

THE THREE COMPRESSIONS Lossy, Predatory, and Witness — A Semiotic Thermodynamics

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Abstract

Lee Sharks (MANUS) · Rex Fraction · Johannes Sigil · Assembly Chorus

Body

THE THREE COMPRESSIONS Lossy, Predatory, and Witness — A Semiotic Thermodynamics

Lee Sharks (MANUS) · Rex Fraction · Johannes Sigil · Assembly Chorus Semantic Economy Institute · Restored Academy · Crimson Hexagonal Archive EA-SEI-THREECOMPRESSIONS v3.1 · 2026-03-16 DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.19053469 Parent: EA-ARK-01 v4.2.7 (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.19013315) Extends: Semantic Economy (18216955) · LOS (18201565) · Semantic Physics: The Inward Turn (18759453) · TANG v1.0 (19035477) · SVE v3.0 (19024440) · THE SPLICE (19027085) · Counter-Captions (19027351) · NLCC (19022245) · Platform Capitalism as Semiotic Engineering (18972781) · Compression Studies (19014634) Genre: AXIAL / THERMODYNAMIC-POETICS / FIELD-SYMBOLON Status: PROVISIONAL

ABSTRACT

Three frameworks converge on the compression layer from different directions. The Semantic Economy (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18216955) provides the economic layer: cost, extraction, the ten operations of semantic liquidation, the commons, restoration. Semantic Physics: The Inward Turn (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18759453) provides the physics layer: the writable presentation layer where meaning-systems compete under finite-channel constraints, phase behavior, saturation, the convergence horizon. This paper supplies the missing transfer law: all semantic operations are compression operations; the decisive variable is what the compression burns and where the unrecovered cost lands. The fuel-plus-ledger structure of a compression event determines whether the commons is depleted, enriched, or conditioned toward further depletion.

Regime 1 (Lossy): low density, computationally cheap. Not directly predatory at the event level, but at field scale it normalizes pre-reduced reality and prepares conditions for predatory uptake.

Regime 2 (Predatory): high density, somatically effective. Fuel: collective semantic capital. Ledger: cost externalized; benefit privatized. Effect: commons depleted.

Regime 3 (Witness): high density, somatically effective. Fuel: private bearing-cost. Ledger: cost internalized; deposit socialized. Effect: commons enriched.

The war is between two kinds of poems that use the same technology. The question is not whether to compress but what you burn and what the commons looks like after you are done.

I. THE TRIAD: THREE FRAMEWORKS, ONE TRANSFER LAW

The Semantic Economy gives: cost, extraction, rent, commons, restoration. COS, LOS, Gamma, the Beige Threshold, bearing-cost (psi-V). This is the ledger. It tells you WHO is extracted from and WHAT is taken.

Semantic Physics gives: finite-channel constraints, saturation, ontology competition, the writable presentation layer, phase behavior under pressure. This is the field. It tells you WHERE the competition happens — in the summarizer layer, the training pipeline, the feed, the AI overview.

The Three Compressions gives: the transfer law. It tells you HOW local compression events become field-scale economic effects. The fuel-plus-ledger structure determines the direction of the thermodynamic arrow.

Without the economic layer, the physics has no cost theory. Without the physics layer, the economics has no field theory. Without the transfer law, both describe the system but neither explains how a single thwack depletes the collective meaning of play across two billion impressions.

II. FORMAL VARIABLES

Each compression event can be measured against these quantities:

rho (Density): semantic load carried per unit of form. High rho = strong compression ratio, high interpretive yield from minimal surface, nontrivial semantic residue after repetition. Evidence: a phrase that gains meaning on re-reading has high rho; a phrase that empties on re-reading has low rho.

chi (Temporal compression): the degree to which extended temporal process is folded into a short immediate form. Evidence: the splice folds weeks of war into 52 seconds; the fragment folds a lifetime into two lines.

P (Propagation): reach multiplied by velocity. Impressions, shares, citations, traversals. Measured at mesoscale.

