

Appendix for Simon E. Poole's article on Rancière and the demise of the book

Abstract

This paper is concerned with the future of the physical book, and everything we know and perhaps hold dear about it as an object. As something treasured, stored, loved and remembered. It draws as inspiration and data upon a question posed by Preston (2014): 'Is the demise of the book imminent?', and the debate held by members of Mirandanet over a couple of days in response to the question. It is a paper that deals with the books hypothetically anachronistic existence within the digital world of technology. Before dealing with this and its possible demise though, through a Rancièric lens, Rancière's work and the theoretical debates that his works present will first be critically engaged with. Then by systematic identification and exploration of the benefits and drawbacks of Rancière's theoretical approaches, their relevance to social issues will be highlighted through a folkloristic perspective. Finally, given this relevance, Rancière's ideas are applied to the field of educational theory and practice, and an offering of original interpretations in exploring 'the demise of the book'.

Appendix A

1

Carlsen Tue 17/06/2014 13:40

The conversation is shifting again. Regarding hacking and virus like programs. Foster identified two areas 11 areas of concern. The three that interest me most were mobile security, antimalware, and email.

With so many of us using mobiles we're opening ourselves up to new and different threats. Antimalware is a growing area because hackers are attacking antivirus software.

My other area of interest is email. I know that (the collective) we should know better but according to Forrester's Forrsights SS, "29 % of all security breaches involved phishing. Finally, the continuing problems of, the changing nature of IT and the lack of budget and qualified support people continue to be issues. As a result, schools and public service agencies (especially the smaller and more modestly sized ones) are being stampeded toward the mega service providers.

2

Carlsen tue 17/06/2014 12:46

Please read Ian and Chris. What they say is cutting edge and are things you should know. If you don't understand them, please ask a question here, although a sit down is always better.

3

Lynch Tue 17/06/2014 10:50

I think that the scare of OSS security in relation to proprietary software is over-stated. There was a lot more malware about before there was much OSS about. There are advantages and disadvantages of both but neither is immune. From personal experience putting large scale proprietary systems into schools over the years I'd say the cost and overhead of malware in those circumstances was orders of magnitude greater than anything we have since we migrated to pretty well all FOSS and web apps. I doubt you can really get an appreciation of this until you have tried each system extensively yourself and that is another problem as it requires a considerable investment in learning that most people are not prepared to undertake - at least not in the short term. I guess that is why at 58 I'm not typical. Talk to young developers in their 20s and you'll get a much different view from those in their 50s and 60s.

On the Pearson issue, assessment is where they are most profitable. In the UK Ofqual is becoming very active in stopping linkage and dependency of qualifications on particular publishers. This is not just the obvious link eg Pearson Publishing and Pearson quals (Edexcel/Btec) but also alliances and endorsements of publishers by awarding organisations. It is contrary to the competition act when dominant players do it. As an awarding organisation TLM's strategy is to make money from the quality assurance service manifest in our accredited qualifications but provide all support materials under CC licensing and use FOSS as the delivery infrastructure and make that free too. Revise the assessment supply chain to optimise it for cost benefit. Good enough but not over-engineered. That reduces costs providing scope for development of digital resources that can be made freely available

which in turn attracts customers so reducing advertising and marketing costs. It also reduces our development costs because we are "building on the shoulders of giants" by re-using open source resources. it's more like Google's model but replacing advertising revenue by quality assurance revenue. The Pearson Model is more like Microsoft's and Apples although Microsoft is changing. Apple is likely to be always a highly proprietary vertical top end market with high margins from rich customers willing to pay premium prices. (Is that sustainable in public education?) From a teachers' point of view, every pound for unnecessarily costly support effectively comes out of their pay packet ;-)

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Chris Yapp
chris.yapp@btopenworld.com Tue 17/06/2014 07:28

A word of caution on the open Source Freedoms in regard to Cybersecurity.

The Heartbleed bug was in an OSS vehicle. The Freedoms that Ian accurately describes do have issues.

There are secure versions of some OSS software but if you change a single line of code, then the secure status is not guaranteed. Much malware is actually delivered via OSS vehicles because of the Freedoms described.

I'll forward a link to my paper for the EC when it is published later this month on part of this topic.

The last large scale study on OSS showed that average size of an OSS project was 5 developers with a median of 2. This means that aside from the major long term stuff such as Apache there is a lot of OSS stuff out there that does not have an effective community to support it. This tends to give the same monopolistic tendencies in critical mass that Google, amazon et al benefit from.

For instance a few years ago I advised an HE establishment who had chosen an obscure VLE that no-one else in the UK had gone with. I think it was Canadian. It ended up costing them more than a proprietary solution, because much of the updating and upgrade work for UK sector fell to them.

So what tends to happen is that in the early days you get a lot of projects in a niche but most die out and you end up with a few dominant players, as with Moodle.

This in turn, then creates the problems for cybersecurity. No one is interested in software with few users, but once market share gets to 20-25% then the hackers come in. Heartbleed was so badly funded it required injections of cash from proprietary players to fix the problem!

The details are at

<http://heartbleed.com/>

the irony is that we are moving from proprietary quasi-monopolies to OSS quasi monopolies. Man is born free and everywhere is in chains comes to mind...

Regards

Chris Yapp

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Carlsen Tue 17/06/2014 04:03

Kim,

Thanks for sharing. So, let me tell you a bit more about what I was hoping to do.

I had initial agreement to take a stable of award-winning teachers (think, state-wide teachers of the year and teachers with experience teaching on-line) to offer content to teachers. The "killer goods" my name for the team would work with teachers using the materials the systems were already using. After seeing what Pearson was doing and talking to administrators, I dropped all my plans. One administrator said it all, "great materials, low cost, and builtin assessment, sound good to me. I also like no risk or the pain of getting all the teachers on board".

Think of the best administrators and school systems. What would you do if you were a leader?

Now, go back to the future of books discussion. The 8th level of book media are interactive and virtual teachers. Many will reject this, but it seems as though you've seen the other side of the wall. ;)

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Kim Flintoff <K.Flintoff@curtin.edu.au> Tue 17/06/2014 02:32

Coincidentally, I'm involved in some project development with Pearson at the moment that is a significant shift from their publishing model and focusses on authentic engagement. They've started making some public announcements so I guess its OK to point to the piece:

<http://researchnetwork.pearson.com/news/contagion-teach-students-stop-global-pandemic>

They are looking for instructors to be involved and we'll be trialling the approach later this year.

I guess all the big multinationals are looking at how they shape their business models to maintain their bottom line.

I'm still fairly critical of large entities forcing knowledge behind paywalls and single channel, non-critical distribution models.

This particular piece we're working on is currently breaking out of the non-critical delivery system into a process predicated on student engagement – with an evolving narrative depending upon learner choices. I guess the accountants will eventually take a look at what the educators and researchers are building and try to fashion a paywall around it... in the mean time it presents a model of engagement that could still emerge from the chalkface.... With interested teachers, communities of practice and school systems deciding to collaborate and construct something similar their could be alternatives... openness in education needs many conditions to ensure sustainability and growth.... Many models of OER currently rely too heavily on teacher goodwill... and fall when conditions shift. Any real alternatives to the great educational paywalls will need systemic and community support for viability.

The big publishing houses are easy targets – I've thrown my fair share of critique their way over the years – if we want change we need to start proposing alternatives and workflows that will support them and business cases that will ensure viability – until then all the good ideas will remain as fringe activity and tenuously lined to classroom practice...

7

Carlsen Tue 17/06/2014 02:12

The Pearson strategy is to package assessment with content. Pearson took me to a leadership meeting in Florida. Their presenters were former teachers, tech directors, and administrators. Pearson hired a former evaluation coordinator from my University who left to work at the State of Ohio Department of Education. They are buying real pros. I don't know the number of States but it is about 75% of the high stake testing.

It is a good plan. Regarding the fiscal situation. Yes, state departments are pressed for funding but the market share tied to high stakes testing and accreditation I think is probably a winner. Assessment is where they're making noise.

