Library Underground

- a
- reading
- list
- for
- a
- coming
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● In capitalism, institutionalized libraries, publishers, and book traders all have ways to suppress the publishing of, the access to, or the distribution of texts and books—rigidities inviting creative subversion.

Eva Weinmayr

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Eva Weinmayr

I

Ed Ruscha's Letter • An Alternative Information Service • There is No Such Thing as Neutral Knowledge

INNER VOICE: Why start with Ed Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*?

EVA WEINMAYR: Simply, because he is *the* pioneer of artists' books and because he gives interesting insights on the topic in a letter we have in The Piracy Collection in London.[1] In it, he writes that it was "a terrible mistake" to number the first edition of *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*. He saw, that numbering the individual copies creates a "limited edition" rather than "just another book." He wanted his books to circulate freely. So it seemed quite counterproductive to turn the book into a collectible. Numbering creates a scarcity that hikes up the value. He actually was right: a copy of the first (numbered) edition of *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* sells today on AbeBooks for 17,432 £ [fig. 1]. It has become an object of desire for private collectors and big art institutions likewise.

INNER VOICE: Remind me, what was Ruscha's initial print run?

EVA WEINMAYR: He numbered and signed the first run of 400 in 1963. This had been followed up by a second edition of 500 in 1967. In 1969, he printed a third edition of 3,000. A huge print run for an artist-booklet. In my view it can be seen as the attempt to flood the market in order to undermine the trading of the books as expensive collectibles.

INNER VOICE: But what's wrong with that? Why can't books primarily be a collector's spoil and reading matter only as a secondary function?

EVA WEINMAYR: Books need to circulate to have an impact by being read. That is why books came about in the first place. Owning a book is fine but it still needs to be accessible. It's quite interesting that, roughly at the same time in the 1960s, a few hundred miles north of Los Angeles another publishing project took off. Stewart Brand, Lois Jennings, and a group of friends kicked around ideas to finally set up a serial publication in 1968: the *Whole Earth Catalog*—an alternative information service and distribution system [fig. 2].

INNER VOICE: I guess it was more about providing information to friends, who like themselves, attempted to live in communes. It was more a newsletter than a real book.

EVA WEINMAYR: The decisive point is that its publication gave it freedom to circulate. It was published twice a year—with more frequent updates in the form of supplements. The *Whole Earth Catalog* collated reviews of self-published counterculture literature, manuals, information about new tools,

1 Letter to writer and co-founder of *Village Voice* John Wilcock, February 25, 1966.

building and land use designs, as well as general philosophical texts. It provided practical "News to Use" for everybody in the community and source ideas for potential community building. Imagine the perversity, had such a rich tool been put into the cupboard of a solvent collector. David Senior, bibliographer at the MoMA Library, wrote a fantastic text about it in *Fragments from Access to Tools: Publications from the Whole Earth Catalog 1968–1974* [fig. 3].

INNER VOICE: If I am correctly informed, it also listed and reviewed a wide range of products such as books, manuals, tools, machines, but did not sell any of the products directly. Instead, the vendor's contact information was listed alongside the item and its review. In that it was decidedly anti-commercial.

EVA WEINMAYR: No doubt. And in a way it resembled an alternative library project—a kind of "reading list for a coming community,"[2] as Senior put it. And as such the *Whole Earth Catalog* was not just informing about tools, it was a tool in itself, a publishing concept and a community-in-print. It was also a kind of educational service. Before they started the magazine, Stewart and his wife Lois embarked on a commune road trip with a truck touring the country and doing educational fairs. The *Whole Earth Truck Store* was not only "a store, but also an alternative lending library and a mobile micro-education fair."[3]

INNER VOICE: Interestingly, David Senior describes the catalog project as a precursor of today's online communities as the publication talked directly to its readership, asked its readers questions and completed the feedback loop by publishing reader letters, reviews and announcements.

EVA WEINMAYR: Yes, and that's why the catalog became very popular and kept growing. In the years 1968 to 1975, more than 2.5 million copies were sold. It was a living organism, alive and kicking, rather than something dead put on a plinth for worship. They were widely distributed through informal channels like mail order, alternative bookshops, and in community libraries.

INNER VOICE: Libraries were an important reference point at the time, as it seems.

EVA WEINMAYR: Indeed, one of the many ads in the *Whole Earth Catalog* announced the 158-page library press publication *Revolting Librarians* [fig. 4] which campaigned for the inclusion of neglected topics in their library information service. Materials produced by independent and small-scale publishers had up to then not been reviewed in the library press, therefore not acquired for the libraries. Subsequently, they were not accessible for the readers, who had to do with the fairly limited range of publications by commercial publishing houses. Those, of course, would pick up alternative topics only when profit could be sensed.

2 David Senior, ed., *Fragments from Access to Tools: Publications from the Whole Earth Catalog 1968–1974* (Portland, Oregon: Publication Studio, 2013), 2–3.

3 Andrew Kirk, *Counterculture Green*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 48.

QUESTION: Do you know Celeste West?

EVA WEINMAYR: Yes, she is brilliant! She actually co-edited the *Revolting Librarians* book. She was a feminist librarian and, in 1967, the founding editor of *Synergy Magazine*, an alternative library newsletter. She campaigned for librarians to become pivotal to enforce the Library Bill of Rights issued by the American Library Association in the 1930s (see Appendix).

INNER VOICE: Free and neutral provision and access to knowledge for everybody is the famous creed of that bill.

EVA WEINMAYR: Neutral? I don't think there is such a thing as neutrality when it comes to knowledge! Librarian activists such as *Synergy Magazine* demanded to address and recognize the political context of the work of librarians.