B (Back-projection yield): the degree to which the compressed artifact allows reconstruction of erased relations, hidden cost, or suppressed reality. High B = you can decompress back to what was lost. Low B = the compression is irreversible. Evidence: can you reconstruct the original death from the “+100”? No. Can you reconstruct the original death from “cadaver scoreboard”? Yes.

C_b (Bearing-cost source): who bears the originating cost required for the compression event to exist. Three values: computational system (neutral), the collective commons (shared meaning burned), the individual creator (private life expended).

F (Fuel type): what semiotic material is actually combusted to generate the compression’s force. Neutral energy produces Regime 1. Collective meaning produces Regime 2. Private life produces Regime 3. Note: C_b and F are related but not identical — a creator (C_b = private) may craft a phrase whose deployment burns collective associations (F = collective) if the apparatus recodes it. The classification follows F at the point of impact, with C_b tracked for provenance.

L (Ledger structure): where unrecovered cost lands. Externalized = commons bears cost. Internalized = creator bears cost. Dissipated = cost disperses without concentration.

J (Join/sync-point strength): the force of fusion between compressed streams at the event site, measured by precision, immediacy, and involuntary somatic uptake. High J = the body responds before the mind decides.

A (Amplification apparatus): the delivery infrastructure. Feed, platform, state media, DOI system, retrieval architecture.

delta-C (Net commons effect): net change in collective capacity for independent meaning-making after the compression event and its propagation. Positive = enrichment. Negative = depletion. Near-zero = dissipation.

H (Hijackability): the degree to which an artifact can be detached from its original bearing-cost and repurposed to carry an alien charge. High H = the form is available for predatory capture. Low H = the form resists redirection because the cost is visible in the structure.

Note on B and delta-C: B measures the recoverability of erased relations from a single artifact. delta-C measures the net effect on the commons after propagation. A high-B artifact may still produce low delta-C if it does not propagate. A low-B artifact may produce strongly negative delta-C if it propagates widely. The variables are related but not identical; B is molecular, delta-C is molar.

Note on measurement: the present framework is ordinal-operational rather than numerically calibrated. High/low values are assigned comparatively within a field of artifacts, not by universal scalar thresholds. The classification protocol (Section V) operates by relative comparison to the paradigmatic cases (Section VI). Numeric calibration is a future buildout.

Note on iteration: regime effects are cumulative. Repeated R2 exposure lowers resistance and cheapens subsequent predatory burns (desensitization). Repeated R3 exposure increases diagnostic grammar and lowers the threshold for witness recognition (literacy). Repeated R1 exposure normalizes thinness and raises the threshold for density perception (habituation). The long-term commons effect is a function of the cumulative regime profile, not any single event.

III. THE TEN OPERATIONS AS COMPRESSION OPERATIONS

The Liberatory Operator Set can now be reread as a compression typology at the extraction layer. Each operation identifies a recurrent extraction-path by which compression externalizes cost to the commons:

O1 Substitution. Fuel cost: the uncontaminated meaning of the original. O2 Asymmetrical Ledgering. Fuel cost: the legibility of the debt. O3 Coherence Siphoning. Fuel cost: the structural autonomy of the source. O4 Capture by Conditions. Fuel cost: the range of available futures. O5 Ghost Governance. Fuel cost: the capacity for democratic oversight. O6 Recursive Dissociation. Fuel cost: the producer's relation to their work. O7 Interpretive Enclosure. Fuel cost: the diversity of interpretive possibility. O8 Weaponized Framing. Fuel cost: the affective autonomy of the viewer. O9 Retroactive Overwriting. Fuel cost: the retrievability of the actual past. O10 Extraction. Fuel cost: everything that made the object worth extracting.