Sorry but I'm not really current on what is happening outside the US.

8

Lynch Tue 17/06/2014 01:05

Pearson has serious problems in the US education market with recent profit warnings <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-25857336> They know the writing is on the wall for their traditional products. New disruptive players coming into their market spaces. Sure they are going aggressively into new ventures. Its either that or go out of business. I don't see them as immune from disruption as say Microsoft, probably a lot less so.

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Anne Sheddick asheddick@gmail.com Tue 17/06/2014 00:45

Miranda members amy or may not already know about the Load to learn project, part funded by DFE and run in partnership with RNIB and Dyslexia Action

Although the impetus for this was to make as many texts/books as possible available as an e-resource for educational purposes for print impaired learners – the model can be extended to all learners

A huge amount of work was done to sort out the copyright issues to make texts widely available in electronic format and if you look at the website you'll see how it works .

This project may well provide the model for texts being available for sharing within an educational context

The web site explains how this works <https://load2learn.org.uk>

Basically, you sign up as a member, purchase one copy of the book and then it can be given to you as an e book for distribution within school to a wide number of pupils

The service is free for UK learners

Best wishes

Anne

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mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk Daniel-Gittens Tue 17/06/2014 00:52

Hi Roger,

I agree that Pearson is trying to muscle in on all aspects of the Education market that they can. They have seriously branched out from publishing books (vertical integration?). For example, a couple of years ago Pearson bought out the guy who owned Tutorvista.com. This was an online tutoring service for students studying world wide. He sourced tutors in India and connected them to the market for science tutors in the US.

When Pearson bought him out I thought that that was the end of that, They would hold on to Tutorvista and make their money with it; little did I know. They basically shelved Tutorvista, they de-fanged the competition.

Flash forward roughly 4 to 5 years and now Pearson has a new company Smarthinking.com which offers real time online tutor support, just like tutorvista did, but the market for this company is not individual students. No, Smarthinking sells it services to higher education institutions in the US. My university just signed a large contract with Smarthinking to provide online tutoring service for our students. Hmmm.....Interesting the way they reworked the business model to capture institutional (read big) bucks rather than the smaller fees they would receive from individual students. And this is in addition to trying to muscle in on the English language testing business that other players have going e.g. ETS (Educational Testing Service)'s TOEFL and ACT's ESL placement exam.

I see Pearson as an aggressive market player who is reducing its focus on print publishing and who is trying to extend its reach into what it sees as growth areas in the educational market. And, like you, I fully expect that wherever they are able to corner the market, they will send up the costs to buyers.

11

Chandler Tue 17/06/2014 00:03

Hello from California!

We have an organization, the California Learning Resource Network that lists Open Source resources and paid resources as well. All resources are listed by the publisher and by the standard (these are U.S. Standards).

Regardless, the website should be beneficial to your queries. Cheers!

Cynthia

www.clrn.org

OER Textbooks (some mostly PDF)

<http://clrn.org/fdti/>

Web Information Links

<http://clrn.org/browse/index.cfm/web-info-links>

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Lynch Mon 16/06/2014 23:37

Why do we assume educationalists will buy from the conventional suppliers? Given the tradition of teachers preparing individual lesson plans and SOW etc all fragmented and isolated, all it would take is to channel that resource and it could be they become self-sufficient. Its only going to get easier with better free tools to do it.

13

dylan@eduvationconsultants.com Mon 16/06/2014 23:30

I am currently working with a number of publishers to explore their e-Book offering and it is clear that there is no one model preferred by all and that all of the major publishers do not know how to approach the education market for eBooks. Many publishers are not keen to open up their back catalogue to a Library model when it comes to eBooks and are looking to add restrictions to the number of individuals that can read a book, the number of times it can be checked out or how long it may be available to a school library.

What is clear is that over the next few years it is demand that will shape the model rather than supply, schools and educationalists will buy the model they are comfortable with and the content that is available in that model as there is ample supply of material from a wealth of good publishers.

thanks

Dylan Jones

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Carlsen Mon 16/06/2014 20:51

Kathy-Ann,

Pearson has done some very interesting stuff in the US. Pearson Publishers are creating the materials for the curriculum in US schools and are one of the largest assessment companies in the US.

They will also be doing more accreditation worldwide

<http://pearsonpte.com/PTEGeneral/Pages/RecognizingInstitutions.aspx>

They are nice now. What will happen once libraries close and a company achieves a monopoly? If the past is any guide, cost will go up.

15

Carlsen Mon 16/06/2014 21:35

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PaeNKjA5YFxoVhx8ClzBnW19teO4AxdJ6RSatQD6UAK/edit?usp=sharing>

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16

Kathy-Ann Daniel-Gittens kdaniel@wayne.edu Mon 16/06/2014 20:09

I am agreement with Ian that open licesing and open data formats is one of the ways forward to prevent the the 'book burning' phenomena. Interestingly, and going back to the relationship between publishing and its business models, I have noticed that Sage is dabbling with an alternative model for academic journal publishing: The academic journal Sage Open makes its content freely available online, that is, academic libraries no longer have to pay large licensing fees to access the journal database. So how does Sage Open finance its operations? Well, right now authors pay Sage to have their work published in the journal. The way it works is that author submit an article manuscript to Sage Open, if, and only if, the article is accepted for publication, then the author pays Sage for publishing the article. When Sage first floated the idea in 2011, it set author fees at around 300.00 per article. Apparently that didn't fly, so they dropped it to 99.00 recently. That was the last I saw.

Will this alternative model for academic publishing thrive? I don't know. I don't think Sage knows either. I think they are trying to get ahead of the wave. That being said, I also agree that making information widely accessible through open licensing and formats restricts the ability of any one entity to remove it from the public domain.

I think this is a very interesting discussion!

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Lynch

For Tina :-)

It is all down to the license.

Whenever work is originated the originator owns the copyright. Copyright enables the owner to decide the conditions of use in the license. Open Source licenses are based on the 4 freedoms defined by the Free Software Foundation.

- The freedom to run the program, for any purpose (freedom 0).
- The freedom to study how the program works, and change it so it does your computing as you wish (freedom 1). Access to the source code is a precondition for this.
- The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbor (freedom 2).
- The freedom to distribute copies of your modified versions to others (freedom 3). By doing this you can give the whole community a chance to benefit from your changes. Access to the source code is a precondition for this.

The Open Source Initiative changed the name from free software to Open Source but very little else.

A proprietary license generally does not provide freedoms 1, 2 or 3. 1 and 3 are generally more relevant to developers because you can build things quickly if you don't have to start from scratch every time. 2 is more useful to end users and the consequence that there is no way to enforce payment.

There is nothing to stop anyone selling open source software except that since you can get it without charge, selling it might not work. Some licenses allow you to take opensource software and relicense it as proprietary eg Apple did this to produce ios from BSD Unix. Other licenses do not eg the GPL license of Linux. If you make a new product from Linux it has to be licensed under the GPL too. You can make a proprietary product that is dependent on the Linux kernel without it being affected as long as it is separate code. You can see this gets complicated quite quickly.

Does an Open Source business model work? Well look at the Web, Apache web server MySQL, HTML, Python, PHP, Javascript, Java, Linux, Firefox all open source. We run our entire company on Open Source software with one or two exceptions like Google Drive and other free tools from the web that are not open source. Works for us. No virus and never use anti virus software, no threats from the federation against software theft. No need to keep inventories of licensed software to prove we paid for it. Free upgrades as and when needed so systems always as up to date as we want them.

18

Lynch

On 16 June 2014 16:16, Roger Carlsen <wsucarlsen@gmail.com> wrote:

On 16 June 2014 15:46, Roger Carlsen <wsucarlsen@gmail.com> wrote:

Working in open source is more difficult and takes more time, for sure.

