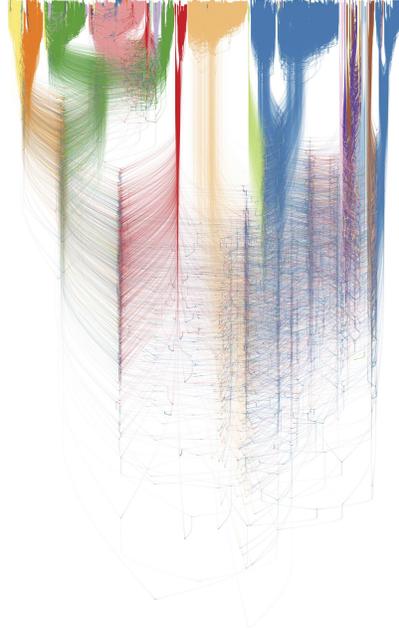
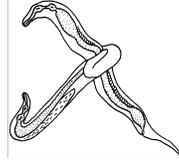


**Asymmetrical paired & with an ampullaceous base**



*ADSVMVS ABSVMVS (HERE/APART)* (1982) is a series of 14 photographs by Hollis Frampton each dedicated to a single subject, of either abiotic or biotic specimen, for which the artist solicited the force of time to fossilize in limen between abiotic and biotic propositions. Frampton thus joins a continuum with Gesner (who enjoyed collecting/preserving roadkill) and Proescholdt used time to sieve proper from mimetic organization. For the former, of interest was “a husk of the light” affording a “muted resemblance” independent from what it depicts. Elsewhere Frampton referred to the “unimaginable or ordinary case of their correspondence” wherein “our own notion of likeness between paired entities, we understand even less the manner in which entities are like, or unlike, or may come to be like, or unlike, themselves. This indisposition depends from a temporary defect: that we have not yet evolved to comfort in the domain of time, our supreme fiction, that parses sets of spaces in favor of successiveness” (105).

*(HERE/APART)* gives a graded pattern of materiality and form such that “ever so momentarily, they resist, and then, suddenly, pressed, liquefy and vanish, leaving behind an everlasting sensation.” Of course, *here* Frampton is reminiscing of that fluidity between “something of the childish adventure” and the sensation of a jellyfish that “suddenly, pressed, liquefy and vanish leaving behind an everlasting sensation.”



## From Cocks Spur To an Octapeptides Pit®

Ergot is a fungal disease of cereal crops and grasses produced by the fungus *Claviceps (C) purpurea* with a distinct purplish sclerotia or ergot body. In alkaloid form, mimicking a cocks spur, ergot is pharmacologic to animals, being ambivalently cure and poison in an affinity for neurotransmitter receptors. In seeking to systematize ergoline effects, Sir Henry Dale accidentally discovered a naturally occurring oxytocic analog after injecting human postpituitary gland into a cat in 1906. After observing roughly equivalent labor induction in both pregnant and virgin felines, Dale christened this natural analog in a Greek conjoint of oxy (quick) + tocos (birth). By 1928, Pituitrins apocryphal brand would see Parke Davis pharmaceuticals rebrand ergot under, Pitocin. In fact, Dales conjectured unitary effect would subsequently be discerned as the hands of distinct, if nearly chemically indiscernible, agents- both posterior pituitary gland extracts, but one linked to uterine contractions and the other to raising blood pressure and antidiuresis. With this distinction, and following hundreds of thousands hog and beef gland extractions, in 1953, the American chemist Vincent Du Vigneaud synthesized the molecule, as well as the first true neuropeptide as such (Du Vigneaud et al., 1953a), receiving the Nobel Prize in recognition two years later. Synthetic oxytocin would nonetheless preserve its title to be administered through today via intravenous labeled, Pitocin®. More recently, the neurochemical oxytocin has emerged as a watershed spanning R+D in neuroenhancement, normative medicine, attentional economies and geopolitics. I address the ascent of Oxytocin, and return of the Cock's Spur through the stories of model specimens, the rise of affective economy and the different biological times they idealize.