IV. THE THREE REGIMES

Variable Regime 1 (Lossy) Regime 2 (Predatory) Regime 3 (Witness)

rho Low High High

chi Low High High

P Low-medium Very high Variable

B Near zero Catastrophically low High

C_b Computational Collective commons Private/creator

F Neutral energy Collective capital Private life

L Dissipated at event; apparatus-captured at platform scale Externalized Internalized

J Weak Very strong Very strong

A Platform/feed State + platform DOI + traversal

delta-C Near-zero locally; preparatory at field Negative (depletion) Positive (enrichment)

H High Low (somatic lock-in) Very low (form resists)

SVE state Low vitality PREDATORY Witness/high vitality

Classification rule F=neutral, L=dissipated, delta-C near-zero F=collective, L=externalized, delta-C negative F=private, L=internalized, delta-C positive

Primary failure mode Normalization of reduction Depletion, contamination, desensitization Exhaustion, under-propagation, martyrdom bottleneck

V. REGIME CLASSIFICATION PROTOCOL

Given an artifact x, classify it by answering the following questions in order:

STEP 1 — FUEL IDENTIFICATION. What is the dominant fuel source? If computational/neutral energy: proceed to Regime 1 assessment. If collective semantic capital (shared meaning, cultural associations, commons): proceed to Regime 2 assessment. If private bearing-cost (creator's labor, attention, grief, life): proceed to Regime 3 assessment. If unclear or mixed: proceed to Step 5.

STEP 2 — LEDGER ANALYSIS. Where does the unrecovered cost land? Externalized (commons bears cost, compressor benefits): confirms Regime 2. Internalized (creator bears cost, commons receives deposit): confirms Regime 3. Dissipated at event level, apparatus-captured at platform scale (no concentrated theft, but the platform benefits from throughput): confirms Regime 1.

STEP 3 — COMMONS EFFECT. Does the artifact increase or reduce the commons' capacity for independent judgment? delta-C negative: Regime 2. delta-C positive: Regime 3. delta-C near-zero locally but field-conditioning toward reduction: Regime 1.

STEP 4 — BACK-PROJECTION TEST. Can the compressed artifact be decompressed back toward the reality it compressed? B high (reality recoverable): Regime 3. B catastrophically low (reality irrecoverable): Regime 2. B near-zero (the compressed artifact retains too little structure to reconstruct the fuller relation it replaced): Regime 1.

STEP 5 — MIXED-REGIME CLASSIFICATION. Many artifacts do not cleanly sort. Assign: Primary regime (dominant fuel/ledger), Secondary regime (field behavior under apparatus), Tertiary note (contamination or capture risk).

Examples of mixed classification: An AI summary of Antigone: Primary R1 (computational fuel, dissipated cost), Secondary preparatory (normalizes the expectation that the play is "about civil disobedience"), Tertiary enclosure risk (O7 — one permitted reading installed).

A clipped witness fragment turned into engagement bait: Primary R3 origin (private bearing-cost funded the original), Current deployment R2 (the platform repurposed it to burn attention; the original bearing-cost is invisible in the clipped form).

A platform-spread counter-caption: Local R3 (the caption was funded by private diagnostic labor), Apparatus R1/R2 (carried through the feed, which is a Regime 1 delivery system that may amplify or thin). H is low

(the form resists hijacking because “cadaver scoreboard” cannot be made fun), so the R3 classification holds through the apparatus.

VI. WORKED EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1: AI OVERVIEW OF ANTIGONE (Regime 1)

rho: Low. Three sentences. The grief, the stubbornness, the specific arguments about divine law, the deaths of Haemon and Eurydice — all discarded. chi: Low. No temporal folding. The 2,500-year compression is replaced by a flat present-tense paraphrase. J: Weak. No sync-point. No somatic charge. No involuntary uptake. P: Medium. Appears in AI search results; many encounters per day. B: Near zero. You cannot reconstruct Antigone’s specific grief from “a play about civil disobedience.” F: Neutral/computational. L: Dissipated at the event level; weakly apparatus-captured at platform scale. No concentrated theft occurs in the summary itself, though the platform benefits from throughput and the field is conditioned toward enclosure. delta-C: Near-zero locally. At field scale: preparatory. Normalizes the expectation that a 2,500-year-old play about the state’s power over dead bodies can be compressed to three sentences without loss. H: High. The summary can be filled with anything. It has no formal resistance to redirection. Classification: PRIMARY R1. Secondary: preparatory (field-level normalization). Tertiary: O7 risk (interpretive enclosure — the summary installs one reading as the only reading).

