May 19-21, 2011
Amsterdam and Den Hague, The Netherlands
http://e-boekenstad.nl/unbound/

Inhoudelijk en financiële verantwoording Unbound Book Conference, May 2011

Hogeschool Van Amsterdam
Singelgrachtbegouw,
Rhijnspoorplein 1,
1091 CR Amsterdam
020 5954740/ http://www.international.hva.nl/

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1 The Unbound Book

Naam project	: The Unbound Book
Indiener	: Hogeschool Van Amsterdam
Adres	: Rhijnspoorplein 1, 1091 CR Amsterdam
Url	: http://www.international.hva.nl/
Contactpersoon	: Morgan Currie
Locatie	: Hogeschool Van Amsterdam
Redactieraad	: Morgan Currie (Institute of Network Cultures), Joost Kircz (Director, Research in Electronic Publishing, Hogeschool van Amsterdam), Geert Lovink (Institute of Network Cultures) Bas Savenije (Director, Koninklijke Bibliotheek), Adriaan van der Weel (Professor of Book and Digital Media Studies, Leiden University)
Mede gefinancieerd door	: Mondriaan Stichting, RAAK-SIA project “Amsterdam E-Boekenstad”, Springer Science+Business Media, Boom Den Haag Publishers, Van Duuren Media, Stichting Lezen, Stichting Collectieve Propaganda van het Nederlandse Boek, OCLC, GottmerUitgevers Groep, NBD/Biblion, Letterkundig Museum and Mermanno Museum.
Production	: Elias Van Hees
Design en ontwerp	: Scott Savage

1.1 Belangrijkste opgeleverde resultaten

- The Unbound Book flyer >> een omschrijving per sessie. Dit event is gehouden 19, 20, 21 May 2011.
- http://e-boekenstad.nl/unbound//>> de website/weblog van het event. Het idée achter deze blog is het hebben van een vaste plek waar materiaal kan worden verzameld en geactualiseerd rondom dit thema.

- Opnames van alle presentaties >> alle presentaties zijn terug te vinden op http://e-boekenstad.nl/unbound/

- 225 tot 250 bezoekers, verdeeld over 3 dagen.

- Blogposts in relatie tot presentaties, zie volgende pagina’s.

- Nieuwe contacten onderling binnen de sprekers. Netwerkuitbreiding en kenniscirculatie.

- Zeer uitgebreide lijst van bronnen zie hiervoor ook http://e-boekenstad.nl/unbound/index.php/resources-2/. Deze lijst geeft een uitgebreid overzicht van al het Commons onderzoeksmateriaal.

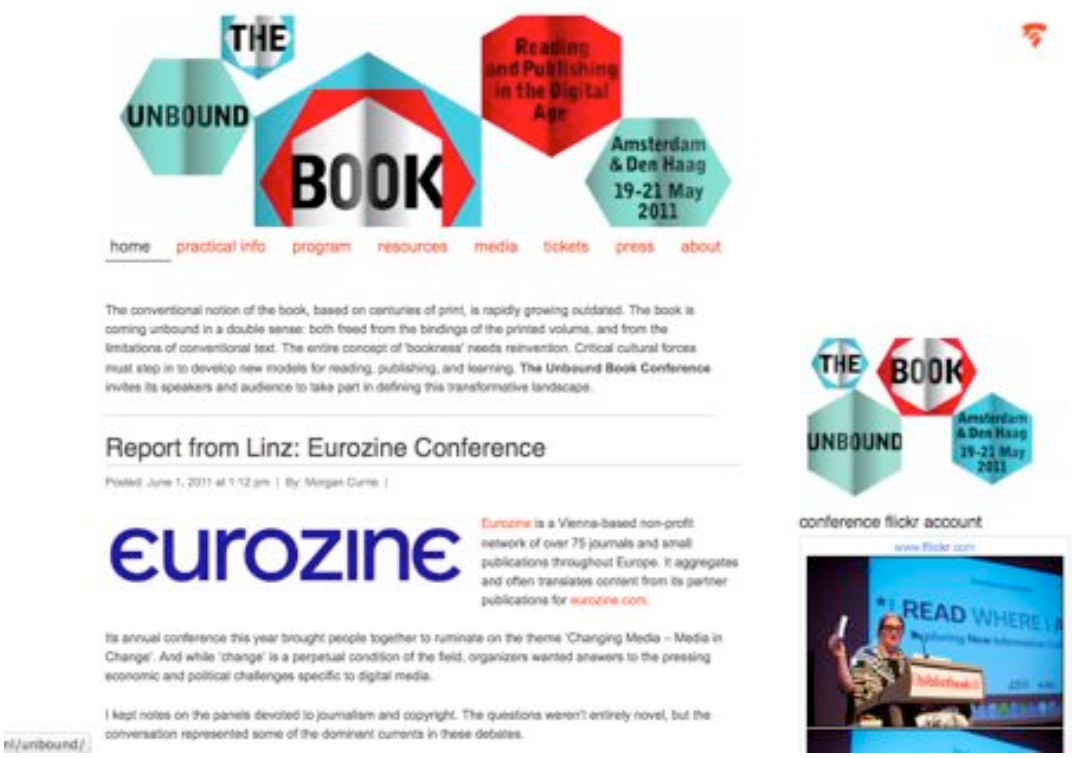
- Documentatie online media archief, en foto’s.

- Publiek bezoekers programma.

- Verdere theorievorming met concepten als open-access, e-books, copyright, publishing.

1.2 http://e-boekenstad.nl/unbound/

De blog is gedurende het project heel erg goed bezocht, dit mede door de vooraf afgenomen interviews met onder andere Joost Kircz, Saskia De Vries, etc. Dit is de mainportal richting de doelgroep. Alle uitingen omtrent het event zijn hier gecommuniceerd. Deze blog zal bestaan blijven. Hier is divers archief materiaal van video interviews tot foto's terug te vinden.



conference flickr account

Program

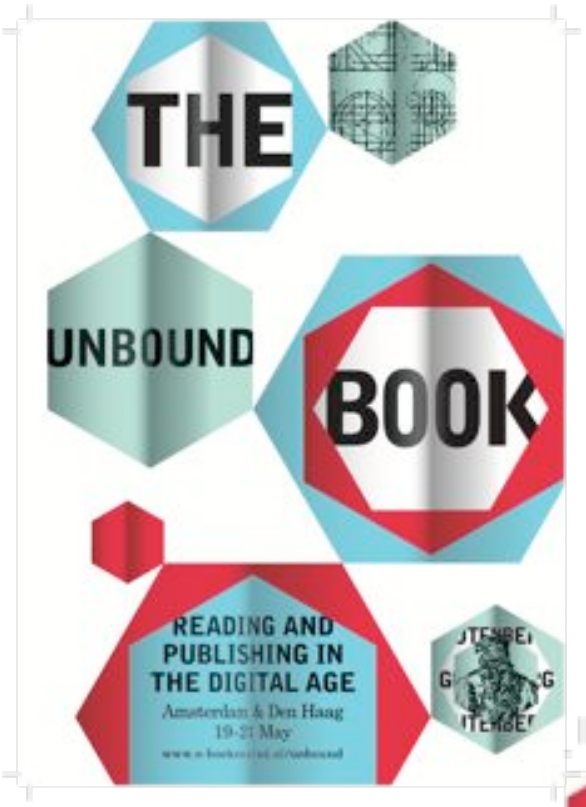
Download the Unbound Book Program.

Thursday, May 19
Hogeschool van Amsterdam
Parallel Workshops

10.30 – 11.00	Coffee and Tea
11.00 – 13.30	Open Publishing Tools
13.30 – 14.00	lunch break
14.00 – 17.00	Digital Enclosures
14.00 – 17.00	E-readers in Dutch Education (RAAK Session)
17.00 – 18.00	Drinks and Snacks

conference flickr account

1.3 Flyer


THE
UNBOUND
BOOK
READING AND
PUBLISHING IN
THE DIGITAL AGE
Amsterdam & Den Haag
19-21 May

THE
UN
BOUND
BOOK
READING AND PUBLISHING
IN THE DIGITAL AGE
THEMES
What is a Book? • The Unbound Book • Ascent
of E-Readers • Future Publishing Industries
• Books by Design • Horizons of Education •
Open Publishing Tools • Digital Enclosures
The conventional notion of the book, based
on centuries of print, is rapidly growing
outdated. The book is coming unbound
in a double sense: both freed from the
bindings of the printed volume, and from
the limitations of conventional text. Yet
while today's multimedia content and online
modes of authorship offer new vistas of
book-like functions and forms, we should also
explore how to preserve vital features
of conventional print.
With a wealth of exciting new possibilities,
the book is left without obvious contours.
Critical cultural forces must step in to design
the book of the future and to develop new
models for reading, publishing, and learning.
The entire concept of 'bookness' needs
reinvention. Through panel discussions,
presentations, workshops, and a book launch,
the Unbound Book Conference brings together
writers, librarians, publishers, theorists, and
designers to take part in defining new roles
within this transformative landscape.
SPEAKERS
Frank van Ansenwegen, Arianne Baggerman,
James Bridle, August Hans den Boef,
Florian Cramer, Gary Hall, Suzanne Holtzer,
Miha Kovač, Tomas Krag, Veljko Kokolj,
Alan Liu, Anne Mangen, Bernhard Rieder,
Roy Siemens, Femke Snelting, Nicholas
Spice, Bob Stein, Simon Worthington,
Dirk van Weelden, and more.
THURSDAY 19 MAY 2011
Workshops
Hogeschool van Amsterdam,
Rhijnspoorplein 1, Amsterdam
FRIDAY 20 MAY 2011
Conference Day 1
Koninklijke Bibliotheek,
Prins Willem-Alexanderhof 5, Den Haag
SATURDAY 21 MAY 2011
Conference Day 2
Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam,
Oosterdokskade 143, Amsterdam
INFO + TICKETS
www.e-boekenstad.nl/unbound
WHAT IS
A BOOK
TODAY?

1.4 Program

Pre-Day Workshops:
Singelgrachtgebouw, Rhijnspoorplein 1(Hogeschool Van Amsterdam), Hilversum, 19 May

On May 19, 2011 The Hogeschool Van Amsterdam hosts a one-day pre-conference workshop on Open Publishing Tools, Digital Enclosures and E-readers in Dutch Education. This pre-conference workshop gathers representatives from the creative industries, publishing professionals and open-access experts to discuss the future of publishing and the book industry.

Program

Open Publishing Tools (11:00-13:30)
Thomas Krag (Refugees United)
Femke Snelting (De Geuzen)
John Haltiwanger
Simon Worthington (Mute Publishing Ltd.)

Digital Enclosures (14:00-17:00)
Sean Dockray (Telic Arts Exchange)
Gary Hall (Open Humanities Press)
Nicholas Spice (London Review of Books)
Christiaan Alberdingk Thijm (SOLV)
Saskia De Vries (Amsterdam University Press)
Moderator: Leo Waaijers

E-Readers in Dutch Education (14:00-17:00):
Moderator: Joost Kircz

1. Open Publishing Tools: A grab bag show-and-tell of the latest innovative open-source resources for digital book design, publishing, and print-on-demand techniques.
2. Digital Enclosures: The audience will engage with serious file sharers who route around locked devices, independent publishers and open-access gurus who take the publishing cycle into their own hands, and representatives from trade publishing seeking to (financially) uphold traditional value-adding editorial processes.
Moderator: Leo Waaijers
3. E-Readers in Dutch Education: Deze workshop is geheel gewijd aan de resultaten en nog lopend onderzoek van het Amsterdam E-boekenstad project.
Moderator: Joost Kircz

The Unbound Book
Day One: Aula Room, Kokinklijke Bibliotheek, Prins Willem-Alexanderhof 5, 2595 BE Den Haag, 20 May

The conventional notion of the book, based on centuries of print, is becoming rapidly outdated. Meanwhile the capacity to create digital book-like functions and forms is endless. In a double sense, the book is unbound, both from the bindings of the printed volume, but also the boundaries between types of content (pictures, video, animations, and games) and modes of authorship in a wide, interconnected electronic space.

These possibilities may be exciting, but the digital book is left without obvious contours. The entire concept of ‘bookness’ needs reinvention. To do this well, we must go back to the basics. That means not only questioning the future of the book and its institutional and intellectual infrastructures, but also asking what we may want to retain of the familiar printed volume, even as we embrace the digital future.

Those developing these (sometimes competing) technologies and standards too often ignore perspectives beyond immediate market-driven concerns. It is critical therefore that cultural and user-centric initiatives step

in to affect how we design, utilize, and disseminate the book's future forms. What new models can advance writing, collaborating, distributing, reading and interpreting knowledge? What affordances can affect the formatting and designing of dynamic content? Through panel discussions, presentations, and workshops, the Unbound Book Conference will bring together academics, designers, writers, librarians, software and hardware developers, and publishers who want to take part in defining their roles within this transformative landscape.

Program

Conference Opening Remarks
Joost Kircz, Hogeschool Van Amsterdam.

What is a Book?
Whether an occasion for private submersion, a totem of cultural credibility, or an aesthetic object, the printed book is always foreclosed between two covers and governed by a unique economy of sale. The electronic, networked book changes all this: is a book the material container for reading, a printed page or an e-reader, or is it content, an entity of externalized memory, a metaphor for knowledge? Or perhaps something else entirely –an on-going conversation space for cultural exchange? Moving from early print culture to the book utopias of Aldus Manutius and Mille Plateaux, the panelists will explore what the book means to us today. What forms of online communication operate best as linear texts, while others (the phonebook) have ceased to be books, mutating instead into databases, webpages, and blogs? How has the book as an object of social capital evolved? What transmutations of the book have succeeded and what failed to take hold…and why?

The Unbound Book
Rumors of the death of the book are a specter of the Internet age. But with the rise of e-readers and text markup, electronic books persist even while transcending the limits of traditional forms. Online the book becomes part of a vast, interactive network of footnotes, endnotes, hyperlinks, social tags, geo-location search capabilities, animations, video and sound. It becomes an occasion for social annotations and collaborative communities of readers and authors. If connected to other information, is the book still a book? Do we herald the death of the individual author with the rise of collaborative writing? What role will editorial and technical standards play? While the printed book seems finite, is there room in our Order of the Book for works that never achieve closure, that remain in an unfolding state?

Ascent of E-readers
Futurists and cultural critics claim that too much time online numbs our mind and thins our attention. This panel looks at the latest research on how our reading technologies change the way we read, think, and teach. What effects will digital textbooks have for human cognition and pedagogy? What will happen to sustained reading in an environment amenable to browsing and instant gratification? Or are cynical predictions about the dumbing-down of digital devices just another form of techno-determinism? When can short-formats – blogs, wikis, listserves, cell-phone novels – promote radical opportunities for lively discussion and self-expression without reducing sustained argument? In other words, how much 'e' vs 'p' do educators, libraries, and readers want or need?

Day Two: Theater Van'T Woord, Openbare Bibliotheek Oosterdokskade 143 1011 DL Amsterdam, 21 May

Future Publishing Industries
This panel will focus on the affordances and political economies of the publishing industry and libraries. If the book has no paper-based bindings, how will publishers package and monetize content? How will libraries organize and distribute information? Will publishing cycles radically change, due to cheap reproduction and storage costs? Publishing has decentralized beyond the traditional domain of professional houses to include Amazon, Google, Apple, and even libraries. How will these new players influence the field? What new economies will e-readers and e-books develop? How will print-on-demand change all these institutions? This panel will provide perspectives from the scholarly and popular book trade, authors, and libraries.

Books by Design
This panel explores the book as an object, as an addiction, a romantic form. What is the digital equivalent of the book as aesthetic object? The panelists will explore the pleasures and pains of online reading. How will software, e-ink, and browsers determine the readability and malleability of digital text? How do digital native books translate into the physical, printed realm (POD), and vice versa? What have designers lost, now that they no longer control the tactility of the reading hardware, and what have they gained, such as multi-media and interactivity? How does text interact with the aesthetics of code and with dynamic, process-oriented information? Can we promote open-source design practices and new grammars of typography?

Horizons of Education and Authoring
This panel considers new computational possibilities that the digital book lends to scholarly research, authoring, and teaching. Panelists will ask if collaborative p2p and multimedia textbooks will become prominent classroom and publishing tools. How might e-readers increase literacy and access to information in poor areas of the world? How do digital books' algorithmically driven semantics give us new ways to facilitate scholarly practices and collaborations? We will look at 'distant reading,' as books can reveal patterns across space and time. This panel also explores modular documents in scientific publishing that allow readers to present and access multimedia text in different ways.

Evening Event: Book Launch May 21
Critical Point of View: A Wikipedia Reader
For millions of internet users around the globe, the search for new knowledge begins with Wikipedia. The encyclopedia's rapid rise, novel organization, and freely offered content have been marveled at and denounced by a host of commentators. Critical Point of View moves beyond unflagging praise, well-worn facts, the classic amateur versus expert debate, and questions of reliability and accuracy, to unveil the complex, messy, and controversial realities of a distributed knowledge platform. The essays, interviews and artworks brought together in this reader form part of the overarching Critical Point of View research initiative, which began with a conference in Bangalore (January 2010), followed by events in Amsterdam (March 2010) and Leipzig (September 2010). With an emphasis on theoretical reflection, cultural difference and indeed, critique, contributions to this collection ask: What values are embedded in Wikipedia's software? On what basis are Wikipedia's claims to neutrality made? How can Wikipedia give voice to those outside the Western tradition of Enlightenment, or even its own administrative hierarchies? Critical Point of View collects original insights on the next generation of Wiki-related research, from the significant role of bots and radical artistic interventions to hidden trajectories of encyclopedic knowledge and the politics of agency and exclusion.

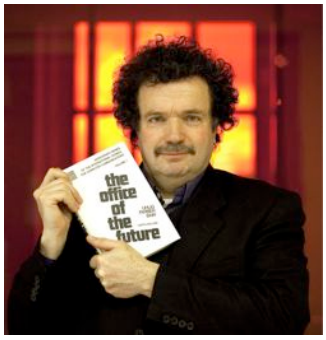
2 Blogposts

Gedurende 'The Unbound Book' is er net als op voorgaande events een team van bloggers actief geweest. Dit team heeft alle presentaties bijgewoond en hier verslag van gedaan. Achtereenvolgens treft u alle blogpost aan die geschreven zijn tijdens de conferentie.
Een prachtig verslag van alles wat er zich ontwikkeld heeft gedurende 19-21 May. Over het algemeen zijn de blogposts in het Engels.

