
Uncle Roger

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Agenda

Intro

- Judy Malloy
- Back ground

Uncle Roger

1. A Party in the woodside
2. The Blue Notebook
3. Terminals

Dive Deeper

- Text meanings
- Analysis
- References



Judy Malloy

A woman of many hats - Her work has been exhibited and published internationally including, among many others, the Library of Congress, universities, museums, conferences and the press

- **Electronic literature Poet/Researcher**
- **Professor-** Princeton University
- **Editor-** The New York Foundation for the Arts' NYFA
- **Author-** Uncle Roger, Its Name Was Penelope
- **Honors:** In fall 2013 she was named the Anschutz Distinguished Fellow in American Studies at Princeton University,



Tip

Twitter account:

<https://twitter.com/judymalloy?lang=en>.

Personal Site:

<https://people.well.com/user/jmalloy/>

Background:

The story is about a micro electronics industry set in Silicon Valley, California (during the era of semiconductor "chip" wars). Uncle Roger is a collection of three database files, each file is a pool of information. The reader build up levels of meaning with each story.

Each file shows many aspect of the story and characters rather than providing alternate plot turns and endings. The reader ultimately is in charge of creating their own story with these files.

"The author's vision was to create a work of electronic literature in which the reader would recreate a fictional environment by repeatedly plunging into a database and emerging with narrative information." (People WELL)

The Timeline for Early Uncle Roger

August 1986

I begin writing the text and designing the structure of File 1 of *Uncle Roger: A Party in Woodside*

Released on ACEN in 1986 as a social media-based narrative intervention and published online as an interactive hypertext on *ACEN Datanet* in 1987.

1988

File 3 of *Uncle Roger, Terminals*, is published on *ACEN Datanet* as an interactive generative hypertext, programmed with UNIX shell scripts.

1986

1987-88

Reference:

<http://dct-wsuv.org/wp/pathfinders/2013/10/01/the-timeline-for-the-early-uncle-roger-by-judy-malloy/>

July 1987

I begin telling *The Blue Notebook*, File 2 of *Uncle Roger* on *Art Com Electronic Network*.

1988

All three files of *Uncle Roger* are implemented in BASIC Narrabase, self-published on disk with packaging and documentation, and distributed internationally by *Art Com*



Did you know?

The story of uncle roger was:

- ◆ Published on Art Com Electronic Network on the WELL.
- ◆ The first full length work of electronic literature narrative published online

Uses:

- ◆ Both poetry and fiction
- ◆ 1986 Apple BASIC program

A Party in Woodside

- *A Party in Woodside* is a dream-like memory of a party of CEOs viewed from the perspective of the babysitter Jenny.
- As at any party, the reader meets some people but not others, observes some events but not others.
- The story about what happened during this party is slowly revealed through the characters.
- The party, as parties usually are, is experienced in fragmented scenes. (Electronic Literature volume. 3)



The Different Stories

- a love story,
- the California chip culture,
- contrasts between the East and West coasts,
- the activities of Jenny's Uncle Roger, an eccentric semiconductor market analyst

The Blue Notebook

The story is framed by a formal birthday party for Tom Broadthrow in a pseudo-elegant hotel dining room. The party is punctuated by an encounter with Uncle Roger in an unlikely place. And while Jenny sits at the banquet table, other narrative threads -- a car trip with an old lover, a visit to a semiconductor house in San Jose -- come and go in her mind.

Parts of the story are taken from Jenny's notebook where reality is difficult to separate from fiction and dream. As Jenny herself says: "The things I wrote in the blue notebook didn't happen in exactly the way I wrote them." (Electriclit/info)



Event: birthday party for Tom Broadthrow

Setting: a elegant hotel dining room

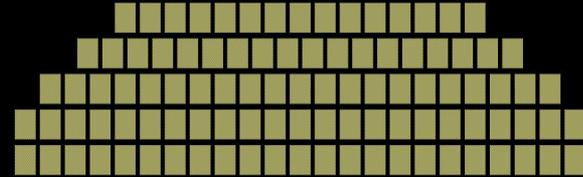
Narrator: Jenny

Terminals

This story is written about a time when computers replace typewriters in the workplace . Terminals follows the narrator to her new job at a market research firm in San Francisco where she has random thoughts and memories.

- the reader has no idea what will happen next, each text is unexpected and unpredictable
- The image at the bottom is meant to display a typewriter box.
- Each key in the typewriter tells a different story about Jenny's life

In the room where I work, there are about twenty desks, called "stations". A computer takes up most of the space at each station. Each computer has a black screen which rests on a gray case, and a keyboard which is attached to the computer by a cord, like those cords which hold the two pieces of telephones together. They call the computers "terminals".



