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The exhibition **The Future of the Book of The Future**, March 5 – April 10, 1994, has been organized by the Florida State University Museum Fine Arts. Gail Rubini was the Guest Curator; Allys Palladino-Craig, grantwriter.

Gail Rubini, an Associate Professor of Art and the Chair of the Department of Art, is an artist who works in photography, artist's books and multiple publications. Involved with artists' books and publications for twenty years, she was one of the founding directors of Chicago Books, an experimental printing and publishing organization producing multiple originals with offset printing. Professor Rubini has received both state and NEA grants for her publications and continues to publish prints and photographic works. She has been researching this project for several years.



Florida Department of State Jim Smith, Secretary of State Florida Arts Council, Division of Cultural Affairs

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Acknowledgements

There was really nothing about THE FUTUREOFTHE BOOKOFTHE FUTURE exhibition that was standard operating procedure: this is, no doubt, the *modus operandi* of Gail Rubini and Conrad Gleber. When a week after the exhibition opened, we found ourselves installing yet another artwork, it gave new meaning to the subtitle "works in progress." This project is intended to set precedents and make history—several times over. It is as reflective as its many individual creators and as exciting as the cast of thousands drawn together by the curators hoped it would be. The Museum celebrates their achievement in this catalogue, and thanks all the artists, writers, and computer-*literati* who came together over this intriguing question.

-Allys Palladino-Craig, Director

Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts Exhibition March 5 - April 10, 1994

Curators

Gail Rubini • Conrad Gleber

Inspiration

F. de la Fuente • Robert Fichter • Tom McEvelly lerome Stern • Martha Wilson

Exhibitors

Dennis Asbbaugh - Thomas Barrow Kevin Begos - Steve Bradley - François Bucher Andrea Callard - James Cogswell - Peggy Diggs Matthew Geller - William Gibson - Ilona Granet Betty Leimer - Scott McCarney - Robert Peters Ed Russha - Paul Rutkovsky - SCRI Jerome Stem - Paul C. Windson Artists' Books: John Baldessari - Miles DeCoster Johanna Drucker & Brad Freeman - F. Dechamps & J. Mohns - Masaki Fujihata - Pattie Belle Hastings - Syl Labrot - Gary Martin Claire Moore - NEXUS Press - Kevin Osborn Genevière Petermann - Dieter Rot Tord Walker - Sch Weinbararti

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John Francis for his invaluable design assistance John Woodworth and the Media Center for photography - Julienne T. Mason - Viki Wylder Technical Assistance: Bil Castine - Dave Poindexter - Richard Sckoonberg • Van Stonecypher • Michael Viggiano • Tim Harley Vicki Harns Lee de la Fuente (for the shirt off her back)

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How will the future book continue to manifest creativity and disseminate knowledge?

The book as interface, the changing interface of collected thought... what is the future of the book? In the '90s, either directly or indirectly, computers and electronic resources have given us unprecedented access to information. In the surge of electronic information systems will printed books still be a part of future history or will their future interdependence with the culture begin to curve away like some discreet particle? In modern history the printed book has acted as a catalyst to propel significant cultural change. Martin Luther considered printing "God's highest and extremest act of grace." Considering his Reformation was a revolution through print, it's easy to see how he could feel that printing was divine intervention not human invention. The American colonies, later the United States, maintained one of the most literate populations in the world. The contribution of printed material to the American Revolution led the United States to

lead the world in making public education mandatory. Today, we are descended from a grand history of publishing when the printed word had a virtual monopoly on the maintenance of our culture.

The printed book no longer has a monopoly on the culture. For most of this past century print has shared the road with licensed broadcast media. More restrictive and less interactive than print, television and radio compete with print to give us a picture of who we are and what's going on in our world. We are in the middle of an emerging information source—the personal computer—and it may integrate the best characteristics of all three. How? We'll see-but it does seem that our eyes and ears will be working harder than ever and knowing how to type (and speed read) will help us to

Early in March, we posted the question above to all kinds of groups who use the Internet, Opinions, questions, stories and all sorts of musings came into our reach-in the exhibition they made a compelling wall of texts. In the pages that follow some of them are reproduced along with writings by our contributors.

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On Photography, On Books and On Purpose

CONRAD GIFBER

 ${f F}$ or 300 years the printed word defined our thoughts and its reign ended when photographs became an indispensible part of the media. The technology of the mechanically produced image untouched by human hands brought the world's mirror into sharper focus. Photography changed the way the world talked to itself and learned about itself. Our collective vicarious experience went up another notch of intensity when photographs supplied us with proof of what was going on inside and outside our heads.

I have seen the future. future.

- James Gleick

My discussion about the future of books begins with photography because books and it's still in the brought me to photography and vice-versa. Photography made a serious impact on our world view, and it owes much of its impact to the print media and the package we love to have and to hold—the book. The techniques of fine printing and bookmaking made me understand photography and commit myself to the making of photographs and later to the

making of books. The published image always served its audience well and photography has never been better served than by the pages of books. Books with photographs gave us the means to make universal connections apparent. It was a means to explore the common denominators of human experience. It was the beginning of a cultural dialogue with images as well as words and it led to the pursuit of developing mass media technology. For those of us who came to art through photography, technology is the handmaiden to our creative output. Film, video, sound, electronics, the technologies that attacked and attracted our senses were always in bounds. Mechanical image making absorbed our efforts at becoming technically proficient—you marry the technology for the sake of making better art.

Imagine the current collective surprise to learn that we are in the beginning of another quantum leap in connectivity. Combine words spoken, written and seen with pictures—still and moving, real and made up (or over)—and do it with a technology on your desk and do it for an audience that is immediately connected to you. Our attention is repeatedly being drawn to the changing interface between ourselves as individuals and ourselves as connected individuals. Of course, our surprise and our attention have yet to point the way to a solid and definitive role for the new means. It is very much a beginning and the pure integrity of new works with the new technology has yet to be revealed.

We are going forward—backwards.

So, what is the purpose of this exhibition? Since we began working, my attention has been focused on enunciating the questions and hoping for some good interactive conversation—the kind that makes



people think and enhance what they produce. In fact, that is what the exhibition is designed to do—pique your interest, make you wonder and force a good conversation. And the recipe for our conceptual endeavor? Take two parts historical perspective, with some humorous twists and turns to point out the irony in the past. Add that to a contemporary library of CD-ROM titles, with access to the Internet and America Online (a large portion of connectivity). Toss around with those awhile until you know just what to make of them and you have reduced your experience to a concise personal viewpoint. Then pour over the fresh artwork, from visual artists, writers, technophiles and technophobes to form your own gut feelings on the future of the book.





You must be able to tell the difference between a joke and an argument.

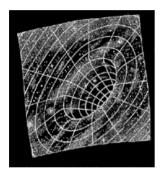
-Walter Ong



Q & A

FRANK GILLETTE

"A central characteristic of the modern period has been continued increase in the efficacy of the technology of production which poses a growing challenge to the primacy of the values they are supposed to serve. The post-modern period, the onset of which



may be set at 1945, will witness either a greater threat to the status of these values by the surging technology or a reassertion of their normative priority. Which alternative prevails will determine whether society is to be the servant or the master of the instrument it creates."

-Daniel Bell

On her deathbed, moments before she expired, Gertrude Stein was interrogated by Alice B. Toaklas, "Gertrude, what is the answer," what is the answer?"—With her final shaped breath, the great Stein responded, "Alice, what is the question, what is the question?"

Similarly, questions addressing answers to questions regarding art's actual or potential relation to, or dependence upon hyper-technologies evolving and mutating at warp speed, have a feverish urgency about them.

Two antipodal positions generate this flow of answers preceding questions: first is the Technophile—or, in its extreme manifestation, the Technocultist; then there is the Technophobe—or, in its maniacal form, the Neo-Luddite. Thus, we have two distinct attitudes of mind, and within each, gradations of embrace and degrees of dementia.

Our "Q & A" session begins with the usual suspicions and instinctual hunches emerging from a Technophobe's natural attitude, and is couched in three questions, to wit:

- 1) Will the "answers" high-technologies impose perpetually out-maneuver the questions posed and formulated by the plastic Arts?
- 2) Will Art become ensnared (or is it already enmeshed) in a compulsive unending *reactive* stance *vis-à-vis* high technology's increasingly extravagant sophistication?
- 3) Willthe mesmerizing glamour of a manifold, voluminous stream of novel high-tech ways and



Received: from cooky.demon.co.uk by post.demon.co.uk id ab23924; From: Pat McMurray -pat@cooky.demon.co.uk> Subject: future of the book

I think people will always publish books as books, the physical objects. I think this will be true even when an electronic device exists with ALL the capabilities of a book. People still practice calligraphy, even in the age of the PC. In the future most information will be transmitted as electronic data and read out on screens which may be very different from today's computers and televisions. However there will still be works that are so personal that they're printed, for example poetry. There will also be works considered so important that the effort of committing them to print will still be made, for example genealogy. And, of course there will still be books published as souvenirs and for collectors. The latest Stephen King will always be available in hardback for collectors even in a century's time. THINK OF IT AS EVOLUTION IN INTER-SECTION

Pat McMurray

From Technophila's crenelated ramparts the prevailing response is this: these three questions reflect a common garden-variety parochialism, and further, the <code>authentic</code> issues at stake are simply hamstrung by such feeble, sanctimonious, and ultimately irrelevant quibbling. The bona fide core of the matter to the Technophile may be summarized as: high industrial, or late industrial, or—paraphrasing Daniel Bell—post-industrial civilization is for better or worse, synonymous with a robust, tumbling on-rush of ever advanced, more efficiently improved, more functionally stable, increasingly miniaturized, progressively protean ways and means of identifying, organizing, processing and stimulating information that is both analogous to and homologous with the actual nature of reality. How can the plastic arts—its practitioners and its critical agencies—ignore or refute the curt implications of these smirking facts? By what justification, by what blind cipher's tactics, can the Arts disengage from

their existential responsibility to take on, deflect, and otherwise corral these high technologies into aesthetic embodiments? When reflecting upon the unprecedented complexity, magnitude, and rapidity as well as frequency of change which characterizes the dynamo systematically procreating these technologies, it becomes inexplicable that artists should, or possibly could, ignore their presence and impact—while smugly churning out images and objects cut from the same old cloth. Moreover, continuing to eschew any interest whatever in engaging high-tech media within the aesthetic domain is equal to a culpable negligence, because the Technophobic attitude of mind eviscerates art of any moral breadth, while playing directly into the grip of end-game nihilists and their reactionary ilk.

