intention disappears faced with the deluge of electronic data. Even the human viewer is beside the point. If there is history here, it is history without human bias, but also without human logic. This is a form of history – or at least, an organization of archival documents – that no longer needs us. Thus, the digital archive effect may provoke the viewer's awareness of the possibility that human sense may be bypassed and replaced by that of an agent who no longer takes us or our desire for a coherent meaning into account. *spam letter* thus constitutes a metahistory of the digital era.

Another major attribute of the digital era is the accessibility through the internet of an infinite number of far-flung sites. Through video-sharing sites such as YouTube where amateur performers of every stripe post their performances (or those of their cats and dogs as well as their favorite appropriated videos), we can look into a million little windows and see a fragment of life inside each one. We, too, can then appropriate these fragments and use them in any way we see fit. If *spam letter* gestures toward the potential for inhuman, nonsensical production that lies within the digital archive, Natalie Bookchin's *Mass Ornament* (2009), a single-channel split-screen video running on a seven-minute loop, offers us, by contrast, one model for navigation through the wealth – or deluge – of accessible materials unique to the digital archive in a way that produces an emergent kind of specifically digital "sense."[19]

Mass Ornament sifts through the brief fragments of lives archived on YouTube to find both congruities and incongruities in the bedrooms, living rooms, and basements of hundreds of anonymous young people of different genders, ethnicities, and (judging from the spaces in which we see them) social classes, performing for themselves and – via YouTube – for the whole world. The loop begins with empty rooms and moves on to images of these various performers peering directly into the camera to make sure it is working before each individual begins to dance. Then, as we watch these individual amateurs trying out their moves, with no immediate audience other than the camera, the number of screens in Bookchin's image begins to increase, each showing someone and somewhere different. As more and more dancers appear, each alone in his or her own little square on the screen, Bookchin weaves their movements together so that at times they come into synch, making nearly the exact same movements – presumably imitating the dance moves they have seen in music videos and popular culture. In unison, they twirl their bodies, shimmy up and down with their backs against a wall, and perform handstands and backbends. They look, at least for a few seconds at a time, like they are dancing together before they again drift apart into their own, individual performances

(). Bookchin further unifies these disparate clips by removing their original soundtracks and inserting the soundtracks from two 1935 films, Busby Berkeley's *Gold Diggers of 1935* and Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*.

The title of the piece is an explicit reference to Siegfried Kracauer's famous essay about the mass choreography of the Tiller Girls, a 1920s dance troupe that created geometric forms with their bodies. Kracauer saw this abstraction of the human form as a symptom of the capitalist order and argued that the "mass ornament" embodied the Taylorist logic of the factory, transforming human beings into a set of moving parts in the service of a larger pattern that none of the participating performers could ever see.[20] Although Kracauer was writing about group performances choreographed down to each identical step, the mass ornament in Bookchin's piece is one that she found, collected, and then synchronized. While each individual dances on his or her own, records it, and then posts the recording on YouTube, Bookchin, through her editing, choreographs these individuals into a mass dance. Bookchin is not, however, repurposing private documents for public consumption as in films such as *Capturing the Friedmans* (Andrew Jarecki, 2003). While each of the YouTube videos was shot in a home, they are not "home movies" (see my reformulation of the "home movie" in). Since they have been posted on YouTube, presumably by the performer him or herself since each is clearly aware of – indeed, performing specifically for – the camera, they read as having been made for public consumption. Thus, the intentional disparity – and hence the archive effect – here does not emerge from a movement of the documents from an intended private context of reception to an actual public context of reception. Instead, the intentional disparity derives from the fact that Bookchin has taken all of these solo performances and turned them into a collective dance, transforming individual, isolated performers into a dance troupe. When the dancers suddenly come into synch, much of the pleasure of watching the film derives from the fact that this synchronicity could not have been anticipated by the performers themselves, that Bookchin found the pieces and brought them together as one. Yet, as compelling as the moments of synchronicity are, the differences between the dancers' bodies, their individual movements, and the background images of the private spaces in which they dance are equally fascinating. We are permitted to look through these little windows to see where other people – whom we will probably never meet and whose real names we likely will never know – live: how messy their living rooms are, what kind of wallpaper they picked out, what odds and ends they keep in their basements. We also witness the exact way each girl tosses her hair and shakes her hips and how

each boy cocks his head and spins his body. Thus, the pleasure of the piece lies not only in the patterns of sameness but also in the play of differences.

