

PREFACE

I entered a traditional Japanese style house through a crawlspace between the roof and the ceiling. The ceiling was made of wood and rice paper. As I crawled forward, the ceiling collapsed under my weight, and I fell into a hallway. There were shoji screens on either side of me. Part of me wondered how this place had been created or scripted. As I hit the ground, several swordsmen appeared at the end of the hallway and started advancing. I turned and ran for the door, closely pursued. As I was preparing to teleport home, I awoke.

It was December 9, 2006, and I had experienced my first Second Life dream. My real-life self had been dreaming in my virtual body (or avatar). This experience left no doubt in my mind that all my time spent in SL working on this book had left its mark on my subconscious. It was as thrilling as it was unnerving.

Some think that SL is a game, but before you judge, give it a try. You will see that while there are many aspects of play, SL is something more than just a game. SL is a new world accessible only through the Internet. You don't need to buy anything to participate; it is free to join. You will find passion, history, art, politics, culture, government, and drama in SL. It has an aboriginal population (old-timers), and it has an ever-growing number of artists, explorers, entrepreneurs, settlers, designers, musicians, misfits, builders, vamps, scripters, furies, griefers, androids, dragons, and yes, even corporations.

The tapestry of creative potential and social possibility becomes deeper and richer as you learn more about the world and spend time there. I am convinced that SL or worlds like it will become another breakthrough technology that affects your real life just as the Internet has done since the early 1990s.

It is my sincere hope that this book helps you unlock your own potential in SL faster and with less frustration than those who have gone before you.

WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

This book is about Linden Lab's Second Life (SL). Imagine a place where you can explore landscapes that stretch to

the horizon, enjoy beautiful sunsets on a beach or from your jet ski, buy land and plant a garden, give your girlfriend that tattoo she's always wanted, go skydiving, spend an evening at a club dancing the night away or at home relaxing by the fire with friends listening to some smooth jazz on your new stereo. Now imagine doing this all online with friends from around the globe.

SL is a virtual world construction set full of creative potential. The SL residents form its community. This book provides the keys to unlocking your own potential in this vibrant online world while avoiding its pitfalls.

You can think of this book as a travel guide for visitors, a relocation guide for someone looking to buy land and move in, and a home improvement guide for the serious architect/builder who has been in SL a while. It will teach you how to move, fly, see, communicate, build, texture, script, animate, and explore.

WHY A BOOK ON SECOND LIFE?

To get acclimated to SL, you have a lot to learn. Practical information is hard to find and often unavailable. Existing tribal knowledge is scattered across online help, forums, knowledge articles, blogs, websites, and YouTube videos. You need to learn the software (SL viewer) to accomplish the basics of movement and communication, and to breathe life into your own creations. Equally important, you need to learn the social networks and cultural norms of SL to be accepted as an SL insider. Helping you acquire these basics quickly and easily is what I set out to accomplish with this book.

If you've spent time in virtual worlds, you might consider it a quaint idea to write a traditional paper-based book on the subject of SL. I mean, aren't we supposed to be all-digital nowadays? I believe a traditional book, even today, remains a great way to deliver a large amount of structured information to a reader anywhere and at any time, without consideration for connectivity, bandwidth, power, and startup time.

WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK?

This book has been written to address a broad audience. I expect you will come back to it again and again as your

SL knowledge increases. If you're completely new to virtual worlds, this is a great place to start. Even if you've been in SL a long time, you will still learn a new thing or two. If you're a graphics professional or game developer, it's worth your time to learn a little bit about SL. SL or worlds like it will be key components in the future of your profession. Finally, if your interest in SL is purely professional, this is an essential guide to help you understand your target audience.

Those New to Virtual Worlds

The availability of broadband Internet and good graphics cards now make it possible for you, even if you are not a gamer, to get involved in virtual worlds, which are shaping the future of online communities in creative and even lucrative ways. This book reduces the barrier to entry for new SL residents. Chapters 1—4 will be particularly valuable to you.

Second Life Residents (Who Already Know the Basics)

Other books (at least as of this writing) have only scratched the SL surface. If you've been in SL for a while and are looking to take your knowledge to the next level or maybe learn a new skill like scripting, texturing, or animation, then this book is for you. Reviewers who have been in SL more than three years have all commented that they learned something new while reviewing this material. Chapters 7—10 will be particularly relevant.

