

The Big Plot, selected audience's reviews. From internet forums. 2010:

thebigplot-NOW-ON-VIDEO

*"I am **sure** you are not a pilot. WHERE IS YOUR AIRPLANE?"*

While I enjoy *The Big Plot*'s ingenuity and creativity I must say, those videos are awkward and hilarious. I think this is where network fiction breaks down for me. I have an extremely hard time considering YouTube fiction (even if half the stuff on there is staged), and hearing the characters talk endlessly felt artificial and goofy at times. I'm not sure if there is a solution to this, I just don't think these two mediums mix well. I think maybe it could have been the actors to play the characters. I expected Mark Savin to be smoking a cigarette and drinking vodka throughout his videos. Vanessa, while hot, really needs to cut it out with those intense stares into the camera. Also when she talked I felt like I was at a poetry reading that wouldn't end. Brian Steiger must be a failed Shakespearean actor with the way he screamed and whined throughout his segments. The only one I felt was believable was Humpel, but then his dialogue and subject matter threw me a little. A spy is really concerned with what some Internet losers think? Yeah right.

The Big Plot is a good idea, and its on-going so I can't make a solid judgment on it, but throughout I kept asking myself...whats the point? Is there an end to this? A mystery the reader has to solve, or is this just a look into the lives of four fictional characters? Only Vanessa's thoughtful glares will tell.

~~~jamil

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### The Big Plot

When I first opened the link for "The Big Plot" I didn't know where to start. I was a bit confused, couldn't decide if I was going to really like the adventure or if I would rather read a story like this page by page. I read the summary of what I was about to get myself into and decided to start with Paul Hampel. Something about the way he looks in his picture intrigued me to find out more. The first thing I clicked was the youtube link. The video that came up was of Paul Hampel talking about how his job is disgusting and what he does basically gives him no value since he's a spy and can never talk about his daily work with anyone. After watching and listening to the other youtube videos and reading the live journal entries from all the characters I decided I really like how in order to "read" this hypertext and figure out what it actually is about I have to go to many different websites and constantly be clicking. The youtube videos enabled me to see and hear how the characters were feeling. It's a lot different to see feelings rather than to read a description of feelings and have to interpret them. Different in a good way, in my opinion.

Some people may think that when you read a novel (on paper in an actual book) it requires more thought, because of all the interpretation; but I have discovered that hypertexts, especially this one, make me think a lot more and want to know a lot more. The way a story on the computer is animated and even the way the text sometime is written in different fonts, colors, or styles makes it much more interesting. Because I'm much more interested when I'm involved in the work I tend to think deeper into what the meanings actually are.

-alby

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### fiction-or-nonfiction

One thing every reader must accept when first encountering hypertext narratives such as *The Big Plot* is that narrative is by no means limited to writing. Taking full advantage of today's social media tools, such as facebook, youtube, blogs, flickr, ect., characters can be created that, when thrown together with the

nonfictional characters on the internet, appear completely realistic. Rather than chapters in a book, new story lines or character developments can be made through short videos, posts to a blog, or even pictures on flickr, that require the writer (or actor in the case of a video) to actually take on the voice or physical appearance of the character. This is true character immersion.

If the author chooses to use visual tools, such as facebook or youtube videos, then it must be acknowledged that the actual people used take on a fictional identity that could easily be confused for a real person by the unknowing user who stumbles upon their profile. For this reason, the use of the internet as a medium for story telling questions the truthfulness of peoples identities online. How will you know if Billy Bob, your most recent friend on facebook, is not actually a character in someone's hypertext narrative?

[ Hannah Pilling ]

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### **youtube-and-the-big-plot**

This was a new concept for me with the Youtube videos. They were extremely funny to watch; it was like a bad soap opera. Vanessa did have some diabolical stares, and she would look like she was trying to act a little bit too much. I am not fully convinced that Vanessa was actually smoking that cigarette. Also, why did she have to have those long pauses with no words or anything, it was just a blank stare.

