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theGTGTTTTAAAA
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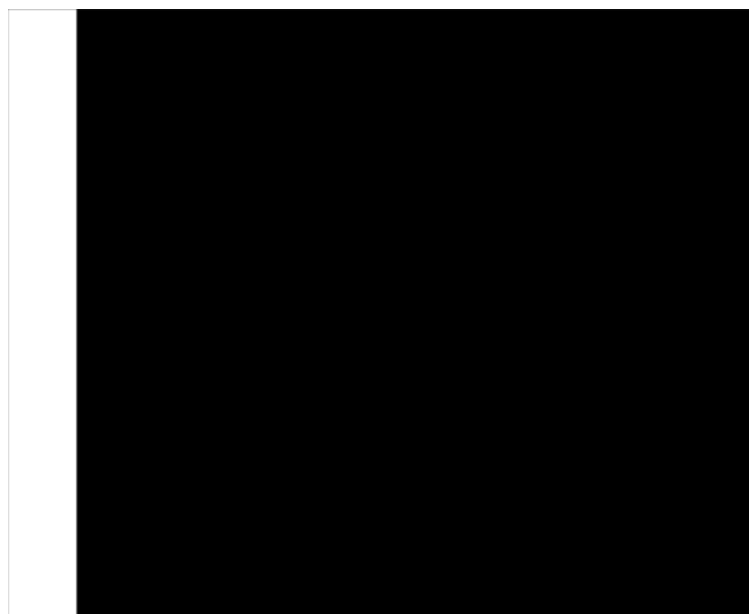
an online archive of *Agrippa*
 (a book of the dead)

The Poem Running in Emulation

William Gibson's poem played from a 3½-inch diskette on a 1992-era Mac computer running the System 7 operating system. When the diskette ran, the text of the poem scrolled up the screen (accompanied by infrequent sound effects: a camera shutter click, a gun going off) while an encryption program on the diskette encoded each line and made the poem "disappear" after its first reading.

On December 9, 2008—the sixteenth anniversary of the original "Transmission" event debuting *Agrippa—The Agrippa Files* was aided by the [Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities](#) and the Digital Forensics Lab at University of Maryland, College Park, in unveiling an [emulated run](#) of the poem based on a [bit-level copy](#) of an [original diskette](#) loaned by collector Allan Chasanoff. The copy was played on a computer with software emulating the functions of a 1992-era Mac. For a discussion of the forensic process by which the code was accessed and emulated, see Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, with Doug Reside and Alan Liu, "[No Round Trip: Two New Primary Sources for Agrippa.](#)"

A "Run" of William Gibson's "Agrippa" Poem from a Copy of Original 1992 *Agrippa* Diskette



Rapid access: [Google Video](#)
 Higher-quality: [QuickTime video](#)

20 minutes, 13 seconds.

Item #D51. Video capture of a "run" of William Gibson's "Agrippa" poem made from playing a disk-image (bit-level) copy of original 1992 *Agrippa* diskette.



Agrippa "label" at start of poem's run



"I hesitated..." (Beginning of poem as it scrolls up screen)



"The mechanism..." (the poem continues)



"laughing, in the mechanism" (the poem ends)



Encrypted text appearing after end of poem



Desktop of Mini vMac emulator with System 7 used to run the poem



Folder on Mini vMac emulator with System 7 used to run the poem

Rapid access: [Google Video](#)
Higher-quality: [QuickTime video](#)

20 minutes, 13 seconds.

Source: original 1992 Agrippa [3.5" diskette](#), 1.4 Mb, loaned by collector Allan Chasanoff.

Process: » Disk image (bit-level copy) made using the "dd" copy process. (See [Item #D50](#) on this site: downloadable disk-image file.) » Run of the disk-image copy on a computer using Mini vMac emulator with System 7 book disk (to emulate the functions of the original 1992 Mac platform for which the software on the diskette was created). » Video capture of the resulting run of the poem.

