Changing Times, Changing Readers: Let's Start With

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my sordid history with reading
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The Bookfuturist Manifesto
A Bookfuturist Manifesto

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The first thing to understand about bookfuturism is that "book" modifies "futurism" as much as the other way around. So bookfuturists aren't just people promoting the future of the book; they're also a different kind of futurist, the way a cubo-futurist painting like Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase" is different, or Afro-futurism was/is different from typically white science-fiction culture.

A futurist (in Maritetti's original sense) wants to burn down literacies. A bookfuturist wants to put video games in them. A bookfuturist, in other words, isn't someone who purely embraces the new and consigns the old to the rubbish heap. She's always looking for things that blend her appreciation of the two.

I started using the words "bookfuturist" and "bookfuturism" because of Joanne McNeil's name for her Twitter list of wordy nerds who like to think about books and new media: "Bookfuturism." I was one of the people she put on the list, and as soon as I saw the name, I wrote...

#toccon
my sordid history with reading

The Bookfuturist Manifesto

Ten Reading Revolutions Before E-Books
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my sordid history with reading

The Bookfuturist Manifesto

Ten Reading Revolutions Before E-Books

E-Books Are Still Waiting For Their Avant-Garde
E-Books Are Still Waiting For Their Avant-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modernist Literature, Art, &amp; Media</th>
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| c'était                        |
| le nombre                        |
| EXISTAIT-EL                        |
| AUTOMATIQUE ET INDIFFÉRENCIÉE AVANT                        |
| COMMENCER-EL ET CESSER-EL                        |
| Nécessaire que cet état étreint apparaître                       |
| EN CHIFFRÉ-EL                        |
| Évidence de la somme pour peu simple                       |
| ILLUMINÉ-EL                        |
| ce serait                        |
| C'ÉTAIT-EL                        |
| L'ÉVÉNEMENT                        |
| DÉCIDER-EL et CESSER-EL                        |
| NE CHERCHÉ-EL                        |
| ÉVÉNEMENT SI                        |
| LE HASARD                        |
Paper Modernism
Paper Modernism

1850–1950
Paper Modernism

1850–1950

media revolutions: cinema, newspapers, telegraph typewriters, diagramming sentences, advertising
Paper Modernism

1850–1950

media revolutions: cinema, newspapers, telegraph, typewriters, diagramming sentences, advertising
all deeply related
Paper Modernism

1850–1950
media revolutions: cinema, newspapers, telegraph
typewriters, diagramming sentences, advertising
all deeply related
technical possibilities of production & distribution
Paper Modernism

1850–1950
media revolutions: cinema, newspapers, telegraph
 typewriters, diagramming sentences, advertising
 all deeply related
technical possibilities of production & distribution
 typewriter, offset printing, cheap paper
Paper Modernism

1850–1950

media revolutions: cinema, newspapers, telegraph

typewriters, diagramming sentences, advertising

all deeply related

technical possibilities of production & distribution

typewriter, offset printing, cheap paper

bombarded with information, text and images in
new expectations and possibilities for reading
new expectations and possibilities for reading

how text should look and be experienced
new expectations and possibilities for reading

how text should look and be experienced

books, movies, city streets
new expectations and possibilities for reading

how text should look and be experienced

books, movies, city streets

no reason to distinguish between media
just like now
the 21st century media industry
How to cover

the 21st century media industry
How to cover

the 21st century media industry

all together
How to cover

the 21st century media industry

all together
or in tiny bits

#toccon
all together
Amazon

all together
Amazon

all together

Apple
in tiny bits
weird obsessions

in tiny bits

#toccon
weird obsessions

in tiny bits

how do you do text entry in a Netflix app for the Wii?
unusual contexts for reading and writing
unusual contexts for reading and writing

unusual devices
unusual contexts for reading and writing

unusual devices

unusual functions and use cases
unusual contexts for reading and writing

unusual devices
unusual functions and use cases
not so unusual
unusual contexts for reading and writing

interface jumps
unusual contexts for reading and writing

interface jumps
part of the experiential background
that reading is defined with or defined against
How do we read, really?

in a hyperliterate society
the vast majority of reading
is not consciously recognized as reading
what readers expect is more important than what readers want
structure of expectations

what readers expect is more important than what readers want
structure of expectations

1. skeuomorphs
2. conventions
3. skills
skeuomorphs
conventions

#toccon
skills
Clay Shirky: “a screen without a mouse ships broken”
Clay Shirky: “a screen without a mouse ships broken”
Steve Jobs: “if you see a stylus, they blew it”
Clay Shirky: “a screen without a mouse ships broken”
Steve Jobs: “if you see a stylus, they blew it”
if you see a mouse, they blew it
skills

Clay Shirky: “a screen without a mouse ships broken”
Steve Jobs: “if you see a stylus, they blew it”
  if you see a mouse, they blew it
NOT TRUE
skills

Bill Buxton: “every tool is the best at something and the worst at something else”
skills

Bill Buxton: “every tool is the best at something and the worst at something else”
“skills are expensive”
skills

deeper than skeuomorphs or conventions
skills

deeper than skeuomorphs or conventions
stronger relationship to the body
skills

deeper than skeuomorphs or conventions
stronger relationship to the body
more generalizable
skills

deeper than skeuomorphs or conventions
stronger relationship to the body
more generalizable
most poorly utilized in interface design
skills

how to button a button
skills

how to button a button
manuscript / pen & ink
skills

how to button a button
manuscript / pen & ink
your pocket is a multitouch interface
path-dependency and learning effects
path-dependency and learning effects

switching costs
coordinating around a common standard
people get better at things they practice
path-dependency and learning effects

switching costs
coordinating around a common standard
people get better at things they practice

need external shock
when do we NEED to be SHOCKED?
most important expectations for reading
most important expectations for reading

not how the page looks
most important expectations for reading

not how the page looks
not even just how we interact with it
most important expectations for reading

not how the page looks
not even just how we interact with it
nothing qualitative at all
most important expectations for reading

QUANTITY
most important expectations for reading

QUANTITY
how much we get
how we get more
who’s in charge
the quantitative turn
Odysseus and the Sirens

we actually like constraints once we’re in them
Odysseus and the Sirens

we actually like constraints once we’re in them
constraints are freedom
Odysseus and the Sirens

we actually like constraints once we’re in them
constraints are freedom
we have an endless supply of constraints
Odysseus and the Sirens

we actually like constraints once we’re in them
constraints are freedom
we have an endless supply of constraints
(this itself is a paradox)
Pardon The Interruption