FIGURE *Mass Ornament* (Natalie Bookchin, 2009). Courtesy of the

Like *spam letter, Mass Ornament* does not look or sound like historiography as we usually recognize it. There are documents but no chronological, causal chain of events or a narrative with beginning, middle, and end. Indeed, since the piece plays on a loop, it is possible to enter into the flow of sound and images at any time (even if there seems to be a point where the performances themselves begin); and given that the image is constantly fragmented into multiple screens, their relationship is one of simultaneity rather than temporal progression. This emphasis on the (literally) synchronic rather than the diachronic combined with the overwhelming number of screens suggests the resistance of each of these archival documents to narratively sequential comprehension. It points to the fact that the plurality of documents in the digital archive – like those in the material archive but, perhaps, more so – resists such causal enchaining.

At the same time, however, *Mass Ornament* puts forward a different model of archival comprehension, pointing to congruence and incongruence, convergence and divergence as a way of mapping a synchronic slice of the – recent but quickly receding – past rather than its diachronic explication. In this sense, *Mass Ornament* bears some similarities to Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's *In 1926: Living at the Edge of Time,* a primarily nonlinear history book in which each alphabetically-arranged entry describes in the present tense some thing or concern of cultural, social, and ultimately historical importance in the year 1926, the chapters "linked" together by cross-referenced keywords such as "reporters," "railroads," and "gomina" rather than by chronological cause and effect. Building on phenomenological philosopher Edmund Husserl's notion of the "life-world," Gumbrecht – with irony made explicit in some methodological and philosophical chapters – aims to recreate what he calls the "everyday-worlds" of 1926.[21] Gumbrecht writes of the project in his afterword:

> The self-imposed imperative to suspend sequentiality obliges us to minimize recourse to the subject-centered concept of causality and to the genre of the historical narrative. Thus, we must ask what discourses and concepts we can elaborate in order to establish noncausal relations between the texts and artifacts to which we refer. An answer is all the more difficult to find as we have to expose ourselves to the unavoidable sequentiality of the text as medium.[22]

Although *Mass Ornament* appropriates what are, or at least were, audiovisual documents of contemporary "everyday-worlds" at the time of Bookchin's

making, like *In 1926* it attempts to circumvent sequentiality and cause and effect in order to evoke a milieu. The technique of using split-screen and a loop (although there remains some sense of sequence and causal relations) brings Bookchin closer to Gumbrecht's imagined historiographic ideal than his printed book ever could. If *Mass Ornament* is not a history per se, it can nevertheless be read as a model for an alternative form of audiovisual historiography that sidelines narrative and sequence for a different effect: the experience of a milieu, of everyday worlds that we can (almost) inhabit.

Furthermore, *Mass Ornament* also functions as digital historiography in that the play between what is the same and what is different in each clip invites us to think about the presence of both similarity and difference within the archive in general and the digital archive in particular. There have always been patterns and deviations to be discovered (and constructed) in the material archive; but the vast expanse and variety of the materials available in the digital archive, combined with its accessibility and searchability, offers us new means to trace and discover such patterns and deviations, not just in the official documents of revered institutions but in the brief public moments in otherwise anonymous and disparate private lives. In other words, the digital archive expands the territory for tracing such patterns, and the search engines allow us to quickly and easily follow them across this digital territory. At the same time, however, as *spam letter* suggests, the structures of the search engines also limit what sort of patterns we may find. Bookchin says that, in order to find her appropriated videos, she used search terms such as "me dancing," "dancing alone," or "dancing in my room." She further notes that as she found videos that were relevant, she thought of additional search terms in order to find more.[23] Her film, then, is a result of following certain pathways through the YouTube labyrinth.

I would argue that part of what is at stake in Bookchin's film is our ability – or inability – to trace patterns within the digital archive and thereby reestablish some kind of (human) coherence and sense through these patterns. On the one hand, *Mass Ornament* points to the fact that there are millions of amateur videos in the digital archive from which to choose, no two exactly alike (except for multiple copies of the same file), each a metonymic fragment for a single human life and for the vast digital archive itself – a fact that can overwhelm all attempts to theorize or come to grips with them. Like *spam letter,* Bookchin's film gestures toward the potential for total incoherence that lurks within the digital archive. At the same time, however, the film also suggests that there are points of similarity and coherence to discover through a clever deployment of search

terms. In fact, it is the act of tracing the videos' similarities that gives their difference a meaning and vice versa. Bookchin's film emphasizes that only in tracing pathways through the digital archive can we make both visual and social sense out of its excess. In contrast to *spam letter*, however, which derives its formal structure from a preestablished pattern based on the spam letter and the computer algorithm that underlies the search engine, *Mass Ornament* is derived from the human hand and eye in conversation with the computer search engine so as to make human sense from the inhuman operations of a machine.