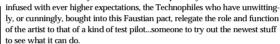
Swinging back from high-tech's ramparts into the trenches and dank bunkers of our Technophobes, the counter-exchange turns a low-tech screw another notch

with this choice volley: from its stealthy origins in interactive video installations of the late '60s, through the introduction of electronic real-time analog enhancement, to pixilation and variations on the computer as an image-making and plotting device, to the computer as a governing element in video installations as well as the initial modem-linked networks of the late '70s and up to the full-flowering emergence in Virtual Reality systems—even through all of these developments, nevertheless, in gazing back



on this 25 plus years, the once promising *ménage* of high art motives and high-tech methods has yielded far more polemical flatulence than works of enduring formal conviction.

And that has been the key word, the "P" word: Promise, promising. The participants during this chronology have been lured into a sort of Faustian pact by the rigmarole and mumbo jumbo of each successive generation of high-tech as it arrives on the scene to displace the prior generation, ad infinitum—as if one ought to construe an automatic aesthetic potential, or value, by the sheer availability of a new generation of high-tech, as if faculties of the imagination are enhanced by the charismatic presence of high-tech's latest round, offering new promise of even greater control, more expansive capacity, and a leg up on those without access to its marvels. Dazzled by, and addicted to, a superfluity of novel mechanisms



Returning to the aloof atmosphere of the Technophile's very latest model of a rampart, the counter salvos are primed to go ballistic, as in this crusty nugget from, of all people, Alfred North Whitehead: "By the turn of this century [and by that he meant the turn of the 19th to the 20th], nothing, absolutely nothing, was on certain ground; everything was being challenged; this is the main fact of our lives." How much more true now—in the present moment—

than when Whitehead's remark was first uttered some 75 years ago. Its implications are not unlike Buddism's "Endless Knot," a sacred belief revealing an infinite network of interrelationships between all forms of life. The metaphor is now compelled, perforce, to include life's technological extensions with all its various and frequently dangerous developments. Like it or not, a form of technological Darwinian selection has been insinuated into the "Endless Knot." It is no longer a matter of proselytizing for or against high-tech, it is now a question of creating necessary and sufficient ideational dexterity for dealing with the givens and the uncertain consequences they unload—or is it download—onto the culture. And this is the stock-in-trade of the artist, the Kunstler, if you will, dealing with identifying, and providing contextual shape for ambiguities and uncertainties. If anything, the role and existential duty of the contemporary artist is as critical now as it was during the Paleolithic, or Magdelanian epoch when the function of the artist-shaman was a matter of life and death for the tribe. We are now in the midst of a paleocybernetic epoch, accompanied by high modernism's (or, if you insist, post modernism's) moral crisis intertwined with the greater overarching threat of planetary ecocide; and it has been myopic, arrogant and cavalier usage of first industrial instrumentation and then, subsequently, high tech's byproducts that has, over the past century and a half, been leading the species down a primrose path, teetering to a brink of ecological collapse.



From:Armstrong@SEN.CA.GOV

book@mailer.fsu.edu Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; CHARSET=US-ASCII Importance: normal Priority: normal

Subject: Future of Books To: future-of-the-

It will be a very sad day if the only copy of a book must be read electronically. There is nothing like a nice big hardback book to sit and read and relax. Not quite the same looking on a monitor.

Steve...

brave new world with optimism, calm, and true grit. We can now withdraw our tongue from our proverbial cheek—or at least withdraw it half-way—and cobble together a cursory synthesis of the two respective positions.

Facing any critical posture which assumes—like this one—to illuminate the predicament of high art and high-tech, is the specter of fleeting shifts and dislocations generated by unforeseen technical developments, as well as unanticipated variables in the aesthetic equation. This is as it should be. What may seem a sagacious analysis at one moment, may turn into a pumpkin at midnight. All such critical speculation is wrapped in contingencies, remains tentative, and is obligated to stay alert to alluvial streams of facts and interpretation. Virtually none of this is carved in stone.

That much said, there nonetheless exists an unbroken line of argument focusing on dialectical relationships between objective and subjective status, or explicit and implicit components, or art and scientific truths. Beginning in the fifteenth century with Brunelleschi's "science" of perspective and van Evk's invention of an oil based medium, up through the nineteenth century with Talbot and the invention of photography and Ruskin's theories of industrial influence on the arts, proceeding as far as the precincts of early modernism with its concern for synchronicity, non-

Euclidean geometry and machine imagery, there has been a continuous and passionate interest on the part of artists to incorporate ideas and appropriate materials which inform or enhance their intuitive way of working.

Our current high-tech dilemma is exceptional only with respect to the magnitude, complexity, and the rate of turnover circumscribing its prevailing condition. Ignoring or

holding in blithe disregard the latent, actual and future influence of high-tech on Art or, for that matter, on normative priorities of any stripe makes as much sense as

a rat copulating with a grapefruit. And conversely, an unqualified faith in the *instinctive* beneficence of "scientific progress" is as loony as explaining the operation of sundials to a bat.

To recapitulate: it does not boil down to a confrontation between the Technocultists, with their belief in the fading of the traditional art object into a diaphanous haze of photons, and the Neo-Luddites, with their equally firm belief that all high-tech is intrinsically evil and we therefore are compelled to return to



Matthew Geller



the halcyon days of hand crafts, where macramé, basket weaving, clay pots and their likes constitute the legitimate aspirations of high art and artists. It is, instead, a matter of striking a wobbly equipoise between these positions at the porous border separating the Technophiles from the Technophobes, such that the artist becomes neither and both simultaneously, maintaining her or his freedom from ideological pressures imploding from either side of the conflict, and producing works of art that should, in sub-limity, elevate your thoughts, or, in profundity, send them down deeper.

By way of a summation, three hardcore questions address this issue:

Whether it is our nemesis or our salvation, high technology is now an irrefutable fact of life while art—or more specifically image and object making—is the most ancient and continuous and eloquent form of human communication and/or expression. According to Leroi-Gourhan, the late great historian of the paleolithic, humanity has been making images and aesthetic objects for some fifty thousand years. The first question now becomes: how is this archaic behavioral impulse for images to be linked up and integrated with humanity's most recent technological effluvia?

Second: how does the grammar of Art—in the high *format* sense—knit with the mind-obliterating potential of an emerging meta-apparatus? By "meta-apparatus" I mean the global infrastructure of information command and control systems which appear destined to shape the future, the *near* future. By "the grammar of art" I refer to those inter-subjective codes, implicit techniques, and syntactical rules which have governed aesthetic praxis since paleolithic times.

Third: how do the private and collective motives driving art—in all its variety of manifestations—balance the distinction between localized, culture-bound accretions and the apparently inevitable universalizing effects of this emerging meta-apparatus? This last question strikes the very heart of the matter, simply, and perhaps obviously, because it is now dawning upon those who ruminate on such questions that, left to their own devices, the consequences of rationally calculated tech-systems lead to totalitarian ends. Reductionist notions like "maximum efficiency" or "the bottom line" for instance, tend to bleed into social and cultural ideology. High-tech metaphors, with all their rationalist pretensions, tend to become employed by those who would socially engineer recently-globalized populations. Aesthetic motives and interests which emphasize free-play, chance operations, optimum variety, dreaminess, magic, the primacy of imagination, and even deliberate irrationality, are predetermined by reductivist lights to be, for the most part, inefficient, perfunctory or merely decorative.

The stream of intellectual development that has ineluctably led up to the present predominance of Science—and its handmaiden, technology—is well over one hundred years old. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century it had become an all pervasive—if not zealous—tone of thought that science was the decisive factor in all aspects of life. Scientific method ensconced itself as the know-all and cure-all as well as the final word on the validity of any given proposition—what-so-ever. Its dicta acquired the pati-



na of a preemptory usurpation, reducing all in its wake to folklore and superstition. Metaphysics, especially, was reduced to the status of a fool's hegemony. Art, at worst, was reduced to the status of super-

From: davis@MIT.EDU
To: Gail Rubini
(grubini@mailer.fsu.edu)
Re: FOB Project

Being stuck on a mock bulletin board isn't exactly my idea of high profile or a big reward for thinking. (but I am sort of a crank)

Not until the word book is an acronym for something will you know you are in the future... or maybe it becomes a verb... we already book to get out of someplace fast... like I'm booking now...

В.

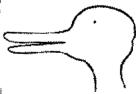
cilious diversion; at best, art was considered perhaps capable of providing emotional solace and inspiration, though devoid of any real epistemological value. The domain of unquantifiable or intangible qualities of any stripe has ever since been assigned a distant secondary role concerning affairs of the Mind. Scientific method and technology were thereby sanctified with the air of inevitability. However, in the words of MIT's professor of computer sciences, Joseph Weizenbaum, "Technological inevitability can be seen to be a mere element of a much larger syn-

"Technological inevitability can be seen to be a mere element of a much larger syn drome. Science promised man power. But, as so often happens when people are seduced by power, the price exacted in advance and all along the path, and the price actually paid, is servitude and impotence."