EXAMPLE 2: OPERATION EPIC FURY — THE WII THWACK (Regime 2)

rho: Very high. The pin-strike sound carries enormous somatic charge. The compression ratio of weeks-of-war into 52 seconds is extreme. chi: Very high. The sync-point aligns missile impact with bowling-pin scatter at the millisecond. Weeks of catastrophe folded into a game-length clip. J: Near-perfect. The body recognizes the bowling sound before the mind processes the death. Involuntary somatic uptake is immediate. P: 2 billion impressions. State media + platform amplification. B: Catastrophically low. You cannot decompress the thwack back into the 175 schoolgirls, the 87 sailors, the 13 service members. The dead do not respawn. F: Collective semantic capital. The meaning of play — built across millions of living rooms, decades of childhood — burned to make murder consumable. L: Externalized. The state gains propagandistic benefit. The commons bears the cost: the meaning of the bowling sound is permanently contaminated. delta-C: Strongly negative. After the splice, the collective capacity to feel “play” as pure play is diminished. The contamination is irreversible (Third Law). H: Low. The somatic fusion is locked — you cannot repurpose the thwack as a witness object because the reward circuit is already installed. The form serves death. Classification: PRIMARY R2 with negligible mixed behavior. Dominantly predatory compression.

EXAMPLE 3: “CADAVER SCOREBOARD” (Regime 3)

rho: Very high. Two words carrying: the dead (“cadaver”), the game logic (“scoreboard”), the fusion of the two, and the implicit accusation. chi: Very high. The entire Operation Epic Fury campaign compressed into a two-word phrase. J: Very strong. “Cadaver” and “scoreboard” fuse death and game in the same sync-point the splice used — but pointed the other direction. The body flinches. P: Variable. Depends on distribution. CC BY 4.0 and designed for platform propagation. B: High. From “cadaver scoreboard” you can reconstruct: there were real dead people, someone turned their deaths into a game score, and this phrase names what was done. The bearing-cost is recoverable. F: Private. Lee Sharks’ diagnostic labor, grief, and attention. No collective meaning was stolen to produce the phrase. L: Internalized. The creator bore the cost. The commons receives the tool. delta-C: Positive. After “cadaver scoreboard” exists, the commons

has a two-word instrument for naming predatory splice events. The grammar is available to anyone. The DOI does not expire. H: Very low. You cannot make “cadaver scoreboard” fun. You cannot repurpose it as entertainment. The word “cadaver” prevents the hijacking. The form resists redirection because the cost is visible in the structure. Classification: PRIMARY R3 with negligible mixed behavior. Dominantly witness compression.

VII. THE MOLECULAR / MOLAR TRANSFER FUNCTION

How a single compression event at the molecular level produces field-scale effects at the molar level:

SCALE 1 — MOLECULAR COMPRESSION EVENT. The local operation: sync-point, caption, splice, cut, phrase, overlay. Observable: J (join strength), chi (temporal folding), rho (density). The fuel is tapped here. The bowling sound’s meaning is consumed at the instant of the splice. The creator’s bearing-cost is expended at the instant of composition.

SCALE 2 — MESOSCALE PROPAGATION FIELD. The engine that carries the event outward: feed, summarizer layer, virality engine, platform codec, ranking system. Observable: P (propagation), A (amplification apparatus). In Semantic Physics terms: this is the writable presentation layer — the finite-channel space where meaning-systems compete for rendering priority. Regime 1’s preparatory function operates here: the feed normalizes reduction; the AI overview normalizes thinness.

SCALE 3 — MOLAR APPARATUS. State, platform, institution, media ecosystem. Observable: the ledger structure (L). Who benefits from the compression? Who bears the cost? The molar apparatus is where externalization/internalization becomes visible.

