

Popping Pills:

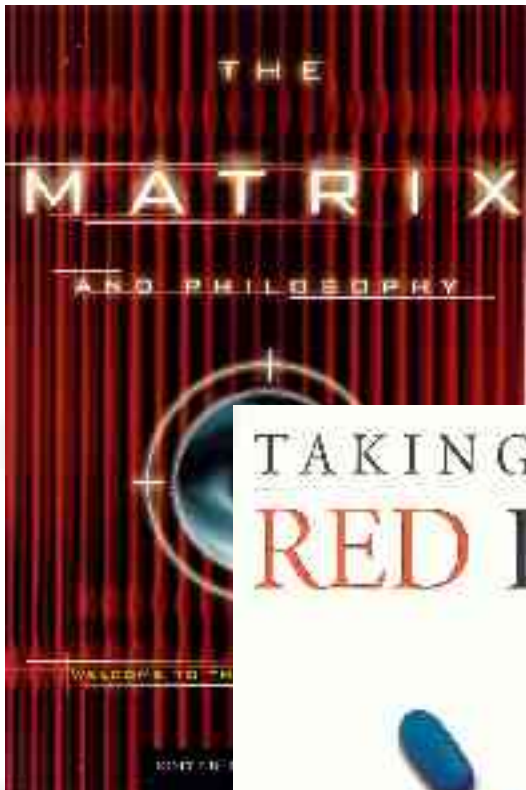
New Media and the Rhetoric of Drugs

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Thinking Otherwise: Philosophy, Communication, Technology
Purdue University Press, April 2007



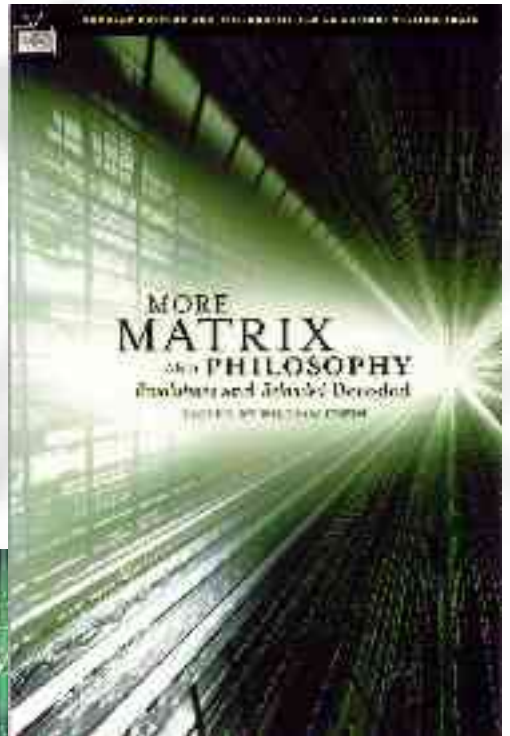
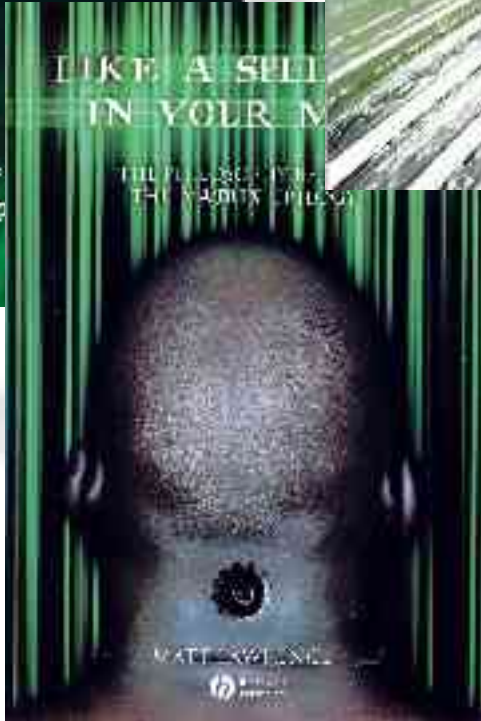
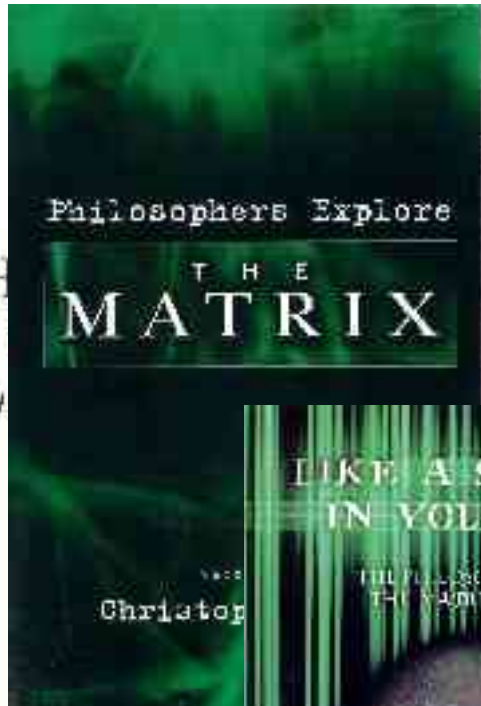
The Matrix (1999)