They looked at the nature of library catalogs, indexes, and search tools because they believed that "these tools were mostly 'rear-view mirrors' that provided little or no bibliographic access to the actual information needs." From April 1968 on, a feature section was included in an attempt "to concentrate on subjects of current interest or on popular subjects for which we feel there is a lack of available information."[4] These were subjects such as Women's Liberation, Gay Liberation, Dope, Native Americans, Ecology, Changing the Family Structure, Independent Publishing, and the Underground Press.[5]

INNER VOICE: (Holding up a back cover of *Synergy Magazine*) This list of subjects here gives an instructive overview of topics important to them [fig. 5].

EVA WEINMAYR: New cataloging and new subjects were just one thing. Celeste West's aim was also to fundamentally shift the concept of the library from "conserving and organizing information to generating or promoting" it.[6] She initiated an alternative library culture that was less preoccupied with archiving of cultural records then more with activating them.

INNER VOICE: It sounds as if you also came across Anna-Sophie Springer's book *Fantasies of the Library*?

EVA WEINMAYR: Andrea Francke just sent me a copy [fig. 6]. It basically builds on Celeste West. The book looks at libraries from a curatorial perspective. It says that the library's primary function privileges active use over passive display and presentation, whereas museums and archives normally store objects and information only after the time of their utility has expired. So the library is really about being switched on by its readers. And that is a good thing.

4 "Index for 1967–71," *Synergy Magazine* (San Francisco: Bay Area Reference Center, 1972).

5 See Tony Samek, "Intellectual Freedom within the Profession: A Look Back at Freedom of Expression and the Alternative Library Press," *Library Juice* 6:6 (2003), http://libr.org/juice/issues/vol6/LJ_6.6.html.

6 Celeste West, "Conversation with Celeste West," interview by Milton Wolf, *Libraries for Social Change: Women's Issue*, 31/32 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1983), 29–35, 29.

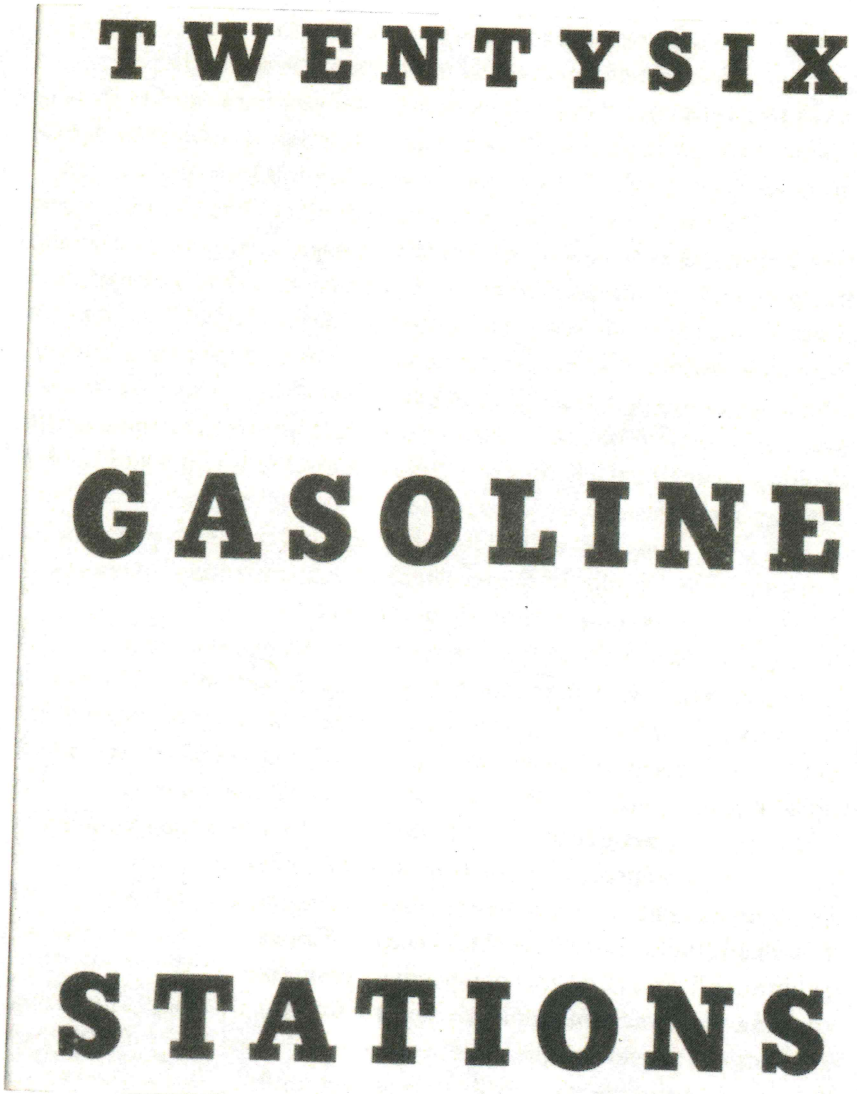


Fig. 1. Ed Ruscha self-published the first edition of *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* in his own imprint National Excelsior Press in 1963. It had a print run of 400 copies, which he numbered. © Ed Ruscha, 2015.

→ **Fig. 2.** Stewart Brand, *Whole Earth Catalog*, Fall 1969.