"Exactitude is not truth" wrote Henri Matisse in his Notes of a Painter. And this is, at its core, the key to this conflict—truth. What rings true, from the perspective of the artist, does not necessarily emerge from a calculation of facts, or a precise application of statistical probabilities, or an inevitable engagement with the most recent and sophisticated instrumentation available—it emerges as well, and even more urgently, from hunches, from leaps of faith, from a sudden epiphany, from wishful thinking, and from a panoply of intuitive judgments.

Thus, it may very well be that an essential function of the a in the present epoch is to provide the culture with a foil, with a counterpoint to reigning scientific dominance—whether the artist utilized high technology or eschewed its use as irrelevant. If we revivify the arch idea that art is a necessary and distinctive way of knowing the world—a way of knowing which celebrates the world's mystery as opposed to expunging it, and a way of knowing which is the signature of consciousness itself—then the task of art becomes tantamount to making a difference that makes the difference that makes the difference in the accelerating order of things.

Finally, a caveat from Heraclitus:





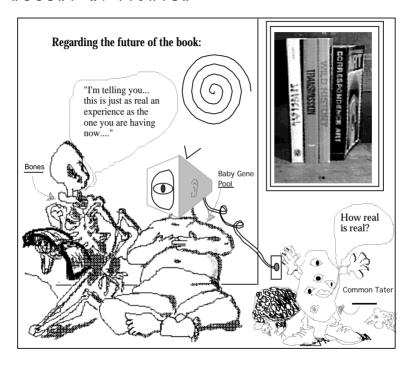
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count count

[&]quot;Nothing that is great enters into the life of mortals without a curse."

Bones to Baby Gene Pool:

ROBERT W. FICHTER





From: DON HOSEK

The imminent demise of printing is much exaggerated. Electronic media can really only be viable assuming that an electronic book is as self-contained as the paper book. Working in the field of digital typography (i.e., expressing "printed" matter electronically-l use printed in quotes since some of the material that I typeset never actually appears on paper, only on screen), I find that the current technology is really rather inconvenient. To look at material on a CD-ROM. I need to go to the room where the CD-ROM drive is. put the CD in that drive and read it on the screen. Paper books can be read anywhere there's sufficient light. Most likely the future of the book will be twofold: books that are generally not read linearly (technical manuals, reference works, etc.) can benefit from the searching abilities of computers. These will almost certainly become available at least as a digital supplement to a printed work (the OED is an excellent

example of how one might have a digital version of a work that is superior to the printed version). For works read linearly (novels, biographies, etc.) the benefits of the computer are less. There are some advantages to being able to find every place that Shakespeare used the name Balthazar for a character, but most readers of Shakespeare don't need this sort of facility. Literature in electronic form will probably become even more bipolar in its distinction between "serious" and "popular" fiction with only the former commonly available in digital form.

Of course the question of what will happen to literature in the first place must be asked as well. Are multimedia adventures the format for the future? Perhaps, perhaps not. I suspect that computer-based interactive multimedia will become an art form on the same level as drama, movies and television, but just as none of these has supplanted the forms of these has tory and novel, neither will interactive multimedia. The much-proclaimed death of reading is not going to be caused by such forms as storytelling, and it's

entirely possible that the growth of multimedia will actually lead to a renaissance of reading.

I've not really touched on the issue of poetry in these comments so I'll do that now. Poetry in this century has been primarily about language and communication. The advent of new ways to communicate has exciting possibilities for poetry. A work like Vladimir Nabokov's Pale Fire, for example, could be remarkably different as a hypertext presentation and were Nabokov writing that book in 1994, he almost certainly would have published it as such. Similarly, there are numerous other cases of pushing the envelope of what a book is beyond the traditional codex being done by various book artists. Some of these experiments might change the form of the book as we know it, but the bulk will continue remaining interesting items in collections of art books.

I, personally, really won't give up my library in exchange for a stack of CD ROMs or any other non-book form. Personally I like the traditional codexbooks and that's why I am involved in their production and am constantly learning more about traditional book production. Don Hosek "The Only Solution is Love" Quixote Digital Typography -Dorothy Day 909-621-1291_EAX: 909-625-1342





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When Will the Keyboard Become Extinct?

STEVEN BOBKER

The Newton, the EO, and the 9600 series Sharp Wizards are ushering in a new method of data entry: writing, or if you're snotty, pen entry. For centuries handwriting was the only way to permanently record data. Then the printing press changed our whole concept of permanent data. However, until a keyboard-based type creation scheme was invented, printing was a slow and specialized task. Keyboards rapidly took over all large data entry devices. Good keyboarders could (and still can) enter data at several times the speed of the best writers and more accurately.

Keyboards have also exacted a price. As they have become ubiquitous, so have the repetitive stresstype injuries they can cause. They are overwhelming our bodies, literally.

Keyboards demand a substantial amount of real estate. They are what determines the size of tiny

computers these days: not screens, not chips, but the need for an acceptable keyboard.

Apple and others have been promoting pen entry as a substitute for many items now keyboarded. They claim it is more natural. That's not true. Handwriting is as much an acquired skill as is keyboarding. We tend to learn it earlier in life and more of us master hand-



writing, but it's still a learned ability. Since handwriting is slower and the motions more varied it is easier on the body. But more natural (and hence better because "natural" is good)? *Not.*

Pen entry has a place in computing: on-the-go applications and places where a keyboard would take up too much space. Still, its market is a niche market and will remain a niche market. If you have lots of data, pen entry is inferior to a traditional keyboard.

There are at least three alternatives to pen entry and traditional keyboarding. One is here now, one will be here in the next few years (I think) and one is pretty much sci-fi today.

Here today is chord keyboarding. Chord keyboarding is very much like what court reporters do. There are five buttons, one for each finger of one hand. They are generally arranged in the natural layout



From: Bob Wyman

<b

If you are interested in the future of the book, then read the article by Vannevar Bush which appeared in the July, 1945 Atlantic Monthly entitled "As We May Think" Yes. I mean 1945.

What Bush predicted then is what we are only now creating. The concept of "Hypertext" originated in Bush's idea of "associative links." If you read the article, be prepared for the first few pages to be interesting but not really on the point. It's all a build up to the discussion of the MEMEX he invents as the book/library of the future.

bob wyman

an hour; others, less adept (like me) take three to four hours. Of course, as in handwriting and traditional keyboarding, lots of practice is required to achieve proficiency. I can chord at about 70 percent of my admittedly slow traditional keyboarding speed. Fast typists say they can generally chord at about half their top speed. In both cases, data entry is faster than maximum writing speed. Chording allows tiny devices like the Newton MessagePad all the usefulness of a full keyboard.

A bit further down the road is voice entry, where you speak and your words appear on screen. The technology is fairly far along on this, but there are problems with CPU speed, power and memory. Today's better systems require computers more powerful than any seen outside SuperComputer sites and of the announced CPUs the only one that might work is still-in-the-dreaming-about stage. Today's technology also requires many megabytes of very high speed (=expensive) RAM. As the physical components become available with reasonable prices (inevitable), voice entry will replace pen entry in most market niches, but will still be too slow to replace keyboarding for bulk data entry.

The sci-fi solution is cognitive patches. We'll all have them implanted at birth. When we need to communicate with our machines, we'll hook up a small transmitter and our machines will take their data and their commands directly from our thoughts. When will we see this? I'd be willing to bet that within 20 years we will see this form of entry replacing all others. And I hope to be a beta tester.

New technologies alter the structure of our interests, the character of our symbols and the nature of our community.

-Neil Postman



Steven Bobker was the former editor-in-chief of MacUser. Mr. Bobker has been a Mac columnist for MacUser, Computer Shopper and MacGuide. He is one of the best known authors in the Macintosh market.

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On Surfing...

JEROME STERN

I've been surfing the last couple of days. Not ocean-surfing like the unquenchable seekers of the ultimate wave. Not tv-channel-surfing like the die-hard couch potato. But book-surfing, the new, most hypnotically captivating sport ever devised by the creative, technical, and entrepreneurial ingenuity of humankind.

Until a couple of weeks ago I didn't even know this mind-tingling activity existed. Gail Rubini and Conrad Gleber were putting together a show called the Future of the Book of the Future at the Florida State University Museum of Fine Arts. It was to address the implications of computers and electronic information systems for the world of books. I was given the chance to make a contribution to the enterprise. So I plunged in, made my discoveries, and read this piece at the opening of the show:

BOOK BEDAZZLED

Books are physical objects, objects that embody for us a most compelling psychophysiological experience—sustained reading—the in-depth visual and mental tracing of word strings so long that days or weeks pass before we get from one end to the other. We read and eat and return to our book, and sleep and eat and return to our book and work and eat and return to our book, plunging into worlds that grow in subtlety and complexity, letting us live with characters whose intensity deepens and quickens our own sense of being.

And so, in tribute, I thought I would bring a book tonight, a book that stood for the world of books, that private pleasure, that giving of oneself to another realm. It was hard to decide.

Should I bring Two Years Before the Mast or Robinson Crusoe, A Tale of Two Cities or The Three Musketeers, Alice in Wonderland or The Wizard of Oz, Wuthering Heights or Jane Eyre, Little Men or Of Mice and Men, Dracula or Frankenstein or Tom Jones or Huck Finn.

The Heart of Darkness or The Way of All Flesh, The Critique of Pure Reason or The Interpretation of Dreams, War and Peace or Anna Karenina or Ben Hur or Don Juan, Daisy Miller or David Copperfield or Madame Bovary or Don Quixote, Moby Dick or Oliver Twist or Little Women or Portrait of a Lady. The Red and the Black or The Red Badge of Courage.

Silas Marner or Sister Carrie, Great Expectations or Gulliver's Travels, the poems of Emily Dickinson or the stories of Edgar Allan Poe or Walden or Uncle Tom's Cabin or Crime and



Punishment or The Brothers Karamazov, Tess of the D'Urbervilles or Sons and Lovers, The Canterbury Tales or The Decameron or The Magna Carta or the Code of Hammurabi. Paradise Lost or Paradise Regained, Beowulf or The Aeneid, The Iliad or The Odyssey, Aeschylus or Aristophanes, Demosthenes or Euripides, Hippocrates or Galen, Cicero or Aurelius, Hobbes or Locke, Plato or Aristotle. Thucydides or Plutarch. The Divine Comedy or The Faerie Queene. The King James Bible.

