

# Three-Sided Pages

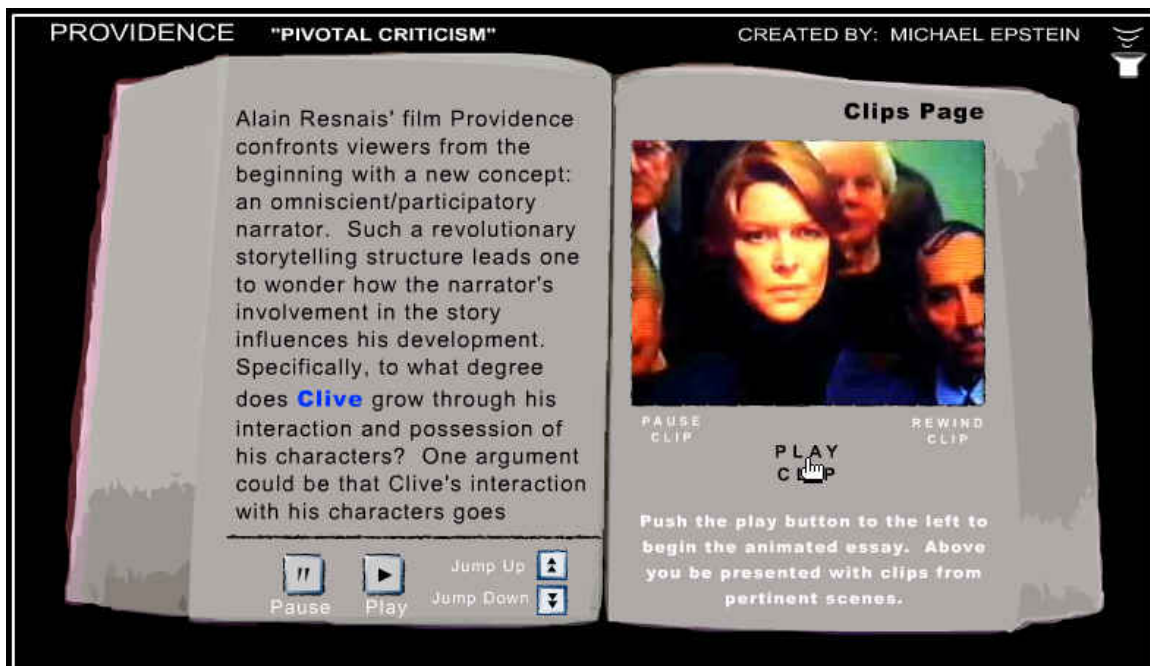
## Using Rich Media to Explode the Expository Essay

### Abstract

#### Web Publishing Across the Art/Science Divide

DVD's are truly expanding the ways we watch movies. You can watch "Memento" in chronological order, you can hear Linklater explain what's going on in "Waking Life" and, in essence, you can see the mechanics of how the movie was made. I believe that CP Snow would be happy with this technology and its uncovering of the logic, the science that lurks within the art of film.

Rich Media publication tools such as Macromedia Flash MX offer similar DVD-like production capabilities for Internet publishing. This has profound implications to the academic, the journalist, and the artist. With rich media we now have the ability to produce works whose rational/mechanical faces can be turned to reveal the more artistic/emotional qualities. For example you can use Flash MX to publish a standard expository essay with audio of the author's voice, or with visualizations of the edits the author made, or even with links to hidden poems, songs, and artistic flashes that we so often purge from expository writing. CP Snow knew that the two cultures weren't that really far apart and now we a format to produce documents to express this.



The key to Flash projects is user control. Like the DVD, you can create buttons or other types of input objects that allow the user to turn on or off features at any moment while experiencing the work. A Flash-based essay can then be built to unfold as either fiction or non-fiction, objective or subjective, general or personal depending on user choice. I have developed a couple of prototypes of this type of projects.

**Providence:** A standard expository essay on the film "Providence", yet presented through "live pages", which, based on user input, can move to reveal the key editing moments in the essay. This object hopes to bring art and humor into the standard critical essay.

[http://web.mit.edu/m\\_e/www/providence/providence.htm](http://web.mit.edu/m_e/www/providence/providence.htm)

**Peace Profiles:** A combination of hand-drawn art and radio reportage on coexistence efforts in Israel. Audio interviews with Palestinians and Israelis are presented in a rich media environment, inviting personal exploration while listening to the radio report.

[http://web.mit.edu/m\\_e/www/peaceprofiles/link.html](http://web.mit.edu/m_e/www/peaceprofiles/link.html)

**New Critic:** Again an expository writing piece on film that plays in an animated format. Links are provided to a video poem about the creation of the essay and inspirational Bob Dylan rant on the press' ability to understand his music.

[http://web.mit.edu/m\\_e/www/newcritic.html](http://web.mit.edu/m_e/www/newcritic.html)

#### **Other interesting Links:**

- <http://web.mit.edu/monetaho/www/ghost> : Moneta Ho of the MIT's Comparative Media Studies program multimedia essay on "Ghost in the Shell."
- [www.becominghuman.org](http://www.becominghuman.org): interesting presentation of a documentary film that allows for side trips into the bones and artifacts of the human evolution story.