

Well after the video *Snowjob* was made and screened, terrorists knocked down the World Trade Centre. Amongst the many horrors of the day, Disneyland was shut down. TV's glowed across the continent for days on end.

In the video, there is a little bobbing creature. It looks like it is having fun. It is wearing a toque... the sign of a perpetrator! It is wearing a piece of duct tape across its mouth... the sign of a victim! This creature acts, and it is acted upon. An Unidentified Animate Object. A human. A product, a unit...

Hey little creature, stay animate! Slip around and bob up and down! Snowjob, blowjob. I'll mow your lawn if you mow mine. C'mon, lets dance.

I publish a magazine. An advertiser sends me a CD. It is a little thin piece of metal. It has information on it. That piece of metal is worth about \$2 new. Retail. The information on it is an ad that has been created by a designer. The designer was probably paid about \$30/hour to put that information together in that particular order. It has visual impact. Now I will put the information into a file on my computer. The computer cost me about \$2500. The information on the computer is worth much much more than that. I paid for some of it. Other people will pay me for some of it. Some of the information on my computer will turn into a magazine that will be printed on paper with ink. Someone is paid to put the ink on the paper. It is likely that they will suffer physically somewhat from the noxious effects of the ink. They may or may not be financially compensated for this. One of the paper pages will contain the ad that came to me on the CD. In exchange for turning that information into ink on paper, the advertiser will pay my magazine about \$1200. I shuffle bits and pieces from here to there, and I watch them transform into and out of various physical states. Because of all this activity, amounts of money are changing hands. This is what happens because I do my job.

If Money were a space alien that took over the planet Earth, I would be one of its worker drones. To Money I would not be a person. I would be an Unidentified Animate Object. That wouldn't leave me many options, would it? But Money does not come from outer space.

Snowjob  
by Andrew J.  
Paterson  
A train of thought  
by Sally McKay

“post-nationalist  
post-identity  
universal language  
global warming”

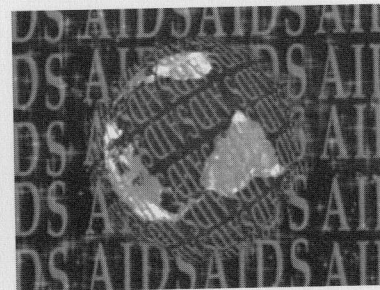
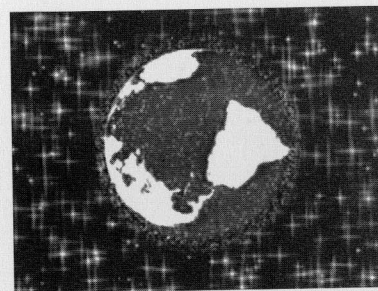
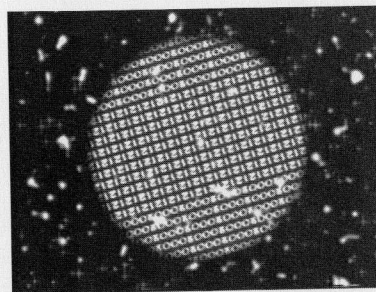
I watch Digimon on TV. Kids have little digital monsters as pets. Each kid has his or her own personalized monster. The monsters travel back and forth between the real world and the digital world. Their means of travel is not important. Laptops are involved, and so are ports and portals. Sometimes evil monsters show up. There are two big boss fights in each half-hour episode. The little Digimon are super-cute and cuddly. They speak in baby voices. But when it is time to fight, they transform into big powerful monsters. They have deep booming voices and enormous claws. They tower above everyone. They have hard shells and magic powers. They battle the evil monsters. If the evil monsters are winning, the Digimon transform again into even bigger, scarier, deeper-voiced monsters. They always rise to the occasion, they always grow big enough to defeat the evil monsters. Order is restored. They go back to being small and cute again. They cuddle with the kids and everyone feels safe.

I think Digimon is a snowjob. All the monsters are really on the same side. The only enemy they have is whoever turns off the TV. And here's another thing. When a Digimon “digivolves,” its statistics come up on screen. All the info on this particular monster is there for us kids at home to grasp onto. We are provided with a system of criteria for choosing our own favourite Digimon trading cards and keychains. Digimon are perfect products. They are all image, artwork transformed into a myriad of commodified manifestations. They are Identified Animate Objects.

Digimon are like cute, tiny Money, and we kids are their tiny worker drones. If Digimon were space aliens that took over the planet Earth, we would be their Unidentified Animate Objects — slaves to the Digimon! But Digimon do not come from outer space.

So if Money does not come from outer space, and Digimon do not come from outer space (and neither do GAP, Imperial Oil, and the art market), how come we are all employed at pushing these things around from here to there? Maybe we are Money. We are Digimon. We are GAP and we are Imperial Oil and we are the art market. We make these things, and we make pictures of these things and show them to one another, in order that we may continue to make all of it some more:

