

NEWSENSE ANTI-MANIFESTO

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Why must we model our speech patterns solely on expository writing and grammatically correct sentence structure (think-talk) when extemporaneous poetic-speech is available to us for purposes of conversation? Why do those of us who write poetry, systematically restrict it to the page, planned readings, or memorized performances instead of letting it enter our conversations as a free agent? It seems to me the answer is that we have accepted compartmentalized notions of conversation and poetic speech and have dutifully adhered to this somewhat arbitrary separation simply out of habit.

Perhaps one could argue that there is a time and a place for each, but in fact, there is no time and place left for poetic-speech; we simply don't use it for conversational purposes. As poets, it is up to us to infiltrate poetic speech into our conversations and see where that experiment takes us. I propose the umbrella term *Newsense* to refer to poetic conversation that need not adhere to the old-sense demands of coherent sentence structure or, for that matter, rational sense-making. *Newsense* wants to recharge our batteries and change not only our speech patterns but also the way we think and exchange thoughts with others. We enter into conversations with a playful enthusiasm and irreverence. In a party or social gathering a few may start a Newsense exchange and break into "spores" that infiltrate other conversations around the room until the infection has spread throughout. No explanation is necessary.

Newsense is an improvisational, poetic-speech between two or more individuals, each alternating or freely entering and existing the flow of conversation in order to undercut the tightly structured demands of rational speech and thought. Strings of unfinished sentences completed (or not) by others, non sequiturs, and other parataxical operations and interruptions would become the norm. The exchange between *Newsensers* should be rapid enough so that no speaker can pre-think or compose his/her response to the ongoing ebb and flow of individual sounds, words, phrases or brief sentences.

Newsense dialogues between two or more people have less of a chance of getting stuck in any particular set of speech patterns than the self-contained monologues of Rap or Free Style. The automatic writing exchanges in surrealist group poems (exquisite corpses) and improvisational jam sessions in jazz are two closer forerunners to *Newsense*.

Springing up spontaneously anywhere at any time and lasting for any length of time, *Newsense* improvisations may become an insurrectionist alternative to usual sense-making strategies for "effective living." *Newsense* offers an alternative to the fixed nature of conversation between people and nurtures a revolutionary response to our over-rationalized communication structures by infiltrating bits and pieces of *automatica* into any situation.

Newsense celebrates an inclusive sharing of unconscious, uncensored material between people from different backgrounds and experiences. *Newsense* works in the gaps between established conversational norms where the barriers and restrictions of "good sense" no longer apply and the unpredictable and imaginative are the common exchange at everyone's fingertips. Instead of being bound to the mechanisms of clarity and precise, precious meanings, conversations between *newsensers* would engage the analogical resonances of juxtaposed poetic exchanges.

Newsense is a grassroots, social experiment aimed at reawakening in us a more poetic, non-linear response to ourselves and the world. Whenever old-sense becomes boring and lethargic, predictable or doctrinaire, *Newsense* will be there to interject wit, irony, anger, joy, or the kitchen sink into any situation. Just the threat of old sense turning into *Newsense* at the drop of a hat may bring new dimensions into tired thinking. Old-sensers may be forced to *Newsense* themselves before *Newsensers* can undercut their language.

Newsense operates as a surplus or overflow of useless, playful, unproductive speech that lies at the heart of rationalist order and efficient communication. *Newsense* is the mistake, the joke, the pun, the dream, the doodle, the impossible, the invisible, the poetic, the unstable in every

system. It is the remainder that cannot be absorbed and made to work effectively. It is not outside rational order, and therefore something "other"; it is inside the very core of rationality. The laws of chaos, accident, and chance must be recognized and allowed to flow within any system or the system itself will reflect a distortion of reality and petrify under its own exclusivity. In a *Newsense* world, pataphysics, the science of imaginary solutions and laws of the exception would be on everybody's lips.

At first, *Newsensers* may make nuisances of themselves, but ultimately, *Newsense* and old-sense will find supportive resonances and reverberations in their agonistic juxtapositions. Hopefully in the future, old-sense and *Newsense* will move rapidly and radically between rational and irrational states, thus transgressing and ultimately renovating the fixed limits of speech and exchange between peoples.