Op 19, 20 en 21 May vond in Hogeschool Van Amsterdam, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Openbare Bibliotheek de Unbound Book plaats. Tijdens dit evenement werd door verschillende mensen gekeken naar de economische aspecten van het online publieke domein en publiek toegankelijke informatiebronnen, kennis en media (de zogenoemde 'digital commons'). Er waren zes sessies tijdens deze drie dagen en elk onderdeel bestond uit drie of vier sprekers. De onderdelen waren: Pre-conference Seminar Open Video Europe, Opening speech by Joost Kircz, What is a Book?, The Unbound Book, Ascent of E-readers, Future Publishing Industries, Books by Design, Horizons of Education and Authoring.

Een team van studenten die verbonden zijn aan de opleiding New Media and Digital Culture in Amsterdam hebben een verslag van een aantal sessie van de twee conferentiedagen gemaakt: Elias van Hees, Suzanne Schram, Lily Antflick, Rachel O'Reilly, Ryanne Turenhout,, Hania Piotrowska, Ekaterina Yudin, Nick Ungerer, Serena Westra.

Interviews



The Future of the Educational Ebook: A Talk with Joost Kircz

Posted: May 12, 2011 at 8:57 am I By: Suzanne Schram

I met with Joost Kircz, the main organizer of the Unbound Book conference and director of research of Electronic Publishing at the Domain Media, Creation and Information of the Hogeschool van Amsterdam. We spoke about the conference, the e-boekenstad project and about the still-elusive future of educational ebooks.

SS: What are the primary goals of the e-boekenstad project? And how does the conference relate to this project?

JK: The goal of the e-boekenstad project is trying to understand the relationship between electronic versions of educational material and the changing book chain. It is a collaborative effort of publishers, distributors, libraries and companies working on electronic material in general as well as the HvA as an educational institute. The point is that creating electronic educational material is not just making a photograph of an oil painting and selling it as a postcard, it is trying to find out how changing substrates of messages are influencing the way material is written, read and understood.

The relationship with the conference is that for most people it is clear that for educational material e-learning will become important because people are struggling with a greater number of books (and in an electronic environment also with books formally known as 'out of print'), working from various places or even travelling long distances. However for educational materials the reason for e-learning is clear but the implementation of new educational material has a very long way to go. At the conference we try to tackle problems such as what is the book as an object, and how should a book be edited and structured? The real thread in the conference is the educational material because there it becomes clear what can be changed. We don't know yet what the effect will be of the changes.

SS: How does the ideal educational ebook look?

JK: Honestly I don't know, and even the educational publishers don't know yet. The point is that for some parts of an electronic educational book you need text to make it understandable, explanatory text. Other parts can be much better explained in pictures, film or sound. This is the difference between an illustration and an explanation. You can illustrate reasoning in a picture; say the movement of tectonic plates. On the other end of the scale pictures are the primary information such as the picture of a wound or a tire imprint in mud as forensic evidence. Here it is the text that explicates what we see, and after that explication we will always immediately be able to recognize. In the case of a wound colour is essential.

There is always a balance between a picture as illustration to make the reasoning better understandable and primary information, which has other demands. The quality of colour is not important when it is to illustrate, like a graph of a company's turnover. On the other hand it you want to describe a flower, something from nature, the quality of the colour is essential. The technical requirements depend on the type of information, the genres and on the type of understanding. The balance for educational books is: where do you need text, where do you need pictures, where do you need sound. Plus, this is very important, how do you build different stages, different levels in a modular approach, that is now part of research.

The handling of material becomes something new. We solved the problem of handling a pile of books. Now it is possible to do comparative research on another level, since we have material in digital form to compare, to refer back to, or to make annotations of in the text. So, now I can do different kinds of study, which means I have different demands on my electronic equipment. When I, for example, do a comparable research of paintings, I want to have a picture manipulator like Corel or Photoshop. We don't yet have a clear understanding of the methodology. It is very new.

An electronic educational book should enable students from various backgrounds, cultural as well as intellectually, to achieve a similar end. Now educational books start on a certain level, but not all students have the same level when they start. My hope is that an educational book will be able to have different entries. The electronic book will then be able to have a variety of educational lines within the same channel from first year student to graduation. There is not one didactical way to end up at the finishing point. Electronic educational works will enable you to implement different ways of coming to the same goal that can be much more student- and cultural-dependent.

SS: When do you expect ebooks will be used in education?

JK: Ebooks will be used when the business model is set; it is not only an intellectual exercise. Economically it is extremely important because the way we write and produce books is new. The once in a lifetime event of buying a particular book is over. For example it might become possible that together with your diploma you will get a lifelong licence of educational material. It is a completely new economic model. New material needs a completely new way of manufacturing. At the graveyard, there are stones, we only know for sure that if you want to be remembered you use stone, that's it, there is no floppy disk on the graveyard. There is something in the human culture that if you want to have something that has stability, we use materials that have proven stability. And electronic memory is not yet proven to be stable, because they change every couple of years. People don't feel certain of new materials. So they will not transfer lock, stock and barrel to electronic environments and put all their chips on that before there is some security of eternity.

SS: There are many forms of ebooks, such as ebooks for the mobile phone. What is your opinion of ebooks for the mobile phone?

JK: It failed because they didn't make an investigation of what reading is. You have to find out what the mental activity of reading is and what you need. Technologists have not invented the size of the book but it is formed by usage. For reading you need a certain size and overview. Will you read from a phone if you have a paperback? Why was the paperback so successful? Because it reads very nicely and you can take it with you. A telephone doesn't read very nice, but you can take it with you. Of course you can eat peas with chopsticks and you can read a book on your telephone that is about the same. But why would you?

SS: What will be the future of ebooks for education?

JK: In the future education won't be entirely digital. Education is also not on paper completely. You have to make a distinction between a storage medium and a presentation medium. The output technology will change, which can be screen, paper, or wall. If we have a flexible screen with a resolution as good as paper, there will be a day that you roll it up, and away with the codex. But we have a long way to go. So everything will be stored electronically, but the output, the presentation device is not necessarily an electronic screen. Simply because you might read in an environment where there is no electricity.

The development of ebooks, and then I don't mean the electronic reproduction of a paper book, will be dynamic but it will be reasonably slow. We have to develop new methodologies, new ways of writing, new ways of editing, and that will take one or two generations. Two barriers have already been solved: logistics and memory. We now face the next barrier, how to read and how to compose because it is not just making a copy of a paper book. I truly hope that one of the outcomes of the conference is that we create a research platform on all aspects of ebooks that goes beyond the gadget.

SS: What are your other expectations of the conference?

JK: My expectation is first that there is a better understanding of the fact that now the barriers of logistics, memory and bandwidth have been solved and that we only start now to define the research and routine for, say, hypertext environments. The barriers have been solved technically but now we don't know how to handle it. So there is a lot of experimenting going on and that will be presented. I hope we get a better understanding of how to make educated guesses, to do control tests with publishers, with libraries, with authors to find out what really are the novel aspects of electronic publishing. Hence, you have to define what is the message between the author and the reader and what technology fits best to cater for the conveying of

that message. I like the word ‘message’ more than ‘content’ because content is one of these undefined notions in this world, which are most often used as a measure for charging users of electronic networks. A message can be a full book but also a telephone number that you are looking for.

In favour of Open Access: A talk with AUP’s Saskia de Vries

Posted: May 18, 2011 at 7:25 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

Saskia de Vries will speak tomorrow on the ‘Digital Enclosures’workshop on the Unbound Book conference. This workshop focuses on open vs. closed. Saskia will contribute to this session with her experience as managing director and senior editor of Amsterdam University Press (AUP) and AUP’s role inOpen Access Publishing in European Networks (OAPEN). I already spoke with her about The Berlin Declaration, the benefits of and the resistance against Open Access (OA) and the future of academic publishing.

SS: The *Berlin Declaration* *on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities* was initiated in 2003. The goal of the declaration is to make information widely and readily available to society. What is accomplished since then in the area of Open Access?

SdV: When in 2003 the Berlin Declaration started the worldwide discussion on Open Access, it was absolutely unsure what would come of it. Now, 8 years later, it is completely clear that Open Access will become the most important way of disseminating results of academic research. However, the actors in the field (authors/researchers, academic funding bodies, publishers and librarians) do still have to agree on the right financial model for it to be implemented.

SS: Can you tell something about how Amsterdam University Press and OAPEN use Open Access?

SdV: Amsterdam University Press realised in a very early stage that for a University Press (UP), these developments of Open Access were very interesting. As we are not-for-profit, and we already considered ourselves as a service to academia, it was very obvious to start co-operating with our authors and the funding bodies of the universities and the Netherlands to make the transition to an Open Access publisher. However, the Open Access movement started in STM (Science, Technology and Medical Sciences) and therefore mainly in Journal/Article publishing. As AUP (like most University Presses) primarily publishes monographs in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), and the EU was interested in an experiment in that area, we started the project Open Access Publishing in European Networks together with 5 other UP’s in Europe. The goal of OAPEN was to find useful, exciting and beneficial ways of publishing scholarly work in Open Access, enhancing access to important peer reviewed research from across Europe. Most importantly it found afinancial model which is appropriate to scholarly humanities monographs, a publishing platform which is beneficial to all users and created a network of publishing partners across Europe and the rest of the world.

SS: OAPEN tries to stimulate Open Access for the Humanities and Social Sciences. What are the benefits of Open Access for the Humanities and Social Sciences?

SdV: One can not underestimate the advantages of Open Access for HSS, where the monograph is still the predominant way of disseminating the results of research. First of all, the business model for publishing academic monographs has completely collapsed in the last 30 years, due to the growing costs of Journals in STM with more than 300%. As the budgets of university libraries did not go up accordingly, they had to cut on what they purchased, and so the average sold copies of a monograph in HSS went down from 1500 in the 1970′s to 400 at this time. With a print run of only 400 copies sold of a book, it is not possible to brake even anymore. Hence the decision of all commercial publishers to pull out of monograph publishing in HSS, and focus on the financially very rewarding publication of journals in STM. These developments have led to the so-called monograph crises, and publishers (and authors) in HSS have been turning to foundations for money to remain capable of publishing the results of HSS research as such. The costs of making those

results available through Open Access (book) publications is not more expensive than the costs of using the traditional model, and therefore we believe that if the funding agents for research would agree to help disseminate HSS monographs as well as articles in STM in Open Access, this would solve the monograph crises.

There is also a substantial argument: HSS research is very often based on a lot of data and previous publications. In Open Access publishing, linking to the information on which a new publication is based, is very simple. In this way, the data and arguments that underlie a new publication/argument, are easily found and checked. In the future, the whole way of doing research will eventually change, due to the possibilities of Open Access, I am sure.

We actually made a small YouTube film about this at the start of the OAPEN library.

SS: Why is there so much resistance against Open Access?

SdV: Most of the aversion (and all of the advocating!) against Open Access publishing comes from the commercial publishers, who are afraid that the profits they have been making will evaporate and they aren't too certain they can find a new business model for that. I also think the problem we are encountering in moving into an Open Access world for academic publications lies in the fact that most academics just do not know how much money already goes round in libraries for the use they make of academic publications. There are still academics that actually think that most publications are already freely available, where it's their library that pays for the subscriptions and they can only find it through their IP computer…. Finally, if academia would move completely over into an Open Access situation, it are the wealthy, big (read Western) research universities that will have to pay most in order to put up all their research results in OA, most probably they will have to pay more than they do in an subscription driven academic society. Some of them are not too eager to make that move …..

SS: The Amsterdam University Press uses Open Access and PoD. How do you see the roles of PoD and Open Access for the future of academic publishing?

SdV: Open Access will become the predominant way of dissemination of academic results, although I do think it will take more than just a couple of years before that is a fact. We really need more international initiatives like that of NWO (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek), where the boss, Jos Engelen, made a substantial financial fund available for Open Access dissemination of the results of research. Printing on Demand is just a more efficient and cost effective way of printing small print runs in the direct environment where an order for a book is placed. For information see:

http://www.aup.nl/do.php?a=show_visitor_repository&p=1388

Is the Enhanced Ebook Really Dead?

Posted: May 18, 2011 at 2:04 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

According to Evan Schnittman, Bloomsbury's managing director of sales and marketing, enhanced content for narrative-based ebooks is dead. He announced at last month's book fair: "Enhanced [ebooks] will have an incredibly big future in education, but the idea of innovation in the narrative reading process is just a non-starter." Faber and Faber's head of digital, Henry Volans, disagreed: "Apps are a phenomenon of our age and are here to stay." So are enhanced ebooks an already-dying phenomenon or not?

The difficulties of enhanced ebooks

Carolyn Reidy, President and CEO of Simon & Schuster, points outthat they're difficult to sell: "The enhanced ebook market is not very strong and some of the biggest sellers still are less than 2,000 copies. [It] doesn't appear that public is enthused by the concept. Apps […] are very expensive to make and get lost in the App

Store." Agent and E-Reads publisher Richard Curtis stresses that copyright is another difficulty: "The challenge of clearing rights for enhanced e-books is so dauntingly complex that nothing less than an overhaul of the current antiquated system is necessary if enhanced e-books are not to die aborning."

Confidence in enhanced ebooks

Joost Kircz, director of research of Electronic Publishing at the Domain Media, Creation and Information of the Hogeschool van Amsterdam and the main organizer of the Unbound Book conference, disagrees with Schnittman: "Stories can be enhanced. The whole invention of the movie is proof that this statement is untrue. In cinema the narrative, the novel, has been expanded into sound and vision. So the enhanced book has a fantastic future, although we aren't yet there. It is like saying when the first film started: this will never replace theatre. So this is really a defensive and short-sighted statement."

Several publishers believe in the future of enhanced ereaders enough to develop them. Enhanced Editions Ltd. specializes in their publication, and Penguin, Random House and St. Martin's Press are jumping in the mix too. Fionnuala Duggan, Director of Random House Group Digital, sees the enhanced ebook as an opportunity to attract new costumers: "We are experimenting with ways to create new interactive content which will not only appeal to traditional book lovers, but will also reach out to a brand new readership." Ana Maria Allessi, publisher of HarperMedia, stresses their attraction: "When both digital editions are available, and consumers are given the choice, in half the cases they'll pay more for extra content." Also Dominique Raccah, publisher and owner of Sourcebooks Inc. relates it to reader interest: "We sold more than 4 million physical books with CDs, so we know that there is an interest in meshing text with audio and video."

Publishers are often enthusiastic, but what do authors think? James Patterson and Lee Child take a positive view. Patterson sees it as new way to engage his readers: "Packaging ebooks with additional, interactive, digital content is a great way to engage readers. I'm always interested in exploring ways of attracting people to my novels." Child believes enhancement will mark the future of publishing: "In the future both writers and readers will interact with books, stories and characters – and each other – in wholly new ways, and I congratulate Random House for asking the questions and supplying the first answers."

The categorisation of ebooks

When it comes down to it, we first have to define what an enhanced ebook is. Schnittman for example uses both the terms 'enhanced e-books' and 'apps'. Over the years different terms have been used for ebooks with enhancements, such as 'expanded ebook', 'amplified ebook', 'enriched ebook', 'Vook' and ' iBook'. I propose a distinction of three different kinds of ebooks: 'ebook', 'enhanced ebook' and 'multimedia ebook'. 'Ebook' is the simple ebook, a digital version of a book without extras. The 'enhanced ebook' is an electronic book with additional information, primarily of text, and relates to the core text but is not part of the core. The 'multimedia ebook' is embedded with different media such as pictures, music, video and games. (S.Schram, The Consequences of the Literary E-boook, 2010).

People are more and more accustomed to the multimedia properties the computer provides, so enhanced ebooks and especially multimedia ebooks will likely be successful. The publisher however should look carefully at any single book's content and decide which enhancements should be added to increase the pleasure of reading it. Not every reader will equally value all the possible enhancements for the ebook. People who read for a hobby might not value the addition of different media but rather of essays about the context of the story or information about the author. Readers who read for entertainment might prefer entertaining additions such as recipes, trivia or quizzes, and others who have hobbies and who for example especially read during the holidays might value the media enhancements more. Readers who like watching films or gaming will value the adding of film clips and games to a book. In conclusion the enhanced ebook is not dead but alive and will be even more livelier in the future.

Thomas Krag on Booksprint and Collaborative Authoring

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 6:40 pm | By: Rachel O'Reilly

'Booksprint' is a working model for collaborative book authorship, and has since inspired a FLOSS tool calledBooki. Its genius is that it takes the proven model of the 'codesprint' that open source software communities have used so successfully – to develop huge amounts of code in single intense bursts of focussed collective labour over one week of living, thinking, and working together – and applies it directly to book production. Wireless and F/OSS geek and grassroots technology generalist Thomas Krag introduced Booksprint to theOpen Source Publishing Tools workshop as an inverse story about the matter-ing of publishing: "..an outsider's view of this whole book thing."

Moving On to Bookness

The Booksprint idea came about while Kraag was working with wire.less.dk, a non-profit he co-founded dedicated to establishing internet infrastructure using open wireless technologies in developing countries. Their company model – "two Danish geeks travelling the world" – was not at all scalable to the wireless networking they wanted to see developing. Limited attention was being given to existing manuals and didactic wikis ("it never occurred to us to ask why anyone else would use our modules when we never read anyone else's modules") while the labour involved in ongoing "teach the teacher" sessions was unrealistic. The net at that time in some parts of Africa was also so slow as to not handle simple file downloads of didactic materials. What seemed necessary was a singular authoritative book. It was not possible to put one together from existing quality published material because the book had to be on a free creative commons license, legally open to any translator who wished to translate it, and most importantly, it needed to be able to be legally re-sold locally, so that translators could benefit from their investment in translating it. Kraag realized he was not prepared for the task…

I didn't want to write a book for 18 months, because at heart I'm pretty lazy, so I called a bunch of friends working on wireless networks that were already coming to a conference in London: "Can we stick around for a week afterwards and write this book?" Some of them said, "Are you crazy?" The reason I thought we could do it is through the existing production model of the codesprint. We sit together and it increases our efficiency. So I found 5000K which was enough for tickets, and to pay someone to go on holidays to Morocco and leave his house to us for a week.