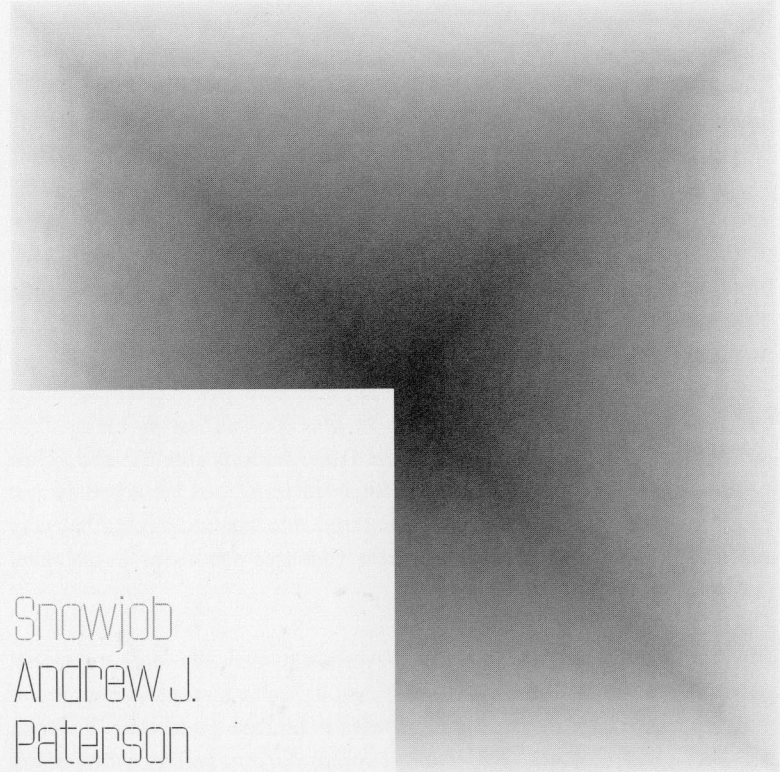
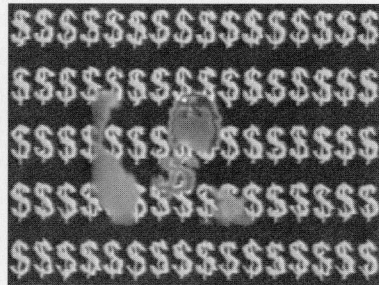
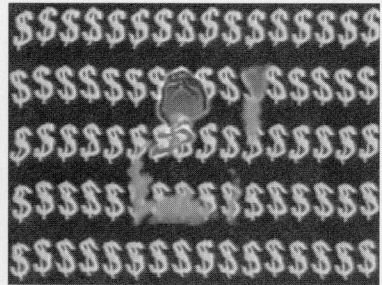
“pictures r words r pictures r words r pictures r words r pictures r words...”  
I’m losing track. I don’t know where to go from here. I think it’s a snowjob.





NATIONALIST  
 POST-IDENT  
 AL LANGUAGE  
 GLOBAL WAR

POST-N  
 ENTITY  
 UNIVERS  
 ARMING



Snowjob  
 Andrew J.  
 Paterson

Perhaps the 21st century did actually commence with the dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet or Eastern Bloc. If so, then two contradictory belief-systems are at loggerheads — if not overt war. Modernist ideologies have theoretically been crushed by instituted post-modernism, yet Futurism is not only invoked but trumpeted by the very idea of the millennium and the subsequent new dawn. The Rapture is also at least implied.

The triumph of capitalism allegedly concluded History and re-situated every single exchange or interaction into a hyperactive present tense. But what is so radically new about Supreme Market Dominance? The pathway from Flux through Chaos Theory into Stock Market Relativism is certainly not an unusual trajectory. How could humans and animals be now living in any brave new world when poverty, selective wars, AIDS, and environmental disasters still characterize and determine too many landscapes and bodies? So far to me, whether the new century began with the triumph of capitalism and market-economies or whether it literally began with the actual millennium, this new century strongly resembles its predecessor. Heroic nationalism and simplistic identity-politics may well have been problematized, if not completely discredited, within “the bigger picture,” but must bodies and ideas (not ideologies) be routinely entered into pseudo-egalitarian play systems that are in fact inaccessible to far too many people for far too many reasons?

The 21st century commences at a time when, paradoxically, local and global concerns are a click of the mouse away yet light years apart. The local and global paradigm might perhaps also refer to blurred distinctions between personal and systematic (corporal and corporate?) properties, whether the contested bites be visual, linguistic, or sonic. This videotape was conceived in response to much of the aggressively modern video art I was witnessing at a moment when it had become apparent that Y2K paranoia was itself a big corporate snowjob. An impressive thrust of recent time-based media-art combines visceral imagery and montage with techno-flavoured music and creates its own associative languages that permit little space for anything verbal.

I recall viewing an evening's programme at the 1999 TranzTech Video Biennial with the late Colin Campbell, who wittily opined to me that there didn't seem to be any dialogue in the 21st century. But why are words and phrases necessarily incompatible with images and sounds?

As a writer who has utilized verbal language within the film and video mediums, I wished to essay possible roles for words within futuristic videoscapes. I also wished to challenge deceptive separations concerning bodies vs. technologies, words, sounds, and pictures, and global vs. local situations and responses. It is indeed in powerful interests to enforce these simplistic binaries, but it is crucial for not only individuals but also discursive societies to realize that these separations are nothing less than a snowjob. After all, you don't need a gag or mask to be a card-carrying dancer.

Many may now insist that the 21st century truly commenced with the events of what has been simplistically condensed as 9/11. On the contrary, these and both parallel and subsequent events prove that the previous century never truly ended, as nation-states and ideologies or belief-systems are still demanding resolutions and closures. Would that a new century might begin!

I would like to acknowledge the invaluable creative input of the late Michael Balsler in the realization of this videotape.