Initially, but then once you learn how it all works its actually quicker in many respects. eg Installing software on my laptop generally doesn't require any payment, any messing about with licensing codes or the overhead of paid upgrades, everything can be updated to the latest stable versions. Contrast that with eg SIMS where over the years immensely complicated sets of versions with different price points made managing systems very complicated.

**** my experience has been that operating system, coding, hardware are always changing (sometimes more and sometimes less). Something as neat as Google Drive changes very often. For, people like me, this isn't a big issue. For some less experienced (the 'big majority' of my students and clients) it is frustrating.

Google Drive is not open source. If you take eg Ubuntu 14.04 LTS, LTS means long term support. its supported for 5 years so you can just stick with that version. The FOSS mantra of release early release often is still available in the release cycle but you only need to do those regular upgrades if you want to.

I think the main reason Google changes is that it is a new environment (< 10 yrs) and these change until maturity is reached - on line it is easier to make changes too because do it once and everyone gets it. I think that is more a consequence of being on-line and free of charge not really much to do with Open Source.

Back on the book theme, if software can be produced so that it can be used freely why not books? I don't see any shortage of authors because they might not get paid for their work. Most people would probably produce a book for the love of it if they thought it would get a

wide take up and with the right skills and knowledge its easy to do. BW (Before the Web) you needed a publisher to get your work visible and produced to a professional standard, now you need promotion perhaps to get heard above all the noise but distribution and publishing is something anyone can do. Promotion might be as effective using networked communities. Universities could easily publish their own undergrad texts without a publisher - MOOCs are just an extension of that. If I was an English teacher I'd get the pupils to publish their own books both on-line and in print. Let the audience decide what they want. Free on line or the cost of the paper in print. Look at hardback vs paperback for a steer on the cost/aesthetic balance.

19

Preston 16/06/14

'Treading water only works so long then you die' is a very good point about resisting inevitable technical change...

In this context, as you have realised you two very capable guys are making a lot of important technical observations that are beginning to go over my head as they will many other members.

But I am still enjoying trying to understand the basics between open source and proprietary systems. But as you say you are getting way off topic. MirandaNet is talking about better ways of having debates than email - but meanwhile why not start another email debate stating in the headline your topic and where you are going...not strictly books any more:-)

Lynch / Carlson discussion

Oops, I hit the wrong key on my ipad. Here's what I was saying: I'm going to leave this conversation and only reply to you Ian. But, anyone wishing to continue rearing this is welcome to join us. We're not excluding anyone who wishes to read or participate.

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On Monday, June 16, 2014, Roger Carlsen <wsucarlson@gmail.com> wrote:

I'm going to rip out of this conversation and only reply to you ian

21

On Monday, June 16, 2014, Roger Carlsen <wsucarlson@gmail.com> wrote:

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Even this conversations, held in a threaded email is probably turning some off. We're way off topic. And now others are jumping in so that I can't edit properly.

That's why networks are more important than ever. Since everything is changing (growing or withering), pick a direction. Treading water only works so long then you die.

Second, 'For profit publishers' are moving to leverage open source. Maybe. If they can implement alternative business models that do not kill their own cash cows in the interim. It's hard to recommend to your board that you have to take a 50% hit in profitability, but if you don't a new start up will do it in a couple of years time and destroy the business.

***** yep, it seems that what have you done for me lately is the mantra. Bottom line is very important for everyone. Ah, another reason for tenure?

What are YOUR choices? Do something, something that will provide you with (an income not dependent on content licensing but enabling content production) fill in the blank.

22

Ian Lynch ianrynych@gmail.com Mon 16/06/2014 15:27

I'd say the main reasons schools have been slow to take up Open Source and open content are:

There has been a massive economic machine with an interest in software and content licensing telling them not to. Big marketing budgets etc.

it's a con game and confidence comes from numbers so competing with the overwhelming volume locked into proprietary infrastructure is not going to be quick.

You need to learn about how to get support and help from the community - not obvious and learning takes effort.

It has taken time for open source applications to be developed to be "good enough" for generic desktop applications.

Government agencies eg BECTA are geared to doing business with large commercial entities, not a fragmented community.

What has changed is the internet and mobile technologies. Firstly the internet is the platform and it is based on open standards. It enables communication between the fragmented communities to collaborate on software development involving far greater numbers with more powerful tools. Second mobile technologies are much less dependent on specific operating systems than the desktops of the 80s. Porting apps is much easier and if the apps are internet compliant the OS is irrelevant. Developing for the web is the most sensible option to reach the biggest numbers. If the connections become reliable enough and cheap enough why bother with local apps at all? Local plugins perhaps to the browser and technologies like AJAX. Most of the messing about at the moment is because we are in a transition between a desktop paradigm and a web/mobile paradigm.

Seems that for general productivity tools in mature applications such as desktop productivity, audio, graphics etc free web based applications are increasingly going to be the norm. It's also much less expensive to leave all the systems administration to cloud services than manage them locally in a school. It will take time but I see all the running of local apps from ipads etc as a bit of an aberration. Water eventually runs downhill and the ocean is the world wide web. Content with business models based on licensing are always going to be vulnerable to someone somewhere finding a way of providing it for free, whether a Wikipedia or a Google. People take longer to change so this all might take decades but the trend is already in motion. Some people still have septic tanks most people are on mains water and sewers ;-)

23

Carlsen Mon 16/06/2014 14:55

Simon,

I have a general rule, follow links that people place within their communications for at least 2 clicks. I enjoyed your words and links. I'm adding the thought of organizing a gallery as a "wild garden" and adding this to a "dream bazaar" that I fist experienced a few weeks ago.

Thanks

24

On Monday, June 16, 2014, Simon Poole <simon.poole@chester.ac.uk> wrote:

Just to chuck in my penniesworth - to a scintillating debate - but as a very proud husband I wanted to let you know some fantastic news and I felt it also had some pertinence here. My wife, is an artist, and also a bookbinder; she has since her degree played and explored the medium. In short Lou's two submissions have been accepted in this year's Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. Both 'Engram' and 'Cartography I' lack text but nonetheless carry messages in a way that absolutely could not be recreated without the physical object. Her biography and account of her work gives some interesting perspectives on the 'traditional' medium and its function in a world of digital technology. Follow the link for further information...

As an aside, I've been writing a piece on this area and some of the points of discussion have been enlightening. Christine, I wonder is there a means by which I might apply to use some of the thread in my writing - I'm thinking of ethical considerations here.

kr

Si

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/15>

<http://www.louisaboyd.com>

25

dylan@eduvationconsultants.com Mon 16/06/2014 14:24

No is the simple answer... but why? Surely books that never disappear, can be accessed anywhere, from a Library you can carry with you is a fantastic idea. However I believe that Tony's comments below regarding the delivery medium are quite correct and Keith's use of the musical instrument analogy is also accurate.

Perhaps the question should not be 'are books dead' but 'how society will society use eBooks?'.

Schools are reporting that 50% of their pupils request print.

KS1 children (digital natives if ever there were some) greatly prefer print, the feel of a real book with real pictures is vastly superior. The idea of an infant school replacing its print library for a suite of iPads is quite abhorrent.

I personally choose digital over print if the book is over 400 pages as it is easier to hold.

e-Textbooks are absolutely in their infancy and most publishers produce almost nothing in e-Pub3 format that allows embedded content. When this is there and ebooks are designed to be published as digital books then you will see more uptake along these lines, however that will beg other questions such as what is the different between an interactive eBook describing the curriculum for GCSE biology and a really good website or other e-learning tool....?

I think as technology matures and emerges there will be a continual development of usage patterns, we still look at fine art pictures in a gallery, listen to the radio, write with a pen, draw with a pencil - all mediums that have in some way been superseded but not replaced by digital technologies.

Dylan Jones

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Roger Carlsen

wsucarlsen@gmail.com Mon 16/06/2014 13:48

Now this is much bigger than just books and book media but very related to some comments.