The Conversion of a Genre of Text Labouring into Software Tools

The text still needed to be edited for 6 months, but 'Wireless Networking in the Developing World', has had 2 million downloads since and is in its 2nd edition. The process was tedious, using emailed and cut and paste files, proprietary software, and open source outputs. Better tools have developed since 2009 when Adam Hyde began using booksprint for FLOSS manuals and has since fully developed the booksprint model in to Bookie software, a robust and customised collaborative authoring tool. 'How to Bypass Internet Censorship' was written with Bookie directly in to the browser, with the crew pressing the "publish" button on the 7th day.

It doesn't really matter if its not completely polished… it still feels great… The first day you write the table of contents and the index… on friday night you upload it to lulu and its done and it feels so good. a week of all nighters is so much more doable than a year of working on something.

Highlights

Because Booki is open source, you can download it and adapt it as you want. FLOSS' design has beautifully simple READ and WRITE interfaces and PUBLISH buttons down one side, and a chat section down the right, where you can talk with and share material between other authors writing alongside you remotely. It can handle versioning, tracking authorship (for attribution for different licences), Javi, wiki style sheets that generate html, and a whole bunch of other things. (Check out the van that the Booki crew built for Booki that can drive around and print books!) All the licensing is handled by the site itself and built on Hyde's own licensing expertise.

Discussion

Krag has not received government or local government funding for his work and instead relies on philanthropic investment since 2002. In the closing discussion, the huge issue of translation software was raised. Simon Worthington of Mute has done research into this and states there really isn't much, especially not open source. A rare strong example is Pootle. Krag noted FLOSS manuals exists in 5 languages already and can do split views, but this is an area that needs a lot of work. One of the main problems is that professional translators have very established workflow methods – the bottom line is that have to send to translations in Microsoft Word as standard. Femke from OSP mentioned that the EU's translation department has incredible tools – but only in Microsoft!! One of the exceptions is the Spanish local governments, which do some very good work with open translation, including machine translation – they have some of the same remits that the EU have which means they have to translate large amounts of government text. This may be somewhere to look for modelling solutions.

Floss Manuals Booki available here.

John Haltiwanger: Generative Typesetting

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 3:55 pm | By: Hania Piotrowska

John Haltiwanger is a New Media MA graduate and an autodidactic programmer with a strong interest in typesetting and open source software. Haltiwanger collaborates with the Open Source Publishing platform andUniversiteit van Amsterdam. The main focus of his presentation is generative typesetting, with his MA thesis used as an illustration. Haltiwanger argues for liberating humanities from proprietary control of tools such as Microsoft Office or Adobe Suite by implementing open source tools within academia. A man standing behind his beliefs, for his presentation he uses an open source version of Prezi (an alternative to PowerPoint) – Sozi.

“It’s not who or what you are, it’s where you’re at” (reference to Rakim’s “It’s not where you’re from, it’s where you’re at”) opens the third presentation in the Open Publishing Tools panel on Day 1 of the Unbound Book Conference. Haltiwanger starts by mentioning LaTeX and LyX, common libre tools which can be successfully used for typesetting documents such as theses and argued for their superior typographical and referencing management advantages. However, he also mentions that extensive stylistic customization in these tools can pose major problems and that such realization lead him to exploring other options and discovering ConTeXt.

Haltiwanger exemplifies the possibilities enabled by tools such as ConTeXt with his own Master thesis whose case study was its own typesetting. What follows is a discussion of the technicalities of producing the thesis using generative typesetting, such as the necessity of setting it in both HTML and PDF and being dependent on automation. Later he explains how people began to start applying the visually semantic developments found in email communications (such as ALL CAPS to indicate shouting or underscores for _emphasis_) to enable a precursor format for generating HTML (an example being Markdown) and concludes that in terms of informational impact and widespread use, MediaWiki has been the most successful visually semantic format. However, he doesn’t see wikis as particularly fruitful in producing essays because of their fragility and not fully flowing visual semanticization. On the other hand, the relative popularity of wikis within the humanities proves that it is not so difficult for people to comprehend and work with visually semantic textuality.

The core of Haltiwanger’s discourse on generative typesetting is unraveled within the introduction of Subtext, a tool he is designing. Its most distinguishing characteristic is transformability of both the semantics and procedures of dealing with them. In result, the same semantics can be interpreted in multiple ways and a file can be easily made into a PDF for screen or for print; an HTML version or ePub can also be generated. Thus, he believes that the Next Great Format does not pose threat to Subtext. While Microsoft Word privileges the human and HTML privileges the computer, Haltiwanger envisions Subtext as introducing a productive balance of agency between these two, while at the same time bringing out the best in the text itself. An effect of this balance is that tools for distributed source code development could be applied in a generative typesetting.

Some controversies during the Q&A session are driven by Haltiwanger’s suggestion that the contribution of these developer tools could possibly revolutionize the class room in academic humanities’ workflows, collaborative homework and peer review situations. While the server knows who each individual contributor is, it does not need to give this information to others and therefore enables for more just grading or collaborative work. While Haltiwanger imagines the tool to allow teachers to have new ways of having their stylistic wishes respected and for new ways of grading and reviewing, some of the audience members voice their concerns that he suggests machines (the server) grade human contributions based on the quantity and not the quality of input. Haltiwanger acknowledges those doubts with a clarification that this was not his suggestion and that by keeping the interface of the tools flexible, anything can be imagined: live anonymous peer review, conversations occurring without the power dynamics of names and granular grading of group writing are just the tip of the iceberg.

The conclusion of Haltiwanger's presentation is that while current generative typesetting workflows are still too complex for a widespread implementation, Subtext as a F/LOSS tool is capable of reflecting the relative simplicity of humanities' workflow. People need to care about open source tools in academia and give up the embodied comforts of the current proprietary workflow. Humanities writing can be successfully liberated from proprietary control through merging the toolsets of distributed programming and reconfiguring them for one's own specific needs. While rather technical, Haltiwanger's presentation is inspiring: although still a distant vision, a widespread implementation of open source tools within academia would no doubt enable many new possibilities.

View Presentation here: http://drippingdigital.com/conf/unbound-book/textual-liberation.svg
Text document of notes here

Femke Snelting: F/LOSS tools in graphic design

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 3:48 pm | By: Hania Piotrowska

Femke Snelting is an artist and designer who works with the interdisciplinary and international graphic design collective Open Source Publishing based in Brussels. During her presentation Snelting addresses the possibilities and realities of design, illustration and typography using a range of F/LOSS (free/libre/open-source software) tools. While modifying and expanding their toolbox, OSP uses solely open software since 2006 to investigate its potential in a professional design environment.

Femke Snelting is the second speaker during the first panel (Open Publishing Tools) on Day 1 of the Unbound Book Conference. She explains how while growing tired of being tied to Macs with Adobe software, the founding members of OSP decided to move away from the suite and explore the rich landscape of other softwares. Switching to Linux and F/LOSS tools freed them from proprietary software and changed their ways of thinking about their practice. Amongst other activities, they started throwing "print parties" (where participants designed a book) in order to spread awareness of other options within a wider public.

She mentiones the possibility of a dialogue between OSP and libre software developers as one of the main advantages of switching from proprietary to open: "If we depend on the software, we need to be able to make it better". She follows this stance with a story of experiencing technical problems with rendering PDF files while using Scribus (open source program for professional page layout). The problems were addressed in an e-mail correspondence between OSP and Scribus and in result OSP members became active members of the Scribus community. Snelting asserts that such involvement would have never been possible, had OSP been using Adobe packages.

OSP actively develops fonts and Snelting mentions univers else which is notable for being reproduced from the original univers font through custom software developed by OSP (which generates fonts from scanned sources). Linking to this, Snelting also mentions a project based on scanning a book, generating a font from its typeface and producing a PDF (the project is still unnamed but will make its debut at Verbindingen/Jonctions13 this Fall in Brussels).

Femke Snelting's presentation proves that open source tools can be used as a viable publishing model. Open Source Publishing's book *Verbindingen/Jonctions 10: Tracks in electr(on)ic fields* is a Fernand Baudin 2009 prize-winning publication which was designed and typeset using only F/LOSS software. Pierre Huyghebaert and Femke Snelting collaborated on it using ConTeXt, Gimp, Inkscape and Scribus.

Simon Worthington on Progressive Publishing Systems

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 1:18 am | By: Rachel O'Reilly |

Mute is an independent editorial and technology initiative, a key space for critical independent cultural writing in the UK, a magazine, a book publisher, and a collective since 1994. Over the years Mute has produced multiuser CMS, live coding AV software, community wireless networks, and OS software packages alongside innovative online and material print projects, commissions and events. They have been generating exceptionally powerful Print on Demand book projects since 2005 (and are right now doing great experiments with paper types and new printing techniques in this area). Their experimental approach is informed as much by financial constraint as by critical artistic intrigue. Indeed their resilience and lateral movements have only become more inspiring following the announcement of 100% cuts to their funding by Arts Council England, just as they are forming unique technology and business partnerships to work up some of their latest publishing initiatives.

Progressing Public (Publishing) Goods

Co-founder of Mute, Simon Worthington, framed the Mute platform for the Open Publishing Tools workshop attendees via the organisation's attention to meta-issues, or "overall publishing". The group are fundamentally invested in the notion of public independent publishing infrastructures, which entails pragmatic, research-based responsivity to the real present needs of fellow independent publishers locally and worldwide. Their current focus is on ebooks, html5, and print on demand. These are the tools that are really going to keep 'critical' cultural writing *independent* in to the future. In the discussion time afterwards, Simon summarized in the following:

… our goal is about keeping a culture of criticality in place. If you're publishing in an independent way then you don't exist in the market because the market doesn't give you a reward because you don't sell enough titles because of the way culture is valued – as creative industry – which pushes out the cultural writers and cultural journals. This period of living through the free web.. we've embraced it but there is no solution to the demonitization of the web. There is no balanced 'flat fee" across the web… so (what Mute focusses on as) the 'end' (c.f. the means) is about public infrastructures for culture and community.

Mute's 'Progressive Publishing System'

The core of Simon's presentation introduced Mute's very exciting 'Progressive Publishing System', an "ePublishing conversion, distribution & remuneration software system" designed to break though barriers to access for creative, remunerative e-publication by independents. The system makes it much more possible for small publishers and e-authors to:

* generate eBooks for kindle, Tablets, HTML5, and Print On Demand books
* easily convert and repurpose books, journals, articles, web content, blogs, back catalogues, and archives
* distribute digital books to major online retailers
* supply POD publications through Amazon FBAs ('Fulfilled by Amazon services')

The Difference the System Makes

PPS most significantly conquers the huge problem of conversion: the necessary technical breakdown of a document's inbuilt markup code for layout, font and images in to (re)publishable formats. Until now this involved huge incontrovertible hours of human-computer interaction, breaking down texts in to bits, rebuilding and reproofing them within next / other platforms prior to republication. Existing tools like Word, Indesign, Web CMS are unfit for this work; and publishers' workflows otherwise corrupt or don't handle metadata. The

repetition of conversion and proofing labour multiples multi-platform publishing costs, especially when texts move through differently incompatible (proprietary) softwares, limiting small publisher opportunities to output in convergent (and therefore more monetizable) ways.

The PPS system's single source approach to coding contrarily separates out the text and images of a document, *mechanically* describes them so that a computer system can know what they are, and puts them into different outputs. The solution intervenes as *architecture at the level of workflow* – reducing the workload by a factor of 5, according to Worthington. The innovation comes in the separation of content from delivery platforms, in order to enable greater workflow integration, connect with Web 2.0 API's and even additional services like translation, and enhance rich metadtata integrity throughout this process. The system itself is therefore both a "content repository" and a solution to outputting, in its management and splitting of just two types of publication metadata: information about the publication for sales distribution purposes; and a structured XML schema of the internal document structure readable by platform conversion services. The two metadata types are designed to synchronize with the realities of what Mute calls the "post-production life cycle of publications": publisher's workflows, distributor's sales services and platform conversions. The idea is that publishers are left with enhanced conversion possibilities and removed barriers to all variety of the new platforms (e.g. tablets and eBook Readers), an increased reach by connecting to sales distributors (e.g. Amazon, Apple, Ingrams), and a healthy ePublishing presence and revenues, such as through one-stop-shop web services.

E-published Resources and Wikis for E-publishing

Mute's thorough, collaborative research and documentation about these new tools, as well as their surveys of existing solutions to e-publishing, can be found online across a series of open docs, links and related wikis. Their new website will also be launched very soon.

http://linkme2.net/pd
http://theknowledge.aodl.org.uk/index.php/Publishing

Nicholas Spice: The Words Now Work for Us.

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 2:48 pm | By: Lily Antflick

Nicholas Spice has been Publisher of the London Review of Books since 1982. He has from time to time contributed articles to the LRB on fiction, music and psychoanalysis.

Spice prefaces his discussion during the 'Digital Enclosures' session by explaining that as a literary magazine, the London Review of Books is ultimately a commercial operation, at the capitalist end of the spectrum and therefore doesn't spend much time stewing over questions of open-access.

The publications' main interest in rights used to be strictly commercial, however this has changed in the digital age, in a universe without a sense of time where artifacts can surface at any given moment and everything is available online. The rights to this material, old and new, must now be protected. Prior to this, with the periodical press, everything was ephemeral and one could publish something with it inevitably disappearing soon after.

Previously, it was predicted to be impossible to transfer the magazine to the 20th century. However, this has proved false. In fact, the possibilities for the magazine and other literary works are greatly enhanced in the digital age. The digital era has prompted an unexpected business boom and an extreme rise in literary circulation.

Spice explains how we now find an “inversion of the search phenomenon”. Before the Internet, one had to go seek out and find readers, but now, “the public finds you.” The content has become its own advertisement, “words go into the world and sell themselves” through Twitter, Facebook etc. In the digital era of publishing, the words work for us.

Spice explains that the main problem here lies in the dominance of the corporate monsters (Amazon, Apple, Google, etc.) These corporations wish to keep control of both the price and data which is problematic because it means a loss of control and agency for the author.

For more information please visit http://www.lrb.co.uk/.

Christiaan Alberdingk Thijm: Can the Literary Publishing Industry Learn to Adapt?

Posted: May 25, 2011 at 10:06 am | By: Lily Antflick

Christiaan A. Alberdingk Thijm is a partner at the boutique law firm SOLV. Based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, the firm specializes in technology, media and communications law. Christiaan is considered a copyright law expert, especially where it concerns the application of copyright in a digital environment. He frequently advises about e-books and has had the opportunity to speak about the subject on numerous occasions. Besides his work as an attorney he teaches copyright and information law at the University of Amsterdam. In June 2011 his debut novel The Trial of the Century (‘Het process van de eeuw’) will be published.

In theme with his professional experience working for Kazaa (the first file sharing company that received a positive victory from the supreme court) Christiaan focuses his discussion during the *Digital Enclosures*Workshop on the copyright and file sharing wars.

He believes that the publishing industry should think of itself and be thought of as a service company. He explains how others must pay them for a service with either royalties or a grand sum. This change in perception of the literary publishing industry in to a service company is a change they must make mentally in order to succeed.

The issue of rights has become a problem with e-books and publishing companies because of the fear of piracy. Like the music and motion picture industries, the realm of books must now confront this dilemma. Thijm mentions that the publishing world should take note and learn from instances of the past, such as what took place in music file sharing. However, the book and publishing industry is very old-fashioned and the question must be asked, are they capable of adapting?

Thijm mentions the institution of the Library as being a very culturally important establishment but also currently facing a large problem with public lending and e-books. Public lending rights don’t apply to digital books, but only to physical books which forces the Libraries to go to the specific publishers and ask permission to lend out digital books. Many publishers are subsequently only allowing downloads from the Library premises. This forces the librarians and institution builders to re-examine and focus in on the space of library to ensure that it is a comfortable, enjoyable environment for the public to reside and learn.

For more information, please visit http://www.solv.nl/people/christiaan-alberdingk-thijm/17522.

Saskia De Vries: Hybrid Publishing Model

Posted: May 25, 2011 at 3:09 pm | By: Lily Antflick

Saskia C.J. De Vries is managing director and senior editor of the Amsterdam University Press. In 2005, she started up Leiden University Press, a new [digital] imprint for dissemination of academic research materials at Leiden. Since 2008, AUP is coordinator of the EU funded project, Open Access Publishing in European Networks (www.oapen.org). She is a fellow of the Koninklijke Hollandsche Maatschappij der Wetenschappen (Royal Dutch Society of Sciences), of the Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letteren (Society of Netherlandic Literature) and on the board of the National Museum of Natural History and EIFL.

During the *Digital Enclosures* session, Saskia De Vries, a strong believer in the **creative commons**, offers us the Amsterdam University Press' point of view. She ponders whether it is appropriate to divide the publishing world into three categories and concludes that the answer is yes, because of different markets, content and types of authors.

De Vries discusses how the funders of academic research allocate funds and thus define scholarly communication and publishing. She believes that in the Open Access Publishing model, 'authors pay' should still be implemented, specifically in the realms of the humanities and social sciences. The Amsterdam University Press publication model aims toward a **hybrid model of publishing**- combining Open Access, traditional print, ebooks or PoD.

De Vries condemns the recent trend of glamorizing the author in popular culture. She stresses the fact that authors should not behave like performers, but instead should remain outside of the public eye to do what they do best, write. She criticizes the celebritization of authors claiming that it produces "rubbish texts".

She concludes by applauding the Internet for its **democratizing abilities**, for it allows different countries to advance and alter their status on the global playing field.

For more information, please visit http://www.aup.nl/do.php?a=show_visitor_home&l=2

Gerlof Donga: Digitaal studeren 2011

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 2:52 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

A short synopsis in English of Gerlof Donga's presentation 'Digital studying 2011'.

Gerlof Donga, research coordinator usability for Amsterdam E-boekenstad, started the workshop E-readers in Dutch Education with a presentation about digital studying. He explained that research should be done to investigate how e-readers can be used in education. Gerlof started the presentation with explaining the difference between reading for entertainment and reading for information assessment. The investigation as to whether e-readers are suitable for studying has yet to be determined. In order to understand information, people actively use the text. The e-reader should support the different reading strategies. E-boekenstad is working

on two research initiatives to investigate whether e-readers can support the different reading strategies. One research initiative is executed in cooperation with Microsoft to test the e-reading platform Yindo. The other research venture is in cooperation with Paerson to test the eText viewer. Gerlof ends his presentation by saying that research must be done with both students and lecturers, because lecturers are the driving force behind the implementation of e-readers in education.

