hope to take this experience one step further by continuing to develop Wickedary.com to become what Daly calls a "Spinster," by "Spinning" a "Parthenogenetic Creation." In other words, I would like to be a "woman who defined herself by choice,"(Daly 1988, 167) who is "Discovering the lost threads of connectedness within the cosmos and repairing this thread in the process"(Daly 1988, 96) resulting in a "method which seeks to construct a female train of thought."(Daly 1988, 154) My position as hypermedia developer includes me in the economy of feminist creative energy or Gynergy. (Daly 1988, 77)

Daly's style and methods demand an active reader. Words like Spinster and Spinning invite women to create, and her redefinition of words like Weird, Harpy, Silly and Bitchy give meaning to some of the attacks that expressive women might receive. An important concept in her work is the unfettered Be-ing of women.

To this end, she has offered the term Parthenogenetic Creation. Parthenogenetic Creation has two meanings listed in the *Wickedary*. The first is "work of feminist creation produced by women alone; woman-made work

which may use males as re-sources but never as progenitors, spiritual fathers, mentors, or models." The second is "method of Philosophia: method which seeks to construct a female train of thought working with primary and secondary sources only by women; method which focuses more on actions of women for our liberation from patriarchy than on dissection and critique of patriarchy." (Daly 1988, 154) Hypermedia not only gives a shape and space to the text while pulling the reader into its generation, it also gives the programmer an opportunity to Weave and Spin. She has the opportunity to participate in the metaphoric play, because the popular metaphors for hypermedia are often the same as the feminist metaphors for method. Even when they are not, by Daly's example, Websters (i.e. a woman whose occupation is to Weave, esp. a Weaver of Words and Word-Webs) can assign their own words and definitions as necessary.

Webs and the Network are examples of terms that offer double meanings to the developer of hypermedia. These word plays and their various meanings keep the mind sharp and nimble for learning new things. The digital version of the *Wickedary* should also be nimble for additions from feminists, because new technologies are emerging and new metaphors accompany them. Donna Haraway's "Cyborg" and S. Paige Baty's "Matrix" have been added to the digital *Wickedary*. Another addition to the digital

Wickedary comes from the analysis of Sadie Plant. The word "Computer"

should be added to reflect its roots. Computers were formerly groups of

women who computed targeting coordinates for the military. As she explains

"when *computer* was a term applied to flesh and blood workers, the bodies

which composed them were female."(Plant 1997, 37) The addition of these

terms changes the *Wickedary*. There is a sense of innocence lost. Excluding

women's position in relation to computer and other technologies prevented

Daly from confronting the truly messy alliances that are the reality of

women's lives today. Her heritage and training in theology equipped her

with notions of goddesses, pixies and witches, but did not prepare her for

cyborgs. I think that it is important to add them today.

The Web has become a global phenomenon, and women are using it to

Network and Gossip. Hypermedia and other forms of digital communication

offer opportunities to navigate new conceptual spaces. Creating a

hypermedia *Wickedary* is a process of understanding Daly's intention and

incorporating her critics into a matrix rather than an adversarial debate.

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