This table attempts to describe the interactive Flash argument by dividing it into a series of slides. Please visit the interactive version in its publication location at *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 17(2): <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/17.2/topoi/vitanza-kuhn-et-al/helms.html>

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| Layer | Title | Text |
| 1 | Title slide | Vorhandenheit |
| 2 | Introduction and how to navigate | I’ve been thinking a lot recently about Heidegger’s notions of Zuhandenheit and Vorhandenheit, especially as they concern digital scholarship.This interactive demonstration explores some of those ideas. As part of its message, it has a few strange conceits. |
| 3 | how to navigate (continued) | First, rather than advancing from slide to slide as a PowerPoint might, we will burrow layer by layer, ever lower. You’ll be able to keep track of this movement on the left side of the screen.Second, the “next slide” buttons are hidden. You will have to work to find them. This first one is easy, hover your mouse over the words in quotation marks above. |
| 4 | Transition | On to Heidegger then. |
| 5 | Terms 1 | During Being and Time, Heidegger introduces the terms Zuhandenheit and Vorhandenheit.Zuhandenheit (readiness-to-hand) signifies our everyday being in the world and dealing with objects.Vorhandenheit (presence-at-hand) signifies our awareness of the world, a special mode of being.Heidegger offers an example to help explain. |
| 6 | Terms 2 | Say you are hammering.As you hammer, you are unaware of the hammer itself. Real hammering does not necessitate a lot of reflection. This normal state is zuhandeheit.Now, as you are hammering, you hit your thumb.Suddenly, the hammer becomes vorhanden – present at hand.Now you see the hammer clearly, the entire workshop becomes illuminated by your pain and reflection. As you begin to hammer again, tentatively, it is only slowly that the hammer becomes zuhanden again. You move cautiously and deliberately, aware of your movements and of the hammer itself. |
| 7 | Being Aside | It’s important to note that Heidegger’s point is that although Vorhandenheit is clearly derivative of Zuhandenheit, western philosophy has privileged vorhandenheit – the metaphysics of presence. Heidegger calls us back to Zuhandenheit, to a more basic mode of being for his existential analytic. I worry Vorhandenheit has suffered a bit to much because of this move, but we’ll return to this shortly. |
| 8 | Lanham 1 | Richard Lanham’s recent book *Economics of Attention* describes life in an attention economy, one in which the currency is eyeballs not coins, one like our own.In doing so, he distinguishes between two modes of attention: looking through and looking at. |
| 9 | Lanham 2 | Looking through is our normal mode of being, the way we might read an instruction manual, a newspaper, a novel, or a blog. The text acts as a window through which we see the content.Looking at is when we become aware of the medium at which we are looking, here the text becomes opaque.Just as a smudge on a window makes you aware of its presence, so a typo or comma splice can make you aware of the text, of its construction and flaws.But we also become aware of a window when a chance angle of light causes us to catch our reflection in it. Looking at then raises the possibility of reflection. |
| 10 | Lanham 3 | It is probably obvious by now that I see parallels between Lanham’s concepts and Heidegger’s.Looking through is roughly equivalent to *Zuhandenheit*.Looking at is roughly equivalent to *Vorhandenheit*.Lanham’s system is a bit simpler and Heidegger’s more thoroughly explored (by Heidegger and his army of scholars).But Lanham avoids Heidegger’s privileging of *Zuhandenheit*. … |
| 11 | Reflection | There are of course advantages to *Vorhandenheit*. Returning to the hammer example, you have just struck your hand with the hammer. While this is not a desirable experience, our capacity for *Vorhandenheit* allows you to reflect on the situation.Now aware of the hammer and your thumb, you devise improved methods of hammering.Perhaps you even become aware of your self, of your contingency and inseparability from the hammer, from your thumb. |
| 12 | Oscillation 1 | But Lanham does not privilege reflection at the expense of transparency either. Unlike Heidegger, he is unwilling to take a side.Instead, he calls for oscillation between the two modes, something like we saw in the hammer example again.It’s important to realize that, unlike Heidegger, Lanham is not attempting a destruktion of Western metaphysics. His stakes are different and he can afford to ride the fence here. |
| 13 | Oscillation 2 | Lanham calls this oscillation revisionist thinking. It’s the kind of thinking we do when we revise, looking through the words to content and then flipping the switch to look at the words themselves.This oscillation becomes even more important now than ever for two reasons. |
| 14 | Oscillation 3 | First, in an attention economy being able to oscillate back and forth from reading to evaluating allows us to budget our attention. If we were characterized only by looking through, we might spend all day reading Dickens or we might spend all day reading Facebook, but we’d have difficulty choosing. If only looking at, we would stare uncomprehendingly at our screen.Second, with digital media consumers have greater access to the modes of production than they did throughout most of the 20th century. While print literacy involves no separation between production and consumption, visual literacy often separates the artist from the public. All this is changing with the rise of desktop video and image editing software. As Bernard Stiegler writes, “It is not possible to read without knowing how to write. And soon it will be possible to see an image analytically: “television” [“*l’écran*”] and “text [*l’écrit*”] are not simply opposed” (“The Discrete Image” 163). |
| 15 | UXD | In addition to media critiques, Stiegler extends Heidegger’s insight to construct a model of Dasein that is always already technological. This idea is lurking in Heidegger, but Stiegler articulates it more fully.Dasein ex-sists technologically. It is technology, whether hammer or iPhone, that extends us into the world. More specifically, mnemotechnology, like language, the pen, or the internet, extend the world into us, changing us, offering us new modes of existence |
| 16 | BREAK | none |
| 17 | UXD | Recently, Heidegger has been adopted in the discipline of user experience design (UXD). A group of scholars, Anthony Chemero, Dobromir Dotov, and Lin Nie, have devised a series of experiments to see if *Zuhandenheit* can be studied empirically.These experiments involve subjects playing a simple computer game. After a few minutes, the game starts to malfunction for a few seconds, then returns to normal mode.The researchers track mouse movements throughout the entire project and then analyze them with a particular algorithm designed to reveal particularly human traces in the movements. |
| 18 | UXD | As you might guess, the results supported their hypothesis that “the participant and tool constitute a self-assembled, extended device during smooth coping and this device is disrupted by the perturbation” (Dotov et al.). You can see it quite clearly in these mouse tracks.This one shows the user’s mouse as it is working normally.This one shows the user’s mouse during the perturbation.It is important to note, that their experiment showed *Zuhandenheit* but not *Vorhandenheit*. Their perturbation (a wobbly cursor) was too slight to make the entire system apparent. |
| 19 | UXD | Perhaps no experiment could be successfully designed to analyze *Vorhandenheit*. It would have to involve a complete breakdown of the apparatus, something a bit closer to what you experienced during the red screen a few slides ago.I’ve tracked your mouse movements throughout this demonstration. Rather than attempting to analyze the data or even saving it for myself, I’d like to show it to you now.It exists nowhere else but on this computer. The second you move past the next screen it will be obliterated forever. This is an installation not an experiment. |
| 20 | Vorhandenheit | The line is coded to the timeline on the left. The red signifies the breakdown. When you press next, this data will be lost. |
| 21 | Vorhandenheit | Hopefully you created something interesting and got a moment to reflect on it, even in such an ephemeral state.This demonstration offers a chance to reflect not just on the mouse and the computer, but on your status as a technological being. Perhaps you will catch your own reflection on the final slide. |
| 22 | Final Slide | Thank you.Refresh the screen to begin again. |