*[Uncle Roger File 3: Terminals](#) by Judy Malloy
click on the keyboard or the spacebar to read the story*

The Start of Electronic literature

“In the spring of 1986, I was invited by my friend, video and performance art curator Carl Loeffler, to go online and write on the seminal Art Com Electronic Network (ACEN) on The WELL where *ACEN Datanet*, an early online publication, would soon feature actual works of art, including works by John Cage, Jim Rosenberg, and my own *Uncle Roger*.”



Pathfinders project, led by Dene Grigar and Stuart Moulthrop and sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The event took place on October 18 at the Electronic Literature Lab (ELL) at Washington State University Vancouver..

Discovering Electronic Literature

- An interview from Judy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oBBZ6cYS14w>

A Party in Woodside

by Judy Malloy



[jenny](#)

[dreams](#)

[uncle roger](#)

[puffy](#)

[jane](#)

[men in tan suits](#)

[jeff](#)

[jack](#)

[semiconductor chips](#)

[tom](#)

[dorrie](#)

[laura](#)

[louise](#)

[food and drink](#)

[the house in woodside](#)

[Uncle Roger](#): click on the icon or select a link

Lexia

- A form of hypertext
- Each lexia was written as a scene that could either stand by itself or be combined with other lexias to create a narrative
- Malloy intended these words to signify a simple and basic structure of units to create non sequential narrative

Non Sequential Narrative

>> (or nonlinear)

“Although [the words] can be read sequentially, they were meant to be non-sequential works that combine words and pictures so that neither the words descriptions of the pictures nor are the pictures illustrations of the words”. (Malloy, 195)

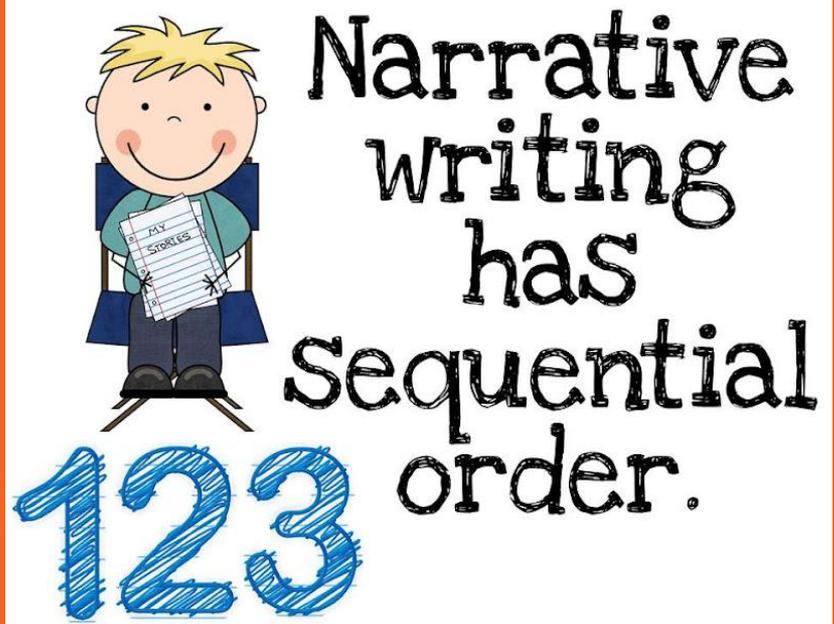


Image Source: <https://dumielauxepices.net/wallpaper-1076122>

Each card stands by itself but also functions as molecular unit but when combined with other cards builds up a story



Analysis:

narrative lines are poetic

images and text connect wot create a technical and visual art form that act as poetry

> the stories are fragmented and out of order, each of them seems to not have a connection

Different- one specific difference I noticed is that this electronic piece unlike other electronic literature I have read, has no sound or game design however it is still interactive and allows users to play a role in creating an art form story.

** female narrator- Jenny

Analysis Continued...

The reader has entire control and opportunity to engage in this text, they are ultimately the one who decides where the story begins and ends. Thus Uncle Roger is a great example of what a successful work of electronic based literature can accomplish, unlike the traditional paper-based writing.



References:

- *The Electronic Literature Collection: Vol 3*
- Malloy, Judy. "'Uncle Roger', an Online Narrabase." *Leonardo*, vol. 24, no. 2, 1991, pp. 195–202.
- <http://collection.eliterature.org/3/works/uncle-roger/uncle.html#basic>
- <http://collection.eliterature.org/3/work.html?work=uncle-roger>

QUESTIONS?