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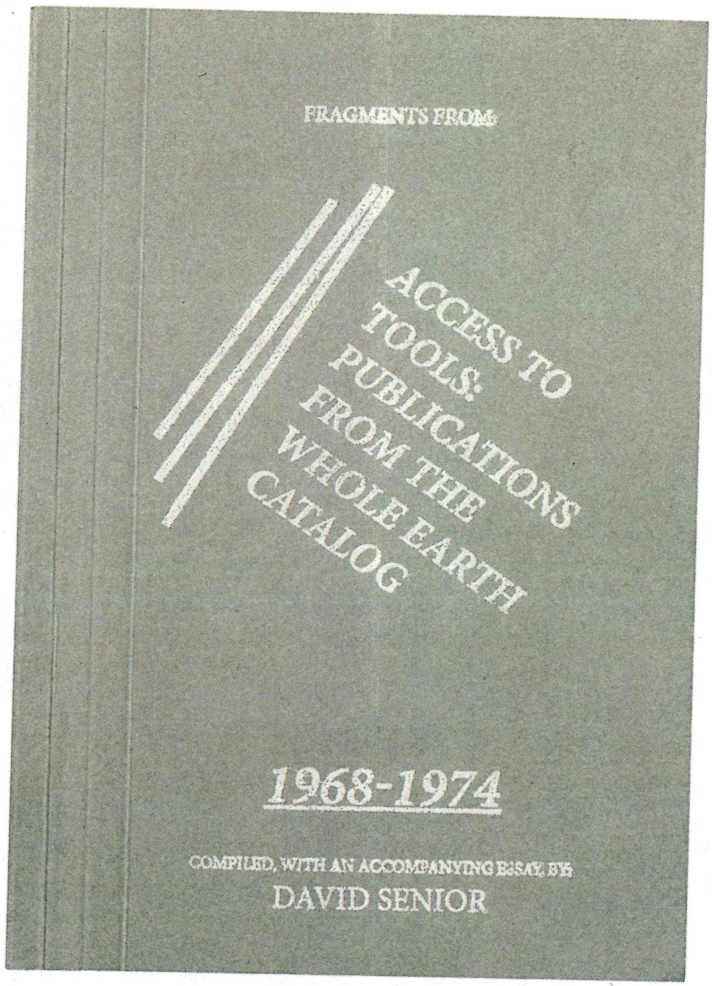


Fig. 3. David Senior (ed.), *Fragments from Access to Tools: Publications from the Whole Earth Catalog 1968–1974*, Portland, Oregon: Publication Studio, 2013 (first edition Wooden Leg Press, 2012).

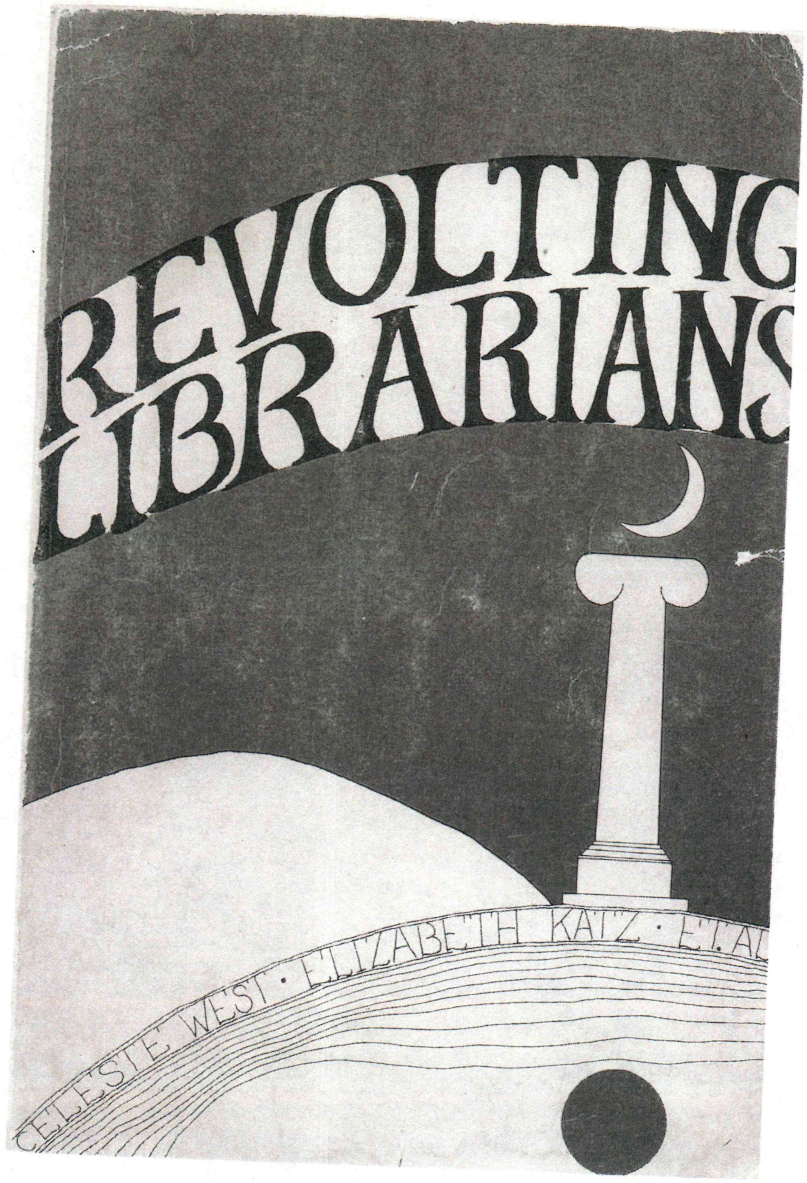


Fig. 4. Celeste West and Elizabeth Katz (eds.), *Revolting Librarians*, San Francisco: Booklegger Press, 1972, front cover. The price was $2.00 and the book was distributed by the American Library Association, Chicago by prepaid post. Photo: Sarah Mae, CC-BY-NC, https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0.

he Whole Earth Catalog
g Press, 2012).