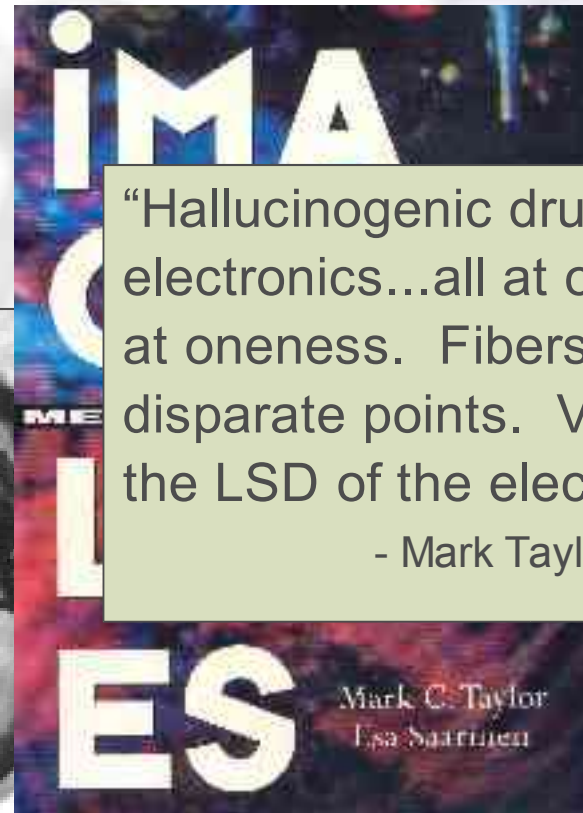
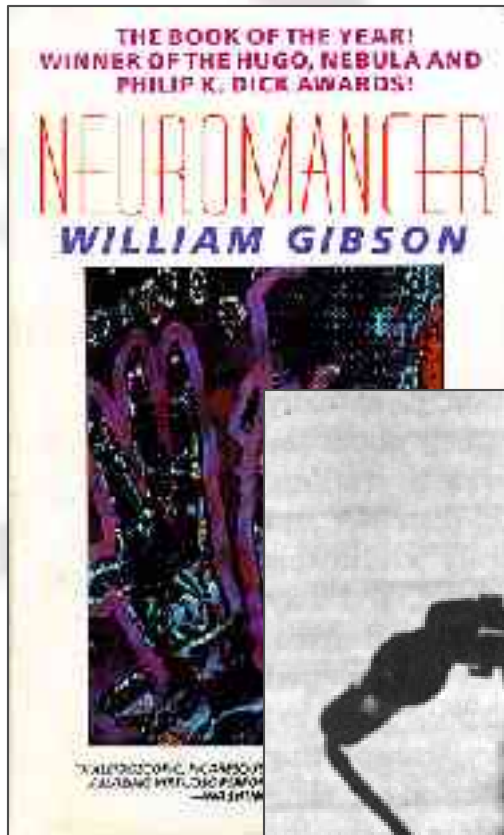
TAKING THE RED PILL



Science, Philosophy and Religion
in *The Matrix*
EDITED BY GARY YERGEN
INTRODUCTION BY DAVID GERRITZ