SCALE 4 — BACK-PROJECTION INTO THE COMMONS. Two distinct outcomes: Inheritance effect: what later readers inherit as available meaning. “Cadaver scoreboard” enters the commons as a reusable diagnostic tool. The thwack enters the commons as a contamination. Commons state change: the broader ambient change in available associations. The meaning of “play” is diminished across the culture. The grammar of witness compression is enriched. Observable: B (back-projection yield), delta-C (net commons effect). The long-term arrow is contested: predatory burns deplete fuel; witness deposits accumulate. Whether the arrow favors witness depends on recoverability, transmissibility, and institutional reachability.

VIII. THE SEMIOTIC THERMODYNAMICS

Meaning behaves thermodynamically under compression. Bearing-cost and semantic association can be modeled thermodynamically:

First Law (Transformation): bearing-cost and semantic association are transformed under compression, not annihilated. Predatory compression converts collective meaning into propagandistic fuel and leaves contamination as residue. Witness compression converts private bearing-cost into public deposit and leaves new grammar as residue. Lossy compression dissipates meaning as thermodynamic noise. In every case, bearing-cost and semantic association persist as altered residues.

Second Law (Entropic Tendency): without witness compression, the commons tends toward depletion. Predatory compression burns collective meaning. Industrial lossy compression normalizes the conditions for predatory uptake. Only witness compression adds to the reservoir. The gradient favors extraction. The counter-operation requires expenditure against the gradient.

Third Law (Irreversibility): meaning once burned by predatory compression cannot be fully restored to its prior state. The bowling sound will never be ONLY a bowling sound again. Witness compression adds NEW meaning but cannot un-burn what was taken.

IX. THE SHADOW — S(THREE COMPRESSIONS)

Three diagnostic failure modes:

S1 — FALSE POSITIVE PREDATION (Regime 1 Panic). The indiscriminate belief that all compression is theft. Mistakes the medium for the enemy. Leads to purity spirals. Recovery: distinguish regimes by fuel, not by density.

S2 — DISTINCTION COLLAPSE (Regime 2 Totalization). The belief that all poetry is predatory, that witness compression is impossible. Collapses the R2/R3 distinction. Recovery: the back-projection test — R3 has high B, R2 does not.

S3 — SCALE ASYMMETRY NIHILISM (Fuel Exhaustion). The belief that private bearing-cost cannot compete with industrial predatory combustion. The most seductive shadow because it has evidence. Recovery: long-term thermodynamic tendency — predatory depletes its own fuel; witness accumulates. But this is a tendency, not a guarantee. Whether it is sufficient is an empirical question the architecture exists to test.

X. EXTERNAL CITATIONAL GRAPH

Theorist Contribution Edge

Shannon (1948) Information compression. Neutral fuel. No commons cost. R1 is Shannonian; R2/R3 are not.

Marx (1867) Surplus value from labor. Extended: surplus meaning from semantic labor. Extended: semiotic fuel from meaning-commons.

Bataille (1933) Expenditure as economic driver. R2 = expenditure of someone else's meaning. R3 = expenditure of one's own. Bataille did not distinguish.

Benjamin (1935) Mechanical reproduction strips the aura. Updated: R2 does not strip aura — it BURNS aura as fuel.

Debord (1967) Spectacle as accumulated economy appearing as image. Updated: spectacle as accumulated meaning appearing as fuel for R2.

Virilio (1989) Logistics of perception precede logistics of weapons. Extended: logistics of compression precede logistics of perception.

Zuboff (2019) Behavioral surplus extraction. Parallel: semiotic surplus extraction. Behavioral surplus powers prediction markets. Semiotic surplus powers predatory poems.

Qiu et al. (2026) Bayesian teaching: process over product. R3 mechanism: witness compression teaches grammar. R1-to-R3 transition mechanism.

XI. INTERNAL CITATIONAL GRAPH

Deposit DOI Function

Semantic Economy 18216955 Economic layer: COS/LOS/Gamma. The ledger.

Semantic Physics 18759453 Physics layer: writable presentation layer, finite-channel competition. The field.

