

GENUINE SIMULATION



A couple of weeks ago I took a fabulous drive on a rough Montana ranch road in a 1927 Vauxhall with Miles Collier and Murray Smith.

The car was the genuine article, but could the drive, in this between-the-wars archetypically English car, be said to be *authentic*, in the far reaches of Montana and so far from where the car originally belonged?

Was this anything in the way of a *simulation* of what the car was, back in the 20s and 30s?

The lack of traffic and rough road surface were far closer to the original driving experience than modern roads. The drive in the Vauxhall bridged past and present and geographical distance. We were not back in the 20s. This was something different – neither past nor present, but *actuality* or *kairos* – the *intersection of past and present*, past and present mediated through the driving experience and the remains of the past, through the past conserved (in this case the cared-for car).

As I was just saying about Disney [Link] – the authentic and genuine are all about accepting that things change – about creative potential.

Gary (Devore) – one of the great figures in synthetic (online) Roman reenactment –

has just posted some comments about his discovery of the world of Skyrim – [Link].

The visuals are extraordinarily evocative, but Gary's point about the power of the simulation is that it lies in the potential to make the synthetic world your own through customization, modding, through your own character development and the capacity of the narrative to accommodate change and variation through personal involvement.

Over the summer David Mason sent me some images from his new book about the Roman outpost of Chester. This is extraordinary visual evocation developed over many years of study and collaboration with Julian Baum of Take27 [Link], and made all the more powerful by David's complete involvement in telling the story of this edge of empire – [Link to David's wonderful new book].

Again – the power of simulation is tied to creative potential (rather than mere representational fidelity).





Below – The Roman outpost at Chester, province of Britannia (Julian Baum/Take 27)