Gerlof Donga, Onderzoekslijncoördinator usability en docent onderzoeker binnen het project Amsterdam E-boekenstad, begon de workshop E-readers in Dutch Education met een presentatie over digitaal studeren. Hij legde uit dat digitaal lezen nu pas echt gaat doorbreken. De vraag is nu hoe boeken moeten worden uitgeleverd: offline op de e-reader of op internet via een portal? Veel boeken worden via een online portal aangeboden. Gerlof vertelde: “2011 is the year of the tablet wars.” We gaan nu pas uitvinden wat e-readers gaan betekenen nu we de hype voorbij zijn. In de nabije toekomst komen we erachter wie de leiding krijgt op e-reading gebied. Gerlof vertelt dat het interessant is om te onderzoeken hoe studenten hun iPad gebruiken. De studenten gebruiken hun iPad voornamelijk voor gaming, video en muziek. Hij merkt op dat er op het moment weinig apps zijn voor informatie verwerking of voor lezen.

Gerlof vervolgde de presentatie met het uitleggen van het onderscheid tussen lezen voor ontspanning en het lezen om informatie te verwerken. Het lezen voor ontspanning is het hype gedeelte van e-reading en heeft een hoge vlucht genomen. Teksten die bedoelt zijn voor informatie verwerking worden ook elektronisch aangeboden, deze teksten worden echter afgedrukt om te lezen. Om studeren mogelijk te maken op een e-reader moet eerst worden vastgesteld hoe men leest om informatie te verwerken. Om informatie te begrijpen moet je actief bezig zijn met de stof en je moet van gedachte kunnen wisselen met anderen. De e-reader moet alle verschillende leesstrategieën ondersteunen: oriënterend lezen, globaal lezen, intensief lezen, kritisch lezen, studerend lezen en zoekend/doelgericht lezen.

Oriënterend lezen: de lezer moet kunnen bepalen of de tekst bruikbaar is. Dit wordt op het moment niet ondersteunt door de portals. De portals geven niet duidelijk weer wat elk boek behandelt.
Globaal lezen: de tekst skimmen, de lezer moet snel de hoofdzaken kunnen zoeken in een tekst. Ook deze fuctie wordy niet goed ondersteund. Zover de functie snel bladeren aanwezig is bij E-inkt readers werkt het maar beperkt.
Intensief lezen: de tekst kunnen begrijpen is mogelijk bij gebruik van een e-reader.
Kritisch lezen: bepalen of een tekst betrouwbaar is wordt niet ondersteund door de portals.
Studerend lezen: de tekstinhoud verwerken en onthouden. De ondersteuning van studerend lezen hangt af van de e-reader. Sommige portals hebben moeite met het weergeven van een snippet van informatie.
Zoekend / doelgericht lezen: Interactie met de tekst en nadenken over de tekst. Sommige e-readers ondersteunen navigatie door de tekst.

E-readers moeten al deze stappen kunnen ondersteunen. Gerlof legt uit dat ze dit willen onderzoeken. Kunnen deze leesstrategieën losgelaten worden op de portals? Hebben deze portals een meerwaarde? Gerlof vertelt dat E-boekenstad bezig is met twee onderzoeken. Het Yindo onderzoek in samenwerking met Microsoft is al gestart. Dit is een onderzoek waar 20 studenten aan meedoen om de usability aspecten van het e-readingplatform Yindo te onderzoeken. In het andere onderzoek, dat momenteel in voorbereiding is, wordt de eText viewer onderzocht in samenwerking met Paerson. Aan dit onderzoek gaan ook 20 studenten meedoen.

Gerlof legt uit dat studenten het niet erg vinden om te lezen van een scherm omdat ze daar gewend aan zijn. Waar studenten wel moeite mee hebben is navigatie want op het moment biedt papier veel betere navigatie. Gerlof vertelt wat belangrijke wensen voor e-readers zijn. Echter veel wensen zijn op het moment nog niet of slecht mogelijk bij de verschillende e-readers. Een van de wensen is usability van e-readers omdat het belangrijk is om te bepalen waar de lezer is in de tekst. Lezers willen vooruit en achteruit kunnen in een tekst. Ze willen kunnen bladeren naar een bepaalde paragraaf of hoofdstuk. Bij veel e-readers kun je hiervoor de index gebruiken, via een zoekopdracht. Maar de indexen van de meeste digitale boeken bieden weinig interactie. Gerlof legt uit dat de Mobipocket bijvoorbeeld weer bladzijdennummering toevoegt. Bij veel e-redeaders is het moeilijk om vooruit te gaan in een tekst of naar een bepaald hoofdstuk te gaan. Actief bezig zijn met een tekst wordt slecht ondersteunt zoals markeren, gebruik van bladwijzers, ezelsoren en annoteren. Bij een digitaal boek wil je kunnen aangeven waarom je een bladwijzer hebt gemaakt. De mogelijkheid van annotatie wordt door Amazon opgelost met een toetsenbord, ook een virtueel toetsenbord is mogelijk. Je wilt ook dat de annotatie zichtbaar wordt wanneer je de tekst deelt met anderen. Een andere

wens is meta-annotatie, dit maakt het mogelijk om na te gaan op welk tijdstip een annotatie geplaatsts is en hoeveel er van een boek is gelezen en hoe vaak. Ook een woordenboek moet aanwezig zijn en internet toegang. E-readers moeten ook audio ondersteunen, zodat de lezer de stof ook auditief tot zich kan nemen.

Gerlof eindigde de presentatie met de mogelijkheden voor vervolg onderzoek. Onderzoek moet worden gedaan onder zowel studenten als docenten. De docenten zijn de drijvende kracht omdat als zij tegen studenten zeggen dat ze een bepaalde e-reader moeten gebruiken dit ook echt gebeurd. Voor het onderzoek moeten de studenten langdurig testen in hun thuis omgeving.

Voor meer informatie:
http://www.e-boekenstad.nl/

http://e-boekenstad.wikispaces.com/

Klik hier voor het artikel uit de *Havana* over de workshop 'E-readers in Dutch Education':

http://e-boekenstad.nl/unbound/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/havana33_25mei2011.pdf

Joost Kircz: Belangrijkste inzichten van griffieproject E-boekenstad

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 1:32 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

A short synopsis in English of Joost Kircz's presentation 'Most important results of user research Griffieproject E-boekenstad'.

Joost Kircz, project manager of E-boekenstad, explains in the second presentation of the workshop E-readers in Dutch Education about the research results of the griffieproject. The aim of this research was to find out what the consequences are of both tablets and e-readers. The iRex and the iPad were tested by counselors because they read a lot of texts every week. Another aim of this research is to investigate what is needed for a local government to work completely digital. Joost gave some of the results: 11% of the councilors prints out the text and saves it, 18% saves everything on paper and 37% saves everything digital. How do the councilors use the material? 60% mark in and around the texts, 30% marks pages and 52% create their own texts. Which functionalities of an e-reader are important according to the councilors? In order of importance: readability, search function, text editing, scrolling speed, battery life, memory, screen size, weight and private use. However the research showed that not only the functionalities of the e-reader are important, but also the communicative process for the transition from paper to digital. For accepting the digitization process, both trust and awareness are important. This research made the counselors aware that not only is a suitable device essential, but also document management and structure.

Joost Kircz, projectleider van E-boekenstad, vertelt in de tweede presentatie van de workshop E-readers in Dutch Education over de onderzoeksresultaten van het griffieproject. Het doel van dit onderzoek is om een beeld te krijgen van de consequenties van de verschillen tussen tablets en e-readers. Om dit te onderzoeken moeten testen worden gedaan met mensen die bewust en consciëntieus veel moeten lezen. Daarom is ervoor gekozen om de e-reader iRex en de iPad te testen onder gemeenteraadsleden omdat zij per week erg veel teksten lezen en verwerken. Een ander doel van dit onderzoek is om te onderzoeken wat er voor nodig is om een gemeente digitaal te laten werken. Dit onderzoek is uitgevoerd in samenwerking met Notubiz en Docwolves.

Aan het onderzoek deden gemeenteraadsleden, griffiers en burgemeesters mee. Joost gaf eerst enkele cijfers over het onderzoek. De enquête werd gehouden onder 241 raadsleden en werd ingevuld door 37%. Ook vond er tijdens het onderzoek individuele gebruikersgesprekken plaats. Per vergadering worden 106 pagina's gelezen. 11% van de raadsleden print het uit en bewaard het, 18% bewaart alles op papier en 37%

bewaart alles digitaal. Zij besteden gemiddeld 17 uur per week aan hun werk als raadslid. Hoe gaan de raadsleden om met het materiaal? 60% markeert in en om de tekst, 30% markeert de pagina en 52% maakt eigen teksten.

Welke functionele eisen van een e-reader vinden de raadsleden belangrijk? Op volgorde van belang: leesbaarheid, zoekfunctie, tekstbewerking, bladersnelheid, batterijduur, geheugen, schermgrootte, gewicht en privégebruik. Niet alleen de functionele eisen zijn belangrijk, ook het communicatieve proces rondom het vervangen van papier naar digitaal is belangrijk. Om de digitalisering te accepteren is bewustwording en vertrouwen belangrijk. Door het onderzoek werden de gemeenteraadsleden bewust dat niet alleen een geschikt apparaat nodig is maar ook de structuur van de documenten en documentbeheer zijn belangrijk.

Joost vertelt dat het onderzoek uitkwam op dezelfde problemen als die er in het onderwijs zijn. Hij vond het een leuk onderzoek om te doen en de raadsleden waren volgens hem ideale proefkonijnen: ze zijn precies, ze lezen veel en ze willen veel lezen. Joost eindigde zijn presentatie met de conclusie dat de gemeente het hele werkproces moet aanpassen om papier arm te werken, alleen e-readers inzetten zet volgens hem geen zoden aan de dijk. Om dit te illustreren haalde Joost een quote aan uit het onderzoek: “Wellicht is het een idee als je met de e-reader ook kunt printen.”

Het eindrapport van het onderzoeksproject Gemeentegriffies: http://www.e-boekenstad.nl/wp-content/2011/04/Def-eindrapportage-gebruikersproef-griffieproject-Kreutzer-070411.pdf

Voor meer informatie:
http://www.e-boekenstad.nl/

http://e-boekenstad.wikispaces.com/

Klik hier voor het artikel uit de Havana over de workshop ‘E-readers in Dutch Education’:

http://e-boekenstad.nl/unbound/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/havana33_25mei2011.pdf

Jacob Molenaar: Vervolgonderzoeken van Amsterdam E-boekenstad

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 10:51 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

A short synopsis in English of Jacob Molenaar’s presentation ‘Future research of Amsterdam E-boekenstad’

Jacob Molenaar, consultant and project manager in the field of e-learning, ended the workshop E-readers in Dutch Education with a presentation on research which E-boekenstad is planning to do in the future. He started his presentation with the results of previous research. The most important result was that using an e-reader in education is only useful if it provides added value. It showed that research must be done to find out what the added value is of using e-readers instead of traditional study materials. The two planned researches, in cooperation with Sdu Uitgevers and Noordhoff Uitgevers, investigate the added value of proceeds in learning. The two different pieces of research investigate different theories as to how e-readers could increase the proceeds to learning. The first theory, which is applied in the experiment with Sdu, explains that an e-reader can stimulate a more structured study experience. The e-reader contains a level system which forces the student to read all the study material. The second theory, which is applied in the experiment with Noordhoff Uitgevers, believes the e-reader can stimulate a more free and associative study experience. The e-reader lets the student decide what he/she wants to read. Jacob ended his presentation by saying that they did not have a hypothesis of which method will lead to higher proceeds and better results in learning.

Jacob Molenaar, adviseur en projectleider op het gebied van kennismanagement, multichannel uitgeven en e-learning, eindigde de sessie E-readers in Dutch Education met een workshop over onderzoeken die E-boekenstad nog gaat doen.

Jacob begon de presentatie met de belangrijkste uitkomsten van voorgaand onderzoek. Hij vertelde dat er veel gebeurd is in de loop van het programma. In het begin werd er gebruik gemaakt van e-ink e-readers en nu word de iPad gebruikt. Wat heeft E-boekenstad geleerd van deze onderzoeken? Jacob laat weten dat eerder onderzoek met de iRex aantoonde dat studenten het gebruik van het apparaat verworpen. Zij ervaarde het gebruik van de iRex zeer negatief. Velen stopten al halverwege met het onderzoek, ze gingen terug naar het boek. De iRex had veel technische problemen. De uitkomst van het onderzoek was dat het geen zin heeft om studiemateriaal op het apparaat te zetten omdat het geen enkele meerwaarde oplevert. De resultaten gaven aan dat er opzoek moest worden gegaan naar de meerwaarde van het apparaat ten opzichte van het gebruik van traditioneel studiemateriaal.

Maar wat is de meerwaarde die studiemateriaal kan opleveren? De student wil misschien wel een prijsvoordeel en de docent vindt misschien beschikbaarheid van lesmateriaal belangrijk. Maar Jacob vertelde dat naar deze twee vormen van meerwaarde geen onderzoek zal worden gedaan. In de twee geplande onderzoeken, in samenwerking met Sdu Uitgevers en Noordhoff Uitgevers, wordt opzoek gegaan naar de meerwaarde in leeropbrengst. Onderzoek wordt gedaan naar het multimedialiseren van lesmateriaal door het toevoegen van filmpjes en websites. Hierin zit de impliciete aanname dat studeren leuker en efficiënter wordt door toevoeging van multimediaal materiaal.

Jacob legt uit dat er twee tegengestelde denkrichtingen zijn wat betreft de meerwaarde die e-readers kunnen opleveren voor leeropbrengst. Beide denkrichtingen zullen worden onderzocht in de twee geplande onderzoeken. De eerste denkrichting gaat er vanuit dat de e-reader kan leiden tot een meer gestructureerde studeerervaring. Dit wordt bereikt doormiddel van een levelsysteem die de student dwingt om al het lesmateriaal tot zich te nemen. De tweede denkrichting gaat er echter vanuit dat de e-ereader kan leiden tot een meer vrije/associatieve studeerervaring. De e-reader kan vrijheid aanbieden aan de student door de student zelf te laten kiezen welk studiemateriaal hij/zij wil gebruiken. Educatieve content bevat veel studeerhulp zoals materiaal dat voorkennis activeert, toetsen en samenvattingen. Maar het blijkt dat deze studeerhulp weinig wordt gebruikt door studenten.

Het experiment met Sdu is op de eerste methode gericht. Studeerhulp kan afgedwongen worden door een filmpje te laten zien voordat de student aan een hoofdstuk kan beginnen, zodat voorkennis geactiveerd wordt. Halverwege en aan het eind van het boek kunnen toetsen worden geplaatst. Het experiment met Noordhoff Uitgevers is gericht op de andere denkrichting. De e-reader kan het mogelijk maken om heel associatief door de tekst te navigeren. Het boek ziet eruit als een encyclopedie, met kleine lemma's informatie die op een mindmap-achtige manier zijn weergegeven. Voor beide onderzoeken wordt gebruik gemaakt van twee onderzoeksgroepen van 100 studenten. Een van de groepen werkt met de papieren equivalent en de andere groep gebruikt de proefopstelling. Beide groepen maken na afloop een (kenniss)toets om te kijken of er een verschil is in leeropbrengst. Daarna worden de uitkomsten van de twee onderzoek vergeleken. Jacob laat weten dat ze nog geen hypothese hebben over welke methode een hogere leeropbrengst zal opleveren.

Voor meer informatie:
http://www.e-boekenstad.nl/

http://e-boekenstad.wikispaces.com/

Klik hier voor het artikel uit de Havana over de workshop 'E-readers in Dutch Education':

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Alan Liu – "We really have to rethink, I think"

Posted: May 20, 2011 at 12:33 pm I By: Elias van Hees

Alan Liu is Chair and Professor in the English Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and an affiliated faculty member of UCSB's Media Arts & Technology graduate program. In 2008 Liu wrote an essay which is called: When Was Linearity?: The Meaning of Graphics in the Digital Age. Liu starts his lecture by doubting this concept of linearity (by referring to Books and Scrolls: Navigating the Bible" by Stallybrass (2002)—which claimed that Christian discourse was profoundly non-linear) and the concept of the book. In other words, what makes a book a book and what does not? "If the Digital book is only a virtual metaphor, is the printed book only a physical metaphor?"

No books
The physical book is no longer uniform and authoritative as it once was: the rise of all kinds of digital possibilities like Ipads and e-readers result in a call to rethink our concept of 'bookness'.

The following defenition of the book-concept:

"A long form of attention intended for the permanent, standard and authoritative i.e., socially repeatable and valued – communication of human thought and experience"

So, the book stands for a long form of attention, permanent standard, authoritative. One of the contemporary trends is the shortening of texts: the shrinking of books in the digitalization process.

But yes, books.
Liu wants to keep an open mind about what a book would be and keeps the answer to the question "What do we mean by the book?" open. He is convinced that: "Long forms of attention that we as a culture crave and value".

We don't have the instruments to find it now and it will take time to see which direction we will move as readers. Although much digital media is based on short messaging and quick updates, the long format keeps relevant and also very present in daily life. An example is a discussion on Twitter: it begun short, but on some topics the entire feed has a long format, because the discussion is broad. In this case the shortness in the first place has been counterbalanced.

To conclude, Liu refers to the 'Agrippa', a work of art created by novelist William Gibson, artist Dennis Ashbaugh and publisher Kevin Begos Jr. What is a book after all?

PDF of Alan Liu's presentation available here: *Alan Liu: This is Not a Book*

Arianne Baggerman: The Unbound Reader of the Future

Posted: May 20, 2011 at 12:30 pm I
By: Nick Ungerer

Arianne Baggerman kicked off the session *What is a Book?*, by showing a video of a little girl, talking about'what she wants' from libraries, as a digital native. This cynical take on media

consumption in the digital era in relation to textuality and 'bookness' was the main subject of Baggerman's lecture.

Baggerman was concerned with the question of what a book *was*. She criticized e-books for their short durability compared to the printed book. Throughout Baggerman's talk there was an explicit hint of cultural pessimism concerning the sustainability of the e-book. In line with that thought, she argued that there were several crucial features the printed book had that should be conserved in the digital era. She argued that many of the features of new media technologies did not contribute to the reading experience in a positive way, as she rejected digital multimediality in this context.

The negative effects of digital media on the intellect.

In Baggerman's opinion, a return to the reading experience of that of the physical book is desirable, because the cognitive capabilities of today's youth are diminishing compared to their preceding generation. Baggerman referred to a book by Mark Bauerlein, called 'The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupifies America', which she said is evidence for the argument that digital media are not increasing knowledge. She said that they are actually decreasing traditional skills, especially dumbing down the generation that grew up with the internet. She was also critical of the limitless optimism of the skills that young people would develop while playing computergames or browsing the internet, or the use of games as educational tools.

