



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

New edge : technology and spirituality in the San Francisco Bay Area
Zandbergen, A.D.

Citation

Zandbergen, A. D. (2011, May 25). *New edge : technology and spirituality in the San Francisco Bay Area*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/17671>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/17671>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Acknowledgments belonging to the PhD dissertation of Dorien Zandbergen: *New Edge. Technology and Spirituality in the San Francisco Bay Area*. Defense date: May 25 2011, 15:00.

It was recently decided that PhD dissertations at Leiden University should no longer contain personal acknowledgments. However, this dissertation could never have been written and finished without the support of many people, to whom I wish to express my gratitude in this way.

Acknowledgements

One of the privileges of doing anthropological research is that one gets to meet an incredible amount of people in a relatively short time. These people are generally studied as 'the other', but often become part of the ethnographer's own life-world. I thank the many people that I met in the San Francisco Bay Area without whom this study would not have been possible and who have become enriching parts of my life-world ever since. Praveen Sinha, thank you for teaching me the many 'languages' I had to learn to speak, from mathematics to 'magick' and from quantum physics to irony. Brian Behlendorf, thank you for bringing 'New Edge' so close to home for me, by offering me a place in your house in the last phase of my research. Gregory McNickol, I know nobody else who uses measurement cups and pipettes to brew the perfect coffee drink, turning a seemingly mundane act into a feast. Thank you for all those other little moments that taught me the fun-side of 'New Edge life.' Bruce Damer and Galen Brandt, thank you for showing me the enormous creative breadth of your minds and craftsmanship. Brenda Laurel, what a treat it was to listen to your thoughts while enjoying wine at your fire-place and taking a walk in the breathtaking nature around your house. Seth Schoen, thank you for my first experience of information-overload during our first, six-hour long interview. I also appreciate the time spent talking with Erik Davis, Ken Goffman and Jon Hanna, whose writings and conferences organized around New Edge themes formed a prime inspiration for this dissertation. Besides these people, many others have acted as guides by pointing me to events and helping me enter them, by sharing memories, by thinking with me, and painting me their particular picture of that ever-changing New Edge landscape: Mary Eisenhart, Bonnie DeVarco, Jim Funaro, Benjamin Feen and the many others who made my research possible, you were not merely my 'respondents', but challenging intellectuals and artists in your own right and I sincerely hope that this dissertation gives some of the inspiration and insights back to you that you have given me.

Besides Bay Area 'natives', this dissertation owes greatly to the academic networks in which I was, and continue to be, professionally embedded. I thank the *Cyberspace Salvations* team: my supervisor Peter Pels as well as Dick Houtman, Stef Aupers and Ineke Noomen. Peter, I continue to be impressed by your enormously eclectic appetite for research topics. The way in which you combine your prime interest in pre- and postcolonial Africa with studies of science-fiction, futurism and New Age makes you an inspiring, colorful academic. I genuinely wish for you that a posthuman future is dawning where three lives at once can be lived, so as to fit everything worthwhile into the daily schedule. Stef Aupers and Dick Houtman, you taught me that being a social scientist cannot only be intellectually rewarding, but hilariously fun as well. Your humor as well as your energetic work ethos really kept me going at difficult times. Stef, thank you also for the many fun and intense hours of discussion and debate, which we often had together with my other co-promotor Irene Stengs. Irene, if not for your unique eye for detail and your uncompromising dedication to keeping things grounded, I think I would still be shuffling

parts of texts around. Thank you for that, and for the warm friendship and support you gave me throughout the years.

Gabrielle Coleman, it was through our encounter at the ASCII Hacker Internetcafe in Amsterdam, a long time ago, that I first got introduced to the American geek scene. Thank you for being so generous with your contacts and insights throughout the years. I thank also het Leids Universiteits Fonds and the Fulbright Foundation for financially making parts of my fieldtrip and conference visits possible. Also the Anthropology Department at Stanford University, by means of Shelly Coughlan, made it possible for me to access the Stanford University Library, where I conducted archival research.

My interest in 'hacker culture' began when working at the helpdesk of XS4ALL years ago, and I am grateful for the ongoing connections this period gave me. Together with the Waag Society, XS4ALL Internet proved a valuable and reliable partner when we co-organized the *Science Fiction Science Faction* lecture series. Rop Gonggrijp, who began 'it all' in 1993: I loved the conversations we had in San Francisco when you attended the Hackers Conference there. Your skepticism regarding what you thought was the main aim of my project - 'to argue that hacking is a spiritual practice' - kept me alert regarding the limitations of the New Edge discourse. I am also indebted to the Dutch New Edger Luc Sala, for copies of Mondo 2000 and for other New Edge material.

The Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR) offered a great environment from where to start my explorations. And, when the PhD students from the CNWS came to the anthropology department at FSW a similar environment was offered here. Roos Gerritsen, Maarten Onneweer, Annemarie Samuels, Wendelmoet Hamelink, the doctors Tryfon Bampilis and Martijn Wienia, I wish you had been at the FSW from the beginning!

Zane Kripe, thank you for helping out with editing this dissertation. Wies Gijbels, thank you so much for being such a warm and stable factor at the FSW during the past turbulent years. Roos Gerritsen, the Californian combination of 'working and playing hard' continued for me in Apt in the Summer of 2010. I loved the combination of long hours of writing and enjoyment of nature, good French food and wine and friendship. Thanks to you and Karl's encouragements, I was able to make the last meters towards the finish. Karl, thank you also for your great help with editing the cover.

And then there are the people who have seen me dive into this project from the start and who have often worried whether I would ever come up again: my friends and family, who continued to show me that there was a world beyond the dissertation. I fondly look back at the many fun and engaging evenings with my anthropology friends from the University of Amsterdam: Maarten Reuvers, Christien Muusse, Agnes Jaspers and Nick Verouden. And I am very grateful for my friends who love 'Do It Yourselfing' and who look at life with the New Edge-like attitude that things can always be done and created in better or more interesting ways. In particular I think of Maurice Bos, Jupijn Haffmans, Roosien Verlaan, my uncle Luitzen Zandbergen and my good friend and former Technika 10 colleague Pia van Hijfte. And of course, Lise van der Linden, Marijke van der Haterd, Gerbrand Korevaar, Petra Dijkstra, Jantien Mijwaart, Merel Noorman, Rogier van Vuure, Maurice Bos and Jolien Dorgelo: thank you for so many beautiful re-energizing moments.

Finally but certainly not least, I want to thank Marieke and Karen Zandbergen. I am so lucky to have such amazing sisters. To my parents, Ria and Dick Zandbergen: I cannot thank you enough for the many ways in which you have supported me. Your open-minded and honest approach to life continues to be an inspiration for me.