Indeed, *Mass Ornament* suggests that the digital archive effect may occur when an appropriation filmmaker uses digital technology (the video-sharing site and the search engine) to draw together a great number of what the viewer perceives as previously disconnected archival documents and reveals patterns of human behavior that emerge from their aggregation – patterns that were never found or, more precisely, were never findable before. This form of digital archive effect is similarly obvious in some of Bookchin's other split-screen works derived from YouTube, three of which make up a trilogy entitled *Testament* (2009). In *Laid Off,* she synchronizes videos in which speakers confess to their video cameras that they have lost their jobs; in *My Meds* she transforms isolated speakers, who tell their video cameras about the psychotropic medications they are taking, into a mass pronunciation of pharmaceutical drug names; and in *I'm Not*, she orchestrates the confessions and denials of men and women telling the world that they are or are not gay. At moments in each of these pieces, several speakers pronounce the exact same word or phrase at the same time, so that a single voice becomes a chorus. What is crucial to note is that before digital video cameras and the internet, these people could not have posted their confessions for others to find, and before digital archives and their search engines, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to gather so many such confessions that participate in the same, almost word-for-word discourse. While the technologies do not determine how people will behave, digital technologies have created opportunities that did not exist before, both for users who record themselves and post their videos and for filmmakers like Bookchin who may appropriate them. Thus, aggregating hundreds of those across the (English-speaking) world who are dancing alone in their rooms, who just got sacked from a job, who started a new mood-altering medication, or who need to tell the world that they are or are not gay has only recently become possible. This form of digital archive effect, then, is based on a movement from the singular to the plural, from disconnected documents to a chorus – or chorus line – of voices and bodies working together, at least in one appropriation film.

Moreover, in tracing these visual and aural patterns across disparate spaces, Bookchin's pieces point simultaneously to the utopian promise of connection and community that emerges in the digital realm and the dystopian specter of conformity latent in these lonely videos. Indeed, in addition to visual and aural patterns, Bookchin's films also reveal the common social patterns inscribed within each of these individual performances, the fact that each video is not *sui generis* but, rather, emerges from a shared social, ideological, and historical system that encourages certain kinds of bodily movements, speech patterns, and media practices. The tension between sameness and difference or individuality and collectivity in Bookchin's pieces and in the digital archive more broadly is also that between individuality and conformity. On the one hand, the anonymous people in *Mass Ornament* – some of whom seem to have "talent" and others who do not – are putatively expressing themselves as individuals. On the other hand, as *Mass Ornament* reveals, they are also simultaneously doing what everyone else seems to be doing – the same dance moves combined with the same impulse to post their videos online.

In the 1930s, Kracauer was quite pessimistic about the mass ornament, suggesting that the participants themselves were unable to recognize the violent abstraction done to their own bodies. He writes:

> Although the masses give rise to the ornament, they are not involved in thinking it through. … The more the coherence of the figure is relinquished in favor of mere linearity, the more distant it becomes from the immanent consciousness of those constituting it.[24]

Similarly, the individual performers appropriated for Bookchin's film will likely never recognize their place in this new mass ornament as similarities are transformed into synchronies and individuality is lost within the ornament. Thus, *Mass Ornament* begs the question of whether the democratizing force of the digital archive, where anyone can post anything, is not also a force for conformity – or at least a reflection of the conformity that mass media attempts to impose on individuals as it transforms them into consumers. The bodies of these dancers seem to have been colonized by the same hand – even before Bookchin's hand entered the picture.

The collectivity of the mass ornament as it was formulated in the 1930s was not a collectivity of shared goals but rather the suppression of individuality in the service of politics and the spectacle of bodies in lock step. In 2009, this suppression of individuality seems in the service and ideology of the all-encompassing mass media. As Bookchin notes in an interview:

In seeming displays of personal expression, the YouTube dancers perform the same movements over and over, as if scripted, revealing the ways that popular culture is embodied and reproduced in and through individual bodies. They often perform utterly conventional gender roles, but the fact that they are performed – repeated, mimicked, and quoted again and again, undermines any pretence of their being real, authentic, and immutable.[25]

Indeed, Bookchin points to the tension between the seemingly infinite variety of objects in the digital archive and the redundancy and superficiality of these same objects. We have, as art critic David Pagel notes, a "god's eye view" in that we can see so many videos of so many people,[26] but at the same time we remain at a remove, unable to engage with the individuals that make up this chorus line, who, like the Tiller Girls of the 1930s, become a collection of bodies rather than people. In this sense, the digital archive may simply heighten the paradox of access to so much and so little at the same time.