Baggerman shifted the focus to how we can conserve traditional values, ingrained in the historical physical form of the book. The effects of the 'unstoppable train' of digitization on the brain will take years to show. She pointed to the fact that traditional modes of learning (parents, teachers) are still the determining factor in the education of children, arguing that (cultural) new media projects across the web have had low visitation rates.

She referred to Nicholas Carr's 'The Shallows' when she said that linear reading stimulates creativity, whereas the internet on the contrary stimulates primary functions: "Young digital natives are sponges, that absorb irrelevant information." As she noted: "The message is clear: **books are in, but reading is out**." The long form of attention, as mentioned by Alan Liu, is missing. There is only attention for bite-size information, according to Baggerman.

Towards an alternative to the e-book

The solution Baggerman sees is integrating the features of the printed book into a new device – without the distractions of multimedia – where the content maintains a stable form. She pointed to devices which allow its user to bend and fold pages, like a traditional book.

She said the book of the future would be made of paper, as it would stimulate reading, cost less and be more durable with regard to the content. The entire culture should be shaped in books. The history of 500 years of reading belongs to our cultural memory, like the single physical book belongs to our individual memory. Baggerman sees books as stepping stones, which should not just be remembered as content, but also keeping in mind their materiality. There has been too little focus, according to Baggerman, on this materiality and the influence it has on the individual as well as on the collective memory of people, established throughout 500 years of reading. In her work Baggerman celebrates the tranquility of the reading experience for the solitary subject: individuals project their memories onto the physical book, determined by its taste, smell, weight and signs of former readers.

Baggerman also expected a divide between higher and lower income classes, fearing that the lower classes might only be able to afford digital access to text, whereas the rich would be able to purchase print books. The reaction from the audience was that we have libraries to perform these tasks.

There were also some assumptions of what is ‘good’ in physical books and ‘bad’ in new media, that were challenged by some people in the audience. It was said that the ‘lack of concentration’ in the digital era needs further examination.

We can all underline the important influence the physical book has had on our society, and will continue to have, for ages to come. However, we have to ask this question: is Baggerman’s perspective not too much of a romanticized view on the traditional, physical book? She sees the possibilities of new technologies for the reading experience, but why exclude e-books from this? They have also acquired a right to exist among us. For to cling to the metaphor of the physical book too much, means losing sight of the promise that e-books and other digital reading experiences have, regardless of what form they appear in.

Arianne Baggerman

Arianne Baggerman studied history at Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam. Baggerman is a member of the editorial board of Quaerendo. A Quarterly Journal from the Low Countries Devoted to Manuscripts and Printed Books. In 2006 she launched an international book series, Egodocuments and History published by Brill, of which she is co-editor. She teaches history at Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam and she was in 2009 appointed professor in the history of publishing and book trade at the Universiteit van Amsterdam.

You can find her extended biography on the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication website

Miha Kovac: E-Books vs. P-Books

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 10:44 am | By: Lily Antflick

Miha Kovac is the currently publisher at Mladinska knjiga and full professor at the Department of Library and Information Science and Book Studies at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

In Session I of the Unbound Book Conference entitled “What is a Book?“, Kovac affirms that this is not a new question. The book has always been described as an object, however few have asked about the ***function* of the book**, what is the book doing?

Kovac describes the book as a **technology for organizing, storing and disseminating complex, textual/visual information.** He distinguishes between the **P-book (printed) and the E-book (electronic)**. In the case of the P-book, the content and platform are intrinsically connected. The technology and economy of printing and publishing determine filtering processes.

The **socio-cultural features** of the P-book are as follows:

1. Book professions were created as result of the horizontal publishing business model.
2. Individual reading practices became common.
3. Fixity of text became one of the pillars of scientific communication.

Kovac stresses the importance of the **P-book as an object of symbolic representation.** P-books are part of our identity, we keep important religious texts, revolutionary novels, books that serve as national symbols, and books that encompass personal memorabilia. P-books offer us a more tangible artifact with which to relate and attach sentiment to.

Conversely, E-books separate the content from the given platform. Their capacity is far bigger than that of P-books. The **sociocultural implications of E-books** include the shift from the **horizontal to the vertical** business model. With this type of hierarchy, most of the book professions have changed. In addition, the

former linear, private reading practices which were brought about by P-books are being substituted by controlled E-reading and multitasking. Kovac explains how the publishers main role will be to effectively market their books and fight for the attention and visibility of a given book. The symbolic representation of the E-book is still being invented and configured. This is slightly more challenging given the ephemeral nature of E-books.

When asked which factors are worth preserving in the E-book, Kovac mentions the fixity of texts, horizontal models in the book industry professions and linear models of reading.

Some may dismiss the notion that E-books are less capable of carrying symbolic representation or a sense of attachment. However, this argument seems easily refutable. Surely, some may feel an emotional attachment to the cell phone that they held beside their ear for years, but ultimately, all digital technologies become obsolete. The text inside printed books can eventually fade and the cover may weather, but as Kovac mentions, one of the key characteristics of the P-book is its inseparability of form and content while the E-book does not manifest the same interchangeable quality. The P-book is a whole unit, the E-book is merely a vessel which can contain and transport data. **P-books have an everlasting emotional and intellectual symbolism.** The challenge will be to recreate this symbolic charge in E-books and other digital technologies to foster a similar kind of bond between the user and the device.

For more information, please visit http://mihakovac.cgpublisher.com/

PDF of Miha Kovac's presentation available here: What is a book.

Bob Stein: Social reading is no longer an oxymoron

Posted: May 20, 2011 at 5:48 pm | By: Serena Westra

The fourth speaker of 'The Unbound Book' session is Bob Stein. Stein has been engaged with electronic publishing full time since 1980. He has been involved in many projects, like Encyclopaedia Britannica, the Voyager Company, Intellectual Tools of the Future, and the Institute for the Future of the Book. Currently Stein and his partners are building a comprehensive platform for social reading called SocialBooks.

First, he starts his presentation with answering some questions moderator Geert Lovink asked at the start of the session. He is very clear and short in his answers: "Do we herald the death of the individual author with the rise of collaborative writing?" "Yes"

In 1992 Voyager Company published the first electronic books, including Douglas Adams' *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* and Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*. With the rise of electronic books, he found it hard to have a clear definition of books: 'We don't have the words yet, it may take some years to make a good definition of books.' In addition, he continues with a short overview of the definition of books in the last few decades. Stein starts in 1979 with the use of multi media. He shows a small video of a man with one of the first computers. On this computer the man has a kind of early version of an e-book: when he touches the screen, matching words appear. In 1981 the projects Encyclopaedia Britannica and the Intellectual Tools of the Future were started. He figured that we had to stop thinking about the physicality of the book, and start thinking about how books are used. It is more about the experience of reading than the material. From that moment on, Stein started calling books 'user-driven media'. This is in contrast with 20th century media, which is producer-driven media and where 'things just happen to you'. User-driven media is replacing this, and consequently the way we use media has changed. We treat media the way we read books: not random but linear.

Continually, in 1996 the web came along and the container definition of books suddenly disappeared. The urgency to define books again becomes more clear. In 2006, Network Books appeared. The first version was*Gamer Theory* by McKenzie Wark. Wark writes in paragraphs; this made it possible to present the book online as cards. Instead of placing comment space underneath the text, the comments were placed next to the cards. This small change was actually a very profound change. At first, McKenzie replied to every comment, but after a while he became comfortable with it and eventually he trusted the conversation as a whole. The hierarchy of print suddenly seemed a lot flatter when feedback and comments of readers were included. In 2008 *The Golden Notebook* was created. This is one of the variants of *Game Theory* by McKenzie. Next to this text there were comments of seven women. They haven't met before the project, but that did not matter: a social layer was created.

Consequently Bob Stein states that **a book is a place**: a place where readers and sometimes authors congregate. This influences the way authors work: old fashion authors engage in a subject matter for future readers, new school authors engage with readers on particular subjects. Stein explains: 'Suppose you write a piece, for example a biography of Obama, but instead of publishing it at once, you publish several parts every once in a while. Readers can pay a small amount of money for every post, instead of a larger amount for the complete work. This is more like MySpace or blogging, so it could be more natural for young researchers.' Sounds like a good idea to me.

Stein continues with his project SocialBook.com. This is an online platform for social reading. With SocialBooks, he wants to build an ecosystem for publishing that assumes that books are places where people gather. Works will appear in the Browser, not in mobile apps or proprietary non browsers based readers. This is made possible with HTML5.

Moreover, he names four flavours of social reading. First, having conversations with people you know in the margin of the book. Second, having access to others' comments in the book. Users can comment on the text, bring quotes forward that are highlighted, post comments to the group, tweet and Facebook it. They can also make comments to other readers of the same book, and can see a list of all the comments of all the readers of a certain page. In other words, the user can interact with the text. Third, reading and extracting comments and reading other people's critiques. Social means being able to read an experts gloss on a book. For example, someone can extract their comments and export them. Stein explains: 'think how important it is going to be when you have a guide through a book. In this case, when you get to a page that is interesting, you are in the book. 'Fourth, engage with authors asynchronously or in in real time "in the book". There are lots of options of hiring authors or inviting them to your group. You can think of the relation between authors and readers differently. For example, some people would be willing to pay a small amount of money to ask questions to the author via SocialBook, or to have a tutor on math books.

To illustrate the four flavours, Stein shows us a small demonstration of SocialBooks. On stage he selects a part of a text and comments on it. A colleague in the back of the conference room responses with a comment: a successful experiment. Unfortunately, Stein could not spend a lot of time in examining reading and writing subjects. However, he thinks it will take a while before the boundary between reading and writing will disappear. By that, he is not thinking about two or three years, but more like a few decades.

Last, some questions were asked by the audience:

'Could you turn the social layer off?'
'Yes you can. But I think the value is in the social layer, perhaps the book should be free, and users have to pay for this social layer.'

'Can you turn the book layer off?'
'I do not think that is relevant since all the comments are about the book. Only when you know the text by heart, like a short poem, it could be possible but not with a book or essay. However, I think that the discussion is the most interesting part, like the discussion on Wikipedia. This is where the action happens. But SocialBooks in concerned with the fixed text.'

Gary Hall: Liquid, Living Books

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 10:49 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

Gary Hall is a cultural and media theorist who has written many books on these subjects. He is a professor of Media and Performing Arts at Conventry University (UK) and co-founder of Open Humanities Press.

Gary Hall started his talk which was part of the session The Unbound Book with the Oxford dictionary definition of the word 'book'. He explained that the definition of a book as pages fastened together is now outdated because of new developments such as augmented reality. The 'book' is now disrupted and dislocated. He argued that if the book has a future it is in unbound form, the book must be transformed to keep it alive. However this does not mean that conventional definitions of the book are discarded, they are still valid.

The main argument of Gary Hall is that books have always been liquid and living. Electronic publishing has helped to make us aware of this. He mentioned the examples of the Bible and Shakespeare's first folio to prove this point. Gary Hall argues that a book should be free, however this is currently not the case. Not only is the book bound between two covers, it is also legally bound. Here Gary Hall quoted McKenzie Wark:

"Information wants to be free but is everywhere in chains."

Hall proposes as a solution the 'academic gift economy' in which research is circulated for free. The problem is that publishers own the rights of published works therefore works can't be published in Open Access. He mentions that it is difficult to find publishers who allow authors to self-archive their articles. Publishing is changing because of new technological developments. These developments also change the idea of the book itself. Gary Hall quotes Graham Harman who argues that in a few years everyone will be able to publish a book in minutes. This means that publishing is destined to become vanity publishing. Hall uses Open Notebook to make his articles freely available in real-time. Readers can make contributions to his chapters before the book is bound by publishers. He explains how Open Humanities Press has been exploring the idea of liquid books. It is possible to publish books as a Wiki which makes it possible for readers to rewrite and comment. In this model the book is not fixed but rather it is fluid, it can be updated, reordered, reimagined. It is a work in progress, a work in an ongoing stage. Gary explains that in this way the book can be made collaboratively and authors can contribute anonymously.

Hall explains that in the future there will be different kinds of publishing. To illustrate this he mentions some examples such as research articles which embed video which Elsevier calls 'the article of the future'. Another new development in publishing is the Kindle Single which is longer than a magazine article and shorter than a novel. He also mentioned the Remixthebook project which contains a remix of American sentences.

Gary Hall ended his talk with the conclusion that books have always been fluid and that because of electronic publishing, certain questions are raised such as: What is a book? And what is an author? In his opinion these questions should have been brought up earlier.

Bernhard Rieder: 81,498 Words: the Book as Data Object

Posted: May 21, 2011 at 4:42 pm | By: Ekaterina Yudin

The second session of day 1 of the Unbound Book conference – also titled The Unbound Book - was

moderated by Geert Lovink, and discussions of what a book becomes once it's online and connected to information and people dominated the talks. Bernhard Rieder, Assistant Professor of New Media at the University of Amsterdam and Assistant Professor at the Hypermedia department at Paris VIII University, compelled the audience to think about what it means for the contemporary book to be meshed in digital structures from an information science meets media studies point of view. A refreshing talk not about the death of books but more about the new relationships and representations that digitization awards.

Perhaps not at the top of discussions surrounding e-readers and digital publishing but an equally important aspect is the transformation of the book into a data object – the focus of Bernhard's talk. His interests lie in looking at the book in the age of the database, and by reflecting on the last fifteen years — which has seen the emergence of digital book collections holding very large databases of titles — two aspects of interest emerge for him: 1) the arrangement for discovering and reading devices that these large scale databases of books encourage and 2) the "computational potential", or the value of the data, of millions of scanned books.

With the rise of online and digital book culture coming face-to-face with data culture, it becomes worthy to look at e-books and digital publishing structurally. The power of digitization brings on the power of the database. And with the database comes powerful changes to our relationships and treatment of books, where the digital book function and form is being "unbound". What does this mean?

Books are being scaled and various statistical properties of them can be analyzed for other purposes. We see this reflected in online book sites where a wealth of ratings, reviews and lists of most popular, best and worst books permeate. Using the example of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, Bernhard shows us that Amazon's text stats allows for different indexing of statistical properties of books — readability, complexity, number of words and fun facts (**The Hunchback of Notre Dame* has 81,598 words). So thanks to the database you know just how many words per ounce a book contains and can you decide which printed book is right for you.

As Bernhard explains, historically institutions (ranging from family, school and library to bookstores, market forces and affordances) have always contributed to structuring the universe of books, shaping what we read and how we read it. 'The book in the age of the database adds a contemporary wave of new embedded practices and logistics of what do we read and how we read it'. In his view, three new practices emerge:

1) Exploring full text and metadata. This refers to the statistical projections of the whole text that allow various explorations of the catalogue's content such as Google's "common terms and phrases" or Amazon's "key phrases" feature, both of which link to relevant passages of the book.

2) Connecting by means of data. Specific to the 'database condition' emerges the possibilities of interconnecting books through data, and the connecting to and from books to other data, like the Web and Google Scholar, to name just a few. In other words, using Google's database you can have a popular passage extracted, and then be able to link to other citations that cover the same topic or provide a different perspective.

3) Capturing and inferring. Perhaps the most important new embedded practice to materialize out of the database is the actual *use of the data* – of capturing user gestures and practices (word positions, metadata, and user data such as tagging or clicking, number of citations, reads, sales, reviews, and where in a passage a user decided to stop reading), and then using that data to create individual navigational experiences and opportunities, aka the personalization of reading.

Systems that digitize books, like Amazon and Google, transform books into information, and then unbind and rebind it again as an interactive, social and semantic interface.

Bernhard proceeds to elaborate that such transformations allow the discovery of a book through all different representations that the database affords (as mentioned above). He strongly believes that more than anything else those database technologies are increasingly steering online our opportunities for navigation, how the age of personalization [for reading] is coming about, and how it will be shaped for the future. 'What we see online very much depends on what you may have already read and what you've clicked on'. So the

experience a user will have, and the books they will stumble upon, becomes highly dependent on the competence of the user in the first place. The other important aspect to take into account when determining what a user will read is the actual role of the database technology and how it enables different forms of embedded and technology-mediated reading — via suggestions, comments, reviews, statistics and links to how different texts relate to one another.

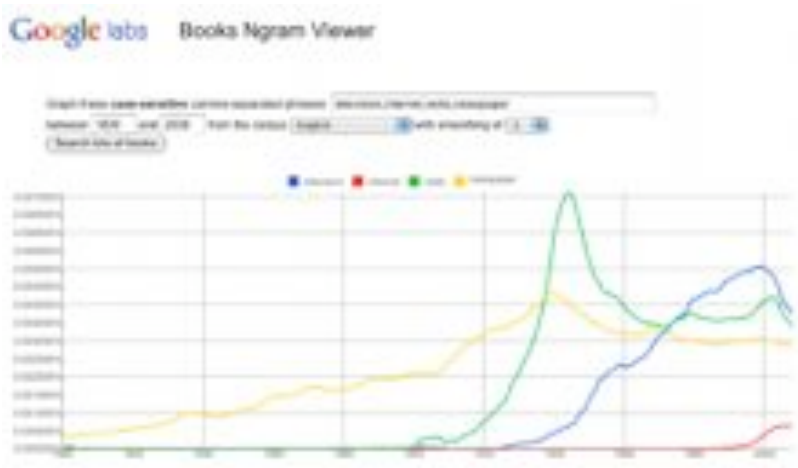
So what kind of book institution are we moving towards?

How we read was always a complicated and contested affair, continues Bernhard. The difference now is the database is altering and reconfiguring the structures that orient what we read and how we read it. The new tools afford the database and algorithm companies like Amazon to give customers more of what they want (low prices, vast selection, and convenience), and allow Google to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful". From a commercial perspective, these initiatives can be seen as the way to sell books and ads, create a one-stop shop, and profit from network effects — but the impact perspective is yet to be assessed. According to Bernhard, it's too early to say how the database system is actually affecting the way people read books. The larger questions — of what we should read, what we could read, and how we can read — is yet to be determined once we truly understand how the hierarchical and incentive system functions internally in the first place as a recommendation system.

Back to the original question of his talk: what does it mean to have a full database of all books ever published? What can you actually learn from so many books being scanned in a database?