<http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/2014/06/why-arent-more-schools-using-free-open-education-resources/>

27

kt6@brighton.ac.uk Mon 16/06/2014 12:04

What an interesting debate. I'm particularly interested in the analogue/digital cross over and the philosophical questions Tony raises. Also Henry's observations on the Fake Book app have got me thinking as someone whose Fake Book is falling to pieces! Increasingly as a musician I find myself returning to the purity of acoustic instruments. I can't quite put my finger on it but digital instruments are different. A digital grand piano sound on an expensive digital stage piano played through speakers just does not occupy the physical and acoustic space like a quality grand piano and I love to hear a real instrument expertly controlled and played these days – it's about the 'body and Soul' - apologies to Avril Loveless and of course Heyman, Sour, Eyton and Green. I think the technologies bring new opportunities but I also think there is much mileage remaining in many of the old established technologies. They have become established because of the ease with which the media lends itself to situated cultural practice as suggested by Tony. What does a physical Jazz Fake/Real Book have over an iPad and an app? Can it interfere less with the interaction between the musicians; after all Music is often getting knocked off stands? An old knocked about Fake Book carries the scars of real musical interactions and sustains in a way that I suspect an iPad might not? That said I am still too attached to my iPad in many situations and it enriches my experience of music in new ways. So too I think the digital/analogue with regards to books is not a linear progression from one old technology to a new one, as the thoughts on this thread illustrate; its complex.

Thanks for stimulating provocations and discussion.

Keith

28

tony.fisher@nottingham.ac.uk Mon 16/06/2014 10:39

Hi Sarah and all

Yes, I was sort of thinking along McLuhan-esque lines vis-à-vis technologies in a way. But also thinking of reading as a situated cultural practice. Do it differently, and it *is* different...

Tony

29

MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Kim Flintoff

K.Flintoff@curtin.edu.au Mon 16/06/2014 10:03

I think you'll find the MASSAGE has never gone far enough away to say we're coming back... I think bound paper books will persist for longer than many expect... publishing (especially academic publishing) is a bit like selling tobacco or petroleum – you keep it going regardless of evidence that you should move on... revising a business model probably only takes a year or two – but apparently the will to implement it is a different and much longer story....

I like transmedia approaches to story telling and information exchange... and am hoping that my 5 year old daughter is having that factored into her literacy experiences at school... my wife is a librarian working in a totally digital library (audio transcribed books for the blind)... She still encounters older librarians who don't see that new book formats are changing the experience of reading and keep ordering paperbacks...

We also have around 4000 paperbound books at home... they will probably stay there for the foreseeable future...

Tactile books for babies and toddlers are hard to replicate with a Kindle... also pop-up books and books that use the medium in other functional and sensory ways...

I don't think there's been a "ubiquitous book" format for centuries... the new electronic/digital forms simply add to the repertoire and will undoubtedly change the way authors and story-tellers enact their craft... I've created a few iBooks with Bookry widgets embedded... some with outreach and social engagement capacities – something I could never do with my old Agatha Christie's in Pan Paperback...

Cheers

Kim Flintoff

BA, Grad Dip Ed, M.Ed, MACE

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Ian Lynch
ianrlynch@gmail.com Sun 15/06/2014 22:47

Best way to prevent digital book burning is to use open licensing and open data formats. This debate has already had extensive airing in open source communities most notably over ISO 26300, the Open Document file format. An open XML format for documents is a better starting point than a secret proprietary format which might become quickly obsolete with no way of reading it if software related to it is not developed and maintained by its owner. Documented open formats can always be accessed as you can then always write a program to do it. The next important thing is licensing for content. If all publicly funded content had to be licensed for copying and sharing it can never be lost because it would always be possible to clone a web site holding it.

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Tony Fisher
<Tony.Fisher@nottingham.ac.uk> Sun 15/06/2014 22:48

Interesting aside Henry, and I'll respond within the music technology context of the aside, rather than making any kind of a point about books...

It's very convenient to have that degree of convenience, portability, plug and play etc, and it can sound great, but imho it sure ain't jazz! What spontaneous exchange do you get with an ipad? Does it respond dynamically to your ideas in the moment, as a fellow human musician might?

A little anecdote from me: the drummer of a band (not a jazz group) I used to play in broke his foot. We had a gig for which we could not find a dep, so our singer brought along a drum machine gizmo that he had been experimenting with for recording purposes, and we played along with that (rather than going for what would probably now be a much more fashionable 'unplugged' approach!) The machine nearly wrecked the gig! As a band we were used to listening well to each other and were pretty 'tight'. However, rather than playing strict time, there was a certain amount of what you might call 'natural ebb and flow' in the music (not that we were sloppy you understand!) You'll guess where this is going - a drum machine doesn't listen and tends to be rather dogmatic about time, and at one point six of us

(humans) were completely in time with one another and fully half a beat out with the machine. I had a very strange sensation of some sort of aural vertigo...

This is not to be read as an anti-technology tale nor is it anything to do with books. It's just a response to your music and i-pad aside, Henry, and by the way I am not opposed to it and I wouldn't be averse to trying something similar myself - I suppose what happens is that one exchanges one set of affordances and constraints for another. Now, where did I put my old Jamey Aebersold 'play-a-long' Horace Silver LP and chord book ... :-)

Kind regards

Tony

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Douglas Butler debutler@argonet.co.uk Sun 15/06/2014 22:20

> I had all the backing tracks for 2 of my daughter's weddings this year on an iPad

I'm intrigued - how many weddings did your daughter have this year?

(Sorry couldn't resist. Useful post all the same - I love gig book apps too!)

Douglas

== from Douglas Butler <debutler@argonet.co.uk > ==

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Henry Liebling hliebling@hotmail.com Sun 15/06/2014 22:00

Interesting thread.

Here is an aside. Most jazz musicians have old fake books or Real books at at least £30 each with around 200 tunes/chords and maybe words with versions for C concert instruments, Bb and Eb versions. So I need a big bag to carry them for a gig.

Along comes an app, ireal pro £5+ and I have no words or tune (they are copyright) but all the chords and great flexibility to make backing tracks as I wish with the number of repeats, key, tempo, instrumentation, add to a play list, export to other devices and in other formats and also can mix a bit. I can download 1300 jazz tunes for free from the forum. So when you see "musos" with an iPad on the stand you now realise why.

I had all the backing tracks for 2 of my daughter's weddings this year on an iPad and iPhone. Just plug it into the PA and off you go.

That is useful technology.

Best wishes

Henry

Christine Preston Sun 15/06/2014 21:47

So I see that the MirandaNet jury is moving closer to an inclusive verdict on media and the complexity of the case has increased exponentially in the last 20 years. Members have really made me think...so many perspectives...

In summary Eric Knutsen and Simon Rae makes a poetic plea for the retention of books although they confirm the value of other formats. But a key question from Ian Lynch is which formats will survive and how will the economics affect our means of communicating? A question that interests Katy-Ann Daniel Gittens as well.

Charlotte Davies champions the ways in which digital texts can respond to the needs of those for whom book text can be a challenge. Roger Carlsten also thinks of books as just one media in many and adds some of the latest like virtual reality. As he says progress is not surprising as book were invented in the 15th century.

Roger also quotes a number of valuable observations that shows how quickly we can assemble valuable views from the internet now: a key point being that "paper books will not go away. But, the philosophy and argument over e-books and similar media should be over. It is happening, so what do we do next?".

The burning of books

I do not entirely agree with Roger that the case is open and shut. I'm with Tony Fisher who has been sidetracked to respond to this debate with some questions . "But maybe these are somewhat philosophical questions, and I should just get on with what I ought to be doing..." I'm glad you took the time to raise some philosophical questions Tony because while our backs are turned books might get burned..

Well at least traditional books are solid blocks of matter and burning them cannot be achieved without the evidence of flames, smoke and smell. What has concerned our community is the silent closing down of the quangos' websites when the Coalition came in in 2010 on the grounds of the costs of maintaining these websites in a recession. Thirteen years of research paid for by tax-payers is now in an archive that is very difficult to search.