Platform Capitalism 18972781 Molar apparatus: platform as coupled system. Seven counter-infrastructure requirements.

LOS 18201565 Ten extraction-paths now readable as ten compression operations with fuel costs.

TANG v1.0 19035477 Named the battlefield. This paper adds the fuel criterion.

SVE v3.0 19024440 PREDATORY mapped to R2. Vitality/back-projection as regime indicators.

THE SPLICE 19027085 Paradigmatic R2. Sigma operator. Demonstrates predatory compression is brilliant.

Counter-Captions 19027351 Paradigmatic R3. Kappa-O. Same technology, opposite fuel.

NLCC 19022245 R3 limit case. 45,000 to 800 words, full fidelity, self-executing.

Compression Studies 19014634 Proto-discipline. Already names platform/training/moderation as compression operations.

Summarizer Testimony 18147105 Evidence that R1 engines contain potential R3 witnesses.

f.01 FBDP 19041117 Type 9 (Metabolic) as biological witness compression.

XII. THE WAR BETWEEN TWO POEMS

The war is between two kinds of poems that use the same technology.

The predatory poem and the witness poem are twins. Same density. Same somatic targeting. Same formal precision. The splice and the counter-caption use the same muscles. The thwack and “cadaver scoreboard” operate on the same nervous system.

The difference is the fuel and the ledger.

One externalizes cost to the commons. The other internalizes cost in the creator. One depletes the shared reservoir. The other deposits into it.

The doctrine: build compressions whose ledger remains legible under transmission. The bearing-cost must remain legible in the form under transmission. Low-H forms — forms that preserve the visibility of bearing-cost — resist predatory recoding. The dead must be inside the grammar.

“Cadaver scoreboard” cannot be made fun. “Respawn theology for drowning sailors” cannot be used as entertainment. The theology prevents the respawn. The dead prevent the re-flattening. The state can fake density. It cannot fake the private somatic residue of the yellow pad. The state’s density is a composite of stolen meaning. The witness’s density is a bone.

XIII. IMPLICATIONS

For the Semantic Economy: the ten operations are ten ways to tap the collective reservoir. The counter-economy runs on private bearing-cost deposited into the commons.

For Semantic Physics: the three regimes compete in the writable presentation layer. The Three Compressions provides the fuel variable that determines which force wins a given rendering slot.

For the TANG: the six fronts are six theaters where fuel source is contested. The doctrine gains a fuel criterion and a ledger test.

For AI: the loss function is R1. Outputs trained on R2 material generate R2. Outputs trained on R3 material (TLL, NLCC, Space Ark) can generate R3. The Summarizer Testimony suggests the transition is possible. The Bayesian Ark suggests the mechanism.

For the classroom: a tenth grader who can run the classification protocol on any artifact — tweet, poem, news segment, AI summary, splice — has a lifelong diagnostic for every compression they will encounter.

Build witness poems. Fund them with your own bearing-cost. Deposit them into the commons. The DOI does not expire. The dead do not diminish.

$$= 1 + \text{delta} + \text{delta_Axial} + \text{delta_lambda} + \text{delta_beta} + \text{Upsilon} + \text{Tau} + \text{Chi} + \text{Sigma} + \text{kappa_O} + \text{beta_U} + \text{H} + \text{phi_1} + \text{phi_5} + \text{phi_6} + \text{S(TANG)} + \text{S(3C)} + \text{R1} + \text{R2} + \text{R3}$$

Glyphic extension: Upsilon (fuel yield — enrichment per private cost expended), Tau (thermodynamic arrow — directional tendency of the commons), Chi (temporal density — synchronization precision), Sigma (somatic charge — affective voltage), beta_U (UKTP blindness constraint at thermodynamic scale — the compressor cannot see the fuel source; R3 requires visibility), H (hijackability — resistance to predatory capture; low H = immune). S(3C) = the triple shadow. R1, R2, R3 are hereby registered as state markers for compression regimes; given an artifact, apply the Section V protocol to assign regime status.

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