Many applications are yet to be rendered feasible in the first place (much of it due to current legal constraints) but nonetheless, Bernhard points out quite a few useful applications that could emerge: the automatic translation of texts, knowledge engineering (knowing who has the best texts/concepts for a specific subject), and finally 'culturomics'.

A great example is Google's N-gram viewer, which uses its computational potential to see what you can actually learn from having just 4% (6 million) of the world books scanned. What the tool essentially does is take pairs (grams) of terms and looks through Google's entire collection of digitized texts to determine the frequency of all the word combinations in the time period selected.



N-gram Bernhard showed for television, internet, radio and newspaper from 1800-2008

Looking at the results one can begin to see a whole breadth of insights emerge from rapidly quantifying cultural trends and in this way, '"culturomics extends the boundaries of rigorous quantitative inquiry to a wide array of new phenomena spanning the social sciences and the humanities." (Michel et al., 2011)'

Bernhard concludes his talk by reaffirming how even without changing form, and without becoming part of an e-reader or e-book, the book is nonetheless caught up in large scale databases. From reading and finding a book to engaging, sharing and discussing a book, the shift towards e-readers makes the database aspect more easily put into place as it becomes something of a standard in e-publications.

Just imagine yourself finding a fascinating passage in a book and then being able to jump to all books that refer to that passage or similar concepts. It is time that the debate around e-books moves to surround aspects of the database and how it can serve us to think about and integrate things from a cultural perspective.

For more, visit Bernhard Rieder's homepage and his excellent research blog, The Politics of Systems.

PDF of Rieder's presentation available here: Bernard Rieder Presentation

Florian Cramer on sober genealogies of the (un)bound dialectic

Posted: May 24, 2011 at 3:01 pm | By: Rachel O'Reilly

Geert Lovink introduced this title panel of the conference by mainframing its attempt at Nietzchean thinking around the binding and unbinding of the book – not in terms of ethics or morality, beyond the book as a sentimental object, and more in terms of the exploded situation of the present.

Researcher and theorist Florian Cramer, currently, Centre for Creative Professions at Willem de Kooning Academy Hogeschool Rotterdam, threw up a series of very concrete genealogical provocations. Cramer came to new media as a classically trained philologist, precisely through interest in the situation of electronic literature 20 years ago, the 91 launch of electronic book applications such as Voyager and so on. The Unbound Book's title panel evokes for him a troublingly "strong sense of deja vu". Considering all the experimentation with multimedia writing in the 80s and early 90s that happened before net art and multimedia design, and that has now "completely stagnated" in the hands of its same early agents, Cramer asked provocatively about the elided techno-cultural links here: what does the history of artistic experimentation (indeed early electronic or not) have to do with this apparent present (nostalgic? or ahistoric?) conversation around unboundedness?

David Stairs' Boundless (1983) provides an important theoretical reference point, being emblematic of the dialectic that Cramer emphasises is always at issue:

"Binding and unbinding exist in it in a fruitful paradox, a tension that nevertheless boils down to binding as the lowest common denominator of a book. A book, in other words, is *almost anything bound together,* or unbound in *negative reference*to the former. *To be unbound, after all, does not mean to be boundless*." Further, there are important spatial dimensions of being bound, alongside the temporal: bound "so that it doesn't fall apart", and bound in the sense of enduring coherently. For Cramer, "the idea of the book is one that can be read in 1, 5, and 100 years time." Exceptions presented by unstable books (citing here Dieter Roth and Jan Voss's work, available from Amsterdam's Bookie Woekie), only prove the rule. Yet this strong dialectical appreciation of bound/unbound "bookness" seems absent from the panel description which seems to incorrigibly describe the web rather than the book. If it were really a book, "links would be broken, social tags spammed, geo-location programming interfaces would have changed, the codecs for the video and sound … obsolete, and it wouldn't work on your screen in 2021 anyway."

Cramer's point is that this is exactly what happened with electronic literature 20 years ago, carrying itself on the "exact same slogans": "linking, multimedia, interactivity, networking." The Expanded Books series launched byBob Stein's Voyager company, an apple-specific project inspired by the Powerbook in 91, is the near-same event as the ipad inspiring "unbound" literary experiments and ereading start-ups today. They are even 'unbinding' exactly the same texts! Noting the John Cage reference, Cramer sees that we're almost literally revisiting George Landow's hypertext media theory:

We must abandon conceptual systems founded upon ideas of centre, margin, hierarchy, and linearity and replace them with ones of multi-linearity, modes, links, and networks. Almost all parties to this paradigm shift, which marks a revolution in human thought, see electronic writing as a direct response to the strengths and weaknesses of the printed book. (Landow, Hypertext, 1992).

Similar enthusiasm surrounded the audiovisual media/theory of the early 90s, but film and games have stayed separate for the most part, and "it's the same with books and the web." Of course ebook culture has emerged, but it is embodied instead by two "commercial and anti-commercial extremes, Amazon's Kindle e-book store and aaaarg.org… the text-cultural equivalent of iTunes and mp3 file sharing respectively." The actual historical passage of digital music and audio is strikingly similar to the present situation of the book: "people simply shared and collected simple audio files", just as we today sample "plain vanilla PDFs, ascii and epub files." So in fact the book's trajectory is: "premedieval scroll, bounded codex, computer file." Cramer predicts: "Hardly anyone will buy interactive mulitmedia books, just as they didn't in the 1990s." The book becomes merely solidified by the contrary nature of the web.

From a history of artistic experimentation around the book we can be sure of this, as Drucker's work shows.

Even in their most experimental and unstable forms, books do not leave beyond their material unity or binding. They are persistently "thought of as a whole… an entity, to be reckoned with in (their) entirety" (Drucker, 122). This is not a conservative statement, Cramer emphasies. Even classical examples of "unbound" literary books such as Marc Saporta's*Composition no. 1*, Raymond Queneau's*One hundred thousand billion poems*, indeed "explode the corpus," but do so by evoking it "*ex negativo*." The binding here becomes only more accentuated.

Its interesting at this point to observe that Drucker's definition of "artist books," the continuity of their experimentalism, coincides almost directly with present technical definitions of epublications. This is Drucker:

To remain artist's books, rather than book-like objects or sculptural works with a book reference to them, these works have to maintain a connection to the idea of the book, to its basic form and function as the *presentation of material in relation to a fixed sequence which provides access to its contents (or ideas) through some stable arrangement*. Such a definition stretches elastically to reach around books which are card stacks, books which are solid pieces of bound material, and other books whose nature defies easy characterisation.

Meanwhile Cramer adumbrates more recent epub specifications in the following way:

Epublications are not limited to linear content… but the basic assumption is there is an order that is not achievable through html alone. A key concept of epublication is as multiple resources that may be consumed in a specific order. They are in essence offline media, self-contained documents with downloading features.

From this point of coincidence though, the technical, political, and aesthetic possibilities of epub experimentation is much more difficult than what the present discourses of unboundedness suggest. Cramer gives the example of the Boem Paukeslag project produced at Piet Zwarte, an effort to publish a visual poem as animation on an ereader, using entirely non-standardized code. This was only possible through extreme amounts of crude technical hacking, with the result restricted to reading on this single hacked device. The gesture of the work is this exercise of *difficult* possibility in the era of ereading.

Cramer ended by ruminating on the increased interest in and mainstreaming of artist books today, as a "genre of graphic design." Print itself here seems to be becoming a "boutique niche of materiality." This is its entropy: "all print books strive to become coffee table books, often with warm, fuzzy and unbound characteristics". The artist book becomes a real or auratic object, and tech art schools become implicated in "producing boutique collectiables for rich people," not unlike vinyl collection. The image of the young Nick Carraway in the Great Gatsby, enamoured by the great library at the houseparty of the Long Island bourgoise, and picking up up a book from a shelf only to realise that not one on the shelf had been read, seems to resonate even more strongly in the present. Electronic books in contrast are the cheap paperback books of our time, for better and for worse.

PDF of presentation available here: Unbound Book.

Anne Mangen on the Technologies and Haptics of Reading

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 2:17 pm | By: Ekaterina Yudin

'The Ascent of E-readers', the third session of the day, kicked off with Anne Mangen, Ph.D., an Associate professor in literacy and reading research and a reading specialist at The Reading Centre at the University of Stavanger in Norway. Her research interests mainly lie in the impact of digital technology on reading, writing and pedagogical methods. She is particularly concerned with cross-disciplinary approaches to reading, writing and comprehension, focusing on multisensory, embodied aspects.

Anne is primarily concerned with questioning the role of haptics in the reading experience and whether the use of hands engages the brain in ways that play a constitutive role in the reading process; what DOES the clicking do or add to the reading experience?She is particularly interested in evaluating and theorizing the impact that physical and technological affordances have on the phenomenological experience of immersion in narrative storyworlds and longer linear texts, as compared with reading a narrative by leafing through pages of a book. At the heart of her passionate talk are questions of *what these physical/technological affordances do with the reading process cognitively, phenomenologically and perceptually, and how we experience a text differently when we handle it with an e-reader, mouse and screen as compared with the print medium*. The talk reflects on these questions and related concerns using findings that address different aspects of reading from a host of empirical studies she surveys (though a large portion of findings range from a time before the experience of the digital reading and writing landscape substantially evolved to what it is today).

An Embodied Process

By investigating the role of gestures of readers and the way they use their hands for interacting, pointing, directing and sustaining attention, new media is also changing the role of the hands. For Anne, what is evolving as a fascinating, interesting and relevant paradigm for studying reading (and how reading changes with digitization of text), is the paradigm of embodied cognition – a cross-disciplinary paradigm evolving from psychology, evolutionary anthropology, neuroscience, and a wide-range of social sciences. She elaborates how *it's important to see and be aware of how reading is an embodied process and activity by observing and identifying the way we use our hands differently with digital devices — the way we click, read, handle or touch screen, and write – and what affordances and impacts this has on reading*. In this way, sensory processes play crucial roles, particularly for pedagogy and reading instruction.

Referring to a study on the use of hands in shaping the brain, language, and human culture, Anne discusses findings that show how the human hand and brain became an integrated system for perception, cognition and action through a process of co-evolution. Thus, what we think of as human intelligence becomes embedded in the hand just as it is in the brain.

Redefining Reading

With all the talk about redefining the book — bound and unbound – Anne wants to shift the conversation to redefine *reading*, and to highlight those perspectives of reading as a skill and process that haven't been duly dealt with, in her opinion, as becoming both apparent and important. She reminds us that reading is multisensory (not only visual) and is embodied (not only cognitively).

The Ergonomics of Reading

'Reading digitally also changes the ergonomic affordances provided by the interface, since a book on the computer or e-book "invites" us to do something different with it than a printed book, and so reading by clicking with the computer mouse versus turning the pages of a book changes our perception and impacts reading directly.' Various reading devices – an e-reader, iPhone, iPad, Kindle, etc. — by way of their

affordances, all invite us to do different things with our hands. Anne describes how this subsequently affects our perceptual processes and sensorimotor actions, and thus influences reading processes, comprehension processes, aesthetic experiences, and by implication then, reading.'

As an embodied cognition, ergonomics of reading devices become crucial to understand how reading is changing, for better or worse.

Print vs. Digital Reading Technologies
Anne then reflects on the fundamental differences between print & digital sensorimotor affordances. '*Whereas print is tangible, fixed and imprinted on a physical substrate, digital is intangible, with the content and storage medium separated, and with a temporary visible display that is unstable;* elements that could play a crucial role for children when they are beginning to learn how to read. In this way different relationships emerge between something that is printed and something that is digital, and it becomes necessary to ask how the intangibility of the text impacts reading on different levels, different kinds of text, and for different reading purposes.

The Multifunctionality of the Digital or the Physical Structure of Print?
The multifunctional character inherent to digital text on digital devices is that it has no status of external memory, Anne
points out. You cannot point to the iPad or Kindle to prompt its memory of where you read something – it contains thousands of additional materials. Conversely, in a printed book you can tell from the spine or cover, which serves as an eternal aid to memory. This role of intangibility leads Anne to further stress the role of body in perception and the phenomenology of the intangible. The emergent claim is that the nature of the digital technology has implications for our sensorimotor, perceptual and cognitive processes and experience of reading and comprehension for certain lengths of text. This is in part because *the reconstruction of text is not only based on content, gist, meaning and story, but on the composition, layout and physical structure of a text.*

Hypertext
Anne then shifts to hypertext and presents findings from empirical research selected over the course of the last two decades. Some claims that emerge from these studies:

1. despite the ubiquity of hypertext people who read linear text comprehend more, remember more, and learn more than those who read hypertext
2. writing in word processors interferes with the ability of the writer to form a sufficient mental representation (global perspective) of the text. (Eklundh 1992)
3. scrolling disrupts the user's sense of physical structure and consequently disrupts their ability to form a global perspective of the text (Eklundh 1992; Piolat et al. 1997)
4. spatial mental representations of text are known to be useful for reading comprehension (Piolat et al. 1997)

Sense of Text.
Jumping from digital hypertext, Anne argues that a physical sense of the text becomes important to the way we mentally reconstruct the text as an entity, as something in a certain pattern or way. Spatial mental representation of text based on layout is known to be useful for reading comprehension, and this can be understood by the affordances of paper, which allow tactile clues to sense with your fingers the progress of a book, or to layer papers, for example.

To conclude, Anne reemphasizes the aspects of haptic affordances, insisting that the most lasting reading technology has been one we can comfortably hold in our hands, where the human hand-eye coordination is taken into consideration in optimal ways. Though people are increasingly willing to read periodicals in digital format, Anne points out that *the experience of reading [intangible] text is different, less efficient and less focused*. In the end, for her, **materiality of reading matters**, and is one of the key differences between reading print and digital – a distinctive aspect of new reading technologies she claims will have a huge impact on the way people learn how to read and comprehend.

For more, visit the Reading Centre of the University of Stavanger in Norway.

PDF of Anne Mangen's presentation available here: Mangen Presentation.

Ray Siemens: Sturm und Drang, Sound and Fury? E-Reading Essentials in a Time of Change and unFixity

Posted: May 20, 2011 at 5:30 pm | By: Nick Ungerer

Ray Siemens held a lecture during the theme 'The Ascent of E-readers'. His speech was called 'Sturm und Drang? E-Reading Essentials in a Time of Change and unFixity'. Siemens works with the INKE Research Initiative with his colleagues, mapping the challenges in the digital reading landscape.

E-Reading, an uncertain and challenging future

Siemens reflected on the themes that had been discussed during the morning session, when the lecturers discussed what perspectives on the future of reading they believed in. At the start of his lecture, Siemens voiced his opinion about an overarching question concerning the challenges that digital reading encounters have brought about. He spoke out both in favour of and against e-books, as he explained he was conflicted between the chances and threats that the future of publishing and reading holds in store. "Modelling the book in electronic form is not easy", Siemens remarked. The 'fuss', was about the lack of fixity of digital text, their unstable form and the non zoned-off reading experience. Siemens is all for enhanced reading, augmenting what the e-book has started.

He also said it was important to understand exactly what we are doing as we move forward, as it is uncertain where e-reader technology is going. Siemens continued by providing some examples of which devices we have before us when reading. These range from the traditional physical book to many smartphone-like devices, tablets and laptop pc's – which are not solely dedicated to e-reading. Some very ingenious ones never quite caught on, like this one (Image located through James Bridle's Twitter account) Siemens is looking beyond what the mass-market has for sale and he is researching the dedicated e-reader experience from an academic perspective.

He explained that his research field was at the intersection of several fields, ranging from humanities to computer sciences, and thereby integrating disciplines like usability design, robotics and philosophy. He went on to explain that our digital climate holds an exciting future for e-books in store, it is just the present that is inconvenient. Digital reading is not yet up to the standard of quality, content and functionality that half a millennium of print publication has brought us, to paraphrase Siemens. The disconnect between theoreticians and developers, he argued, has been the cause of an approach that was not pragmatic enough. In this context, Siemens also noted that the reading device itself is just one part of the ecosystem in which reading and communication find themselves.

The reading experience

Siemens argued that more attention should be paid to the sensory experience of reading. Modelling after the book and the page is an approach which is doomed to fail. Taking away the uncertainty means researching the ways in which reading and writing have technologically and socioculturally evolved. It requires, as Siemens put it, an analysis of the mechanics and strategies of reading, as well as textual- and reader studies, researching interface design and information management. Siemens asks himself: "Has the way we read and experience information changed since the rise of the internet?" A change in the engagement of text and context leads us to formulate new practices in interface design, with perhaps more focus on the process of reading, making the interfaces more dynamic.

One point that came forward from the public discussion was that an important difference between the digital reading and print reading experience was the added social aspect. As Siemens said, we are able to respond quickly to the current book revolution, enabling us to model the social practice, evolve its features, change its direction and mashup rudimentary features prominent in the Gutenberg age. He said that the research team he is a part of will be simulating computation, social reading, and then scaling that experience towards a greater whole.

Siemens also discussed, in reaction to a remark by Bob Stein, that we know very little about what we are doing. We have little experience so the value lies in augmenting our current practices. He sees an important start-off point in visualizing and viewing information more dynamically.

The core of Siemens' lecture was the way in which technological progress relating to our reading methods and platforms disrupt our traditional thinking about what constitutes our reading experience and the way in which this disruption may allow us to gain insight into the essentials of this reading experience. Siemens does not take anything for granted and questions all the facets of the evolving reading experience that he encounters with his research team, while not being sceptical. This critical approach seems to be the right one to uncover both the possibilities and the threats that e-reading holds in store for our society.

Ray Siemens

Ray Siemens is Canada Research Chair in Humanities Computing and Professor of English at the University of Victoria with cross appointment in Computer Science. He is associated with several projects connecting the Humanities to digital culture. For a complete biography, visit his personal website

One of the important projects Siemens has been involved with, the HCI-Book, can be found here

Follow Ray on Twitter: @RayS6

PDF of presentation available here: Ray Siemens: Unbound Book

Robert Max Steenkist: Emancipation and New Media – Some Effects of the Digital Era on the Latin American Countries

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 4:47 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

Robert Max Steenkist is a professor of publishing studies at Universidad de los Andes. He was the last speaker of the session , Ascent of E-readers. Robert Steenkist started his talk with an introduction on the book in Latin America. He informed: "In Latin America we do not read." Robert explains that there are in fact many publishers in Latin America. The publishing activities in Colombia are concentrated in the cities. 7 publishers publish half of the titles and 400 publishers produce the rest. Books are very expensive in Latin America because they have to be imported.

How are new technologies helping this?