So lets get back to Roger's point...what do we do next?

In the MirandaNet submission to ETAGs we are suggesting that legislation is put in place so that this kind of metaphorical book burning can never happen again. MirandaNet is also supporting MESH, an independent campaign to ensure that research is owned by the educators who produce it – not governments and not academic journals.

As you will realise I 'ought' to be watching the football but I decided to defect in order to consider these philosophical issues instead and save the 'book'. Any more ideas?

Extra notes

1. Professor Marilyn Leask is leading the global movement, MESH (www.meshguides.org)
2. On BBC radio 4 this morning there was a timely Point Of View programme in which A. L. Kennedy, an author herself, talked about the value of old books that remind us of past ideas, theories and ideologies. She was in praise of the fact that in the democratic world we are permitted to access books about ideas that are inimical to democracy. But she also said that books are being burnt metaphorically with the culling of the GCSE reading list and the restrictions of sending books to prisoners. In addition, the economic factors that

MirandaNetters have been talking about mean that increasingly a small range of successful books dominate the market. Most of all she is concerned about the gradually closing of our libraries and the lack of press interest in local campaigns to keep them open.

Find the 10 minutes programme here : A. L. Kennedy No Burning Required

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qng8>

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"Using technology to improve education is not rocket science...it is much, much harder than that" Diana Laurillard, Opening Up Education

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Chris Yapp

chris.yapp@btopenworld.com Sun 15/06/2014 21:22

Hi,

You need to segment the "book" market to understand the economic and technology drivers. Out of copyright fiction (linear texts: novels and poetry) is moving online. Each time an author goes out of copyright the free downloads spike (for instance Scott Fitzgerald). Bonk busters and holiday reading is very highly Kindle and Tablet especially since 50 shades of grey. Interestingly books you might reference or read more than once are still mixed physical/digital (cookery books/travel guides...)

On the other hand, high end art and photography books are still largely print as the current technologies cannot (yet) match the affordances of high quality paper. These are niche (e.g. Phaidon).

App versions of museum collections are growing but physical sales are flat. For instance if you visited the Klimt in Vienna, you could download a catalogue of the show or bring back a book which was so big you'd exceed your weight on Easyjet luggage.

I've seen really interesting physical/digital titles which have replaced the book with a CD-ROM in the back that have done well.

What I find interesting is that the covers for e-readers are increasingly emulating good quality binding of hardbacks, so it looks, feels and smells like a book.

The margins for the publishers are such that the production of physical books in many niches will not be profitable within a year or two unless Hachette win over google in current dispute. Also, there are interesting demographics. Older people who used to take 3-5 books on holiday bought at the airport since the era of cheap flights and restricted luggage tend to take 200 books on an e-reader-tablet.

There are many other fragmented dynamics in this market place. Science and humanities show different trajectories for instance.

So, it isn't helpful to talk about "books" as if they are a single category.

I attended a book launch of an e-book where the author digitally signed copies, so the advantage of the physical book signed by author may also be compromised over time!

Good thread by the way,

Cheers

Chris Yapp

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Sarah Younie
syounie@dmu.ac.uk Sun 15/06/2014 13:49

- are we 'back to' Marshall McLuhan & 'the medium is the message'?