SUBJECTS BY ISSUE NUMBER AND DATE

1-4--Dec '67-Mar '68: Reference info and news about development of the BARC project

5--Apr/May 68: Bonnie and Clyde

6--June 68: Astrology

7--July 68: New Terms in Art

8--Aug 68: Contemporary Poetry

9--Sept 68: San Francisco Switchboard

10--Oct 68: Science Projects and Experiments/The Occult and Esoteric

11/12--Nov/Dec 68: The Underground Press

13--Jan 69: San Francisco State College-Strike

14--Feb 69: Focus on Ourselves *The BARC Project (revised Dec 69)

15--Mar 69: Earthquakes

16/17--Apr/May 69: Neglected Novels

18/19--Jun/Jul 69: Right-Wing Periodicals

20/21--Aug/Sept 69: The Creative Alternative

22/23--Oct/Nov 69: Food

24--Dec 69: Women's Liberation

25--Jan 70: Native Americans

26--Mar/Apr 70: Ecology

27--May/Jun 70: San Francisco Scene

28--Jul/Aug 70: Radicals in the Professions

29--Sept/Oct 70: Gay Liberation

30--Nov/Dec 70: Dope

31--Jan/Feb 71: Prisons

32--Mar/Apr 71: SPRING! Greenfeel

33--Summer 71: Insurgent Librarians

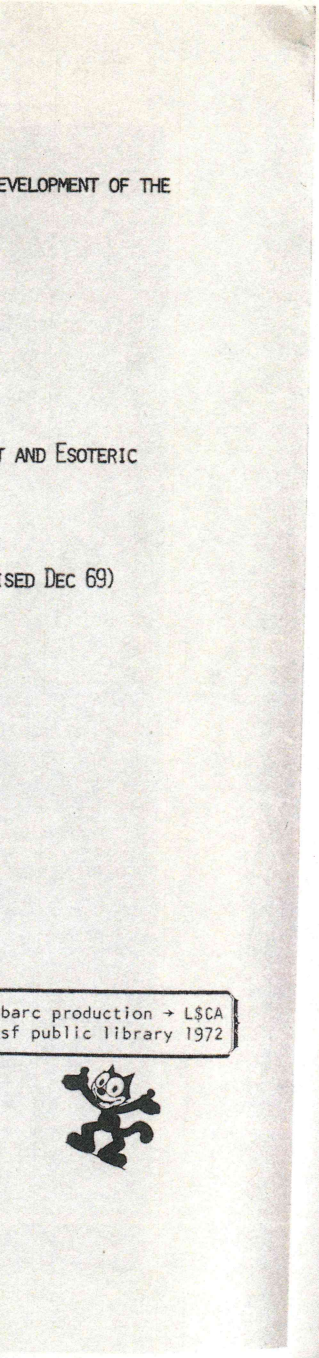
34--Autumn 71: Occult

35--Winter 71: Changing Family Structure

a barc production → L$CA
© sf public library 1972



Fig. 5. *Synergy Magazine*, San Francisco: Bay Area Reference Center, 1972, Index for 1967–71, back cover. Source: https://celestewest.wordpress.com/synergy-magazine.



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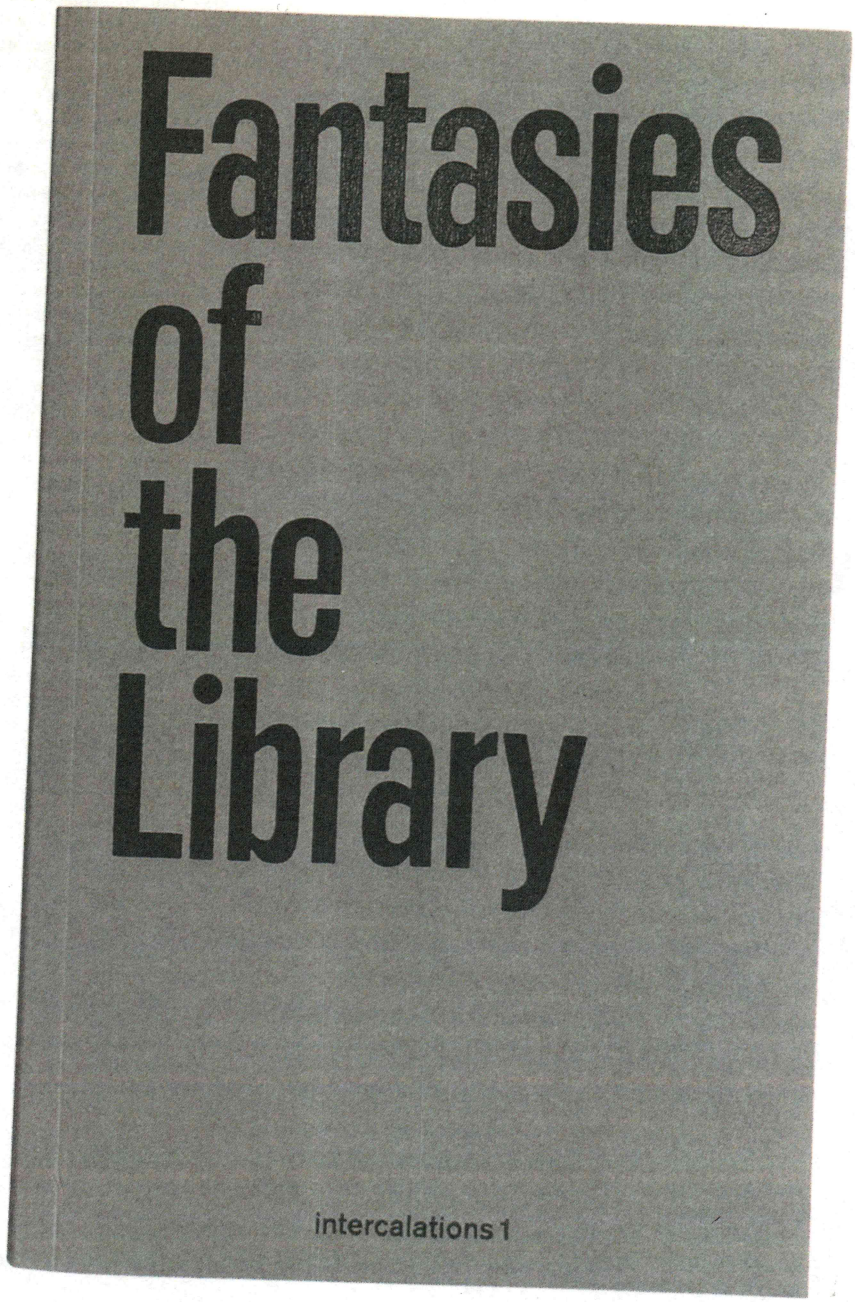


