Popping Pills:
New Media and the Rhetoric of Drugs

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The Matrix (1999)
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

1. *being digital* by Nicholas Negroponte
2. *Hooked on the Net* by Andrew Careaga
3. *EveCrack* Trilogy
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
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.
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.
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.