So I decided to bring them all, and about a thousand other books, here, in my hand, no longer imprisoned in ink and paper and cloth and cardboard. On this silvery disc, the Library of the Future, the size of a slice of petrified bologna, imagination leaps into the world for those who will catch it. The book is dead. Long live the book.

The Bhagavad Gita, or the complete works of William Shakespeare.

People came up after I read this, amused, and thinking the disc I held up was just a prop to make a point. No, I explained, what I said was literally true. The complete texts of 3500 culturally significant books, stories, plays, and poems were all encoded on a CD-ROM playable on these new multi-media home computers now available at our local computer and discount stores.

How much would it cost you to buy all those books? If they were available at mass-market paperback prices, I guess it would come to over \$11,000. And if you bought them, where would you

The enrichment of the collective human mind, through the printing and circulation of books, is comparable only to that linking together of individual brains and experiences through the invention of discursive language.

-Lewis Mumford

put the twenty five or so bookcases you'd need? But what's the point you might say? If you steadily read one book a month it would take you 145 years. By that time you might have forgotten many of the earlier works and would have to start over.

Published by World Library, several discs are available, from 171 Classic Mysteries, or a 600-work Greatest Books Collection, to several, ever larger Libraries of the Future, to this monster one. (Call 800-443-0238 for information.)

The Library of the Future is not just a collection. It has illustrations, video clips, and brief descriptions of the authors and titles. But best of all, it can race through thousands of years of literature and capture every mention of any word or phrase, and in seconds it will tell you where that word appeared and let you see the passages one by one. I dove in and learned that 228 works deal with "anguish" and 304 are beset with "misery," letting me wallow in millennia of unhappiness. To recover I thought about animals and discovered 17 titles have a gorilla but, sadly, not one has an aardvark. So I went to the dogs and found that from Alice in Wonderland to Wuthering Heights our literature has 34 terriers and 4 collies; of one, in The Education of Henry Adams it is cryptically pronounced: "about innate tastes no one except perhaps a collie dog has the right to doubt."

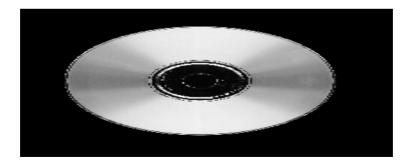


I did some instant social research, finding many more "farmers" (171) than "hunchbacks" (12), much less "pellagra" (2) than "leprosy" (32). I was supersonically flying over the landscape of literature, picking out lakes and mountains, church steeples and town squares faster than ever before possible in human cultural history.

Pineapples are mentioned first in 1681 by Francis Bacon in his essay on what you can grow on plantations. Ten years later John Locke says "nobody gets the relish of the pineapple, till he goes to the Indies, where it is, and tastes it." In 1759 Voltaire's Candide delights in oriental hospitality offering him "candied citrons, oranges, lemons, pineapples, pistachio nuts, and mocha coffee." In 1847 Rochester seductively tells Jane Eyre about his travels to wet gardens dripping with "drenched pomegranates and pineapples." Before Flaubert's Madame Bovary went to a fashionable ball, "she had never seen a pomegranate or eaten a pineapple." But by 1898 H. G. Wells was writing of canned pineapples, and this once rare and voluptuous tropical fruit ends up in *Grapes of Wrath* in a truckstop as a pineapple cream pie.

This power, this access to information, to language, to cultural richness belongs everywhere, in every county and highschool library. Power to the people. We want more of these discs—the literatures of all lands.

Will it replace reading whole works? Of course not, it will lead us to places we never knew were there. Each passage that fills your screen is so intriguing, so packed with verbal energy, you can hardly tear yourself away. This reading thing can be habit forming. It is civilization's ultimate computer game. It can light up your life.





CONFIG-SYS

I said to her come closer and whispered press Alt-L. She dabbed at the tiny keys with the tender tips of her pink fingers. The screen glowed. "How do I love thee? let me count the ways." Turquoise wave forms luminesced behind Elizabeth Bar rett Browning speaking for me. "I love thee to depth and breadth and height my soul can reach." Behind the melodious synthesized voice, Rayel' s Bolero rose and fell from the computer 's tiny speakers. I slid my hand to her bird-song collarbone. Ctrl-G I murmured. "The still unquiet bride of guietness" sang from the computer. I slid my hand under her ango ra sweater and touched sweet, smooth flesh. We moved until our cheeks touched and together we read the pearly screen. "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may." I put out my arm, but she stopped me with her gentle hand. Let me do that she said. I leaned back and she tapped until she came to "My true" love hath my heart and I have his." We turned together, our lips, our bodies. Our fingers danced on the keyboard, hers searching data bases at the edge of time. I touched Alt-S, she touched Ctrl-X "O mistress mine, where are you roaming? O stay and hear! Your true love's coming." And the computer made sweet moan.

Jerome Stern

Jerome Stern is a Professor of English at Florida State University, director of the Creative Writing Program, and author of Making Shapely Fiction. Florida Dreams, his meditation on Florida tourist attractions, co-created with photographer Gary Monroe and underwritten by the Florida Humanities Council and the Florida Arts Council, tours museum venues in the state until 1996. He also is a commentator for Florida Public Radio and National Public Radio's "All Things Considered." His works have appeared in a number of magazines including Harper's and Playboy. He writes frequently on popular culture, edited Studies in Popular Culture for six years and is current president of the Popular Culture Association of the South. He has been a speaker for the Florida Humanities Council and does a monthly book column for the TallahasseeDemocrat.



The Language of Bees

BARBARA HAMBY

The language of bees contains 76 distinct words for stinging, distinguishes between a prick, puncture, and mortal wound, elaborates on cause and effect as in a sting made to retaliate, irritate, instinuate, infuriate, incite, rebuke, annoy, nudge, anger, poison, harangue.

The language of bees has 39 words for queen—regina apiana, empress of the hive, czarina of nectar, maharani of the ovum, sultana of stupor, principessa of dark desire.

The language of bees contains 22 words for sunshine,

Two for rain—big water and small water, so that a man urinating on an azalea bush in the full fuchsia of April has the linguistic effect of a light shower in September.

For man, two words—roughly translated—"hands" and "feet," the first with the imperialistic connotation of beekeeper, the second with the delicious resonance of bareness.

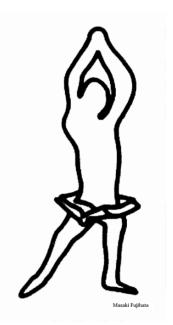
All colors are variations on yellow, from the exquisite sixteen-syllable word meaning "diaphanous golden fall," to the dirty ochre of the bitter pollen stored in the honeycomb and used by bees for food.

The language of bees is a language of war. For what is peace without strife but the boredom of enervating day-after-day, obese with sweetness truculent with ennui?

Attack is delightful to bees, who have hundreds of verbs embracing strategy, aim, location, velocity: swift, downward swoop to stun an antagonist, brazen, kamikaze strike for no gain but momentum.

Yet stealth is essential to bees, for they live to consternate their enemies, flying up pantlegs, hovering in grass.

No insect is more secretive than the bee, for they have two thousand words describing the penetralia of the hive—





From: gold@sri.com (technical boy)
To: The Future of the Book of the
Future
Subject: Re: Opinions wanted: The
Future of the Book??
Organization: SRI International

=The Book of the Future==---

99% of the books in the year 2010 are exactly like the book of today. Computers make it "impossible" for the book to change. That is because text is so easy to copy via computers. If books are translated into the digital medium, then no one will buy them.

Given the opportunity, scholars and students—because they are not people of means—will copy books digitally for free, and would assuage their consciences by saying to themselves that they will not profit monetarily from reading the book. To combat this, publishers will then stop putting books on CD-ROMS; publishers will avoid networks like the plaque.

octagonal golden chamber of unbearable moistness, opaque tabernacle of nectar, sugarplum of polygonal waxy walls.

The language of bees is the language of aeronautics,
for they have wings—transparent, insubstantial, blackveined like the fall of an exotic iris.
For they are tiny dirigibles, aviators of orchard and field.
For they have ambition, cunning, and are able to take direct aim.
For they know how to leave the ground, to drift, hover, swarm,
sail over the tops of trees.

The language of bees is a musical dialect, a full, humming congregation of hallelujahs and amens, at night blue and disconsolate, in the morning bright and bedewed.

The language of bees contains lavish adjectives praising the lilting fertility of their queen—fat, red-bottomed progenitor of millions, luscious organizer of coitus, gelatinous distributor of love.

The language of bees is in the jumble of leaves before rain, in the quiet night rustle of small animals, for it is eloquent and vulgar in the same mouth, and though its wound is sweet it can be distressing, as if words could not hurt or be meant to sting.

Barbara Hamby is a poet, fiction writer, and editor. Her story "Mrs. Kaneshiro Sees God" was chosen as part of the 1993 PEN/NEA Syndicated Fiction Project and will be read on National Public Radio Summer 1994. She is senior editor of Apalachee Quarterly, a literary magazine. "The Language of Bees" was first published in Another Chicago Magazine.



The New Multimedia Publishers

GIOVANNI ZOCCHE

History tells us that any new medium goes through a period in which forms of the previously prevailing media are heavily imitated. The first printed books were mere imitations of handwritten manuscripts, and the first movies were simply filmed stage plays. Similarly, most of today's multimedia titles mimic established, primarily books. We are still waiting for the D.W. Griffith of the multimedia world who will move the camera off the stage and see the world anew. And when we do, we shall also see multimedia publishers who will break through the business models of print publishing and the movie business and come up with a new model for new media.