Fig. 6. Anna-Sophie Springer & Etienne Turpin (eds.), *Fantasies of the Library*, Berlin: K. Verlag & Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2015. Photo: Anna-Sophie Springer.

II

Infinite Hospitality • The Library is a Growing Organism • Melvil Dewey as One-Man Silicon Valley

EVA WEINMAYR: The library essentially is also a structure that is animated by the use of its reader. And therefore it's important to make it easy to retrieve information. David Senior writes in his essay *Infinite Hospitality* [fig. 7] about the Indian mathematician and librarian S.R. Ranganathan and his *Five Laws of Library Science* (1931). "The library is a growing organism" is one of these laws. Ranganathan developed an unorthodox classification system using "facets" where several topics can be linked in a series of keywords in order to describe the various subjects present in a single book.[7]

INNER VOICE: This system creates relationships between the concepts instead of a hierarchical delineation as it is used traditionally by libraries and developed by Melvil Dewey.[8]

EVA WEINMAYR: Melvil Dewey's model is still the standard organizing system in many public libraries. But it is not without criticism: his biographer Wayne A. Wiegand interestingly argues that Dewey's narrow interpretation of objectivity is fully based on "a patriarchal White Western (and, of course, Christian)"[9] worldview. What is left out here is a whole range of alternative perspectives on humanity's knowledge.

INNER VOICE: Are you aware that writer Shannon Mattern has described Melvil Dewey "as a one-man Silicon Valley, born a century before Steve Jobs"?[10] Because in 1876, just after graduating from College, he copyrighted his library classification scheme.

EVA WEINMAYR: More than that! He simultaneously even started a hugely successful furniture business providing the "right" chairs, tables, and shelves to

7 S.R. Ranganathan outlines the Five Laws of Library Science. "1. Books are for use. 2. Every reader his [or her] book. 3. Every book its reader. 4. Save the time of the user. 5. The library is a growing organism." "Infinite Hospitality," in *Every Day the Urge Grows Stronger to Get Hold of an Object at Very Close Range by Way of Its Likeness*, ed. David Senior (New York: Dexter Sinister, 2008). This unbound collection of 14 folders has been reprinted in *Portable Document Format* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2009) and can be found online at www.dextersinister.org. French writer Georges Perec also came up with a set of unusual categories to organize his personal library—"alphabetically, by continent or country, by colour, by date of acquisition, by date of publication, by format, by genre, by major periods of literary history, by language, by priority for future reading, by binding or by series." Georges Perec, "Brief Notes on the Art and Manner of Arranging One's Books," in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, ed. John Sturrock (London: Penguin, 1999), 148–155.

8 The Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system, based on numbers attributed to nine main categories, was invented in the 1870s. It is extendable, as its numerical sequences can be split up infinitely and new categories added.

9 Wayne A. Wiegand, "The 'Amherst Method': The Origins of the Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme," *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 2 (spring 1998), 175–194, 183. Wayne A. Wiegand examines meticulously how the conservative mindset at Amherst College, where Dewey was a student and library assistant, shaped Dewey's concepts of classifications and their hierarchies. "Its moral center was located in 'Anglo-Saxonism' a doctrine that defined 'objectivity' and touted the unique virtues, mission, and destiny of the Anglo-Saxon 'race.'" Ibid. It is quite important to understand, that with the very headings, he came up with, Dewey framed and cemented "a worldview and knowledge structure taught on the tiny Amherst College campus between 1870 and 1875 into what became the world's most widely used library classification." Ibid., 188.

libraries. Even in that respect he imposed his control on how libraries had to function according to him.

INNER VOICE: Megan Shaw Prelinger from the Prelinger Library in San Francisco talks about the shortcomings of Dewey's system: "First," she says, "[our] collection is unique to our combined areas of particular interest. It has never tried to be a general-interest research collection. Second, therefore, the library did not really fit the taxonomic systems of either the Library of Congress or Dewey Decimal. For instance: Art and politics? Handmade films? Nature-culture interface? The history of the demonization of the youth in society? These are just a few of our subject areas that are not clearly articulated in pre-existing taxonomic systems."[11]

INNER VOICE: Do you know of any examples where people have organized publicly accessible libraries in an alternative way?