1) Codependency

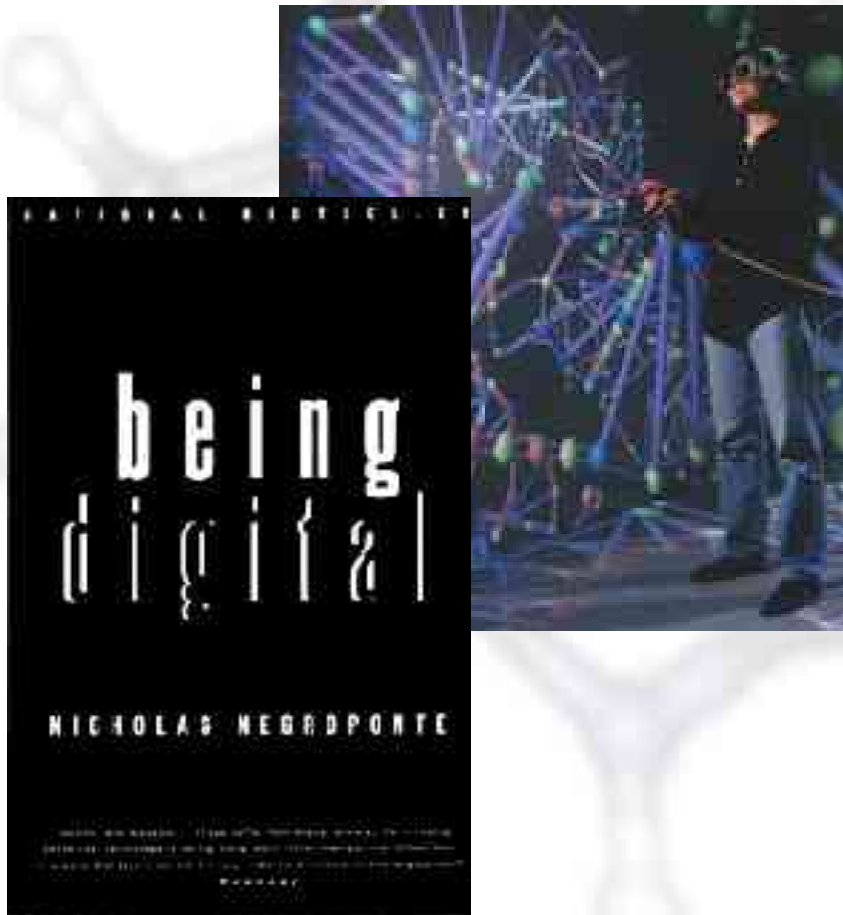


“Hallucinogenic drugs...
electronics...all at oneness...all
at oneness. Fibers link these
disparate points. Virtual reality is
the LSD of the electronic age”