Multimedia is being squeezed into the business-as-usual publishing practices of print and film. Print publishers negotiate with authors and photographers to obtain electronic and display rights as if they were preparing a book for print, and Hollywood is to license distribution of movies on CD-ROM the same way video is handled. These old habits need to be molded to a new model that will revolve around entities known as multimedia publishers.

The first step in changing this model will be to remove technologists from the center of the equation. People are talking about the "killer application" that is going to drive consumers into more aggressive multimedia buying, not recognizing that this will soon become a "title" business and that tools are not the key. There may or may not be a single "killer title" that awakens the consumer beast, but titles will drive the industry.



Agrippa by William Gibson

When the technologists find a standard that satisfies the largest possible market, their importance will be considerably reduced. At that point, another group—the one controlling the content—will take charge. These publishers, broadcasters, movie studios and collectors are sitting on a pile of high-value property.

While existing content will always play an important role, its importance will soon begin to diminish. When we realize that there is more to multimedia than digitizing linear media, economics will shift in favor of the multimedia producers. They will use some of the old content, but will also produce something new. As a conse-

quence, the economic value of the old content will lessen.

At the same time, distributors will play a smaller role as high-bandwidth networks facilitate a



shorter, more direct, distribution channel. Their role will largely be assumed by the new multimedia publishers, who will be the only intermediary between multimedia producers and the marketplace.

The Future of the Book of the Future=====

In the future, we will come to imagine that that the book of the far future has fins and a more aerodynamic design. Eventually, modern language enthusiasts and computer network users will come to the consensus that the book of the future will make greater use of polymer materials, including synthetic inks and artificial paper. Publishers will come to believe that typefaces will evolve towards looking very futuristic, much like the numbers at the bottom of today's bank checks. Publishers will develop the self-cleaning book, and then the biggest breakthrough of all: the self-reading book

The self-reading book will transmit its contents instantaneously into the human brain, so that nobody actually has to read it. On that glorious day, all peoples of all nations will come to understand how little different they are, and nobody will ever have to actually read a book again. Then, publishers will develop the book that writes itself. With that development, publishers will rule the world

And thus begins the age of the new multimedia publisher, whose role will differ from that of a traditional publisher. Besides handling traditional editing duties, the publisher will have to manage the production and coordinate the design of the interface to suit the user. Product failures are mostly problems with interface design rather than content. The product has to be designed for a specific audience; it has to be personalized or personalizable. Publishers will use direct-marketing techniques and will depend on project-management skills, market research, focus groups, and product and production tests. They will be involved in packaging, marketing and distribution, especially as networked distribution increases.

The publisher will also have to coordinate deal-making and negotiations with artists, content owners and other players. The most common model for this new publishing is that of joint ownership, where parties retain a percentage of the sales of the product and retain partial ownership. In some cases, the publisher may own the product outright, especially if it is still at the conceptual stage and the publisher sets up a work-for-hire agreement with the producer.

As productions become more complex and as demand increases, we will probably see increasing use of limited partnerships. It is hoped that return on investment will not be linked to net profits, as in the movie industry, but on sales, as publishing. Products could also be financed through corporate sponsorship and advertising.

To ensure its success, of course, the product must be engaging. Publishers must have a good understanding of the necessary creative techniques and should team up with producers and help them match their ideas with an interface and an audience. Product innovation depends primarily upon the genius of the creator, but innovation in design, deal-making, marketing and packaging can also contribute to the success of a title. If there will be such a thing as a "killer title," not only will there need to be a D. W. Griffith in the director's seat but a savvy publisher who understands just how radically the rules are changing.

Giovanni Zocche is the founder of Bora Ventures, a publishing company in New York City, a new media publisher interested in new multimedia authors and producers. This article was first published in New Media magazine and is reprinted here with permission from the author.



Book of the Future of the Past...

G F N F V I F V F P F T F R M A N N

"What time is it?" asked the passer-by. "When?" the archivist replied.

If by some miraculous accident the Book of the Future really came to us from the future, from an age distant enough to be cleared from our way of life, our prejudices and our logic, its language is likely to be almost indecipherable. Even its "pictures" would be incomprehensible. Still, obstinate and reluctant to admit ignorance as we are, millions of scholars would claim they have translated the text, and new interpretations of their versions would constantly be issued, barraging the public with the most inconsistent, confused or erratic prophecies. For example, some gardener would come up with a detailed description supposedly from an historical chapter of the Book entitled "How to Compost your Computer." The following 50 years would be entirely devoted to publishing countless other contradictory translations, refutations and corroborations, of the same chapter. And so on for every single page of the Book.

One day a curious account of another retrospective chapter which presumably deals with "The End of the Archivist Age" would come out. According to that particular translator, The

Book of the Future would seem to trace the decline of the archive back to our century. This is how it all began:

"The Omega Beam"*

The strange case of the Omega Beam emerged from Professor Jinnah's secret laboratories in Gwadar, Pakistan. In March 1989, Al Jinnah, surrounded by an international team of eminent scientists, took over Dr. Weib's experimentation on the accelerated de-pigmentation of the image by means of waves of variable frequency. By 1991, rumors spread about Jinnah's Omega Beam, a radiation which can selectively destroy any written sign without affecting the medium on which lies the inscription, so that a radiated book would be left absolutely intact but for the ink on its pages, instantly dissolved without a trace. It was soon revealed that the Omega Beam was already



Paul Windsor

capable of erasing any computer memory, as well as photographic images and various types of magnetic recordings. People started shuddering at the prospect of what came to be called the War of the Sign. Would the 21st century become its battlefeld? Were we making straight for the apocatype of the archive? In June 1994, the British Museum in London was positive on the supernatural incident. The hieroglyphics on the famous Rosetta Stone had simply...vanished. Naturalelty, suspicions turned towards Gwadar. The Pakistan authorities strongly denied having anything to do with the matter. It was suggested by some that it may well have been some sort of a divine affair, a symbolic crime, that it was no mere coincidence if it had befallen the very text through which the essence of History, the act of writing, had been epitomized. It is worth mentioning that in London, the crowds of visitors had never been so dense and eager to come and "see" the missing hieroglyphics. However, for safety reasons, the Museum board decided to remove the Stone from view and keep it locked in a safe.



Ultimately, the world will look on in horror at the first testing of the atomic book, the hydrogen book, the neutron book. Publishers will then write the book that threatens to destroy the whole world in a single reading. Will publishers never realize that books should be our servants, not our masters? That books should be used for good, and not for evil? Poised on the brink of destruction, publishers will negotiate to create treaties that discourage the proliferation of books. If we are lucky enough, the all-powerful publishers will then have the wisdom to throw all the books in the sea.

Otherwise, the world will head toward a literary Armageddon. The choice is up to YOU!

-MG

SRI International does not necessarily endorse this message.

second of it? One obvious reason for this addiction is that writing, videotaping, taking a picture of something, gives one the freedom and the right to forget about it, to put off the immediacy of an experience that can thus be lived (again) through technical devices, even if it is in a somewhat abridged and ghostly way. (But who still has time to participate LIVE in the entire course of one's own existence anyway?) Furthermore, by gathering and compiling every trace of everything, by "storing Time" within our own impermanence, we maintain the comforting illusion that we master History because we keep extending our limits in time or space.



Betty Leirner

So, because our own memory is so ridiculously small and unreliable, our sense of "immortality" or, let's say, our aspiration to transcend that which is immemorial, depends almost entirely on the most sacred institution of our social survival, the archives. Archives are like dough with an infinite amount of yeast in it; they are growing at every moment. Even if they become almost invisible thanks to electronics and microfilms, the records keep growing, only it is now in an implosive way, within a more and more compact space. Their quantity is never reduced. They simply become more compressed. It is as if we lived amidst data particles of a microcosm imperceptibly becoming heavier and heavier. And paradoxically, the more information we have in store, the smaller the fraction of it we seem to know.

The invention of the printing press, and today the advance of electronics have indeed been extraordinary revolutions. Ways of measuring time (from the sundial to the atomic definition of the second) have also had a crucial impact on the whole nature of a given society. The book, as some sort of an external appendix to our memory, is directly linked to our relationship with the world, which in turn is inherent to our domestication of Time. What IS the past or the future? Is there any difference? And what are we in between?

....Some day the "Book of the Future" will be just another part of our ever growing past, a gigantic ... future past of the future... past of the future... past of the future... past of the future...

Geneviève Pétermann, April 1994



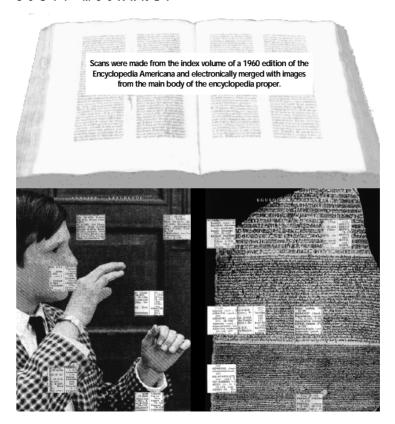
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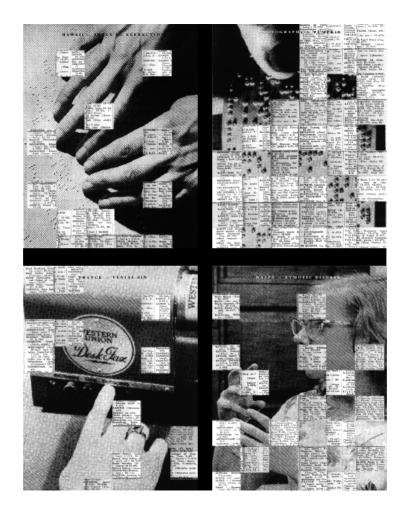
^{*} This is an abridged translation. Swiss artist NICOLAS FOURNIER devised the story of the Omega Beam as part of his essay entitled "Je me souviers de Tercier," which deals with our propensity towards recording and collecting images, the aim of which being more or less consciously, to give a tangible proof of our own existence. Paradoxically, our inclination seems to lead inevitably to the dissolution of the very images we are anxious to store because of an effect of saturation. Shouldn't we then start questioning the systematic conservation of the image and, rather, act against it? This question is one of the leading threads through our Fournier's essay.