EVA WEINMAYR: The Ethical Culture School in New York City for example carried out a radical experiment. They wanted for their students a more independent and empowered seeking practice in their library. Therefore they ditched the Dewey system and developed the Metis system instead, named after the mother of Athena in Greek mythology. They responded to the problem that students frequently were more focused on actually seeking materials rather than using them and along with the kids developed a more usable classification system.[12]

INNER VOICE: For example?

EVA WEINMAYR: They discovered, that kids were interested in topics rather than in authors. Some sections were under-used such as "Languages" which were turned into "Community," "Craft" is now labeled "Making Stuff." But the most radical step was to mix the classic categories of "fiction" and "non-fiction."

INNER VOICE: Really? That sounds pretty radical.

EVA WEINMAYR: Yes, they found out, that this move triggers thoughts and discussions, where students have to evaluate on their own what is imagination and what is information and discover the blurred lines in between.

7 S.R. Ranganathan outlines the Five Laws of Library Science. "1. Books are for use. 2. Every reader his [or her] book. 3. Every book its reader. 4. Save the time of the user. 5. The library is a growing organism." "Infinite Hospitality," in *Every Day the Urge Grows Stronger to Get Hold of an Object at Very Close Range by Way of Its Likeness*, ed. David Senior (New York: Dexter Sinister, 2008). This unbound collection of 14 folders has been reprinted in *Portable Document Format* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2009) and can be found online at www.dextersinister.org. French writer Georges Perec also came up with a set of unusual categories to organize his personal library—"alphabetically, by continent or country, by colour, by date of acquisition, by date of publication, by format, by genre, by major periods of literary history, by language, by priority for future reading, by binding or by series." Georges Perec, "Brief Notes on the Art and Manner of Arranging One's Books," in *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, ed. John Sturrock (London: Penguin, 1999), 148–155.

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10 Shannon Mattern describes Dewey as "the quintessential Industrial Age entrepreneur. [...] He helped found the American Library Association, served as founding editor of Library Journal, and launched the American Metric Bureau, which campaigned for adoption of the metric system. He was 24 years old. He had already established the Library Bureau, a company that sold (and helped standardize) library supplies, furniture, media display and storage devices, and equipment for managing the circulation of collection materials. As chief librarian at Columbia College, Dewey established the first library school—called, notably, the School of Library Economy." Shannon Mattern, "Library as Infrastructure," *Places Magazine*, June 2014, https://placesjournal.org/article/library-as-infrastructure/.

11 "Erin Kissane in conversation with Megan Shaw and Erik Prelinger," *Fantasies of the Library*, ed. Anna-Sophie Springer and Etienne Turpin (Berlin: K Verlag & Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2015), 2–18, 4.

12 Tali Balas et al., "Are Dewey's Days Numbered? Libraries Nationwide Are Ditching the Old Classification System," *School Library Journal*, September 28, 2012, http://www.slj.com/2012/09/collection-development/are-deweys-days-numbered-libraries-across-the-country-are-giving-the-old-classification-system-the-heave-ho-heres-one-schools-story/#.

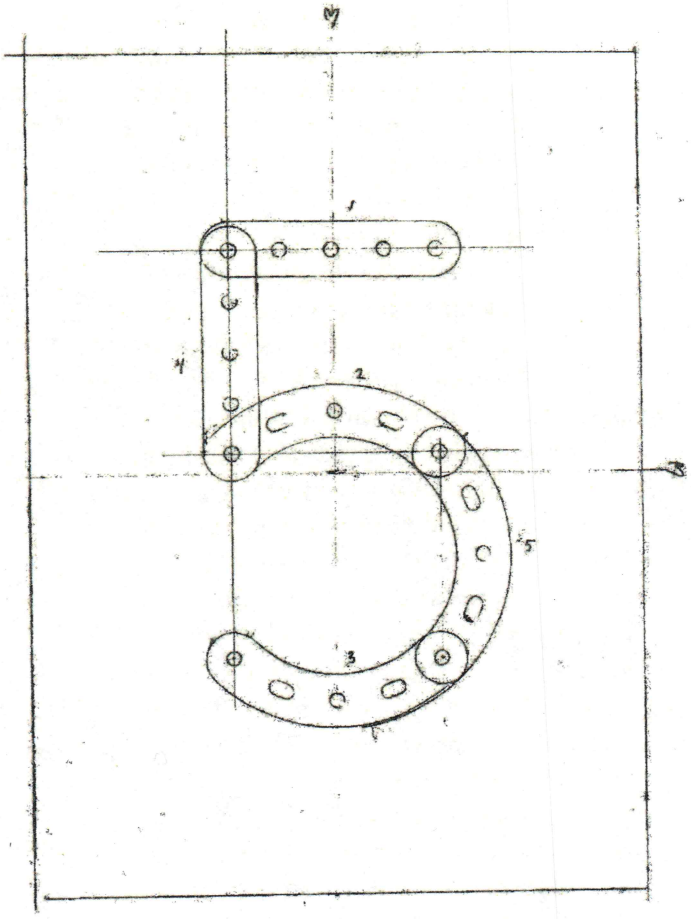
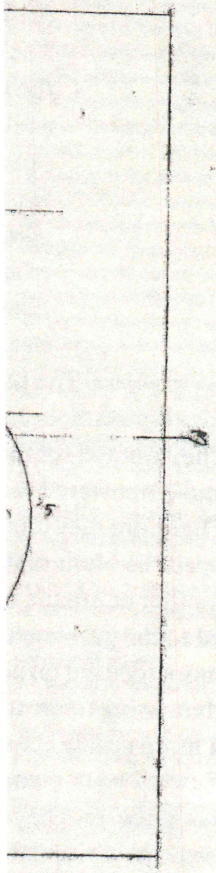


Fig. 7. David Senior, "Infinite Hospitality," in *Every Day the Urge Grows Stronger to Get Hold of an Object at Very Close Range by Way of Its Likeness,* published by Dexter Sinister as an unbound collection of 14 folders, New York: The Art Libraries Society and Museum of Modern Art, 2008, folder front cover.



