Ever since the publication of his first novel, Generation X, in 1991, Douglas Coupland's increasingly uneasy relationship with irony and with scepticism has marked him out as something more than just another writer of 'blank' fictions. In texts such as Life after God (1994) and Microserfs (1996), and most particularly in the troublingly supernatural novel that provides the focus for this essay, Girlfriend in a Coma (1998), Coupland has been writing, in a sense, determinedly against the grain of the last decade of the twentieth century; even as he seems to capture so many of its moods and anxieties.
Most of us work in Building Seven; shipping hell has brought a severe breakdown in cleanup codes. * * * Susan is 26 and works in Mac Applications. If Susan were a Jeopardy! contestant, her dream board would be Oop! users can virtually fly in and out of their creations, or they can print them out on a laser printer. Oop! users can build their ideas on a "pad" or they can build their ideas in 3D space, a revolving space station; running ostriches . . . whatever. Oop! allows users to clone structures, and add these clones onto each other, permitting easy megaconstructions that use little memory. "The Dialectics of Emptiness: Douglas Coupland's and Viktor Pelevin's Tales of Generation X and P."