More info: Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, with Doug Reside and Alan Liu, "[No Round Trip: Two New Primary Sources for Agrippa.](#)"

Credits for the "Run"

- Allan Chassanof (for loan of original diskette)
- Kevin Begos, Jr.
- Matthew G. Kirschenbaum and Doug Reside, [Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities](#)
- Alan Liu
- Robert Maxwell, Digital Forensics Lab and Office of Information Technology, University of Maryland, College Park
- Bini Tecle and Allan Rough, University of Maryland, College Park.
- Permissions to copy, run, and reproduce the diskette online received from: Kevin Begos, Jr., Allan Chasanoff, and William Gibson.

Disk Image (Bit-level Copy) of Agrippa Diskette Created from Original 1992 diskette

Screenshots, audio files, and binary files from François Grieu's [technical analysis](#) of the disk image

Item #D50. Disk image (bit-level copy) created from collector Allan Chasanoff's original 1992 Agrippa [diskette](#).



"Agrippa" disk info



Hidden "Desktop" info file



Agrippa label (picture included on disk)



Agrippa credits screen (picture included on disk)

Sounds included on "Agrippa" disk: [camera click](#) and [gunshot](#)



Exploration of resource fork of "Agrippa" disk with ResEdit program



Sector 2



Sector 2 (interpreted)



Sector 2878

[sectors1708-1712.dat](#)

Scavenged vestigial data on these sectors of the disk image

[agrippa.bin](#)

Flat lossless archive of data fork, resource fork and file info of the "Agrippa" file, made using BinHex5

Download disk-image file
([fd0_agrippa.dmg](#))



Download disk-image file ([fd0_agrippa.dmg](#))

This disk image was created by the Digital Forensics Lab and the [Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities \(MITH\)](#) at the University of Maryland, College Park. For more information, see Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, with Doug Reside and Alan Liu, "[No Round Trip: Two New Primary Sources for Agrippa.](#)"

See also an [independent technical analysis](#) of the disk image performed by François Grieu, an engineer based in Paris (who also provided the screenshots, audio files, and other resources from his analysis at the left).

Original 1992 Agrippa Diskette Used to Make Emulated Run of William Gibson's Poem



Item #D52. Original 1992 *Agrippa* 3½”, 1.4 Mb diskette belonging to collector Allan Chasanoff used to make the [disk-image copy](#) and [emulated run](#) of the William Gibson poem featured on this site.

This was the diskette used to create *The Agrippa File*'s [disk-image \(bit-level\) copy](#) of William Gibson's [poem](#) and its accompanying software, as well as the [emulated run](#) of the whole package. In the Digital Forensics Lab at the University of Maryland, College Park, multiple copies were spawned from the original diskette and run through a computer emulating the platform of a 1992-vintage Mac. Multiple instances of Gibson's poem thus came back to life, ran, and died (disappeared at the hands of the disk's included encryption program) in the effort to capture the experience of reading the original poem—the experience, that is, minus the sense of one-time-only uniqueness that was part of the core work.

The diskette was loaned by Allan Chasanoff from his copy of *Agrippa* (editioned “10/95”). Chasanoff's copy of the book is part of a collection of “book art” he began aggregating in 1990 that has grown to 275 works. The theme of his collection is “the artist and the new ‘disrespect’ he had in opposition to the older cultural devotion to the integrity of the book” (email from Chasanoff to Alan Liu, 5 December 2008).

The creation date of the software on Chasanoff's diskette is “Wed., Sept. 23, 1992, at 1:13 pm; Modified Wed., Oct. 7, 1992, 10:50 pm.” The Post-It note on the wrapper of the diskette is Chasanoff's original note (apparently dating from the time of acquisition). For discussion of the digital forensics used to recover and run the software from this disk, see Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, with Doug Reside and Alan Liu, [“No Round Trip: Two New Primary Sources for *Agrippa*.”](#)

- Created by the Transcriptions Project, UC Santa Barbara



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