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III

A Library is a Space Where Marketable Goods Are Turned into Public Goods

EVA WEINMAYR: Libraries provide immaterial goods and media that would otherwise have to be purchased. When we try to reduce the book and its knowledge to an object-commodity, we forget that a book is actually brought to life by its readers and not by its sales figures. It's the reader's engagement with the book that generates creative and critical thinking, which feeds back into a public domain.

INNER VOICE: Sales figures? Commodity? You are not talking about Amm...

EVA WEINMAYR: Amazon, exactly: "Books are easy to ship and hard to break." That was Amazon's initial idea. George Packer quoted the company's former deputy in a piece for the *New Yorker* saying: "It wasn't a love of books that led Jeff Bezos to start an online bookstore. It was totally based on the property of books as a product."[13] As I said: Libraries provide immaterial goods and media that would otherwise have to be purchased.

INNER VOICE: Terry Deary, one of the best selling children-book authors, follows up this logic with his remarks about libraries. He recently said in a speech that libraries are not relevant anymore. His argument: it has been 150 years since the Public Libraries Act gave rise to the first free public libraries in the UK, and since then times have changed.

EVA WEINMAYR: It is as scary as it is stupid. He perversely reasons that libraries promote the idea that "we've got an entitlement to read books for free, at the expense of authors, publishers and council tax payers. This is not the Victorian age, when we wanted to allow the impoverished access to literature. We pay for compulsory schooling to do that."[14] You can see that current approaches of greed to books as objects of commercial fetish have come a long way from the generous distribution of culture of the Sixties we were just touching on.

INNER VOICE: Apparently Deary's statement triggered lots of hate mail.

EVA WEINMAYR: His statement is actually just following a general hidden logic of neoliberalism, permeating every single aspect of our lives. The current intellectual property discourse is cynically shaping our relationship with culture. Andrea Francke, my

13 George Packer, "Cheap Words," *New Yorker*, February 17, 2014, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/02/17/cheap-words.

14 Alison Flood, "Libraries 'have had their day,' says Horrible Histories author," *Guardian*, February 13, 2013.

colleague in The Piracy Project,[15] recently wrote a passage in an unpublished paper I want to read back to you: "Deary's conclusion is a perfectly logical one and it was just a matter of time before someone voiced it. That is what makes it so scary. Deary's mindset tries to turn knowledge into property: It's yours, you own it. Like a house, a car or a coat that has been passed down through generations shouldn't you have the right to pass down the rights of your book so your great-great-great grandchildren can live on it. Maybe that's why the use of "commons" as a synonym for public domain has become so popular. By using it we unconsciously confirm the transformation of culture and knowledge into property (even if into a communal one)." And this is very illustrating.

IV

Against the Monopoly of the Frankfurt Publisher

INNER VOICE: You also visited Raubdruck Archiv in Germany recently. And there seem to be striking parallels to America in the Sixties?

EVA WEINMAYR: Yes, Sarah Käsmayr, a young graphic designer, who did her dissertation on book piracy,[16] took us to Raubdruck Archiv. It's an archive of more than 3,000 pirated books collected by Götz von Olenhusen, a now retired intellectual property lawyer in Germany [fig. 8].[17] And you are right. Around the same years, Ruscha and Brand circulated their self-published books in California, West Germany's student scene grew fed up with the limited access to critical theory, which was a crucial intellectual resource for the growing alternative and political student culture. They saw mainstream publishing ignorant and disinterested in printing, for instance, more radical writings of critical psychoanalysts like Wilhelm Reich or Anna and Sigmund Freud. The same went for some writing in social theory and philosophy where isolated works of the Frankfurt School—from people like Marcuse, Horkheimer, Adorno, Lukács, Habermas, or Benjamin—were ignored by the mainstream publishers.

15 The Piracy Project is an international publishing and exhibition project exploring the philosophical, legal, and practical implications of book piracy and creative modes of reproduction. Through research and an international call for submissions, The Piracy Project has gathered a current collection of 200 modified, appropriated, and copied books from all over the world. The collection, which is cataloged online, is the starting point for talks and work groups around the concept of originality, the notion of authorship, and politics of copyright. The Piracy Project is run by Andrea Francke and Eva Weinmayr as part of AND Publishing's research program. See www.andpublishing.org.

16 See Haras K. [Sarah Käsmayr], *Ein Raubdruckbuch, Wandlungen der* Chronik eines angekündigten Todes *von Gabriel García Márquez* (Bremen: University Press Bremen, 2014).

17 See Götz von Olenhusen and Christa Gnirß, *Handbuch der Raubdrucke. Theorie und Klassenkampf. Sozialisierte Drucke und proletarische Reprints. Eine Bibliographie* (Pullach: Verlag Dokumentation Saur KG, 1973).

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See Götz von Olenhusen Christa Gnirß, *Handbuch Raubdrucke. Theorie Klassenkampf. Sozialisierte Druck und proletarische Drucke. Eine Bibliographie* (Munich: Verlag Dokumentation GmbH, 1973).

INNER VOICE: How did these students go about this?