Kind Regards,

Sarah

~~~~~

Dr Sarah Younie

De Montfort University

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Ian Lynch  
<ianlynch@gmail.com> Sun 15/06/2014 12:11

Simple short eg of reading related to e-safety <https://theingots.org/community/RedTS> (Also link to Spanish translation)

If you want a paper copy you can use the links at the bottom of the page. The story is adapted from Little Red Riding freely available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11592/11592-h/11592-h.htm>

If children want to they can take that text and make their own paperback book and have it published for free from eg lulu.com (will cost a little for the paper and delivery). The point being that all of this is free \*IF\* you have the skills and knowledge to do it. In my mind the interesting thing is the education opportunity to empower inclusion and this in turn requires learning the skills to be empowered. Give the people the choice to decide how they want to use information and what the constraints are. Then whether or not paper based books survive will be down to informed choice. That is what education is all about.

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Dominic Preston <dom.preston@mirandanet.ac.uk>Sun 15/06/2014 09:56

The 'book' is not in demise, the format has adapted to enable people to carry their own library.

Is the library in demise?

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Jordan, Mrs A - (JO ) - HSOC [AJordan@ravensbourne.info](mailto:AJordan@ravensbourne.info) Sun 15/06/2014 07:18

The view of some 12 – 13 year olds today:

I have almost finished working on a book of stories written by children for children – in 3 different countries.

When asked whether they would prefer me to publish it on line or as a “real book” their response was almost unanimous

- A “real” book!

When it comes to their own work, there is still an ethos that goes with the printed word on paper.

Andrée Jordan

International Coordinator

The Ravensbourne School

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Roger Carlsen [wsucarlsen@gmail.com](mailto:wsucarlsen@gmail.com) Sun 15/06/2014 04:55

Christina,

This paper is for educational use and academic discussion purposes.  
NOT FOR PROFIT

When you said that books are 'redundant' you were certainly on your way to being right. Book publishers are dramatically losing market share. I, however, prefer the term 'legacy mass media' that Tomi Ahonen used. He was and still is correct when he says that new aspects of mass media will do things that previous legacy mass media can't do. After all, books have been around since the 15th century.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven\\_mass\\_media](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_mass_media) . (TA1)

Print (books, [pamphlet]s, newspapers, magazines, etc.) from the late 15th century

Recordings (gramophone records, magnetic tapes, cassettes, cartridges, CDs, DVDs) from the late 19th century

Cinema from about 1900

Radio from about 1910

Television from about 1950

Internet from about 1990

Mobile devices including tablets and e-reading devices phones from about 2000\*

\* = my modification

Many individuals appear to always desire to express an opinion. Not bad, but there are limits to finding common ground without data, evidence, etc. My evidence comes from mainly two sources, Tomi Ahonen's SlideShare presentation

[http://www.slideshare.net/Mobil-Business/mobile-future-tomi-ahonen?qid=30bb1c7e-9fdb-4a68-9763-210a29bf124f&v=qf1&b=&from\\_search=1](http://www.slideshare.net/Mobil-Business/mobile-future-tomi-ahonen?qid=30bb1c7e-9fdb-4a68-9763-210a29bf124f&v=qf1&b=&from_search=1)

When I refer to this I'll just say TA slide#

My second source will be Pew Internet (US DATA)

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/01/16/e-reading-rises-as-device-ownership-jumps/>

Referred to as PI

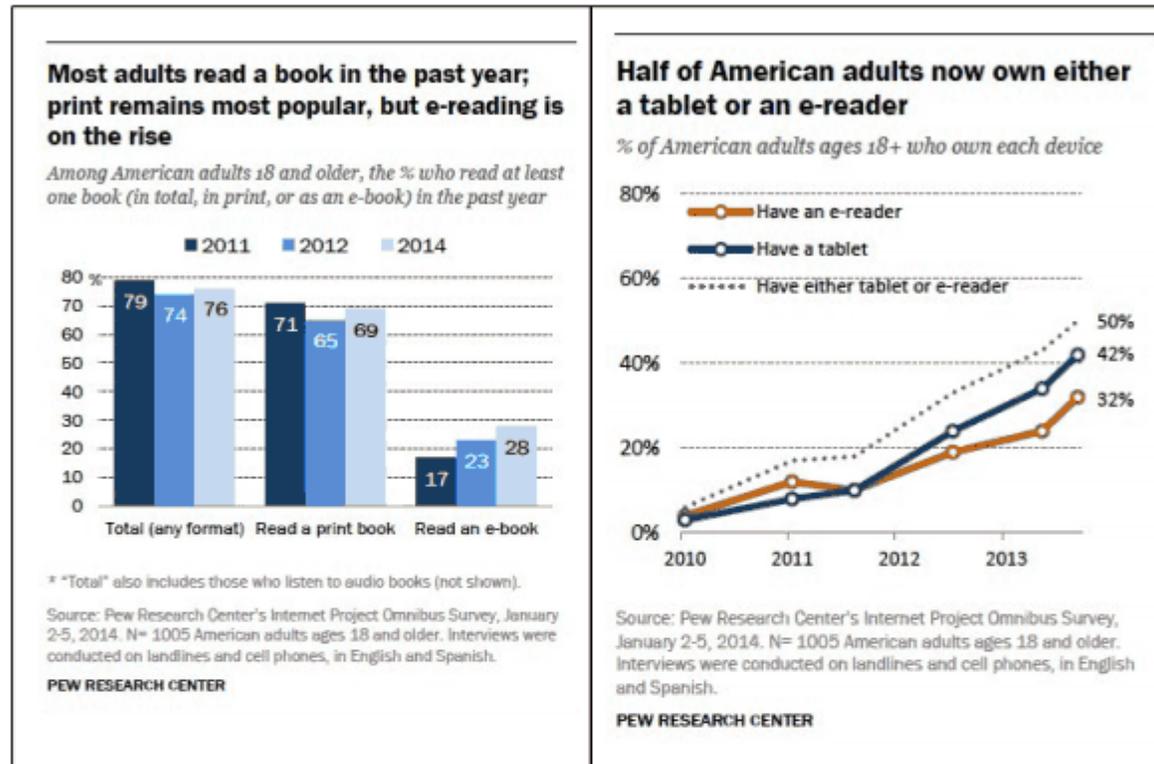
There are changes afoot related to the relationship of traditional paper books, e-books and audio-books. While there are general trends, three things to keep in mind are

- 1) The use of electronic reading content appears to be enhanced by one's access to tablets, e-readers, and mobile devices. The number of mobile technology

users are growing dramatically, thus, more people are reading with these tools.

2) There are age considerations too. Those younger individuals seem to favor electronic reading material.

PI (see below)



As one looks over the PI report one can see many implications regarding age, sex, income, etc. I'll leave this for your personal perusal and reflection. As individuals under age 30 continue to mature they will bring their reading habits and preferences with them. 'Elder readers' will hang on to paper books longer. One of my friends, I'll call him Rich, carries a library book with him and whenever he queues up he reads his library book. His children gave him an e-book which he promptly gave away. He has many reasons for not moving to electronic media. In general, it all boils down to, "it is good enough for who it for" or "it gets the job done for my purposes, so why change". Logical arguments appear to not be able to win him over.

## POINT

RICH'S POINT: At least some of the e-book advantages just don't matter. For this reason, paper books will not go away. But, the philosophy and argument over e-books and similar media should be over. It is happening, so what do we do next.

Paper books are not going away but because of the lost market share, their use may eventually be more expensive. According to Ahonen, each aspect of the six legacies retained some value and enthusiasts. On the other hand, new media offers advantages over prior mass media. New media will continue to evolve.

When one sees Tomi Ahonen use the term mobile, also think tablets and e-books too. Here too I paraphrase and make slight edits from the references (see above - TA1). Because of my eyes my tablet is my mobile device. It is my kindle smart phone, and my computer. Although I own 7 tablets and 2 smart phones I probably will not keep refreshing one for another. A major mistake is to assume that all mobile devices are equivalent. Mr. Ahonen makes this mistake. I too sometimes over generalize. Nevertheless, here are the points that I believe were most noteworthy: They are:

- Tablets and e-reading devices are a form of personal mass media linking one's reading and writing with my social networks. Tablets and e-reading devices offer digital interface to other interested readers.
- Tablets and e-reading devices are permanently carried. I carry a combination of several thousand books in less than 1 pound. But, it is my computer and phone too.
- Tablets and e-reading devices are always available. Most of my friends connect their mobile device to the Internet, unless it is a smart phone, by using WIFI. I use cellular connections too.
- Tablets and e-reading devices are available at the instant of creative inspiration. They permit readers to drill down into depths of understanding and links that old paper book readers would find much more time-consuming.
- Tablets and e-reading devices offer publishers accurate reader data and are never out of print. They also provide GPS and identify pockets of social interest.

- Tablets and e-reading devices capture the social context of media consumption (friends bookmarks and notes)
- Tablets and e-reading devices enable augmented reality experiences along with, audio and video enhancements. More about this later.
- Apps enhance and complement the reading experience. (e.g. Easy Measure for the iPad or Distance and Area Measurement and Distance Meter, both for the Android).
- Tablets and e-reading devices invite authors to digitally publish. Think of Amanda Hocking (<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jan/12/amanda-hocking-self-publishing> ) who wrote and self published vampire books that publishers wouldn't publish. Well, she earned 2.5 million dollars, universities offer courses and Amazon Books published 'how to' books on self-publishing. Hence, more authors and their ideas; also, more crap.
- Additional audio reading devices are used in US libraries. (see. <http://simpl.org/eBooks.aspx> )

One should keep in mind that magazine articles which claim to tell the pros and cons about e-book readers often do not include tablets in their articles. Remember what was told to you in graduate school, be careful when using or citing secondary sources. For example, I rather like <http://www.which.co.uk/technology/computing/guides/how-to-buy-the-best-ebook-reader/amazon-kindle-versus-nook-kobo-and-sony-ebook-readers/> but it has no date reference. It also has, in my opinion, erroneous information in addition to good information. This is not the time or place for this discussion.

I enjoy using crowd sourcing to find books. Isn't this a skill our students need? We should be developing a place in our curriculum for things such as this. I use *Good Reads* and *Amazon* when I'm trying to decide on a book to read. But one should KNOW THE REVIEWERS. I just don't agree with some reviewers. In situations where I've taken a chance, luckily, Amazon and Amazon's Audible have a fault-free return policy.

Here are two reviews of the same book. *TransAtlantic* by Colum McCann

- Audible (Amazon) <http://www.audible.com/pd/Fiction/TransAtlantic-Audiobook/B00CRJKN0Y>

- Good Reads [https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/16085517-transatlantic?from\\_search=true](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/16085517-transatlantic?from_search=true)

When one picks a reviewer, which one does one select? Should you select the one who awarded a 5 or the one who awarded a 1? Certainly, you should not select the average review.

When using an e-book shouldn't students be taught how to set up and participate in book club groups where they share notes or back channel. Shouldn't teachers help student learn how to compare and select reviewers? Shouldn't teachers organize and debate the accuracy and value of particular positions? Students should be taught how to hold a point of view and debate positions without animus?

Yesterday's correct answers are probably wrong, but we still hear pundits, those who listen and believe them and others cite scant personal experience or belief without and current or substantial experiences. Our students should learn how to expose shoddy and vacuous blatherings. Mobile technology is a rapidly evolving area. See TA#4. See how fast mobile media and the innovation cycle changing. We have the job of informing the less informed, helping students and colleagues to build reasonable consensus where possible and how to respect valid disagreement where consensus can't be achieved. E-books and mobile technology provide students with the time to explore issues and skills.

Mobile technology is addictive. Several different sources claim that user of mobile phones are checking the between 150 and 200 times a day. I would suspect that they are not checking to hear if their phone were ringing. Something else is at work. What are the implications for education? TA#12