Mass Ornament also raises certain questions of temporality that emerge in relation to the digital archive and the appropriation of its constituent documents. The title and the musical references – if one recognizes them – produces a sense of temporal disparity between image and soundtrack, drawing a comparison between the mass ornaments of the 1930s and those of today. However, beyond this reference, there is little that reads as history here. We are given a view that transcends the limitations of spatial contiguity but all of the performances seem to be taking place at the same moment, in the present tense; and yet, nonetheless, the passage of time inscribes itself within the image. Specifically, each video clip is accompanied by a title indicating the number of times each video had been viewed at the time Bookchin downloaded it, just like the number we find next to every YouTube video online. We can see that some videos have been viewed by thousands while others only by a paltry few (the number reflecting not only viewer interest but also how long the clip has been online). By presenting the number of "hits" the video had received, Bookchin inscribes each clip with the history of its reception. In addition, quite a few of the videos are accompanied by the subtitle, "This video has been removed by the user." Reading this title, we realize that we are watching videos that are no longer accessible online. An additional form of archival resistance emerges: we are watching something now forbidden to us, suddenly "trespassing" when our invitation to enter has been revoked. These performers suddenly read like ghosts haunting the digital archive, specters we can no longer replay. On the internet, things appear and disappear all the time. The dancers who once posted and then

removed their images from the internet are lost to us even as their traces are preserved within Bookchin's own mass ornament.

Indeed, these seemingly innocuous subtitles point to the fact that millions of digital documents may, in fact, disappear within the next ten years – not just removed from circulation by a user, as in *Mass Ornament*, but disappear without a trace, forever. Although popular culture encourages the notion that digital documents are likely to last longer than physical documents – paper documents, photographs, film prints – this is blatantly untrue. As Paolo Cherchi Usai notes:

> Digital technology offers the seductive promise of a real miracle: perfect vision, eternal moving images that can be reproduced ad infinitum with no loss of visual information – as blatant a lie as the claim that compact discs and cd-roms will last a lifetime.[27]

If digital documents are not constantly updated into new formats (an action aptly called "future proofing"), they may become inaccessible. Furthermore, digital documents degrade quickly. It is thus possible that most of the millions – if not billions – of hours of video uploaded to the web right now may simply cease to exist. The most-recorded era thus far may become an empty space in the historical record akin to the Dark Ages, which are dark precisely because there is so little documentation available to us. *Mass Ornament* evokes the pathos of this loss even as it demonstrates the fact that there are more documents than we can account for within any framework. Whether taken down by the user or the subject of technological obsolescence, these fragments of personal, everyday histories will likely be lost to all of us.

Like *spam letter*, Bookchin's films can be seen as examples of an emergent form of historiography, a means of coming to grips with the digital archive as a source of knowledge about the social present as it quickly becomes past, generating meaning through particular accumulations, revealing similarities across vastly different spaces and thereby social tendencies. Rather than producing a linear and diachronic narrative, *Mass Ornament* places disparate spaces in relationship with one another and finds moments of synchronicity that allow us to think about the multiplicity of individual histories, their congruities, and their differences. Indeed, other appropriation filmmakers have also begun to make these kinds of works, producing the digital archive effect in the form of patterns of appearance and behavior. This form of archive effect makes a certain kind of "sense" out of the digital archive, creating not the single strand of a story but a complex tapestry of a particular moment in time.