If you're getting involved in a relationship in SL and are trying to figure out how the social scene works, check out Chapter 5 on SL relationships. This chapter is uniquely nontechnical, yet the information in it is just as important to know about SL as that presented in the other chapters.

Graphics Professionals Learning About Second Life

Maybe you are a graphic artist, 3D modeler, texture artist, or game-level designer looking for the next big thing in your career. Chapters 6, 7, and 9 will unlock your ability to create your vision on the SL platform.

Corporate Marketing and Other Professionals

Whether you are taking your company into SL yourself or planning to use another firm, please read this book. It's a

small investment in time and money, and it provides you significant insight into SL's culture and creativity. Learn about your audience before you jump in. Chapters 1 and 5 are great places to start.

Aspiring Second Life DJs, Musicians, Photographers, and Movie Makers

If you are a singer/songwriter looking to open up an international market of music lovers without leaving your home studio, you've come to the right place. I ended up with an entire chapter on the subjects of SL music, photography, and machinima because there was so much to say. This topic seriously needs a book of its own, but Chapter 11 is a great place to start with references where you can learn more.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS BOOK

Learning enough to cover the breadth of SL's capabilities would have taken me years. One unique approach I took when writing this book was to incorporate information gleaned from over 100 in-world interviews of both experienced residents as well as new residents. The book flows between topic coverage to expert comments and tips to tutorials meant to be performed in-world. The book is structured such that you can read it offline and then enforce the learning process by following tutorials while online. The book is laid out in the following chapters.

Chapter 1: Welcome to Second Life

Get answers to your basic questions in Chapter 1. This chapter answers questions new residents often ask and introduces the basic vocabulary of SL. You will discover answers to questions like the following:

- What is SL?
- Is SL a game?
- What can I do in SL?
- How do I make money in SL?

Chapter 2: Exploring the New Frontier

Learn how to explore the world in Chapter 2. This chapter teaches you how to walk, run, and fly in SL (movement basics). In addition to movement, you learn how to see the world (using camera controls). Finally, you learn how

to navigate the world's geography through teleports, maps, and mini-maps.

Chapter 3: Communication and Social Networking

Learn how to talk to each other in Chapter 3. This chapter teaches you how to communicate in SL, both verbally and through gestures. You learn about common pitfalls and mistakes new residents make when communicating with others. You also learn about tools for communicating and networking with other groups of like-minded residents. Finally, this chapter wraps up with tips on doing presentations in SL.

Chapter 4: Your Avatar, Your Virtual Self

Lose your newbie look in Chapter 4. This chapter teaches you all about your avatar and how to change your look. You learn how to change your shape, hair, eyes, and skin. Chapter 4 also covers how to create your own basic clothes and shop for new clothes. Finally, you get some ideas about the wide variety of SL avatars that other residents have created.

Chapter 5: Second Life Culture and Relationships

Learn about SL relationships in Chapter 5. This chapter teaches you about some ground rules and guidelines for SL relationships. You learn how to read profiles and adjust your own profile to communicate what you want. You discover the pace of SL relationships and the reasons residents may decide to partner. Finally, you uncover the secrets of virtual sex and where to learn more if you are interested.

Chapter 6: Building Basics

Learn how to create your own stuff in Chapter 6. This chapter teaches you the basics of the SL building system. You learn how to create new objects and link them together to create more complex objects. You also learn about basic texturing and object permissions. Finally, you learn how to create flexible objects and objects that cast their own light.

Chapter 7: Advanced Textures and Clothing

Learn how to make your stuff look real or unreal in Chapter 7. This chapter teaches you how to apply “tex-

tures” to objects to make them look real. You learn how to apply textures to different sides of an object. You also learn how to make objects bumpy, shiny, and transparent. Finally, you’ll create your own brick patio, blackberry plant, and custom T-shirt.

Chapter 8: Making the Magic: Scripting Basics

Learn how to bring your objects to life in Chapter 8. This chapter teaches you the basics of the Linden Scripting Language. Even if you have no programming experience, this chapter teaches you to use existing scripts and write your own scripts. You learn to create a scripted door, a notecard giver, and a teleporter. What you create after that is purely up to your own imagination.