INDEX to the Encyclopedia McCarney: the Portland Project

SCOTT McCARNEY









We Have Seen the Future and It Is Digital

CIIVE PHILIPOT

T he book is an old technology. The form of the codex goes back over 2000 years. It is an efficient technology that has permeated every aspect of society, and every corner of the world, especially if we understand 'book' to include magazine, pamphlet, manual, etc. There are rumors, however, that the book is approaching obsolescence. While such rumors may be alarmist, in that the book will surely not disappear overnight, we should take note of the contestant that threatens to knock the book off its perch. What is the nature of the book's adversary?

The writer and 'authority on artificial intelligence,' Raymond Kurzweil, sketch pelling model of the life cycle of a technology. He identifies seven phases in this cycursors, invention, development, maturity, false pretenders, obsolescence, and antic He suggests that the book is presently in the fifth phase, in which its dominance is ened by false pretenders. To illustrate the concept of 'false pretenders' he charts the in the evolution of the phonograph record, suggesting that the long-playing record LP—was the mature phase, and that the LP was first challenged by the cassette tap sees the cassette tape as the false pretender, because this new technology could not do everything the LP could—and more. The LP was, in fact, made obsolescent by another new technology: the compact disc.

Kurzweil goes on to describe the evolution of book production, from vellum pag inscribed and bound by hand, through the introduction of printing, then movable typ now computer typesetting. He suggests that the printed book is not yet obsolete, but threatened by false pretenders. He also makes us aware that although the challenging nologies are flawed, their appearance is a sure sign of approaching obsolescence. The prominent threat is from 'electronic books.' These are false pretenders because they cannot yet do everything a book can do—and more. The technology that will make the book obsolescent must match 'the essential qualities of paper and ink;' when that moment arrives we will witness the ascendancy of the virtual book.

A description of this still-theoretical virtual book is in order. Kurzweil suggests that it will be a combination of telephone, camera, television, computer and, of course, book. It will enter text from voice; translate pen marks into letters, symbols, and instructions; translate from one language to another in real time; include sound and moving pictures; send and receive mail; navigate databases and networks; access vast quantities of material to seek knowledge: in short, it will be a personal research assistant. It



Masaki Fujihata

To: future-of-thebook@mailer.fsu.edu From: ion.lanestedt@ilf.uio.no

What is going on at this address I am interested in electronic publishing, hypermedia and dynamic documents and would like to know...

Subject: What is going on?

-jon

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Whether or not we agree with Kurzweil that virtual books will send "printed paper book technology into obsolescence by the end of the decade" (my emphasis), we must surely all see the signs that lead him to this general conclusion. As Geoffrey Nunberg, a researcher in linguistic technology and the history of written language, puts it:

... books as such—that is, bound and printed documents—are not an interesting category. In modern industrial societies, the vast majority of books bear no cultural burden at all; they are parts catalogs, census reports...tide tables, tax codes, repair manuals, telephone directories, airline schedules—documents whose appearance as books rather than in some other form has mostly to do with the practical requirements of display and diffusion and the limits of available technologies... The printed documentation that accompanies the delivery of a single Boeing 747 weighs about 350 tons, only slightly less than the airplane itself. Who would have any reservations about putting texts like these into electronic form, if it will make the world a roomier and greener place?

Having disposed of publications that continue to exist only because alternatives are not fully viable, Nunberg goes on to his main concern, the future of "works of literature, belles lettres, scholarship, and criticism, as well as ... journalism ..." etc. He makes many interesting observations. For example, in the context of literature: "It is very unlikely that the computer will replace the book as a reading tool in a way that it has replaced the type-writer as a writing tool." A useful distinction.

At the end of his essay Nunberg states that:

Conventional print-and-distribute publication may be required to establish the public presence of a text, but [not] ... to sustain it. Texts will have primary, secondary, and tertiary lives, moving back and forth over scanners and printers... In some cases, print publication may become largely ceremonial, analogous to the common ... practice of first releasing a book in hardcover to establish its claim to serious critical attention...

Even now, television and radio are probably the principal means by which people in industrial societies obtain knowledge. If, as seems likely, the virtual book draws heavily on sound and image for communication, then linear reading may decline. Linear hearing may be the preferred form of reading. Another factor that might help to knock out linear reading may be the current incessant need to scroll texts in a computer environment—along with the difficulty of estab-

Knowledge, not capital, is the new basis of wealth.

-Peter Drucker

lishing quite where one is in a narrative.

A more positive outcome of reliance on sound and image is that illiteracy might be diminished, since our arcane and harmful system of spelling English can be dispensed with, and speech can be converted instantly into soundtext. If text is more likely to be sound than image, reading may well have more to do with visual literacy, with the deciphering of alphanumeric characters and images combined as gestalt figures.

Writing destroys the mind... it pretends to establish outside the mind what can only be in the mind.

But the rights of wordsmiths, soundmiths, image makers, and multimedia makers will need to be protected, as will the integrity and uses of their creations. This means that access to their works will need to be controlled—at least in the immediate future. This will ensure that creators can earn a living.

-Plato

Because of these concerns, the actual costs of digitized publications and original electronic works to the individual may well be cumulatively prohibitive. Similarly, an individual may be required to pay a kind of license fee—in theory at least—in order to be able to scan a copyright publication into their virtual book and electronic memory; the costs of legitimate scanning may therefore also become prohibitive. Consequently libraries should still have a role to play as accessible repositories for packaged 'signs and symbols,' especially when these packages are digital, since it is almost certain that individuals will not be permitted to realize the full capacities of their astonishing virtual books.

The emerging electronic environment and its denizens seem to me to be analogous to McLuhan's global village. It also seems that electronic communication is much closer to an oral culture than print communication. In a village, in an oral culture, in speech, there is virtually no impediment to the content of a conversation. One can recite a whole poem, even a whole story; one can divulge secret information, one can imitate another person—there is a free flow of ideas, whether original or borrowed. This is surely what we mean by culture—that ideas, signs and symbols, belong to all of us regardless of their origin and currency. If the virtual book was able to fulfill its immense potential, it could be the tip of the iceberg of the collective memory, and of unfettered communication, and could be a tool like no other to guarantee our freedoms, creativity and growth.



From: jon@perth.dialix.oz.au (Jonathan Kitchin) To: future-of-thebook@mailer.fsu.edu Subject: cdroms from Prime Time Freeware

I saw where the above firm is selling 5000 megabytes of UNIX source code on 2 cdroms for \$60 In Australia this works out at about 2 cents per MB Surely putting all this into a book would be impossible!!!! cheers from Perth

jon kitchin jon@DIALix.oz.au

Raymond Kurzweil has been contributing a regular column "The Futurecast" to Library Journal. Five of these are particularly relevant to this discussion; January 1992, p.80-82; February 15, 1992, p.140-141; March 15, 1992, p.63-64; February 15, 1993, p.145-146; March 15, 1993, p.54-55.

Geoffrey Numberg, "The places of books in the age of electronic reproduction," Representations no. 42. Spring 1993, p.13-37.

(This text has been amended and extracted from a longer paper entitled "Book Museums or Virtual Libraries" which will appear in full in Art Libraries Journal, Preston, England, later in 1994.)



Ilona Granet



Peggy Diggs



Steve Bradley, "Banking is Fun in the World," 1994

Listening to John Crowe Ransom Read His Poetry

DAVID KIRBY

I am waiting for my wife to get dressed so we can drive over to campus for the regular Tuesday poetry reading which, when you consider that it takes place, say, forty times a year, means that, combined with the readings sponsored by other groups, there are maybe sixty poetry readings annually of all kinds—benefits, slam poetry contests, even anti-poetry readings—in our little town of less than a hundred thousand people. So while everyone decries the dwindling audience for poetry, I don't see it: when I was in college, we never had readings, so I really didn't go to any until I was a senior and John Crowe Ransom came to the LSU campus to read his poetry.

Ransom was pretty much it as far as Southern poetry went—at worst, he was tied with Robert Penn Warren—what with him being an Agrarian poet and then a member of the Fugitive group and, later, founder of The Kenyon Review as well as author of Chills and Fever, Two Gentlemen in Bonds, The World's Body, and all these other great collections. So everybody was pretty excited about his coming, with the exception of my then-girlfriend, who was majoring in something called Clothing and Textiles and whom I was dating because I thought it would be refreshing to go out with somebody who had ideas and intreest different from mine—bie mistake—and who was

now beginning to pull away from me

and all the "impractical" things I adored. She said no, she didn't see what the big deal was, but yeah, sure, she would go along to see the famous poet since it meant so much to me. So I put on my best clothes and she puts on hers and off we go to the auditorium, where everyone is waiting, all dressed up as though they are going to the prom. In those days, men still wore coats and ties and women wore dresses to football games, so you can imagine how gussied up they are for a poetry reading. We find good seats in the middle, and everybody else files in

pretty quickly, until there are maybe seven hundred fifty or eight hundred people there. And then Ransom comes out, dapper little white-haired guy close to eighty years old and starts reading these terrific poems: "Blue Girls, " "Piazza Piece," "Captain Carpenter," and, to be sure, "Bells for John Whiteside's Daughter." In his semi-ironic, semi-whimsical way, Ransom is just knocking everybody out, even though he seems to weary as the evening goes on and spends more and more time shuffling his pages between poems. My girlfriend and I are sitting behind one of my teachers, Dr. Fabian Gudas, who is quite bald and has a big, sweet, goofy grin, and his wife, whose name is Almena Meeks.