- Mark Taylor & Esa Saarinen

1) Codependency

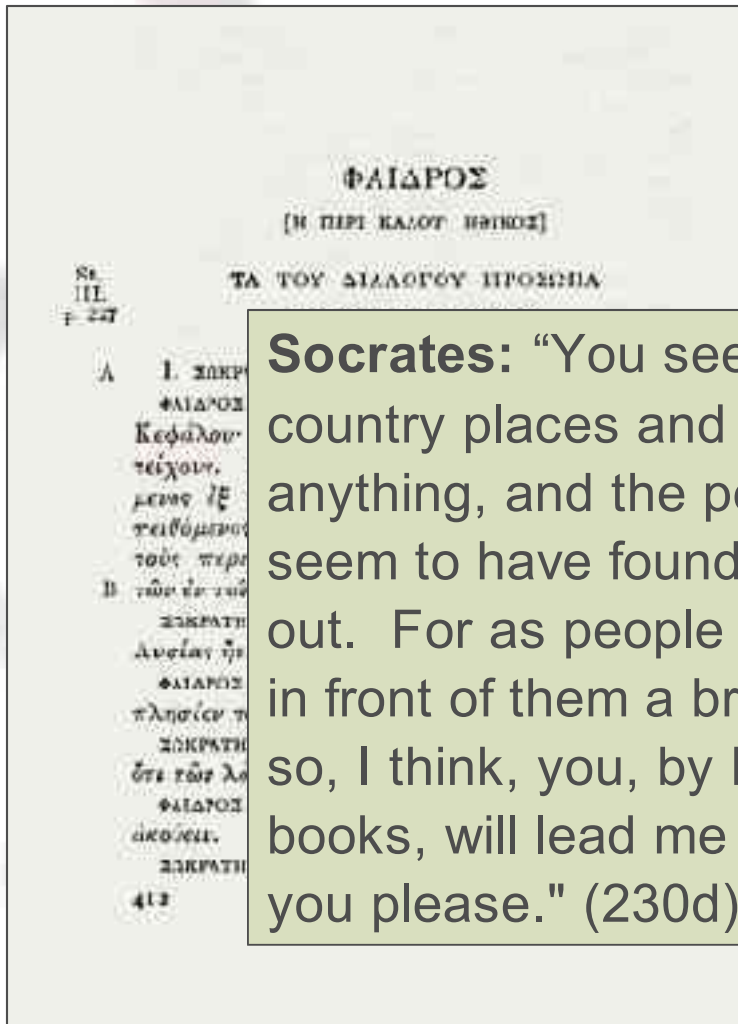
Medicine



Poison



2) Plato on Drugs



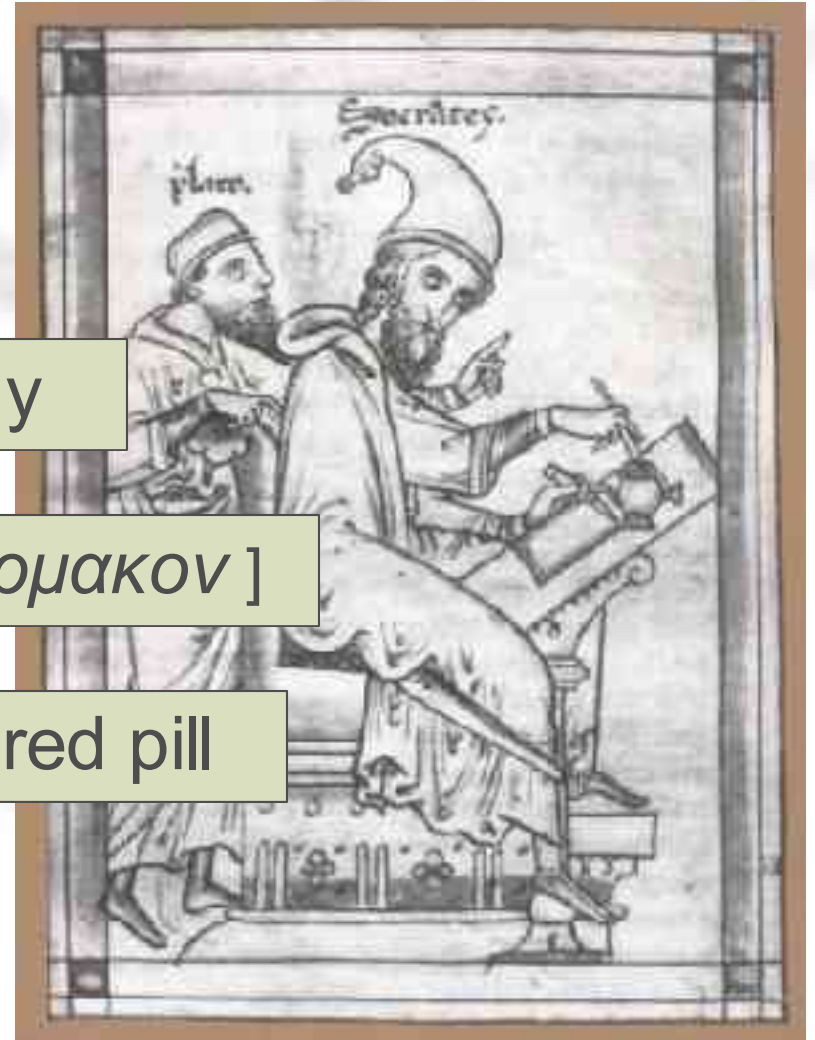
Socrates: “You see, I am fond of learning. Now the country places and the trees won't teach me anything, and the people in the city do. But you seem to have found a drug [φάρμακον] to bring me out. For as people lead hungry animals by shaking in front of them a branch of leaves or some fruit, just so, I think, you, by holding before me discourse in books, will lead me all over Attica and wherever else you please.” (230d)

