Tess Diduch 12.4.04

There seems to be a significant overlap between Hamlet's ideas of Participitory and Spacial. ELIZA is not spacial, but most examples, especially more recent ones, involve some kind of environment, probably due to the convienence of a monitor.

"Weekend" offers an interesting look at the Spacial component. It is very similar to the "movie map" of Aspen that Hamlet describes, except that it is sound instead of visual, and attention is on one person moving through the space rather than the person at the computer choosing a path by clicking. It is easy to imagine "Weekend" as an early exploration into a form, and a forerunner to interactive spacial auditory environments. It would be fairly trivial to set up a database such that a listener can make ambulatory decisions for themselves, rather than relying on the static recording. They then can create their own weekend, while still following the artistic vision of the creators.

What is unclear is whether visual description, whether text or picture based, would be necessary. Most people don't have a highly developed sense of auditory space, and so could get muddled easily. Skipping ahead to surround sound would help. Visuals have been stuck in the 2D environment, which works because actual immersion is not necessary. Some system with headphones and good stereo, with a controller that lets a person 'walk' in a direction, might be ideal, or at least one way to go about it.

"Weekend" also has hints of the Participitory, through imagination and interpretation of sounds, which begs the question: since images associated on a computer are static, at some level, can it ever be as satisfying as what we imagine when reading literature or listening to certain genres?