Chapter 9: Land Ownership, Terraforming, and Landscaping

Learn how to find, terraform, and landscape your own land in Chapter 9. This chapter teaches you the advantages and costs of owning land in SL. You learn the difference between renting and buying and how to find a new piece of land. Finally, you learn how to terraform your land, build a waterfall, and find your first home.

Chapter 10: Particles, Vehicles, Animations, and Sculpted Prims

Unlock the mysteries behind advanced SL effects such as particles, animations, sculpted prims, and vehicles in Chapter 10. You learn how to create the magic behind smoke, candles, fireworks, fountains, falling snow, leaves, rain, and, of course, bling. You create a basic sit animation and learn how to place it into a pose ball. You will learn about the latest building innovation in SL—the sculpted prim. Finally, you build your own airplane and fly it away!

Chapter 11: Photography, Music, and Movies

Learn about photography, SL music, and movie making (machinima) in Chapter 11. This chapter teaches you about the snapshot tool, picture sharing, and picture taking. You learn about the SL music scene and how you can participate. Finally, this chapter provides several pointers on how to be your own director of SL movies.


Chapter 12: Practical Matters: Under the Hood of the Metaverse

Learn how SL works and how to avoid common problems in Chapter 12! This chapter teaches you the basics of how the SL technology works and how to troubleshoot performance or connectivity issues. You learn how to deal with residents who are out for trouble, called *griefers*. Finally, you learn how to tame the growing beast called your *SL Inventory*.

CONVENTIONS

I'll keep this brief. All references to contributors and interviewees use in-world avatar names versus real-life names. If you want to know who someone is in RL, then go ask his or her avatar.

I settled on using PC conventions in this book primarily because I am a PC user. The SL Viewer is also available for both Mac and Linux operating systems. See the following knowledge article for Mac keyboard equivalents: secondlife.com/knowledgebase/article.php?id=345. Some sections written by contributors may include the Mac equivalents to PC conventions.

 Where you see this icon, you will find a Second Life URL, or SLURL, which is a real-life way of indicating a virtual world location. To use a SLURL, you simply place the link into the address field of a traditional browser (for example, Internet Explorer or Firefox). You also need to have the SL viewer installed. More on SLURLs later.

Code items from the Linden Scripting Language appear in a monospaced font.

THE COMPANION IN-WORLD SITE

Technical books often include a CD-ROM and/or a companion website. Well, not this book! CD-ROMs or RL websites are not really practical, useful, or desirable in the case of SL. For example, say I create a texture for a waterfall in SL. I download it and put it onto a CD. You load the texture off the CD. At this point, you need to upload this texture into SL. This costs you L\$10. If thousands of readers also take this texture from the CD and pay L\$10 to upload it, there are now thousands of copies of the exact same

object consuming resources (not to mention everyone had to pay L\$10).

Rather than do this, I have built an in-world site where you will find the content that would exist on a traditional CD and much more. I am deeply indebted to Ceera Murakami, who kindly assisted me in this build. Check out her sim-wide design and build business *Fox and Ground Construction*. I am also indebted to Julia Hathor for providing the unique flora that grows on the site. Check out her lovely sims by searching for *Creative Fantasy Home & Garden*. I would also like to thank Jopsy Pendragon for getting me started on the geyser.

The in-world companion site has all the landmarks referenced in this book kept up-to-date in case things move around. You can discover the book's key contributors in the contributor's gallery. You will find all the textures and objects created in the book's tutorials if you want to get a copy of the final product. Finally, this is where I may add new tutorials and other information over time.

Last, but not least, the in-world site is located on a great rugged coastline that offers soothing ocean sounds and phenomenal sunsets. Take the elevator launch tube kindly provided by *Seifert Surface* to the top and take in the view.

The companion site is located on the old mainland in the Humuli sim at this SLURL:

 <http://slurl.com/secondlife/humuli/222/123/29>

If you are interested in updates, instead of a mailing list I have created an SL group named "Artists, Explorers, and Entrepreneurs." You'll learn about SL groups and how to join them in a bit.

ABOUT THE COVER

The cover of this book was extremely important to me because I wanted it to convey the various things that attract people to SL. I want to thank Judi Taylor and Anne Jones for taking all of my feedback and working with me to produce such a great piece.

I also want to thank Nyla Cheeky of www.houseofnyla.com. Nyla is a Vancouver, BC, fashion designer who is bringing her designs into SL and was kind enough to share some