Mark looked like a badass in his [picture](#), but he was far from this. I do not know if they were trying to be awkward or it just seemed that way. Paul took like 5 minutes per sentence. He was just too monotone and boring for my liking. I cannot picture him being an "elite agent" either. Although some people in this do things you would never expect them to do, so I guess he could be. Finally, I get to Brian. He was the worst actor I think in his Youtube videos. His "Ideologies of Mark Savan" was hilarious. I think all around though the acting could have been better, but maybe that was the look they were trying to get across. I am still unsure of this.

-John Harley

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### **Are you real-Or really well made up-**

After reading the Press Release of The Big Plot i immediately had to go to the site. When first coming to the page of The Big Plot, it is kind of intimidating. The site presents itself as the homepage to a T.V. thriller such as C.S.I., but then i continued to look on and although kind of embarrassing now that i look back, i believed for an instant that these were real people. The presentation of information in formats that are so authentic looking in todays world makes this truly unlike any fiction work that i have ever seen.

When ever in anyones like have you been able to request the characters of a developing story as your friend on facebook? (which i did). I was in awe.

The characters are also very well conected, in my eyes so far. Both Vanessa and Savin go to Steiger as their psychologist and Vannessa meets Paul who Savin works for. It is a very well thought out and provocative piece. I find myself compaing this to The Unknown, which i dont know is really fair, but the character development and the devices used to connect the story are much more impressive than in any other thing we've looked at this semester.

The story itself involves everything that seems to entrance the people of the world today. Love - hate - politics - corruption - what more can you ask for! Now i dont think the actors will win any Grammy's for their [YouTube proformances](#) (And i'm not convinced Mark Savin is really Russian), but the creators of this piece created endless possibilities, but in a format that i could grasp unlike in The Unknown. The Unknown felt like a lottery every time i clicked the mouse. While the Big Plot feels like you are doing a little old fashion cyper creeping on your friends. I'm more excited about this than anything i think we have done up to this point in time.

NickN

## The Big Plot: Where Writing and Art Combine

art<sup>1</sup> (ärt) *n.*

1. Human effort to **imitate, supplement, alter, or counteract the work of nature.**
2. The conscious production or arrangement of **sounds, colors, forms, movements**, or other elements in a manner that affects the **sense of beauty**, specifically the production of the beautiful in a **graphic** or plastic medium.

writ-ing

1. The act of one who writes.
2. Written form: Put it in writing.
3. Handwriting; penmanship.
4. Something written, especially:
  - a. Meaningful letters or characters that constitute readable matter.
  - b. A written work, especially a literary composition.

After touring through one of the newest fictions, it is obvious to see where it is possible for **art** and **writing** to intertwine. "The Big Plot" uses multiple platforms of today's media to supplement a progressive **fiction** and draw the reader into the story as an active participant. The reader is no longer bound to the margins and indents supplied by a beige paper page. They are now free to experience (**read, visualize, hear**) the web and technology as they would had they never even heard of this new genre of fiction.

The use of multiple forms of communication adds a new tone and voice to the story. In combination with the traditional idea of writing (narratives, poems, and now blogs) the reader can literally hear the voice of the characters. This ability was once lost with a linear progressive, page to page book. Readers can now even assess a characters fashion, movements, or tone in videos as well as view photographs of the character in question. They can access current events in the characters' lives with constant updates on facebook, twitter, flicker, and livejournal. A continuously updated story denies the reader one "true" ending, a feature normally seen in classical genres of literature.

In a recombinant fiction like this, the characters are no longer a part of your imagination. They become faces. Voices. Truths.

-EmDeLeo

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## Understanding The Big Plot

What is the big plot of "The Big Plot" really? To follow these people's lives via submissions to a website? When reading/watching the ideas for this I found myself questioning time and time again about what the point of this was, and why i should care. I do not mean to sound too harsh, however, I am having a hard time getting into these link by link passages. Some may view the simplicity of the standard book as something to be improved upon, but as of now I have not found anything that takes my attention away from everything else the way a book does.

When in the middle of a book that I am interested in it is very hard for me to put it down and switch to reading a different book, but in the middle of "The Big Plot" I constantly found myself getting distracted and clicking links that had nothing to do with the story. I couldn't keep myself focused enough to not stray away from the pages onto something that looked more entertaining. For that reason I find that "The Big Plot" isn't as exciting or entertaining as I thought it was going to be when first divulging into it.

-Eric Kane