**Distortions**
(Working title) ncoven2, jbalamu2

Distortions is a view-port through which one can view blogs, news sources and other web pages to see how their publishers lean on various issues. Distortions would take in one or a few pages that are generally accepted to be of a certain viewpoint to develop a corpora for that given viewpoint. For example, Rush Limbaugh's page could be used to establish a baseline for "political conservatism." (Note that we are not making value judgements on groups or viewpoints.) Once baselines have been established, other pages can be viewed through Distortions, whereupon the page would have the words, phrases or themes that match the baseline would be highlighted, magnified, brought out, while the other content on the page is obscured -- viewed as if through the edge of very round magnifying glass.

From a conversation between John and Noah, when discussing the nature of the project:

"and the goal of the project is so meta -- it brings out the distortions of peoples views(from what norm, I don't know), but distorts them to make them more apparent, and in doing so, makes users even more aware of the distortions, distorting their view"

The page would be dotted with mild distortions on pages deemed neutral, but teeming with distortion for pages that are similar to one baseline or the other. The whole page could be a veritable sea of bubbles of distortion. These distortions could take the form of exaggerated (stretched or shrunk) text to show similarity in frequency or colored to show similarity in a semantic sense, for example.

Baseline corpora drawn from:
- transcripts of radio shows (assignment by theme or viewpoint tbd)
  > Limbaugh: http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/home/today.guest.html
  > ABC (Background Briefing): http://www.abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/

- use WordNet to find semantic similarity
> NLTK (learn Python): http://www.nltk.org/

- visualize (?)
> animated; read through sequentially and?
> static; maybe a heat mapping?
  ? Julie's facebook click-mapping idea was really kinda cool
  ? can we swell words used a lot, and shrink those used less often?
  ? filtering out "the", "um" and so forth would be a good idea.
  ? with heat mapping, maybe color code similar types of words
 ! defined by type of speech (action words - verbs / people places things - nouns / ... )
 ! defined by tone - maybe NLTK has this sort of mapping?