

## Are you a model?

I have been getting recent emails from various modeling agencies, asking me whether I want to become a model or whether I could use theirs. I am naturally very flattered. If they could see my present physique, they'd realize that I would make a good model for a small oak tree or a Saturn V rocket, but little else. On the other hand, I am not sure how I could employ their fashion models in, for instance, the modeling of battle theatre conflict; the soldiers would very likely drop all of their weapons and surrender on the spot. The models familiar to most of you seem worlds apart from those on the front cover of Vogue magazine. You may wonder how I found myself in this predicament, so bear with me.

About a year ago, I formed an electronic bulletin board mail system called "modeling" at the behest of an Air Force sponsor who believed that by forming such a group, we might engage in intellectual and high-brow conversation about what it meant "to model and simulate." This was a good idea, and so I created one. The ensuing board saw some action, and we we started conversing and debating technical issues, when all of a sudden, and out of the blue, we started to get email from modeling ad agencies. At first, there were the usual territorial thoughts—they had crept into a technical haven and infested our philosophy with their advertisements for some completely different sort of "human model." This was inexcusable. How dare they? However, with an unusual sense of amity, I didn't have the guts to turn them away. After all, maybe there was room for variety, or maybe my professional future could well turn toward this sort of modeling. It would definitely be a positive change for my career. All it would take is half my present body weight, a complete facial, and the odd skin tuck here and there. And even then, I might be limited to modeling only complete enclosures, like heavy Australian raincoats---complete with hood---or pup tents, where I could stick my head out with the rest of my flesh remaining hidden within the confines of the tent.



*Beth is wearing an extravagant finite state pearl necklace while displaying a stunning platter of assorted Petri networks.*

Then, I did what every normal academic does: I started to ponder highly abstract questions about philosophy and the universe in general. I began to imagine how their sort of modeling related to our technical "simulation" sort. Is there a connection? There is, and it is an intriguing one. Say that I take two objects, our sun (that hot glowing thing in the sky) and a yellow tennis ball. I hold the ball and inform you that it is a model of our sun. This is similar to the sort of modeling that we simulationists are used to. I am using the ball as a *scale* model of the sun, rather than as a *dynamic* model, but you get the gist. However, the idea of the modeling is the same---objects representing other objects or

their attributes. Let's think a little differently now. Can the ball be a model *for* the sun? Well, at first it sounds a little strange, but I then tell you to imagine that we are universe-creators in the third millennium, and I hand you the ball asking the following of you: "please create a sun that looks like this ball." In the first case, the ball was created after the sun, and in the second, the ball was used as an archetype, a "model" for the sun. The word "model" is being used in two different ways.

The fashion model can be thought of in light of the second sort of model, very much like a "model house." The model house is an object like any other, but there are additional information cues, and perhaps some extra signs thrown in with the house, that permit us to create other houses from it in the same way that we can create objects from classes in the object-oriented software paradigm. The model house in your neighborhood models your house, and a scale model of your house also models your house, but in a slightly different sense. Anyway, if you aspire to becoming a fashion model, I have just the mailing list for you.