SAM FRANK
the future of journalism and the publishing industry as a whole
reading in the electronic age
prose and poetry in the electronic age
the state of criticism; e.g., how the discipline has been transformed by cross-platform writing via blogs and Twitter, in addition to traditional printed media
authorship and collaboration
the switch/flip in the structure of knowledge distribution; transitioning from a broadcast/top-down system to a network/rhizomatic system via the Internet
the rise of the informational commons, peer-to-peer networks, and the Open Source movement
the state of the bookstore, classroom, and library in the 21st century
the archive; both analog and digital

SESSION 1 (See attached note for full description; readings can be found here): Sunday, February 21, 5:00 pm, at 177 Livingston; taught by Caleb Waldorf
SESSION 2 (See attached note for full description and readings): Thursday, February 25, 7:30 pm, at 177 Livingston; taught by Bob Stein & Dan Visel
SESSION 3 (See attached note for full description. Readings are provided here.): Tuesday, March 2, 7:15 pm, at The Reanimation Library, Class limit: 10 students; taught by Andrew Beccone; This session is full.
SESSION 4 (See attached note for full description; readings TK): Sunday, April 11, 4pm, at 177 Livingston; taught by Rick Prelinger
SESSION 5 (See attached note for full description and readings): Saturday, April 24, 12–4pm, at Dexter Sinister; taught by David Reinfurt, Class limit: 15. This session is now full. Email thepublicschoolny@gmail.com to add your name to the waiting list.

In preparation for the class, it may help to view some of the following links:
* if:book: A Project of the Institute for the Future of the Book
* Reading (in) the Future
* Bookfutures, a blog by Chris Meade, Director of if:book London
* Snarkmarket
* Bookfuturism, mapping the future of reading
* The Late Age of Print, a blog by Ted Striphas, author of The Late Age of Print
* Everyday book
* The Future of the Reading Brain by Tim Carmody via Bookfuturism
* The Late Age of Print: Everyday book
* Bookfuturism, mapping the future of learning
* The archive; both analog and digital

ALL SESSIONS ARE FREE.


PDF


For those who desire an exact knowledge of the past as an aid to the understanding of the future: a history of having too much to read.

---. “Remington Launches Ghostwriter.” The First/Last Newspaper 6 (Nov. 21, 2009).

On the invention and diffusion of the typewriter, an instructive story in the history of technology.


Thousands on the roads, the abandoned railtracks, tonight, bums on the outside, libraries inside. It wasn’t planned, at first. Each man had a book he wanted to remember, and did. Then, over a period of twenty years or so, we met each other, travelling, and got the loose network together and set out a plan. The most important single thing we had to pound into ourselves was that we were not important, that we mustn’t be pedants; we were not to feel superior to anyone else in the world. We’re nothing more than dust-jackets for books, of no significance otherwise.

To read in parallel:

- *To give us a little bit of context, here’s a Decade in Retrospect by Kady Vannells* via Wired.com.
- *The Atomized Library.* by BLDGBLOG (Possible Topic for Project: Session 2)
- *Lost Formats* via Experimental Jetset (Possible Topic for Project: Session 2)
- *What composition is for and why digital media is intergal to it* by Motoko Rich via *The New York Times*. February 21, 2010 at 5:00pm.
- *The Page + The Screen: Siting Text in the Early 21st Century and Beyond v2* by Jonathan Lerner via Miller-McCune (Possible Topic for Project: Session 2)
This thread is about the architectural criticism at the beginning of the 21st century. It was the impetus behind the proposals for the Public School New York classes, The Page + the Screen: Siting Text in the Early 21st Century and Beyond and Texts + Textures: A Writing Workshop. It is also a formative document of the lnlnln forum.

It is important to note that at the tail end of the thread, the discussion turned toward how conversations like these, which are distributed across multiple platforms, will eventually be archived and interpreted. Beyond this thread, there are still questions that loom. For example, with the introduction of newer technologies and their applications, what happens to the ways in which we read and write? In relation to Twitter and other social media, can these fragmented texts be defined as a form of criticism? If so, do they have the ability to stand alone as such? Where are they situated within a body of knowledge or canon?


A resource for modern readers compiled following The Page + The Screen: Siting Text in the Early 21st Century and Beyond, a course organized by the Public School New York beginning in February 2010. Designed, printed and folded with Graphic Union at 177 Livingston, Brooklyn, N.Y. in May 2010. Contributiors include:

APROVAN Alexander Provan
CALEB WALDORF Caleb Waldorf
CALLAHAN Anne Callahan
PDF Portable Document Formats
REANIMATIONLIBRARY Andrew Beconne
SAM FRANK Sam Frank
SARAHIR Sarah Resnick
SOLIDK Kamomi Solidum

User Labor Markup Language (ULML), a project by Burak Arikan and Ergin Erdogan, proposes an open data structure to measure users’ participation in social web services as a means to develop a criteria for user labor, which is “currently a monetized asset for the service provider but not for the user herself.”


Round and round this goes, with the people committed to saving newspapers demanding to know “If the old model is broken, what will work in its place?” To which the answer is: Nothing. Nothing will work. There is no general model for newspapers to replace the one the internet just broke.


A study on the relationship between “micro economies of attention” and employees participation in “organizations social software applications.”

CALEY WALDORF


It would be difficult to overstate the importance of this book to my life. If I hadn’t stumbled across it at a Goodwill in St. Paul, Minnesota, it’s unlikely that I would have ever started the Reanimation Library. I fell in love with its strange images and I remain captivated by them each time I open it. While there are oodles of amazing books in the library, the quality of this one’s design coupled with its subject matter makes it difficult to surpass. And few do. Thank you Behavior of Man. You changed my life.

Battles discusses why our fragmentary reading practices of today (e.g., clicking, linking, blogging, and tweeting) “evoke patterns that made humanism possible.” In previewing his Barnes & Noble review of The Case of Books by Robert Darnton, Battles states:

What I find evocative in Darnton’s description of commonplacing is its striking similarity to some of the energies we like to think the web has created or unleashed.... Elsewhere in the chapter, he declares that early modern readers read “segmentally, by concentrating on small chunks of text and jumping from place to place and jumping from book to book...” does it sound familiar?

[Confession: I do admit to being a fragmentary reader (the Internet has made this more apparent) but I also make a ritual of reading some texts repeatedly. For example, I often re-read certain works by Jorge Luis Borges and parts of Species of Spaces and Other Pieces by Georges Perec.]


In “Kafka and His Precursors,” Borges states:

The fact is that every writer creates his own precursors.

That is, every writer is a reader and thus writes, knowingly or unknowingly, under the influence of preceding texts. In the case of Pierre Menard, Borges once again depicts the reader-writer as palimpsest. Here, the process of reading is unraveled as the “subterranean” work of every writer. Unlike his “visible” works, Menard writes the Quixote by reading it and despite being exactly the same word-for-word as created by Cervantes, the text becomes enriched by Menard’s everyday reality and prior reading experiences. Menard’s impossible quest to compose “the Quixote itself” is described in this way:

To be, in some way, Cervantes and reach the Quixote seemed less arduous to him—and, consequently, less interesting—than to go on being Pierre Menard and reach the Quixote through the experiences of Pierre Menard.

[This is one of those “certain works of Jorge Luis Borges” that I often re-read and with each reading a different word or phrase catches my eye. What will I find ten years from now? Perhaps Borges will make me the fool. Perhaps not.]