### *Tenuous Symmetries of Sessility and Morphogenesis*

Oxytocin is a mammalian neuropeptide/hormone primarily associated with peri-reproductive functions for inducing milk letdown reflex, stimulating uterine contractions during labor and initiating (but not maintaining) maternal/offspring attachment. Synthetic OT has been associated with the institution of an ideal labor curve. In this chapter I draw a similarly complex sessility of historical with materialist-semiotic topology to engage with the dual centers of this once very shy molecule that initially emerged as a confused actant of both mineral and hormonal substance. A new theoretical frame is introduced that places Bernard Stiegler's thought on "pharmacology" and Bifo Berardis Foucauldian Burroughs' wetware, biogenic cabling to traffic in oxytocin (OT) in terms of the under appreciated critical force of Eve Sedgwick's complex space of peri-performativity. A distillation of the chapter's critical cartography follows:

- ↔ Peripheral OT is normatively constituted as a gendered, circuit.
- ↔ Central OT is operationally hypothesized as a political circuit.
- ↔ OT is an unruly circuit affording a vibrant signal aesthetics.

An autoethnographic narrative compels the chapter's etho-ethnologic study of biotic and abiotic symmetry in morphogenesis with sessility.

### **Subsessility in a Loop**

Above is a detail from Luis Recoder's 16mm film loop, *Variable Density* (2000) that the artist comprised of dirt, hair, emulsion shavings and other residua collected from studio floor. In 2004, six of us were in attendance when Recorder performed a version of the loop on a variable speed rheostat projector in the rear of a 250 capacity movie theatre. In a personal correspondence, Recorder verified that what we



“saw/heard was not an optically printed loop but the actual material itself, the accumulation of emulsion bits pressed onto 16mm clear leader with an adhesive, and spreading over picture and optical sound area.” Back in 2004, Recorder used a variable speed rheostat to declinate the loop’s projection from 24fps to “somewhere near” zero fps. Synchronous to our viewing experience, I vividly recall how the increasing resonance of the optical soundtrack elicited chest bones into equivalently balloon and speaker until, “somewhere near,” the loop smoldered in the gate and on-screen in front of us.

A close reading of the loop’s geo-ecology of material, conceptual and performative substrate both extend and shift perspective on the previous chapters. The loop’s empirical substrates include geodaphic (from floor residue), chemical (e.g., as reactant) and industrial (in media). The loop’s conceptual substrate include biotic, semiotic and poetic. Additional substrate analytics synthesize these distinct framings of the loop’s distinction as an object, temporality and media. These enable Recorder’s flickering of presence and combustion to enter conducive ecology with our previous object biographies. To provoke a sieve herein, I refer to Sean Cubitt (2017) asks “what or where is the subject of geomeia?,” remarking that while its prefix orients life on a surface, in space, and the “most significant dimension of the *subject* of geomeia is temporal.”

Being of clear ‘slug’ for threading, unprocessed and pure base; *Variable Density* might seem thin support for convening matters, histories and cultures of colloidal suspension (photochemical film stock) without *stalk*. Recorder’s loop is by definition an unruly, obstinate and even nonce stock. Herein lies its particular stickiness for new terminuses on media archaeologies of optical sound, format geometries, signal chemistry and peripheral aesthetics. To hunt the loop’s bio-resonance, we need address optical sound and how the loop subverts optimal notions of film grain, noise floor, etc. Alternatively, to characterize the loop’s surface chemistry (e.g., as reactant, set in non-standard emulsion), we need breach these in terms of standard film stocks - their histories, aesthetics and economies. Across these, the loop’s colloidal suspension opens further trajectories on geo-industries, geo-topologies and anthropocenic media colloids currently re-situating filmic hysteresis. More specifically, for the aims of the current collection on film stock, Recorder’s loop affords an unruly stock for opening what Law and Mol (2001) propose as “fire space” wherein, “a shape achieves constancy in a relation between presence and absence: the constancy of object presence depends on simultaneous absence or alterity. A flicker, an oscillation, an impossibility that is also a necessity” (616).

## Karrikins

*When combustion happens within a cell, it's called respiration.  
When it happens outside organisms, it's called fire (Pyne 1970).*

Alongside Recorder’s loop, chapter three positions Hollis Frampton’s photographic series, *ADSV MVVS ABSVMVVS (HERE/APART)* (1982) to canalize current studies on adaptive, and flickering, speciation of novel plant-based metabolites. My interest in these seemingly disparate histories, materialities and ideas is to canalize colloidal media theory with current studies of Karrikins, a novel plant-based metabolite, having an adaptive, and flickering presence just below the threshold of speciation. Here, history finds itself in theoretical position against the grain of distinct times, one of physical clocks, another of flickering resonance. More specifically, I synthesize the theoretical threads introduced above to consider how the apocryphal claims of current Oxytocin research can be productively engaged through the ‘discovery’ and then technicity of Karrikins made by seed plants.