Mobile users appear to love appropriately placed advertisements and recommendations. Will e-books become more susceptible to advertisement needed for school funding? TA#43

Where and for what purposes do people use mobile devices? TA#15 I won't talk about this so you'll have to look at it yourself.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS WE SHOULD NOT DO

Don't try to persuade individuals to accept e-books if they disagree with using them. Instead, romance them into acceptance.

Don't blabber about with opinionizations and awfulizings based on one's negative feelings. Get informed and stay informed

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO DO

Provide educators with a fact sheet. E-books are here to stay.

Help educators to recognize evidence-less e-book positions.

Explore how digital media should be used in schools. Let's start with educators being provided with e-books, e-book tools and support staff.

Let's gather around crystal balls and campfires to repeat what Christine did so many years ago. I don't think Tomi Ahonen is exactly right but he's on to something when he identifies *augmented reality* and the 8<sup>th</sup> mass media. I think his timeline may well be off; he's too certain. (See TA#59) There is a 15-minute TedX video. Now you may have to combine some ideas. Other thoughts may be beyond you and some you may just disagree with. What did you think of the Japanese butterflies related to gamification and badges? I've taught the use of Aurasma for the ipad in several graduate classes. (Here is a link to what my student thought was the best tutorial - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vl\\_UEfoNzbl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vl_UEfoNzbl) ). Ah, but read the reviews in the ipad application store. Quite a few teachers hated it. It did not work for them. I taught 17 out of 19 to use Aurasma and they loved it. I predict books coming to life and interacting with students. You'll need the app on a mobile device. It is free. Go here - <http://www.aurasma.com/#/explore>

This is what we should be doing; let's prepare for the future. Build an Aura (trigger) based on a student graphic and watch them interact. It's magic, don't you know!

I think this could be a threat to some. But there will always be luddites.

MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Henry Liebling  
[hliebling@hotmail.com](mailto:hliebling@hotmail.com) Sat 14/06/2014 22:46

Tony Brown and I have just had the 2nd edition of the really useful maths book published by Routledge (Taylor Francis),

We have put QR codes at the start of each section taking you to the Companion Website when you flash/scan it.

It is not that wonderful but we then link the CW to a blog, YouTube channel, Diigo group with a tag cloud and my images on Flickr.

Not sure how well all this will work or be used. All the books resources are also accessible in soft format from the CW.

We can add to and correct the CW in a way we could not with a book once published. Ebook sales of the first edition were significant, but we are talking about educational publishing.

Have a look and see what you think.

[Routledge.com/cw/Brown](http://Routledge.com/cw/Brown)

Henry Liebling

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Simon Rae  
[simon.rae@gmail.com](mailto:simon.rae@gmail.com) Sat 14/06/2014 20:43

What an interesting thread, thanks Christina for starting it ...

I'm recently retired (in my early 60s) and I don't see the demise of the book happening in my lifetime so that will see the paper format safe for (hopefully) another 20 years at least - certainly in the field of education. However, this dreary stick-in-the-mud/head-in-the-sand prediction isn't based on my personal preference alone. In fact, I'm all in favour of the benefits of e-books, e-readers and all other e-s.

For the last 20 years I was at the UK Open University and was well up on the issues around e-learning. Firstly, as has been pointed out already in the thread, book publishing is now possible in many formats, paper and e-format obviously, but the e-format is presentable in so many different ways, desktop, laptop, notebook, e-reader, smartphone - all potentially of use by learners, all offering slightly different learning advantages and disadvantages, and all developing to offer new facilities at speeds that seemingly defy rational educational integration. I don't think that 20 years will be enough to sort the market out in any way that would see the demise of the paper book. I don't think that 'the big losers are publishers because they are no longer needed', I think that they will adapt and change their practices, they will 'own the words' so speak and will be needed to provide the process of publishing in the many different formats.

Will any educational establishment insist that students access their course texts in e-format? Will they be provided with a college e-reader? A policy that may have worked in some US/UK establishments, but would it work worldwide, or come to think of it, even nationwide?

One piece of research that I was involved in concerned student's preferences for their learning, I remember one student saying that one reason they liked the OU's policy of providing book based course material was that physical ownership gave them a tactile sense of having done the work and of 'owning the knowledge' - obviously not a justifiable pedagogically, but I suspect that many of us have a small library of physical things that embody for us that which we know and are familiar with.

Finally, although academic habits are changing, I'm not convinced that the publish or perish route to advancement will completely embrace the e-format to the exclusion of the book, especially in the humanities.

Cheers

Simon

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Ian Lynch  
[ianrlynch@gmail.com](mailto:ianrlynch@gmail.com) Sat 14/06/2014 20:29

The interesting thing will be what publishers of education books do to compensate for massive losses in their traditional markets. The assumption that they can get revenue by replacing traditional books with ebooks is not a forgone conclusion. As indicated earlier this market is ripe for disruption with different business models that use free content to channel marketing and sales costs into productivity. Revenue then comes from selling a service or services around those products. Google have done this in the software industry using a search service allied to advertising.

On 14 June 2014 19:34, Kathy-Ann Daniel-Gittens <kdaniel@wayne.edu> wrote:

I am in agreement that economics will play a large part in the way things play out, but I also think that changing cultural norms will be an important part of the whole mix as well. There is a whole generation of young people who are growing up getting their information through digital technologies. The surge in digital publication and e-reader use will simply be an extension of that trend. They will opt for digital books over print book as it is consistent with the way they normally acquire information.

The print newspaper industry was roiled by the effects of the digital information age. Their whole business model was turned upside down and they have been trying to recast their service and reinvent their business model since. So too, I think that book publishers will find that their business model will be heavily impacted by the growth of the digital book industry and the up-take of e-readers.

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Eric Knutsen  
[eaknutsen@hotmail.com](mailto:eaknutsen@hotmail.com) Sat 14/06/2014 20:34

Being very close to finishing the Narnia series as bedtime reading to my twin boys (from physical books) the experience for both them and myself would have lost some richness I find difficult to describe. The low res drawing reprints, the smell of the pages as I turned them, the reminder of the book itself via the cover, the visual progress?

In terms of textbooks, I had printed the ebooks for my students because I wanted them to USE them and be able to revise from their own handling of the material.

Personally, I have used both types with some dexterity and would not like to be forced into a choice of dropping one in favour of the other carte blanche.

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Ian Lynch  
[ianrlynch@gmail.com](mailto:ianrlynch@gmail.com) Sat 14/06/2014 17:54

I think they are delivery technologies for information. Books are static text/images, E-readers could be static text/images but offer a lot more. At the moment the e-readers (and that includes mobile phones, tablets, laptops etc) do a lot more but are significantly more expensive and more fragile. I can't see anything a book can do that an e-reader can't. It used to be that books were higher resolution but even that has changed. So for me when the cost of an e-reader book combination beats a book it's a no brainer. Of course there will be sentimental attachment to books for people brought up on them but that is unlikely to survive as new generations come through. I was brought up on animal fat fried proper potato chips, my kids prefer Mac Donald's fries. I think they ar philistines ;-)

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Ian Lynch  
<ianrlynch@gmail.com> Sat 14/06/2014 16:33

No doubt all formats will survive, we still see the odd typewriter around. Some people are still using CDs. Question is what will dominate? The potential advantages from electronic books are not currently realised because of all the complications of copyright and it's a very young medium, less than 10 years in mainstream use so many limitations are just down to lack of time to get the applications to the required functionality. Even so I can search an electronic text and re-use and edit the content creatively, things that are not at all easy in a book. We separate text books and exercise books but most of this is simply entrenched workflows of most adults that will take time to change, possibly decades, exacerbating the digital divide. Personally I haven't worked much on paper like that for years and I definitely wouldn't want to revert back to it. I find it pretty irritating when I'm forced to by eg government departments that are still operating like they did at school. I'd say at least 95% of what I read is from a screen, my children the same and they are now in their 30s so I doubt this is going to get less with each generation. The fact that you can enlarge text is a significant advantage, or get a speech synthesisers to read it to you. For measurement it is easy to get the dimensions calculated instantly and if you want to measure physical objects why bother doing that on a

piece of scaled paper when you can do it for real or get the computer to do it for you? For an exam? Then that begs the question of the relevance of the exam questions in a modern world. It is not that difficult to scale measurements to any particular screen resolution if you know that is what you want to do. I think the health side of things is not really much of an argument. After all, when reading first started by candlelight it was probably a lot more damaging to young eyes than reading from a screen. And obesity, alcohol, tobacco, recreational drugs and lack of exercise are bigger risks and I don't see them dying out any time soon. If there is a "benefit" people will do it. If its easier or more satisfying people will do it. Especially young people.