And behind us is this big moron who is in a couple of classes of mine



and who impresses me as little more than a blowhard as well as something of a mystery, since he is openly contemptuous of literature and especially poetry, which he clearly thinks of as a craft practiced exclusively by leftists and sissies. It is during one of Mr. Ransom's silences that the moron says loudly to his date, "See that bald-headed fruit? That's my English professor," whereupon Dr. Gudas swivels around and scowls directly at me, who begins to stammer things like, "I didn't say you were a bald-headed fruit, Dr. Gudas; I mean,

I don't think you're a fruit. . . . "

The people around me who realize what has happened begin to laugh, my then-girlfriend included, while the others begin to shush us, because by that time John Crowe Ransom has started up again with "Here Lies a Lady" or "Janet Waking" or any one of a number of his (and I think the word comes from a Jane Austen novel, though I can't remember which one) superexcellent poems. The evening ended badly, I'm sure, with much teeth-grinding on my part and quite a few snippy exchanges with my then-girlfriend, who had decided to compound my shame by not only cataloging but also painstakingly analyzing a number

of minor humiliations I had endured recently in her presence but had, until that moment, successfully forgotten. The funny thing is that I don't remember anything at all about the fight or fights that must have ensued and the subsequent breakup, only that I must have broken up with my then-girlfriend at some point because otherwise I would be married to her and not the woman in the other room who is trying on different pairs of shoes and asking This pair?

This pair? even though I keep saying that the latest pair is absolutely the perfect choice, no doubt about it. What I do remember from that evening is the trivial though.

now that I think about it, rather amusing exhange involving me and Dr. Gudas and that moron, which vignette could have been scripted by Feydeau or Goldoni or one of the other great farceurs, as well as the less flashy but more deeply satisfying image of the somewhat donnish Mr. Ransom and the philosophical-fanciful tone of his wonderful poems, which I have decided lately to characterize by the adjective "marmoreal," which means marble-like, though in a warm manner—like flesh, in other words, but with the immortality of statues.

David Kirby is W. Guy McKenzie Professor of English at Florida State University, a recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Florida Arts Council, and the author or editor of sixteen books, including SAVING THE YOUNG MEN OF VIENNA, which won the University of Wisconsin's Brittingham Prize in Poetry.



Issues of Intercession

JIM COGSWELL

A book is a handy device visually, portable, directly interactive with human gesture, almost like an added appendage. Its solid geometry makes it a useful tool for building space perspectivally, yet the pages of the open book also have a fluidity and adaptability to other forms, like cloth over the skin. An open or closed book carries anthropomorphic connota-

of a figure.

As an object of the gaze, the book has become an image both of absorption and absence, mirroring perhaps our own relationship to the painting we are viewing. I was fascinated to read earlier this

tions referring both to the physical manner and the inner attitude

absorption and absence, mirroring perhaps our own relationship to the painting we are viewing. I was fascinated to read earlier this year a reference by Margaret Miles, in her book *Carnal Knowing*, to the shock which St. Augustine's silent readings provoked among his contemporaries.









At First Glance

PAUL RUTKOVSKY

From: CountMind0 <mgardbe@andy.bgsu.edu> Subject: books Mime-Version: 1.0 Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII

McLuhan said it best

"books are nice, so are horses"

-mindy q

At first glance my multi-media installations are more like a focus of Hollywood/Madison Avenue confusion—sounds of radio and television commercials coming from dozens of mini-speakers, hamburgers and buns, plastic figures of World Wrestling stars, Ninja Turtles surrounded by thousands of dead branches, and Toxic Crusaders rotating on small motors as stage lights illuminate the event from below. The sound, light, and bombastic imagery don't seem to suggest a starting point, or an end, or even a resting point. After a short period of time the sound takes on a monotonous, white noise, background effect. The images, sound and light begin to merge like a tapestry and seem to elicit the numbing and pleasurable experience of a warm bath.

Since we live in a material, bottom line, capitalist culture it seems to me to be very important for all of us to keep a sane and knowledgeable perspective in this consumer oriented world. Understanding this simple relationship is an important step in connecting my work to a playful critique of our world. Technology can be mysterious and remote, especially when seen as high tech images that simulate reality. The simulation takes on a life of its own and becomes more convincing than the "objective real" world. It's a very seductive notion to be lost in a virtual reality of perfection. Humor and satiric investigation of the fabricated world can, it is hoped, draw us closer to the living, breathing world that is our humanity—and reconnect us to a more vibrant primitive existence.

The primary focus for me is to connect the technology to our lives, to eliminate the barriers between flesh and silicon.

-Paul Rutkovsky & Doo Daa Floridada



Near at Hand Super Information Highway





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The Book as Art

MARTHA WILSON

The '90s and the Next Millennium

I can't count the number of times I have been asked if the field of artists' books is dying. This question was being asked in the '80s, too, while artists who had ideas appropriate to the published form were busy publishing. The trickle of 1000 or so unsolicited works per year received by Franklin Furnace has held steady also. So my thought about the future is that the situation is like television.



Robert Peters

which never supplanted radio, but rather added to our myriad forms possible. I believe it was Nancy Buchanan who first gave a book to Franklin Furnace in the form of a disk, even though we couldn't "read it." Nowadays, we get quite a few disk-books, and I suspect when CD-ROM technology becomes cheap enough, artists will have a blast combining still and moving images and sound. In fact, now that desktop publishing is here, artists' books are the easiest artworks to produce, in

all senses of the word. For example, *Pig Magazine*, a compendium about an inch thick, contains artworks made for the page, and xeroxed, I think—an office worker's dream. Fanzines on every article of culture fan the flames which warm the melting pot.

I'm not depressed, nor should you be. Visit Japan and take in a department store in Tokyo called *The Wave*. Each floor offers different technology—records, audio tapes, video tapes, CDs, books. The only thing that is sure to be lacking is the time in which to consume our options.

The 1980s

During the '80s, the gains for women and minorities imagined in the '60s, achieved in part in the '70s, were eroded by the fashionability of racism, sexism and money as the measures of value. While "information" was transformed into sound bytes, ironically, for artists, the simplicity that was possible to project in the '60s and '70s disappeared in the '80s in favor of complexity—perhaps in reaction to artificially simple analysis of the world as a place in which to make a profit, where a 19th-century supply-and-demand morality applied.

"Oneof-a-kind one thousand of a kind. Precious. And not so. A visual pun. An unending mental challenge. The artist's bookthe visual bookis an unexpected art"

-Amy Jinkner-Lloyd

Barbara Kruger worked as a graphic artist for Condé Nast for many years before becoming internationally known for her unmistakable graphic style, which makes liberal use of advertising tech-



subtly raises the volume of her messages by starting her book in conventional codex form, and at midpoint using the entire page spread and forcing the viewer to rotate the book 90 degrees to read it by flipping the pages like a calendar, from the bottom to top.

Helen Brunner's 1982 *Primer* is hardly that—rather, it is a dense and sorrowful analysis of information and knowledge, and how this information and knowledge cannot be trusted. Using the Rosetta Stone—the key to an ancient language—and translation as metaphors for knowledge, Brunner chips away at everything she (and we) think we know and therefore control. Although this is a work of high production value, with burned edges, vellum pages and detached "books" on the pages, somehow this work reminds me most strongly of Claes Oldenburg's *Ray Gun Poems*, filled with the graffiti of destruction and enlightenment

tion and enlightenment.

Each of us uses a "book" almost every day, and we even call it a book—yet it is not an image that comes to mind immediately as an autobiographical volume—the checkbook. Nancy Garruba reveals her full financial disclosure, along with the qualifying phrases, TRUE, FALSE, NOT ALTOGETHER TRUE, NOT ALTOGETHER FALSE, throwing into question the validity of experience, the reality of money, our sources of value

Two Places at Once: Transfigured Wood Part 4 (1986) is Marian Penner Bancroft's thoughtful long view of North American resources—trees, water, air, soil—out of which the book itself is made and out of which the civilized world has been hewn. Through its poetic, nonlinear text, the book seems to be written from the point of view of the trees, or perhaps the Native Americans who watched the approach of the technology that would capture those resources. The extreme horizontal format of this work reinforces the horizon line, the view of both eternity and the present moment in each image.

The 1970s

The '70s began, at least as far as the art world is concerned, with the "Information" show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1970. The "dematerialization of the art object," to use Lucy Lippard's

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From: voaelke@c-

To: future-of-the-

book@mailer.fsu.edu Subject: Re: Opinions wanted: The

Future of the Book??

Systems Inc.

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Organization: Control Data

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How will the future book manifest

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represented by two current pro-

Project Gutenberg is in the

process of putting quite a few

of an Internet Encyclopedia.

and what's being planned for

When I look at what's been done

electronic form, and the Interpedia Project is working on

Voael)

17igp.wpafb.af.mil (Contr Karl

phrase describing the trend which replaced painting and sculpture with documentation of actions and ideas through photography, videotape, audiotape, performance and books, was in full swing. The artists who pioneered Conceptual art in the '60s and '70s paved the way for women and third world artists to mount their attack on the European American axis. Additionally, the '70s saw institutions (such as Franklin Furnace) spring up to deal with the new nature of art world commodity, and (like the Women's Building in Los Angeles) the urgent parallel issue of lack of visibility and representation for women and minorities.