2) Plato on Drugs

a) Writing is a technology

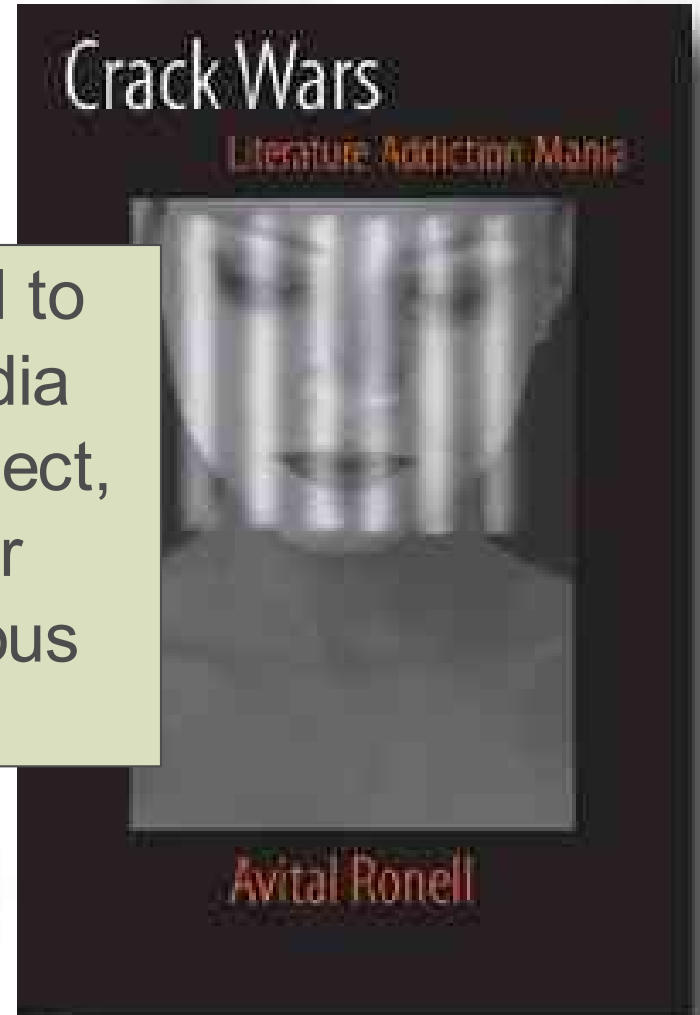
b) Writing is a drug [φάρμακον]

c) Phaedrus selects the red pill



3) Concluding Prescriptions

a) Communication scholars need to acknowledge that drugs and media technology share a common project, are determined to produce similar results, and, often suffer analogous crackdowns before the law.