In this regard, Bookchin's work gestures towards a larger trend in

contemporary appropriation films: "collecting." These works include, among many others, experimental works such as Christian Marclay's 24-hour loop film entitled *The Clock* (2010), where Marclay gathers together many different shots in which a clock or timepiece of some kind appears. The film is shown so that the time visible in each shot precisely corresponds to the time of the audience's reception throughout the 24 hours that the film runs, meaning that Marclay had to find and collect images displaying every minute of the day. While Marclay is still working explicitly with film footage, an increasing number of videos are being constructed according to a similar logic. Related video works that appear almost exclusively online include "supercuts," a form defined by supercut.org as "a fast-paced montage of short video clips that obsessively isolates a single element from its source, usually a word, phrase, or cliché from film and TV."[28] Some supercuts involve the paring down of a single source, such as *States of the Union – Bill Clinton* (Aaron Valdez, 2009), which takes a 1997 speech by then-President Bill Clinton and removes all of the words except the numbers so that Clinton appears to be speaking in a sort of mathematical code.[29] Other supercuts involve compiling a similar phrase or element in multiple sources, such as *Groundless* (Jennifer Proctor, 2010), which gathers clips from many different films in which an airplane crashes, transforming them into a single, massive five-minute descent.[30] This practice of collecting is not unique to digital appropriation films; indeed, these kinds of compilations of "like" objects have been done with film (*The Clock* being the best known) and photography as well (for instance the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher). However, the impulse has clearly intensified in the digital era. In contemporary video works, there is evinced a strong desire to seek out things that are similar but different, to accumulate samenesses and differences in order to reveal patterns and deviations, a desire to find and "collect" the contingent synchronicities that occur across sources previously unrelated to one another.

In addition to its emphasis on patterns, however, this form of collecting also points to its arbitrary nature. In *On Longing*, Susan Stewart describes the difference between the souvenir and the collection, arguing that the souvenir acts a metonym of an experience and acquires its significance in relation to that experience, whereas objects in a collection have significance in relation to one another. As a Marxist scholar, Stewart is critical of the collection as a model of consumption that has no referent but itself, the quintessential triumph of exchange value over use value. Moreover, she suggests that the collection denies any possibility of historical knowledge and also relates it to a difference between metaphor and metonymy. She writes:

In contrast to the souvenir, the collection offers example rather than sample, metaphor rather than metonymy. The collection does not displace attention to the past; rather, the past is at the service of the collection, for whereas the souvenir lends authenticity to the past, the past lends authenticity to the collection. The collection seeks a form of self-enclosure which is possible because of its ahistoricism. The collection replaces history with *classification*, with order beyond the realm of temporality. In the collection, time is not something to be restored to an origin; rather, all time is made simultaneous or synchronous within the collection's world.[31]

Stewart's description of the collection, particularly her reference to simultaneity and synchrony, perfectly suits the impulse toward collection within the appropriation films described above. I, however, am less pessimistic than Stewart about the collection as a cultural form. Indeed, Stewart does not account for the fact that an object can, in certain cases, be both a souvenir and part of a collection – for instance, a collection of seashells, each one tied to a particular seaside vacation. The collected items in the films mentioned above are part of a set of variations on a single theme, a collection of motifs that may accommodate an infinite number of similar objects, but they are also metonyms of the many worlds that open up to us through the computer screen. Certainly, the found fragments in these films acquire their significance in relation to one another, but they also point to the world – or worlds – beyond each fragment. Moreover, while the structure of the collection may itself be ahistorical, these found fragments persist in their historical effects, in their status as traces of "the real" as it becomes "the past." I would contend that the films mentioned above can also be understood as collections of metonyms, collections infinitely open to new objects that seem to "belong."

I would also argue that these films' accumulations of similarities and differences fascinates, at least in part, because they often foreground elements that might otherwise go unremarked. In an era when we are often faced with so much information that it is difficult to cull the important pieces from the noise, collecting film and video fragments that share one particular feature allows us to focus on how they are also different, and to notice and appreciate their variations. Similarity generates a background against which differences are foregrounded and made "meaningful" in some way. This tension established between and across so many instances is also a manifestation of the digital archive effect. Indeed, such distinctions provide the basic condition for knowledge – historical and otherwise – in the digital era. We need Ariadne's string to lead us through the labyrinth of the archive in general and the digital

archive in particular. In short, this impulse toward collecting seems to me to be a model for a form of historiography in the digital era that may chart – to a degree impossible and unimaginable before the emergence of the digital archive – the movements of a particular set of objects or actions in order to reveal all of those elements that adhere to and circulate around that one consistent set over time. History is not lost in these collections but, rather, reframed. In sum, digital archives and digital technologies allow us to trace the countless strands of experience that make up the rich tapestry of human lives and cultural productions as time passes by, charting the points at which these strands almost – but never quite – meet.