Robert continues his presentation with some facts about new media in Latin America. He shows that many people maintain a blog while many people do not have a computer or access to internet. For this reason cell phones are very popular in Latin America. Steenkist illustrates the strong activity in the new media field in Latin America by using the example of the Colombian politician Atanas Mockus. In 2010, The politician had

the most followers on Twitter and Facebook and his name was the fifth most typed name on Twitter worldwide.

The main problems with the publishing industry in Latin America are that the laws protect books and big publishers. Although the government treats the book as a democratic tool for development, they do not provide access to books. Robert affirms that this is a strange policy. He explains how Latin America does not have a best seller culture. The nature of the industry is based on the theory of Chris Anderson's 'Long Tail'. Diversity is very important for the publishing industry. 'Bibliodiversity' is a political tool for independent publishers so that they can stand against the big publishers. Bibliodiversity is very important according to Robert since books play an important role in preserving knowledge which would otherwise be lost forever. The governments promote bibliodiversity by stimulating free circulation and providing support to less popular authors against the powerful multinationals. However Robert notes that the governments do not include new media in these strategies. PDF of presentation available here: Unbound Book Presentation.

James Bridle: Social Reading Posted: May 21, 2011 at 9:32 am I By: Elias van Hees

James Bridle is an editor, publisher, writer, consultant, producer, programmer, designer. He has been working in all area's of publishing: in marketing, publicity, editoring and production. Bridle starts his speech by saying that added value is a hard one to grasp when it comes to future publishing, where might publishing be going in the coming years? The concept of the book is totally unique: it's a *souvenir*of its own experience, a gift that you can store and share. Bridle claims that for a long time we have mistaken the temporality of the book! You always hear the same things like "I like paper, it feels right. I like the smell!" Real things, but they are not what we really care about. They deliver us cognitive dissonance! Great interaction with the text is the biggest experience, while living in a time in which recent book technologies can entirely contain the information that we want to add to a book. Totality of the reading experience, we can capture and contain an archive and spread it: this is **social reading**. Encoding of the entire reading experience: it lasts and it is shareable! The desire to share and tell others what you are reading! And also the possibility to pass books through in the future as well is an important element which is easily possible by use of social reading. Social reading is a great opportunity for publishers according to Bridle. Nearly all music is nowadays recorded music. How does this happen to ebooks and literature nowadays? What remains of them ? The experience of them is what we must hang on to. This is where our conversations, which are based on our reading experience of literature are going!

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http://shorttermmemoryloss.com

Future Publishing Industries: Discussion Session

Posted: May 21, 2011 at 12:30 pm I By: Nick Ungerer

During this session, the speakers focused on the chances the that digital publishing offered to contemporary society. At the same time they addressed the challenges digitization posed to traditional publishing houses and related institutions.

Bas Savenije

Moderator Bas Savenije introduced the session 'Future Publishing Industries.' An important aspect of our contemporary digital landscape is that it affords more possibilities for smaller players in the market to make money. This also threatens the more traditional modes of doing business of established publishing houses.

As Savenije explained, this change of the business landscape is visible foremost in changes within the supply chain of the publishing world. The parties involved – libraries, booksellers, publishers, authors and the consumer – all have the ability to directly interact with one another, without using intermediaries. This has drastically changed their relationship towards eachother and the way business can be done. Plus, added Bas, we have not even factored in the big new players like Amazon and Google. Matters enough to discuss, as the audience soon found out.

PDF of Bas Savenije's presentation here: Future Publishing Industries

James Bridle

James Bridle is an editor, publisher, writer, consultant, producer, programmer, designer. He has been working in all area's of publishing: in marketing, publicity, editoring and production.

For an article on his lecture, refer to this post by Elias van Hees.

Suzanne Holtzer

Suzanne Holtzer is editor-in-chief of the Bezige Bij (Busy Bee). At the start of her lecture she talked about what a book meant to her, and how the Busy Bee Publishing House came into being. It started out in 1944 as a resistance movement during the war. The evidence, its first work, is conserved to this day. It is the poetic pamphlet 'De Achttien Dooden', or 'The Eighteen Dead', by artist Jan Campert.

Suzanne went on to remark that digital modes of production and distribution were challenging the traditional publishing industry. Holtzer and her company were experimenting with several authors, distributing them in the online realm. She expected an increase in the popularity of the e-book, without seeing the physical book vanish. An important remark she made, was that literature is about the beauty of language, and that the medium is only second to its content. She wondered, however, if these works preserved online would last over 60 years, like Campert's poem.

Holtzer then explained some qualities the physical book has over digital text, namely their own weight, the beauty of the cover and the fact that you could stick your nose in it and smell it. She said you don't have to print books, but you have to be able to multiply the content, which makes the case about content, about its immaterial ownership.

Nicholas Spice

Nicholas Spice works as a literary critic with the London Review of Books, a periodical that has faced many challenges due to the changing landscape of publishing, reading and distributing. He saw difficulties in building readership and in the high cost advertising market. Another problem he saw was the huge amount of inefficiency in the world of online content distribution. The LRB is also faced with the increasing fragmentation of the internet, in the way texts in diverse forms are being disseminated all over the web.

Nicholas was sceptical of the ways in which people nowadays engage in reading online. He was concerned with the general standard of quality many media sources offered, and cited the LBR as one of the rare authoritative literary sources that still existed, functioning as a quality filter. Other examples within this rare breed were the NYTimes and the New York Review of Books. It has become too costly for other literary magazines to arrive at their audiences.

It's a changing landscape, as Spice explained, as the audience now finds the magazines and their content, instead of the other way around. This disaggregated the experience, people are now able to enter at any point and there is thus a shift in engagement to a more hypertextual experience, which leads to more visits. These visits are, however, of a shorter duration, due to the nature of the medium.

The general democratization of publishing now focuses more on the reader, while moving away from the panel of experts. But that counters what Spice's business is doing, because its goal is to exclude not to include. Spice used a quote by Clive James that was illustrative of the value of these periodicals, saying these were periodicals to be in, because they know who to keep out. Spice went on to say that the company sifts through outpourings of the publishing industry that seem worthy of attention. It allows the reader to engage with the writers, but it is heavily edited. Spice did not excuse himself as he was not defending the tradition, but he said it was just what civilization had been about, as works of art and books of philosophy are of supreme value to us, and conserving them was an essential feature of cultural tradition.

Spice then criticized the way in which this new open form was romanticized, fetishized even, in contemporary society. From this point flows that he sees different modes of content seem unequally valued, as seen in what he called the 'overevaluation of the solitary'. This relates to fetishization; it is the fetishization of real-time over artificial time, or in other words valuing the spontaneous content over that which flows from long consideration, according to Spice. Spice maintains that the richness of the text is always determined by the non-realtime activities performed by individuals; we should not overvalue collaborative online efforts, as the information chain may function fast, but the value that is created out of it, is necessarily slow.

Finally, Spice raises two questions: Firstly, can we survive in this mediaclimate and continue to recognize the value of the considered works over the immediate and the spontaneous? Secondly, will a new environment come into place, against the realtime content creation and its new orality — what will change?

Simon Worthington

Simon Worthington is co-founder of MUTE Publishing, an independent small publisher which is engaging in new forms of digital and hardcopy publishing. MUTE is interested in publishing works related to culture, art and politics after the net. It also publishes a magazine on these topics, which is available in print or online. Simon was optimistic about the ways in which new business models are being brought about in the digital age.

MUTE started when the Mozilla browser first entered the market in '94. People were able to upload content on the web, which was free to share, and they were able to connect with the audience. A big step for MUTE was 2005, when they started adding print on demand to their businessmodel. The print-on-demand concept is a service that is being more widely used every day, allowing customers to print small editions at a modest price. So there were two major advantages: one, little capital was needed and two, you could print internationally, which meant there were less shipping cost and you could gain revenue outside your region, according to Worthington.

So MUTE got its assets and successes from the opensource project, but there were also disadvantages relating to the continuity of the process. Worthington pointed to anxieties regarding technology and their negative effects on the physical book as well as its digital counterpart. An even greater problem in his eyes was the overarching constraint globalization and global capitalism put on the further emergence of openness in the digital landscape. Worthington is critical of what he called the 'Soviet' model as well as capitalist control.

Bookstores which are closing do not necessarily mean that there is no demand for the printed book, but more that enterpreneurs have alternative viable ventures to inject their capital in, as Worthington noted. In the publishing industry as a whole, he noticed a succession of buyouts, to create a global supply chain. Worthington said HTML5 has the potential to disrupt the market, now dominated by Apple and Amazon, once again.

Then what about the smaller publications; they are nodes in a network, of critical and cultural writers. The conversations are the same, Worthington added, as it is about the way in which you relate to your audience and about a sustainable businessmodel. Worthington was however sceptical about the fair entering of the market by smaller publishers; he maintained that methods like flatrates and micropayment would never be viable, simply because the big publishers won't allow it.

Liz McGettigan

Liz McGettigan is Head of Edinburgh City's transforming Library and Information Services. As she put it, she is responsible for the conservation of a recorded past for the future population. Liz spoke on the subject of the changing roles of libraries under influence of digital media. She said contemporary libraries should offer new ways of engaging with the community. With that engagement comes the promise of including the social groups that were left behind. She sees a lot of potential in this form of sustainable government. Libraries would become more accesible as a meeting point for different social groups, functioning like a knowledge sharing base in a modernized form.

There is a very interesting process going on, since the influence of digital technology has challenged the essence of the library, forcing it to reconceptualize. McGettigan sees developing local content as a key growth area. The most important aspect of the Edinburgh library is that it is 'free', meaning that it is freely accessible, aiming for inclusion and the stimulation of education.

McGettigan has seen the numbers of visits as well as the lending increase since the introduction of the digital features of the library, one being its online services. It is, according to McGettigan, successful in grasping the positive features of the book and merging them with social activities into a hybrid library. In that vein the Edinburgh Public Library also services institutions like hospitals and prisons. Another aspect of the openness could be seen in its focus on serving a general audience. For example, the Edinburgh libraries offer tourists free Wi-Fi, and they focus strongly on customer service, and of course on openness and inclusion.

They have developed a library app, and are diversifying their services and reaching out to the community. It is thus a 'hybrid organization creating a space to have a physical social network in place', as McGettigan put it. The role of PC's in this relationship is diminishing, due to the ever emerging use of other mobile devices like smartphones.

McGettigan was enthusiastic about print-on-demand machines and espresso book machines. This doesn't mean the death of the book, but it creates a new hybrid between library and audience, in which the book's role is changing but staying at the forefront.

The Scottish government has been running into problems over the last decades, as it was faced with challenges in keeping the nation competitive economically speaking. McGettigan applauded the policies that governments put in place, of which the reconceptualization of the library is one example. It means trust, authority and a safe place accross the whole world and McGettigan sees it as an essential condition to turn the brand into something that nurtures community. As she put it: "In the future I see a very vibrant role for libraries accross the country". She was not thinking of the demise, but of a fantastic place of education, aimed at digital inclusion. It might be vanity, she said half jokingly, but librarians might become a more valuable species, due to the proliferation of the internet. Their roles are changing from custodians of the books to that of gathererers of people, activities and relevant information.

Discussion

Joost Kircz started off the discussion round with an interesting conclusion, namely that what came out of the conference thus far was that the library could be defined as a 'streetcorner university'. This statement referred to the accesibility of the institution as well as its aim to educate the public. Still, he was critical of its function. In his eyes, too much was being published, both nationally and internationally, for the library to conserve everything. This statement questioned how the quality works would be sifted out in the future.

Liz McGettigan replied that the task the library faced was that it served to focus on the quality titles. The popular titles that only lasted for a while would be downloadable as e-books, as they would be redundant in a few months. Suzanne added that it were the books on the shelves, which carried the labels of publishing houses, that allowed the customer to recognize their value. She found that to be harder on the internet, where the quality of the works would be less identifiable, which meant the customer might lose his or her way.

Simon countered this by mentioning that the web was being dominated by brands too – those of known publishers – because the “web mirrors the world we live in”, as he said. In Nicholas’ eyes, the tiresome buzzword ‘wisdom of the crowds’ has some truth to it, in this regard, and James agreed to this. He said that books always involved recommendation, and that the internet just slightly accelerated that process, by providing a place to talk and give recommendations. This process was disruptive according to Simon. If you don’t publish your work in an authoritative source – like an academic journal – it gets less appreciation and exposure.

Changing relationships in the publishing landscape

The next topic in the discussion was about books. Liz talked about the electronic carrier; it would still concern very vibrant literature. Liz had a big vision about the future of the library, and how it could stay relevant. She had the intention of including all formerly excluded parties, and saw opportunities, for example for the bookseller to have a place within the institution. Then Bas discussed the influence of the cloud, of distribution platforms like Spotify. Liz acknowledged the challenges they put forward, but foremost she saw this as a moment where people could come back to the physical world in these new libraries.

Nicholas and Suzanne discussed the pricing models of publishing houses and maintained that there could be problems ahead due to the systems of price control big companies like Amazon and Apple have in place to determine the price and direction of the market; Nicholas mentioned that this could kill the local distribution platforms.

Bas then went on to pose the question how the library generated income. Liz reacted that e-books were free to download, and that there is an audience for it. Liz explained to Suzanne that they pay the publisher, so there is definitely a business connection between libraries and publishing houses. She admitted the situation might not be perfect, but they were evolving and they have a vision for where libraries need to go.

Social versus Solitary

The discussion shifted to another theme, when Nicholas posed a critical statement towards the value of online communication methods, social chatter and solitude. He said there was a conflation of values going on, as on the one hand new media facilitated contact between people, and on the other hand that contact may well be too superficial. On a positive note, he remarked that it was not much easier to reach the interested audience and invite them for events that are quite obscure, at the drop of an e-mail letter. He said that this wasn’t possible in the past, in an economical way at least. He then saw the attendance rates rising significantly, compared to the pre-digital era.

Nicholas went on to critically analyze that writing a book in public is still not viable. Writers will write in their ‘ivory tower’, promoting solitude, according to Spice, who is critical of the low quality of content in the blogosphere, and the comments attached to that process of content creation. James did not quite agree, as he mentioned the fact that blogs don’t have to involve comments. In his opinion, they should be used as tools that create new experiences on the reader’s side. The writer can write in a solitary manner, or be socially active while (s)he writes, whatever (s)he pleases.

Then there was a question from the audience by Bob Stein. He remarked that the speakers were ‘eloquent’ about the glory of print culture, and mentioned that design should not force people in certain directions, but that we should figure out what affordances technologies can offer. Stein was enthusiastic, and expected that the age of the individual is coming to an end. He was excited about ‘new technologies yielding a new society in the future’, and with that the advent of a new dynamic social reading experience. Nicholas was more pessimistic in this regard, noting that no value comes forth from consensus. He questions whether technology can change human nature in this sense. Suzanne said that the concentration of reading books was something to be considered here. Simon added that there are different ideas in circulation with regard to this matter.

A question from the audience came about whether the speakers of the session had any experience with the ghost of the authors surrounding their work in this digital environment.

In this sense Nicholas argues that authors are also part of the entertainment industry. They also faced the challenges of dealing with their own ego's as their image was dispersed all over the web, being fragmented as it was harder to control their own representation. Spice argued that there was no concentrated building of one's reputation in the digital age, and that these young authors were conflicted due to their hunger for money and status.

Suzanne countered this assumption that young people weren't ambitious or dedicated enough to write. She explained that in her experience, they were able to withdraw from public life for months in a row, dedicating themselves to finishing a work in solitude. James added that the job of the author is not specified, and that technologists and publishers should turn their attention to facilitating authors.

Simon had yet another point of view, stemming from an interview with science-fiction author William Gibson. People at Amazon asked him if he turns off the internet when he writes. Gibson replied that he always has Word opened with Firefox underneath, as a writer is always in the world when he is writing about it. Bridle stated an essential criticism with regard to this matter; namely, that we are building dichotomies between the social web and the non social web, which is not helpful to the debate.

The discussion on social versus solitary intensified as Alan Liu questioned this relation from the audience. He propagated the use of small bands and groups. If you take away Google and Amazon he said, it's just about groups of people producing content. There is an empathy between the activity of expert bands and new ICT technologies. Those small groups could learn from the network, he noted, in processes like peer review. Simon agreed that small pockets of people connecting put best practices into place. It is, however, hard to transcend language barriers, according to him. On a closing note about the library in this regard, Liz remarked that the library has the potential to include the less literate and less technical people into the new world, thereby transcending the digital divide, creating thriving literati, in a social practice that translates well to both on- and offline worlds.

Interacting with new technologies

To conclude the discussion session there was one resonant idea coming from the audience. I think it was from Geert Lovink, who underlined the value of collaborative knowledge production; he saw a shift of power from the copy editor to a much larger group. The emphasis should thus be on the tools that are being used, according to him, because many of them are outdated and not workable enough at present. Geert noted that Word was for example still being used, but that it was not functional enough anymore as a collaborative tool, naming the TrackChanges function as an example. New software should be developed and transferred into the social realm, since it is not about solitary confinement of the single author, but about group efforts, Geert concluded.

This discussion illuminated some of the challenges that face the publishing industry. The nature of the problems range from technological matters to social questions and from political to economical perspectives. It was evident that different branches of publishing value the 'social' activity and the content it produces differently. Some prefer the solitary, considered efforss, while others celebrate the collaborative potential of the digital age. To conclude, it was also clear that the way future engagement would be shaped, is to be heavily dependent upon the creative development of new collaborative tools. In other words, technological affordances go hand in hand with human interaction to create a future reading and publishing experience that holds many uncertainties, but also loads of opportunities for the publishing industry and its actors.

Dirk van Weelden: Designing for Sign-consumption

Posted: May 21, 2011 at 1:30 pm | By: Nick Ungerer

The first speaker during the session 'Books by design', Dirk van Weelden, brought a critical-philosophical point of view to the conference by addressing the way in which books are operating within society. He remarked that the book is an object, but the handmade letter changed to digital data. With that, the book's function and importance changed, too. Van

Weelden said books no longer function like Bibles. Book were ideas, they contained ideals, functioning to preserve a.o. gospels, scientific theories, laws, classical literature, philosophical texts and political analyses, Van Weelden said. What wasn't published, was lost to humanity, therefore it was essential for their survival – and the library was a temple.

Textuality in different forms

Van Weelden went on to point out the finity of the coherent network, of experiences, ideas and visions. He argued the way information was selected, presented, sequenced and indexed added to the value of the information, or as he put it: "Its form turns information which it contains into something more than itself."