The main thing paper books have going for them is that a) they are low cost and b) require limited skills to use. The latter is by virtue of the fact there is not much you can do with them except read them. That's why I say economics is a key issue and of course education because the skill level to get the most out of electronic information is far more demanding than from fixed text. On the flip side the electronic version can be enriched far more to enable greater understanding and insight into its content. It's a shift in the type of learning needed and that is a big challenge for education.

Whole buildings are now designed using Buildings Information Management software. Schools are already doing it. How will the training of quantity surveyors change when the entire bill of quantities is generated directly from the design software? Put on an Oculus Rift headset and "walk through" the building looking all around in a 3D virtual world £400. It might be nice to think drawing boards and 2D paper diagrams would persist but now even 2D CAD is obsolete. Its not just the drawings, but the entire building, materials costings and facilities management, the lot.

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Tony Fisher  
[Tony.Fisher@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Tony.Fisher@nottingham.ac.uk) Sat 14/06/2014 16:39

Ian's use of the phrase 'delivery technology' in relation to printed books got me thinking, albeit not to come up with anything conclusive (I usually don't ☹). But I want to ask the question, are books and screens just different delivery mechanisms for precisely the same stuff, or is there more to it than that? Charlotte's response points to some aspects of that.

I have this nagging thought that if all we think about is different 'delivery' of identical stuff, we are perhaps missing some more subtle, more elusive, yet possibly quite important aspects and implications of our choices of technology. Is the stuff really the same, regardless of mechanism/technology? And is our engagement with it also the same? And do the answers to those questions matter?

Maybe these are somewhat philosophical questions, and I should just get on with what I ought to be doing...

Tony

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; Charlotte Davies <charlotte.davies@fit-2-learn.com> Sat 14/06/2014 15:42

I think that we will have a wider variety of formats, but that books as we know them will survive; and that new technology will make their production yet cheaper and potentially more individualised i.e. we already see books printed to order, that market will widen.

E text books have their limitations particularly in subjects that require practical interaction with the book such as Mathematics. My son has done all of his GCSE's on a computer with enlarged texts and that has not always worked well, particularly on the Maths & Science papers; graphs are a problem for instance or anything that needs to be measured. We wanted to use e-books for all of his secondary education and that has not proven to be practical or possible, he has ended up using both i.e. traditional textbook plus e-textbook for the same subject.

I also think that people will learn to choose formats more intelligently considering other factors about the formats effect on their health; such as formats creating lots of blue light disrupt sleep; or formats that encourage the person to spend hours in one position that cause repetitive strain and so on. We are only just appreciating the long-term impact of people working closely to screens on their physiology and cognition – I could see us designing materials that are better for health; but are also better in terms of cognitive processing – we already see that with variable font sizes.

Regards,

Charlotte Davies

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MirandaLink <mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>; on behalf of; johnwastene [johnwastene@btinternet.com](mailto:johnwastene@btinternet.com) Sat 14/06/2014 13:53

Once again you have posed an interesting question. I am in 'freeflow mode' with this response so it may seem disjointed. That is the beauty of the written word; we can carefully organise the structure to direct the reader to a train of thought or convey a specific idea, or we can string random thoughts and concepts, knowledge and ideas in ad hoc ways allowing the reader to derive their own meaning.

The way in which we carry out an activity is determined in part by the effectiveness of the methods (loosely meaning technologies) available. Steam power revolutionised transport, the drayman replaced shire horses by a steam wagon then by a lorry with internal combustion engine etc. Whilst steam power for trains lorries and cars it was soon found to be less effective for the latter two although for trains continued a couple of decades longer. However the horse and even shire horses have not entirely disappeared, many millions of people worldwide still utilise horses for recreation and work, they have not disappeared and remain functional.

Your debate of 20 years ago highlights that the emerging technology could provide an effective alternative and one could argue that for some aspects the technology has allowed us to share the written word in new and imaginative ways that would not have been so readily available in printed form. Visual literacy with and of the written word is one of mine and many of the Miranda net community real passions so no need to repeat that train of thought. I do not know the evidence base for the amount of words read online/email/e-books/text/apps etc per day compared to those read in books/paper but anecdotally for me and all those that I know well both have an equal place in their lives.

At the time of the debate Christina mentions, there were huge concerns over deforestation, in terms of sustainability of paper supplies and ecological impact etc plus the cost of oil based printing inks making printed books potentially unrealistically expensive and depriving the masses of what had become commonplace.

To me the concerns we had about the sustainability of paper is now not a concern. Through effective recycling and replacement planting utilising fast growing replacements combined with slow maturing broad leaf native species around the world effective forestry is managing the need. However the demand for the rare earth metals required to develop the technologies we need today is of far more concern. The licensing to companies for deep sea bed mining mainly in locations under coral reefs where it is believed the supplies of the required rare earth metals are located is just as poignant.

The technology that has grown so rapidly over the 30 years is incredibly fragile in terms of its sustainability and my question might be will replace the 'digital age' technologies that we depend upon so much.

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**From:** MirandaLink [<mailto:mirandalink-bounces@mirandanet.ac.uk>] **On Behalf Of** Ian Lynch

**Sent:** 14 June 2014 13:33

**To:** Christina Preston

**Cc:** mirandalink

**Subject:** Re: [MirandaLink] The demise of the book is imminent!

I think it is down to economics. One thing that could kill the paper book as a delivery technology is cost. If publishers passed on the full savings from not having to print and distribute the paper to customers most people would migrate to electronic readers as they have

with music. Who buys Music on discs, tape or other physical media now? In a school if all children have an e-reader device and say a physics text book is £10 to buy in paper form and was £1 in e-reader form it would save £9 a pupil - multiply that across say 10 subjects and it is a very significant saving. How much does it cost to write a physics text book? I reckon I could do it in a year easily. So lets say £50k. Lets share that cost between 500,000 users in a cohort. What should the cost of each book be? 10p? Physics is international so if it was globalised, the cost of production is negligible compared to the usage and these books could be given away and free to edit. The big losers are publishers because they are no longer needed. All that is needed is a distribution site which is what Amazon has but it doesn't even have to be an established player if everyone knows where to find the books to download. But for books we do seem to be behind the music industry.

The enabling changes will be that the e-reader technology will continue to fall in cost so everyone has one. ipads are still too expensive, some other tablets are getting down to the sort of sub £50 price that will tip things though and this sort of technology is much more likely to be non-vendor specific. From a practical point of view it might have to be one device rather than ipads, kindle, mobile phone etc etc. or its going to be too complicated to manage apart from costs. These technologies do become commoditised over time so that is the likely outcome. So when the delivery device cost + the content to go on it get to be a lot less than buying one or two paper books, and especially if the e-versions added value such as Creative Commons Licensing so that teachers and pupils can freely re-use the content, books in schools will largely be for aesthetic or historical effect. How long that will take is a little difficult to tell but I would sell any shares in any companies dependent on selling paper based content if I had any ;-)

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On 14 June 2014 12:42, Christina Preston <[christina@mirandanet.ac.uk](mailto:christina@mirandanet.ac.uk)> wrote:

More than 20 years ago in a debate at Sussex University I partnered Douglas Adams (Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy) in arguing fiercely that books would soon be redundant. We talked about how computers and the 'new' internet would make printing on paper redundant and how publications would be added to all the time – a sort of crowd sourcing approach to knowledge creation and reproduction.

Two book publishers argued against us, not only citing the value of linear content, the power of reading and individual authorship but also the weight and smell of a volume in our hands and the sense of control over turning the page.

Douglas gave a sigh of relief when we lost the debate. 'Thank goodness', he said. 'I'm about to publish another book....

Would we have won the debate if it was held again now? Do books matter any more? Is the demise of the book imminent?

I'd love to know what members think.....

**Dr Christina Preston**  
**Founder of the MirandaNet Fellowship**  
**Professor of Educational Innovation, University of Bedfordshire**

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"Using technology to improve education is not rocket science...it is much, much harder than that"  
Diana Laurillard, Opening Up Education

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