

FROM THE EDITORS



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<http://jtmckinleyphoto.blogspot.com/>

MANIFESTO

Think of the internet as a literal place, a newly-conquered frontier. It's a familiar comparison: the pioneering switch-circuit supernerds of ARPANET; the trailblazing explorers of Usenet and Mosaic; the waves of immigrants, establishing Geocities, getting to know their AOL postman by his ubiquitous catchphrase. Now Google's twelve-lane freeways roar across the Web, Facebook and YouTube are visible from space. Unfortunately, as with most frontiers, the development of the Web has brought with it the swift and ruthless execution of native populations. The old empires of printed media are undergoing a greater crisis than ever before, one from which they will never fully recover. They have succumbed to the pox of internet expansion.



These wrongs must be redressed, not by retrenching ourselves in the printed medium, but by salvaging what its best citizens stood for. We cannot mistake the decline of the printed form for the death of quality writing and content. The need for literature and letters to be reliably and intelligently disseminated exists now as it always has. Go back and read how scribes decried the printing press. This is just another medium change—from bleached plant matter to glowing liquid crystal.

The reason many people worry that the written form is dying, and the reason most writers consider online publication second-rate, is that no journal has yet succeeded in marrying the editorial rigors of print to the freedoms of the internet. A high-quality print magazine—a *Harper's*, a *Partisan Review*, an *n+1*—is a micron filter of minds applied to the endless wellspring of human creation, allowing only the finest trickle to pass through. As it stands now, the internet is the opposite: an unbridled and infinite purveyor of information—creation unbound—and it has all the delicate subtlety of a tidal wave.

The countless blogs and Web-based literary reviews are brimming with unexceptional content. With endless gigabytes of storage space, editors of the online corpus sacrifice stringent controls and adopt a

shotgun approach, publishing mediocrity en masse, obscuring the rare gem. Readers end up with entire cows' asses on their plates, rather than the succulent, butterflied filets they were hoping for. Even the bastardized online cousins of prominent print magazines and literary reviews—which often keep their best content dead-bolted behind subscription fees—are visually unappealing and cluttered with unwanted content. That print titans can't get the Web right either shouldn't be surprising: the best carriage makers didn't make the best cars.



We at WAG'S REVUE are intent on revolutionizing online literature. We wish to create something entirely of the internet, never printed and never meant to be printed, but with all the editorial and aesthetic controls that entice people to read and trust the finest printed media. We will insist on strong editorial oversight, from first draft to final copy. We will re-conceptualize the printed page online, and we will explore its space, cultivate its aesthetics. Presentation will be sleek, clean, and controlled.

We will find and foster the new and great writers of the online generation. Alongside interviews with the waggish luminaries of our time, we will publish poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction. We will allow and encourage authors to exploit the internet for the new creative territory it provides: contortions of page, mixed media, electronic writing, interactive narrative. We will publish complete, polished issues, quarterly—no constant dribble of blogging and unwanted content. And there will never be subscription fees; all content will be free to the public, greatly expanding the readership authors can reach.

We are planting our flag in this, our little corner of the internet, establishing a true Web-based magazine (a “wag,” if you will)—a magazine that brings the rigors of print publication over to the online medium, to flourish under the vast new freedoms it allows.

—The Editors, *Wag's Revue*