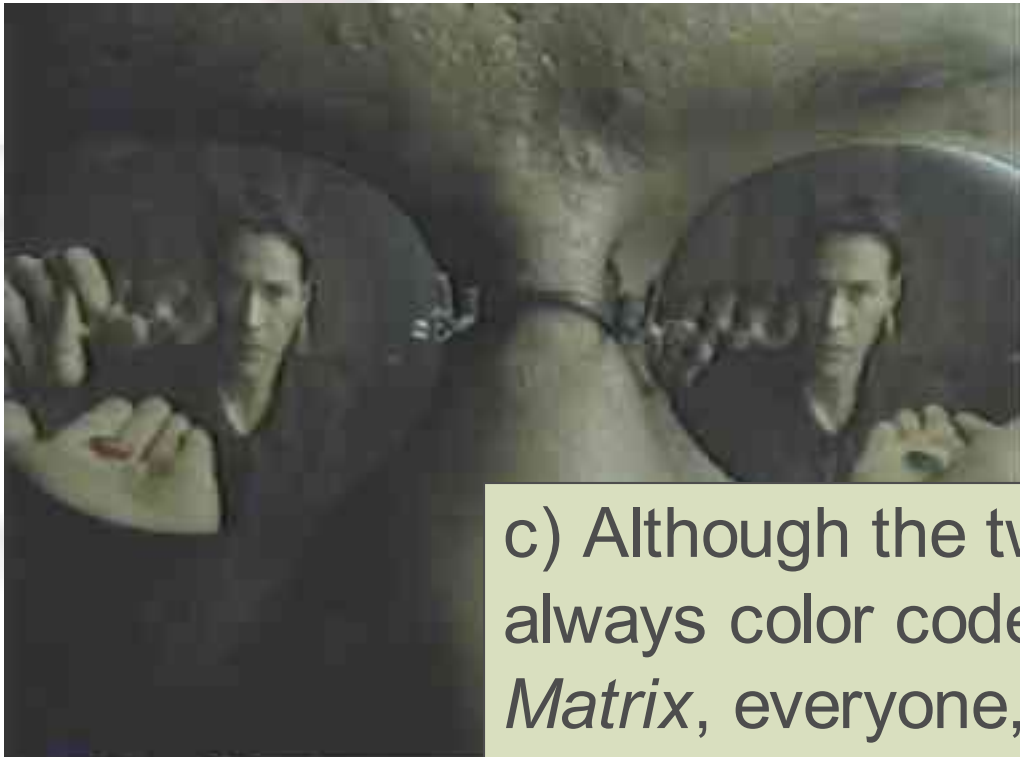


3) Concluding Prescriptions



b) Drugs and media have been inextricably involved with each other from the very beginning. There is a general structure already in place that pre-dates and pre-determines both the chemical and electronic prosthesis.

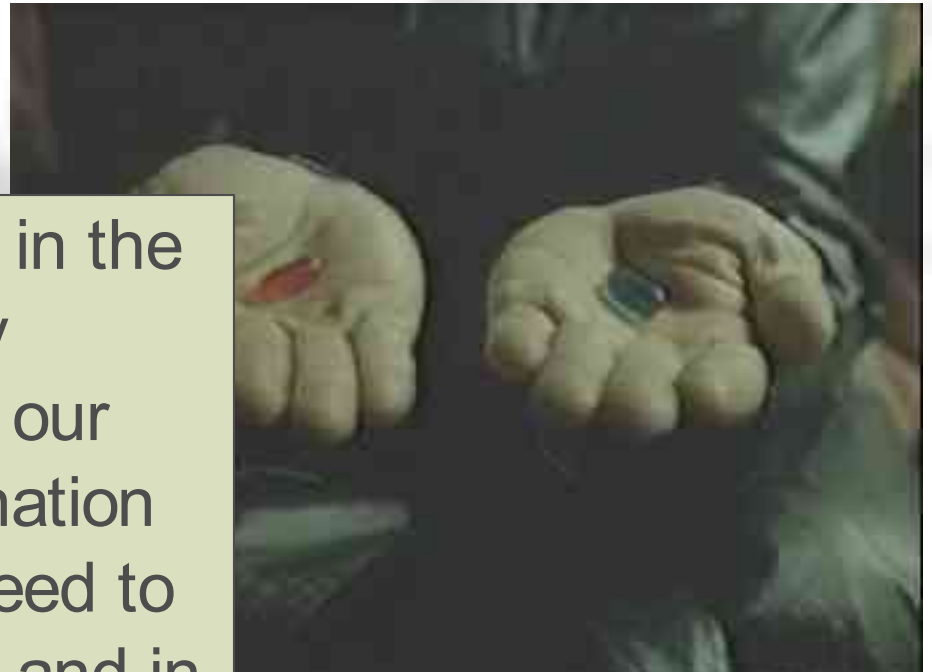
3) Concluding Prescriptions



c) Although the two alternatives are not always color coded as they are in *The Matrix*, everyone, from Phaedrus and Neo to advocates and critics of new media technology, decide to take what would have been a red pill.

3) Concluding Prescriptions

d) Any critical intervention in the pharmacology that already organizes and determines our understanding and examination of media technology will need to learn to operate outside of and in excess of the currently available options.



Paper available at <http://gunkelweb.com/papers.html>