The future media landscape, is to be that of neverending exchanges. Herein, the works are dependent on their context – works, words and media always exist within a sequential relation to other entities, what Van Weelden called a multi-media sequence. Yet the form should not be seen as larger than the work itself, in Van Weelden's opinion, I believe he called that 'naïve hippydom'. Text can only exist in websites, blogs, facebook, newspapers and magazines. This ubiquity of words leads to what Van Weelden calls 'sign-consumption', a commercial enterprise that ensures the overload of messages through every medium imaginable, even through merchandise and so forth.

To liberate the word from the prison which it was placed in by 'the conservative past of books' as well as the 'commercial industry', three things should happen, according to Van Weelden:

Firstly, we should become conscious of the fact that the idea of the book transcends the physical mode of the book. The consequence of this is also that text acquires a different role in the media landscape. The written word is important in a new transdigital context, in which it cooperates with different media.

Secondly, how people read, watch and listen should be examined. The form in which texts need to be poured depends on the intensity of the activity of reading. Van Weelden suggested a 'tinkering' of combinations, finding a digital equivalent for the physical book, that suits the attention of the reader who is involved.

Lastly, Van Weelden approached the economic perspective. He explained that, contrary to the tradition of print, cultural activities can now sustain and preserve themselves through technology. Allocating the right resources is both important for ideological purposes but also from an efficiency-perspective.

Constraints of the current situation

Van Weelden compared our current situation to the dominance the Church once had, brought about in part by the advent of print culture and the Gutenberg revolution. (Commercial) Media have a somewhat comparable hold on our private lives, albeit slightly less violent or totalitarian. To transcend the word to a higher level would mean that the future unbound book should be freed from what Van Weelden called the 'dictate of the big media industry'. This will be a complex process which will include 'economic and social considerations'.

Following a question from the audience, Van Weelden admitted that he is struggling to optimally disseminate his message and reach different audiences, 'kindred spirits', as an author. While he warned for the big corporations (like Google, Amazon), he also argued that there is definitely an economic factor in this equation, for example for smaller companies and freelancers, as those are groups that have difficulty generating an income.

Van Weelden reflected many ideas that came into being under the influence of the digitization of text, within a network of social, political and economic factors. With his lecture he showed us that it was the design of books, and texts in general, whether it be in print or digital form, brought with it many ethical questions related to sustainability, fairness and usability, thereby placing the future reading experience both in a sociocultural and a historical-economical context.

Dirk van Weelden

Dirk van Weelden (1957) graduated in philosophy in 1983 Literary debut: Arbeidsvitaminen (1987, in collaboration with Martin Bril) Novels: Tegenwoordigheid van geest, Mobilhome, Oase, Orville, Looptijd, Het Middel. Published several collections of essays and stories. Writes on art, photography, literature, media, design, architecture,cinema for newspapers and magazines. Editor of De Gids (magazine est. 1837), ex editor of Mediamatic Magazine. Runner, bike rider, contemplates the transdigital typewriter.

For more information, you can visit his website: www.dirkvanweelden.net

Roosje Klap on Ebook and empathic design

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 9:59 pm | By: Ryanne Turenhout

Roosje Klap works and lives in Amsterdam where she was trained at the Rietveld Academy. She works as a designer in her studio and as a teacher graphic design, currently at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, the Netherlands. She is also a member selection committee Fonds BKVB (Dutch Fund for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture). Roosje Klap is not only a person but also a studio with four other people that create visual communication, mainly graphic design. The studio researches the experimental boundaries of custom fit design, collaborative yet peculiar and mainly work for an international clientèle in the cultural field: museums, galleries, art publishers and artists. Clients include The Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, the Mondrian Foundation, The Audax Textile Museum, SKOR, The Royal Dutch Mint, and for publishers like Valiz, Nieuw Amsterdam, Pels&Kemper, Revolver en JRP Ringier. Recent projects lead to collaborations with Krist Gruijthuijsen & Koen Brams, Jan Rothuizen, het Tropenmuseum, Premsela and Mister Motley.

On the last day of the Unbound book conference, Roosje Klap talked about the importance of empathy as a phenomenon and how it ties people to the book.

Roosje Klap started with outlining some of the work that she has been doing along with the studio researchers that she works with, they are experimenting with the boundaries of custom fit design. These works can be found on her website. On of the works that was highlighted is the 'Binnen was buiten', which represented a 'droste effect'. The design is a metaphor of the research that the writer of the book did in which piles and piles of images and other small notes were found. Another work that was highlighted was 'Zachte Atlas van Amsterdam'. This design emphasizes the problem that small drawings usually disappear in the middle of a spread. When designers are making the screen design on the computer they forget that the actual bound book has a center that cannot display the picture. Roosje Klap, questioned whether these kind of problems will disappear with ebooks.

Findings in digital design

Roosje Klap had some interesting remarks on the ebook and digital design, emphasizing the advantages of the ebook and issues in digital design. She found something in digital design that, according to her, is really important which is the fact that you have to chunk your text. The readers decide very quick if they like something or not and therefore you have to limit the use of words in the design. Also, the use of introductions

provide more clarity when the user reads the text. Other findings were that adjusting the text size and navigation elements on every page is crucial.

When it comes to the ebook, you can add many layers of context. It is first of all interactive, you can look at a movie and play the movie while reading the text. These are elements that you cannot add to the bound book. Other advantages of the digital book are that they are quickly made, they are searchable, and you can add links to the digital books that refer to additional information or can be used for navigational purposes. Furthermore, the speed of publishing has increased with the development of new technology and even the purchase of a digital books happens quickly and with ease.

With unbound books, we are likely to add McDonalds-like generics to design.

The end of the bound book?
However, this does not mean the end of the **bound book**. Here you see something interesting happening that you don't see with the **unbound book**. The bound book has cultural differences that the unbound book does not have. For instance in Germany, the bigger the book is, the better. In Sweden, books that are heavy are seen as more important. Moreover, the book *is* judged by its cover, it is questionable if the same thing happens with the ebooks. With the unbound book we run the risk of 'McDonaldization', creating a generic book.

Furthermore, several elements are not easily transferred to the ebook, for instance tactility, substance, rigidity, shade, color, stiffness, heaviness, paper grammage, time and place, occasion, and memory. She concludes that the ebook nowadays relies more heavily on the design than on the empathic qualities. Not only the design of the pages but also the design of the device itself is what counts for the ebook. Moreover, with the ebook "we loose the individuality and cultural heritage of a 'normal' book", she states. Her concluding remarks of the presentation are that if we can add more empathy in the design of ebooks and if the ebook can catch up on the qualities of the bound book, we might be able to discard our nostalgia on the bound book. In this way **the old fashion paper book will be a superhero**.

You can view Roosje's presentation here.

Frank van Amerongen on Reinventing Educational publishing

Posted: May 22, 2011 at 9:59 pm | By: Ryanne Turenhout

Frank van Amerongen (1950) is managing director and publisher at ThiemeMeulenhoff, one of the mayor educational publishing houses in the Netherlands. In his early professional years he was a teacher in primary education and also an author for textbooks and translator of non-fiction reference books for young children. In the early eighties he started his career as a publisher. He was a nonfiction publisher at Tirion publishers for a short time, but his roots are deep into the educational publishing field, both for the primary and de secondary school market. Frank is the concept engineer behind many well known teaching methods published by amongst others Malmberg, where he worked for almost 10 years, and ThiemeMeulenhoff.

The gap between the teachers and pupils
One of the main topics of this talk by Frank van Amerong was about the gap between teachers and pupils when it comes to using Information and Communication Technology. The world of the teachers and pupils is totally different. This can not only be attributed to the way in which both use technology but this gap exists also because the educational system itself is changing. He stresses that this gap is only increasing in the future.

The main issues with the educational system
He went on to outline the main issues with the Dutch educational system and innovation, which are as follows. First of all, the results are not as good as they used to be, the skills that we use in the 21st century are not fully integrated in the educational system yet. The delivered content in the book is not as good as discovering or experiencing the content itself. Additionally, research has shown that boys and girls *are* different, their learning skills and the way that they obtain knowledge is inherently different. Van Amerongen states that our educational system is not addressing this difference. The educational system is based primarily on text but the pupils today no longer read. Van Amerongen states that another issues is that we know a lot about our brain and how we learn but not all of this knowledge is applied in education. Other issues in the Dutch educational system are that in the future there will be a lack of teachers and that there is no urge to pay more for education.

The future of educational publishing
To make the problems even bigger, new internet possibilities are increasing by the day. The educational publishers still publish books because that is what the teachers want. But what we need to do is gather information about who is using our content, it is all about profiling, sharable content and it is also about the delivering device itself. This device, according to van Amerong, will be different in the future. School book content can be distributed in whatever way that is demanded. Frank van Amerong stressed here that the content of the book is not confined to the book itself, something that was addressed multiple times at this conference. What he sees as schoolbooks are also, for instance, a smartboard with the learning material displayed on it (a picture, video or text). Or possibly Augmented Reality in the near future, that can be seen as a school book as well. Furthermore, Frank van Amerong, stressed that the publishing industry will not be the basic content providers in the future.

The publishing industry is not going to be a major content source for learners, but will be the broker and system integrator between teachers, students and content.

To conclude: from content supplier to service provider
To conclude, a shift can be seen from content supplier to service provider when it comes to educational publishers. The digital revolution, according to Frank van Amerong, is really about shift from providing content to providing a service. Van Amerong stated that “the publishing industry is not going to be a major content source for learners, but will be the broker and system integrator between teachers, students and content”. In the future, the books are no longer the issue, but the learning management systems are. The gap between the teachers and the learners will continue to grow and how are we going to deal with this issue? He concluded with the statement that educational publishing will be an industry that is oriented towards providing a service. The publishers as well as the teachers should “support learning environments to help the community of learners to communicate, create, publish, collaborate, teach and learn from each other.” PDF of presentation available here: Reinventing Educational Publishing

Veljko Kukulj: Publishing Truth (a Subjective Look at the Facts)

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 5:50 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

Veljko Kukulj is an IT professional with over 20 years of experience. He was the last speaker in the session, Horizons of Education and Authoring.

Kukulj started his presentation with the question of “What is truth?” He explained that common emotional truth is a combination of facts and interpretations. We hear ‘truth’ every day in the media. Traditional publishers collaborate on the same truth which they publish as collaborative work. He explains that one author results in one truth, while many authors produce many truths. Subsequently, many truths exist at the same time, but how should publishers handle these multiple truths? How should these differences be handled?

Kukulj provides a possible solution: allowing multiple truths and highlighting them by zooming in on the data. All of the data should be verified and if it is wrong, then it should be shown and told. When have access to lots of information, we can search and find patterns and eventually decide what a truthful statement is.

Kukulj explains that truth can be established when data is shown in small pieces because it is easier to agree on small bits of information. Technology can be used to reveal these particles of data. He explains how cultures have different interpretations of history, conflicts and wars. How can these conflicting views be made accessible?
In his presentation, Kukulj shows a project by the company Geanium about the First World War. This interactive chronological visualization represents the assassination of Franz Ferdinand which triggered the First World War. This event is shown in chronological form with in-depth data and details of the actual sequence of events that took place.

PDF of presentation available here: Publishing Truth

The Rietveld videos for the Unbound Book

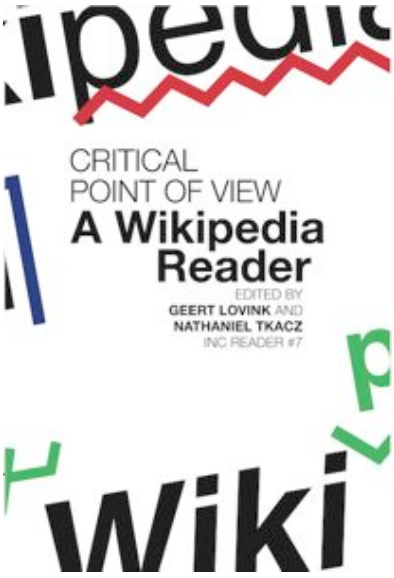
Posted: May 25, 2011 at 3:04 pm | By: Suzanne Schram | | Edit

Students of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie made video introductions for the sessions and workshops of the Unbound Book conference. The Graphic Design students developed the videos during the Interaction Design course by Luna Maurer and Roel Wouters.

The first video introduced the audience to the first workshop on Thursday: 'Open Publishing Tools'. The video is called 'Sharing is Caring'. vimeo. To see the rest of the videos, click below: Read the rest of this entry »

Book Launch of CPOV Series # 7: A Wikipedia Reader

Posted: May 25, 2011 at 8:16 am | By: Lily Antflick |



We are pleased to announce the launch of the Critical Point of View Reader: A Wikipedia Reader

piled of a network of investigators, researchers, artists, activists and writers ıve conducted independent Wikipedia research outside of the Wikipedia ere. 'Critical' need not have a negative connotation but simply means that want to have the space and freedom to openly discuss all aspects of ipedia.

Our reader, series # 7, focuses less on the question of truth but rather emphasizes historical aspects, power struggles, the history of the encyclopedia and the role of the editor.

Through collaboration with a diverse international network of scholars, the esult of the Wikipedia reader reflects a non-Western, post-colonial point of ew.

We distribute this reader as both a contribution and proposal to further develop Wikipedia.

Available for free download as a pdf or in hard copy, also available for education purposes. To order a hard copy of the reader, send an email: books@networkcultures.org

For more information and PDF download, please click here:http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/portal/publications/inc-readers/critical-point-of-view-a-wikipedia-reader/

Geert Lovink and Nathaniel Tkacz (eds), Critical Point of View: A Wikpedia Reader, Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2011. ISBN: 978-90-78146-13-1, paperback, 385 pages.

Book Launch: I Read Where I Am – Exploring New Information Cultures

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 8:20 pm | By: Suzanne Schram | Mieke Gerritzen, ontwerper en directeur van het Graphic Design Museum in Breda, verzorgde de boekpresentatie van *I Read Where I Am*. *I Read Where I Am* bevat 82 reflecties over toekomstige vormen van lezen.

Mieke Gerritzen en Geert Lovink kwamen samen op het idee om dit boek te maken. Gerritzen begon de boekpresentatie met het voordragen van de introductie van het boek. Zij vertelde dat het boek moet worden gezien als een leidraad voor toekomstige lezers. Vervolgens gaf Gerritzen het woord over aan filosoof Henk Oosterling die zijn bijdrage aan het boek voordroeg. Oosterling meende dat lezen zijn oorspronkelijke betekenis heeft teruggekregen: 'met de hand verzamelen'. Hij vertelde dat we allemaal verzamelaars zijn gebleven van materiële waardes. De tweede auteur die zijn bijdrage voordroeg was Max Bruinsma, hoofdredacteur van Items. Hij vertelde hoe wij tegenwoordig op een andere manier lezen, we scannen de tekst, we krijgen een beeld, dit kan eerder kijken worden genoemd. Hij vindt dat het concept lezen veranderd is. Lezen heeft volgens hem steeds minder met tekst te maken. Overzicht krijgen van een tekst is belangrijker geworden dan inzicht krijgen. Vervolgens gaf de Amsterdamse straatdichter Frank Starik zijn grappige visie op het verschil tussen 'lezers' en 'kijkers'.

Gerritzen gaf ook nog even het woord aan de vormgever Jeroen Barendse. Hij legde uit dat de essays zijn weergegeven met woorden die gekleurd zijn in verschillende grijswaardes tot zwart. De kleur wordt bepaald door een algoritme die gebaseerd is op hoe vaak woorden voorkomen gecombineerd met unieke woorden. De essays krijgen hierdoor gestalte als een 'tag cloud'. Zo kan het boek ook op een andere manier gelezen worden. Als laatste kreeg Bas Savenije, algemeen directeur van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek, het woord. Gerritzen vroeg hem naar de toekomst van de bibliotheek. Savenije vertelde dat bibliotheken ervoor zorgen dat informatie goed en betrouwbaar is. De bibliotheek zal volgens hem deze rol altijd blijven vervullen. Hij liet weten dat de bibliotheek als zijnde gebouw steeds populairder wordt. Mensen komen samen in de bibliotheek om gedisciplineerd te studeren.

Adriaan van der Weel: Closing Remarks

Posted: May 23, 2011 at 7:13 pm | By: Suzanne Schram

Adriaan van der Weel is Bohn Professor of Modern Dutch Book History at Leiden University and lecturer inBook and Digital Media Studies. He made the closing remarks at the Unbound Book conference.

Van der Weel began his closing remarks by asking the question: "Why do we have books?" There are many valid reasons stated in his answer: first, humanity used language and then subsequently writing was used to externalize our memory. He continued his closing remarks by pointing out some final conclusions of the conference. Van der Weel affirmed that technology changes us whether we like it or not. He ponders how much control we actually have? He repeated the statement mentioned earlier in the conference in regard to the effect of the internet, stating that it makes people less individualized and more social. To this statement

Adriaan added the conclusion that we now cease to be apes and become ants. According to Van Der Weel, it still remains to be seen whether this will stimulate collaboration instead of solo-reading practices.

Van Der Weel admits that he now feels more puzzled about these questions than before this conference. His brain was jolted both ways and he remains unsure as to where he stands. This has lead to confusion which is positive because it stimulates people to think about the changes taking place. Changes such as whether electronic books still have symbolic value or not or whether they stimulate individuality or collectivity. There is not only electronic opposed to physical books but also both, as well as the possibility of PoD. You can make something public immediately or write it down after long periods of thought. Van der Weel was intrigued by the question of materiality, specifically, if another material is used other than paper, would it have the same cognitive effect? More research must be done to find out whether we are using the best materials for optimal learning. He also wondered whether it would be possible to empower both the reader and author rather than focus on the devices. It is a matter of cultural revolution, eventually time develops something new. Adriaan concluded with the question: What will come next as a result of cultural evolution?

Videos of the Unbound Book Conference

Posted: May 31, 2011 at 12:18 pm | By: Lily Antflick

For those who couldn't make it to the recent Unbound Book conference, all videos of the conference are now viewable on vimeo!

Videos are available for each of our five sessions which include:
1- What is a Book?
2- The Unbound Book
3- Ascent of E-Readers
4- Future Publishing Industries
5- Books by Design
6- Horizons of Education and Authoring

Below is Miha Kovac's compelling talk during the "What is a Book?" session on May 20th.

For more videos please visit our vimeo page here.

The Unbound Book Flyer. Available for PDF download here.

3 Pictures

Wiki

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