

*Editorial***Breaking the quarter-million hits-a-year mark**

As the world's most famous digital poet, Jason Nelson knows how to interpret the mass of data available in the stats for a site. His own site (<http://www.secrettechnology.com/>) was recently ranked within the top 100,000 most popular in the world. Those who understand the web will know that's an awesome achievement. It's not often that poetry vies with porn for predominance.

Jason tells us that although there are many ways of ranking sites, *TEXT* is probably around the millionth most popular on the planet.

We gasp. Is that good?

'That's good,' he says. 'But if you removed all the porn and gambling sites, we just might be in a top 100,000 as well.'

'Look at the figures for the last three years. Considering the millions of sites available, *TEXT* is doing remarkably well. It has a growing audience; it has continuous usage; it is significantly linked from prestigious university sites; it's a strong target from educational engines and from Wikipedia. It has a huge audience yet it's a specialised journal; and it has an impressive international readership.'

Feeling better, we seek elaboration.

The facts are:

1. in 2008 *TEXT* received 146,410 hits from 26,356 unique visitors. There were 76,545 openings of *TEXT* pages by 34,555 visits;
2. in 2009 *TEXT* received 217,511 hits from 36,136 unique visitors. There were 104,578 openings of *TEXT* pages by 51,125 visits;
3. in 2010 (up to 23 October) *TEXT* received 234,267 hits from 32,313 unique visitors. There are 122,930 openings of *TEXT* pages by 48,261 visits.

By prediction, in 2010, *TEXT* will easily break the quarter-million hits-in-a-year mark with 55,000 visitors opening pages beyond the front page. This means *TEXT* has almost doubled its hits in the last three years, and deeper readership into the journal has also almost doubled.

Burying deeper into these stats, we find interesting profiles:

1. in 2008 US searchers opened the most *TEXT* pages (42,858), Australia came second (16,091), and the UK third (1894);

2. in 2009 Australian searchers opened the most *TEXT* pages (39,487), the US was second (28,803), the UK fourth (3026);
3. in 2010 to October so far, Australian searchers lead (49,335) with the US second (32,079) and the UK fifth (2870).

Over the last three years, the US and UK have kept up strong interest in *TEXT* while Australia has *tripled* its commitment to the site. This reflects the fact that Creative Writing has cemented its place as a key discipline in the Australian university context. More Australian academics, and more of their students, now turn to *TEXT* as a source of knowledge for learning and research.

Statistics about hits on a website tell many stories. Not everyone who lands on the *TEXT* site wants to be there. In this regard, the most amusing story we discerned involves how one file in *TEXT* crops up over the years as a strongly-hit site. We would like to think this is the *TEXT* article that has most influenced the world (see it at <http://textjournal.com/april99/guest.htm>). Glenda Guest and Inez Baranay titled their article: 'Stripping the Muse'. It seems a lot of people enter the word 'stripping' into searches. On reaching this *TEXT* site, they must be awfully frustrated – or else subsequently well-educated. We don't stoop to suggest that future contributions to *TEXT* should contain in the title the word 'stripping' or similar.

On another note, it often happens, serendipitously, that themes emerge quite organically in the essays submitted to an issue of a journal. This issue of *TEXT* has de facto become almost a themed issue on creative nonfiction. Natalie Kon-yu looks squarely at the silences in the stories of women's lives, and the resultant tendency of authors to render those lives as fiction rather than biography. Tony Eaton raises the question of 'nonfictional reliability' and liminal identities in his discussion of the crafting of his novel *Into White Silence*, and Allan Robins too explores questions of fictocriticism in his account of creative writing and literary studies. Laura Deane takes up the question of fictocritical writing in her 'incursion into women's madness', while Susan Bradley-Smith wrestles with the effects of 'telling the truth' about personal mental health problems in the writing of memoir. Andrew Miller also takes on mental illness and memoir in his work, which is effectively a performance of life writing, and Willa McDonald deals with the ethics and practice of life writing in relation to the process of adoption. Sandra Arnold's essay deals with the writing of family stories - in this case, the spiritual aspects of facing, and writing about, the death of an adult child; and Matthew Ricketson examines the traditions and practice of writing book-length journalism and creative nonfiction. There are also 'outliers' in this issue. Chris Fortescue brings ideas from the visual art world into the domain of writing, particularly the contradictions at stake in the process of conducting creative work as research; Carol-Anne Croker, writing with Mark Carthew, explores the place of writing programs in dual-sector universities; Robin Freeman outlines the history of editing and publishing Indigenous Australian writing, and suggests ways of adopting an more 'apt' approach to such work; and Mark Carthew offers an argument for a more explicit valuing of young people's writing within the academy and the industry.

Finally, in conjunction with this October issue, *TEXT* publishes three more in its series of Special Issues. Number 7, *The ERA era: creative writing as research*, is the long-awaited collection of creative work from Australian academics writing consciously as researchers. Number 8, *Creative and practice-led research: current status, future plans*, is a timely symposium on creative arts research issues. Number 9, *Rewriting the menu: the cultural dynamics of contemporary food choices*, is a fascinating set of papers dealing with the discourses and texts influencing that tasteful genre, the menu.

Nigel Krauth
Jen Webb

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Editors: Nigel Krauth & Jen Webb
Text@griffith.edu.au