The digital archive effects in *spam letter, Mass Ornament,* and various other "collection" films are produced mainly at the level of the editing. The configurations into which archival documents are organized do not impinge on the unity of the archival image itself. In contrast, Rebecca Baron and Doug Goodwin's series of videos collectively titled *Lossless* (2008) produces the digital archive effect within the image itself. The series, consisting of a loop and four short films, explores explicitly the differences between film and digital images – specifically digital images that derive originally from film but have since made their way into and through the digital archive – by revealing the operations underlying digital moving image files. For the project, Baron and Goodwin downloaded several films that had been necessarily compressed in order to be uploaded to the internet. In the case of *Lossless #2,* for example, derived from *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Maya Deren, 1943), they interrupted the downloading process. In the case of *Lossless #3,* derived from *The Searchers* (John Ford, 1956), they downloaded the entire file and then manipulated the code.[32] In *Lossless #2,* the result is a form of digital "bleeding" in which Deren's original black and white images begin to melt into one another, generating strange new superimpositions as different images from the film "mesh" together. In *Lossless #3,* images of men on horseback galloping through the landscape of the American West are transformed from fully resolved representation into blocky streaks of color moving across the frame (Figure 5.2).

While none of the found documents appropriated in *Lossless* are documentary, the series gestures toward some of the historiographic issues that we may encounter as we attempt to utilize the digital archive and digital documents as the basis of historical investigation and expression. Indeed, these films reveal the ways in which digital technologies may have already altered the found document by the time the historian or appropriation filmmaker comes to appropriate it into new works. John Hulsey explains the technical issues explored through the

series:

> As the *Lossless* exhibit makes evident, the current variety of media players, from iPods to high-end projectors, entails a modification in audio-visual presentation. … A standard-length Hollywood film, for example, is composed of an average of 144,000 discrete 35mm frames, all of which needs to be compressed to fit on a DVD containing roughly 7GB of storage capacity. The best "lossless" compression techniques, which can reduce the amount of scanned data in a feature film onto about 400 DVDs, must be supplemented by other methods to further compress the data. Since the DVD format cannot handle the full, uncompressed imagery of 35mm still frames per second, it has to make calculated choices about what information is provided and what information is left out.[33]

FIGURE 5.2 *Lossless #3* (Rebecca Baron and Douglas Goodwin, 2008). the artists.

Unlike the cinematic image, in which all objects in front of the camera are indexically recorded and are, therefore, equally "present" in the film image, a compressed digital image is selective. As Hulsey puts it:

According to the algorithm, only those areas of the image in which there is a high incidence of temporal edges – the alteration of color contrast over time – will be resolved in detail, whereas the areas in which slower, steadier, or more predictable movements predominate (or in which there is no movement at all) will be rendered with less resolution over time … Areas in which there is a high degree of statistically unpredictable, quick, or erratic movement … are calculated to be of highest relevance for the viewer, while other areas are discarded as informationally impoverished.[34]

These "informationally impoverished" areas are updated less frequently than areas with more movement.

One of the things that allows the playback machine on which a digital file is played to make "correct" calculations about how much information to convey to the viewer is the presence of "key frames." Key frames, which normally occur about every two seconds in a DVD image, are fully resolved frames in which detailed information is provided for the entire image. In between key frames (also known as I-frames), the predictive frames (P-frames) and bi-predictive frames (B-frames) approximate what "should" appear in the image based on the key frame information. *Lossless #2* came into being when Baron and Goodwin downloaded a (necessarily) compressed version of *Meshes of the Afternoon* from an online video-sharing site, but interrupted the download before it was complete. Because digital files do not download linearly or chronologically – in other words, partial information about the beginning, middle, and end of the film is downloaded simultaneously but incompletely – when a download is interrupted you have a file that spans the length of the entire film but is missing information throughout. Thus, the partially downloaded file of *Meshes* was missing many key frames, forcing the playback device to approximate what should appear between the key frames that were in fact present. The uncanny transformations in which one image of Deren overlaps and melts into another is generated as the playback machine attempts to create continuity between the key frames. While *Lossless #3* similarly appropriates footage from a compressed download, in the case of *The Searchers*, Baron and Goodwin completed the download and then went into the codec of the file and selectively removed certain key frames, creating a similar effect of pixilated "bleeding" as certain parts of the screen fail to update in the "correct" manner. The playback machine continues to attempt to approximate what should appear in each part of the screen but, without key frames, it is unable to do so "correctly." Instead, motion turns into a blur of blocks and streaks of color in which the figures of people on horseback are still recognizable against the backdrop of the landscape of the