The 1960s

Let me use as a starting point Claes Oldenburg's Ray Gun Poems, produced in 1960 on a stencil machine owned by Judson Memorial Church, the one-hundred-year-old institution on Washington



Scott McCarney

Square Park in New York City. This supremely ephemeral art object embodies the hopes and dreams of the '60s, and is one of the only remaining products of a collective of artists, dancers, writers, musicians, filmmakers—all of whom were intent upon tearing down these distinctions among media, and between the art world and the "real" one outside on the street. The Reverend Howard Moody cut a clearing for such restless talents as Claes Oldenburg, Red Grooms, Jim Dine, Yvonne Rainer, Simeone Forti, Allan Kaprow, Tom Wesselmann, Al Hansen, Robert Rauschenberg, Dick Tyler, Dick Higgins, George Brecht, and many other artists whose work both despised and hoped to transform the status quo. Oldenburg was living in an apartment on the lower East Side that was so small, writing was the only aesthetic pursuit that would fit. Consequently, the street became his studio, its prostitutes, drunks, artists, landlords, policemen, pigeons and dogs his models. The Ray Gun Poems are graffiti and overheard snippets of conversation, "zapped" with the ray of annihilation illumination, when pimps and governors, artists and the rich would find their swords had become ploughshares. How was this miracle going to come to pass? It would be the artists and seers, pumping pamphlets out of their basements and giving them away on street corners, who would implement

their basements and giving them away on street corners, who would social and spiritual change.

Now, for a further digression on offset lithography—the technology that produced multiple copies of artwork. During the Second World War, a new problem confronted the military for the first time: how would it be possible to distribute orders for a war being fought all over Europe and the Pacific basin? The answer was to mount printing presses directly on aircraft carriers and to perfect offset lithography, which transferred ink from a metal plate to a rubber blanket and onto paper at a



projects, I wonder if I'm going to continue thinking of a book as something solid that has to be held up. For that matter, a "book" in the future may not even exist in one defined place on a network; it may just be a set of links to different sources of information around the world.

For more information about the Interpedia: Doug Wilson dwilson@crc.sd68.nanaimo.bc.ca or dwilson@chaserv.almanac.bc.ca For more information about Project Gutenberg: Michael S. Hart hart@vmd.cso.uiuc.edu Karl Vogel vogelke@c-17igp.wpafb.af.mil [134.136.19.253]

But back to the '60s. Surely this time, social change would work. While the Constructivist artists in Russia had used available technology to produce their works in multiple, that technology was limited: stone lithography, rotogravure, letterpress, silkscreen painting—the desire to litter the landscape with visual literature was genuine, but these methods of reproduction were slow, and materials also at a premium. Oldenburg had a stencil machine at his disposal, the limited resources of a church stationery closet, and his own energy. When I asked him how many copies were in the edition of the *Ray Gun Poems*, he didn't exactly answer, but replied, "Fatigue was a factor."

But, here is my point: after the Second World War, the printing technology known as offset lithography became cheap and available enough to make the vision of multiple artworks, to be given away or sold more cheaply than any form of art in history, a real possibility.



The Archaeology of Knowledge, Paul Windsor



From: Don Webb <0004200716@mcimail.com> Subject: FOB submission

Future of the Book by Don Webb

When I was a young lad, my grand-mother used to Email me her reminiscences on publishing round the turn of the century. Since this historical matter is of interest to you young folk, I'll pass along a few of her remarks — of course this is dimmed and confused by the dint of years, and although nothing written after 1998 was ever lost, I am too weary to try to search the data galaxy for it. Hope you-all find this interesting.

1. The Right to be Written League, a branch of what was then called the Fundamentalist Right, came into being in 2005. These folks argued that texts had a right to life that was often overlooked by their authors. They feared for the loss to humanity of the aborted novels, abandoned articles, and slain short stories that authors dispersed to data heaven. In many countries they created adoption data banks to which authors could send their unfinished work, where it would be finished by a League volunteer. Many pranksters took horrible advantage of this situation sending only a single let-

- ter. The League, with its motto of "Let not a letter be wasted!" lived on until 2011, when the case of Henderson vs. The League was tried. The first case of electronic custody. Henderson claimed that his unfinished novel Bellow the Rain Oueen had been so mercilessly edited by the League volunteer, that it would have been a far, far better thing for it to have been aborted. The court agreed that the League had essentially changed the nature of the foundling work and was thus quilty of the very crime it sought to abolish. Damages in the amount of ten thousand virtual dollars (about \$0.25) were awarded and the League disbanded, although some of its members are rumored to be part of the Library of Babel Cult.
- 2. The Vanity Anthologies. With the advent of huge data files of every magazine story ever published, a new species of vanity press appeared. They would put together a book of detective fiction, half of which would be unanthologized works by recognized masters in the field (needless to say whose copyright had expired) and half 'new talent.' The 'new talent' would be required to guarantee the sale of a certain number of copies. The same half book could be sold over and over again. Most notorious was Gruenstat's _The Compleat Thriller_ which was sold 54 times (once

- in every state) each with half the writers being first timers who lost about a thousand real dollars each. When this scandal hit the major EnewsWerks, a group of the writers banded together and killed Gruenstat, and then novelized their crime as the _The Vanity Murder_. This self published volume sold well and spawned a score of copycat killings/ books.
- 3. The Cancer Novels. The metamorphic novel, introduced by Michael Joyce. became a fairly popular genre by 2001. Almost everyone had read a novel that changed each time it was read, and indeed most High Schools students had gang written one as part of their electronic English classes. A Mr. Pel Terry came up with the idea of introducing viruses into the novels. His early novel, _Fully One Quarter_ had special unseen features that would read files on the owner's computer, and introduce material from those files into the story. Pel Terry defended the idea as being normative of the act of reading, since "We always take our own ideas into the texts we read anyway." This also stopped piracy of the novel, because no one wanted to give a friend a copy of a novel that had their deep personal secrets in it. Unfortunately Terry's computer skills were lacking and the viruses tended to leave traces of the
- novel behind. After a few hours of running the book, the entire system was made into the novel, and if the system had automated Email powers, the novel would spread through the system. Carefully made viruses to kill the meganovel were introduced by the internet Arts Council in 2003. A few other cancer novels were produced as acts of artistic terrorism, but virus detection rendered the medium obsolete by 2005.
- 4. The Chain Novel. The chain novel enjoyed a brief voque in 1996. The idea hased on the chain letter was that one would write a chapter of a novel, send it along to ten friends. each of them would write a second chapter and so forth. By the end of the process there would be in theory thousands of different versions. There had been chain novels ever since the creation of the'net, but in 1995, the completed version of Naked Came the Programmer_ became a bestselling paperback. Thousands of novelists and would-be novelists began their own projects within months. The sheer interconnectedness of net culture killed the project. Some individuals would receive as many as 25 versions of an ongoing book on the same day. The suicide of Dermal Phillips in 1996 ended a great deal of net glut. Phillips



1990

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had tried to answer all of his Email, and as he became further and further behind became more despairing. The day before his leap from the Golden Gate Bridge, he had received 205 copies of the novel in progress, _To Err is Human_. His epitaph, "He died for the Net" is a polignant reminder of the dangers of Email today.

- 5 The Snake Hunt Novels Snake hunt novels combined the thrill of amateur detection with the thrill of reading. Indeed following the so called "Runic School" of criticism which holds that reading is an act of revealing the Hidden, these novels may be viewed as the most normative of any creation of Net culture. The term Snake comes from the cypherpunk wars of '94-'96. According to a manifesto of the time. "A TENTACLE is an Email address used by a real person for the purpose of concealing their identity from others. A SNAKE is a TENTACLE that is particularly wicked and evil and will lie and trick others into believing the TENTA-CLE is real. In other words, the more consequential and malicious a TENTA-CLE, the more it is a SNAKE." The traditional self identification with evil practiced by many writers, Baudelaire, Ewers, Webb, etc. led to the adoption of the term Snake for themselves. The Snake would put out the first chapter
- of his or her novel and then leave clues as to who wrote it. If the reader tracked the clues down to the correct address, the next chapter would be released. Sometime the trackers went in the wrong direction, and other artistes created SPOOF-Snake novels claiming that they had written the first chapter and giving the mistaken tracker a chapter of their own manufacture. Advances in tracking technology eliminated the Snake novel
- 6. The Do It While You Sleep Novel. This particular service originated among the user groups as a final way to stop people seeking direct Internet access. The consumer would buy a program that would read several dozen of the consumer's files. It would do textual analysis of them, number of word pairs, preferred tenses, POV, etc. When the analysis was completed, the program would "Translate" a classic novel into the consumer's voice. These were euphemistically called "Collaborations." Dickens and Conan Doyle were the favorite targets for such collaborative work. These games are still played, but by no means enjoy the voque they had in 2008-2012.
- 7. The Surprise Novel. These were a further modification of the process above. Instead of translating a classic

- text into the narrative voice of the consumer, these would write a novel that the consumer had outlined in a voice they had previously analyzed. The consumer would choose from a fairly simple plot element menu, customize it with locale, character names. etc. and then choose a voice. Since these programs had a fairly long run time, the term "Surprise Novel" was used to describe them. After selecting the elements the user often had to wait a month or more until his or her system announced that the consumer had "written" the novel. These had roughly the same period of popularity as their counterparts above.
- 8. The Re-Creation Novel. All the novels produced by this technique are eminently forgettable, but the method is amusing. Advances in VR allowed persons to re-create the exact circumstances of their favorite novel. A person could write on Poe's writing desk. with Poe's quill (from a raven naturally), and scribble away. Then they could advance the program to a point where they watched their work come out, and be criticized by simulations of the critics of the day. Of course these simulated critics were generally programmed to be much more receptive to "genius" than their actual counterparts had been. Similar programs exist-

- ed for painting, sculpture, musical composition, etc. The problems with addiction and personality breakdown have greatly limited the use of these games.
- 9 The Novel of Rebirth Reincarnation was only discovered as a scientific fact in 2055, and the process by which a person may tap into the accumulated wisdom of his or her past lives is still largely unknown. A very popular idea has been the creation of some artistic. object to cause the psyche to remember its past. Accordingly sophisticated programs which will look for the characteristics of the deceased among Net users have been developed. When the program suspects that the new user may indeed be an old user reborn, it Emails the new user the text of the novel, the music, the poetry, or a VR of the art the old user had made. If this does not produce the memory experience sought for, the program waits and continues its search down the avenues of time. Thus the Net which began as just the wall of the Cave is now the guide to Truth. Beauty, and the realm of the Forms.



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