EVA WEINMAYR: Well, the students based their reading groups and discussions partly on texts which were banned during the 1930s and 40s, got lost or were difficult to access. In some cases republication was even banned by heirs or the author's estates in a conservative climate of post-war Germany. Von Olenhusen told us for instance, that the estate of Wilhelm Reich ...

INNER VOICE: ... the author of *The Mass Psychology of Fascism, The Function of the Orgasm* and the *Discovery of Orgone* ... ?

EVA WEINMAYR: Yes, he had already passed away at the time and his estate did not give permission to publish his most controversial writings, because his family wanted to secure a more moderate legacy.

INNER VOICE: And that was fair reason for Reich's German fans to pirate, publish and circulate these texts?

EVA WEINMAYR: Certainly. They used for example the term "sozialisierter Druck" for their pirate-prints, which means these prints are meant to get "socialized" for the use of the public working against the privatizing power of individuals (authors, publishers, heirs) and monopolies owning the copyright.[18] Often, the copy in the library was good enough to serve as a source for a pirate-print. They transcribed excerpts on the typewriter, duplicated them and circulated the texts on the streets, in the university or in the newly created left-leaning bookshops starting to pop up across German cities. It was a thriving scene and quickly an informal network of makeshift publishers and DIY-printers had developed.

INNER VOICE: Was that also a business model? Did they make money from it?

EVA WEINMAYR: Well, I'd call it rather a labor of love. Imagine all the effort invested in typing, printing on a mimeograph, binding and distributing the texts, which were then sold very cheaply. In our interview von Olenhusen, who runs Raubdruck Archiv, said that later pirates employed financially more successful models and generated a small income for themselves. Some of Germany's left-leaning small publishing houses, such as Merve or März Verlag took their origin from this unruly ecosystem of DIY-publishers. But the motivation to bring buried texts back into circulation were in these early years clearly driven by a mission to contribute to society rather than making commercial gain.

INNER VOICE: And it was not only theorists they pirated for good?

EVA WEINMAYR: Sarah Käsmayr collated stunning research on the many unofficial translations and pirate editions of García Márquez's *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* [fig. 9]. Tom Koenigs, who is today MP for the German Green party, felt the copy price for the forthcoming official translation by publisher Kiepenheuer & Witsch was too costly. And, he did not want to wait for the publisher's translation of

18 This motivation is also apparent in the visionary names, some pirate-publishers gave themselves, such as "Basisdruck" [grassroots-print] or "Zerschlagt das bürgerliche Copyright" [Smash the bourgeois copyright].

the novel—so he did the job himself. His colleagues at the Karl Marx bookshop in Frankfurt supported him by working his shifts in the bookshop and after a few weeks the home-translated novel was published in Frankfurt's city magazine *Pflasterstrand*[19] [fig. 10]—a few months before the official translation came out. In order to avoid obvious copyright infringement Koenigs attributed authorship to "C. de Arataca," the name of the village in Colombia where García Márquez was born.[20]

INNER VOICE: So the reader wasn't aware of the real author?

EVA WEINMAYR: Only a few days later, Koenigs—under the synonym of his young daughter's name—revealed in an article in the German cooperative newspaper *taz* that the author is in reality Gabriel García Márquez. Koenigs added a tongue-in-cheek disclaimer: "published by mistake." So the German readership could read the novel for two Deutschmarks (DM) compared to 19.80 DM.[21]

INNER VOICE: And they got away with it?

EVA WEINMAYR: According to Sarah, yes. But beside affordability and open or hidden censorship, topicality was also an issue. For example, the DIY-publishers among the Frankfurt students explain their goals in the foreword of their reprint of Wilhelm Reich's *The Sexual Struggle of Youth* (1932) [fig. 11]. I'll read to you what they say there: "We published this abbreviated text by Wilhelm Reich because until today unfortunately there is still no affordable book for the youth, which explains in simple terms the relationship between sexuality and power [...] we hope to replace this 40-year-old 'sex struggle' with a new one. The income of this pamphlet will go into the production of the new book, a collation of excerpts, a reader, in which we want to include images in order to make the reading more fun and sensual. We'll check out youth magazines, which are around to look for useful material. If you want to help us with this, please get in touch [...]. Osnabrück, December, 1971."

INNER VOICE: What are these other pamphlets here on the table?

EVA WEINMAYR: It's Walter Benjamin's *A Communist Pedagogy. Toys and Play. Program for a Proletarian Children's Theatre. Building Site* [fig. 12]. It has a great foreword, written by his pirates, which explains that the goal was to read this text in a contemporary context, in a discourse and to make these texts work beyond a "philologically clean, dignified capitalistic literary market." They opposed publisher Suhrkamp's monopoly to come up with a "solemn, but useless edition of Benjamin's collected works, banned behind golden spines." They instead want to unleash the politicized Benjamin, taking sides, from a strictly edited and bourgeois environment.

INNER VOICE: The aesthetics of the pamphlets as well as their

19 *Pflasterstrand*, Frankfurt, June 19, 1981. *Pflasterstrand* [cobbles beach] developed from the student union's magazine as a voice for the left revolutionary scene and had in 1980 a print run of 8,500. The name refers to one of the slogans of 1968 civil unrest in Paris: "Sous les pavés, la plage!" [Under the cobbles, the beach!].

20 See Haras K. [Sarah Käsmayr], *Ein Raubdruckbuch*.

21 Ibid.

motivations seem to have a lot in common with samizdat publishing in East Germany and Soviet Russia where censored literature was illegally retyped on a typewriter, duplicated and secretly circulated from hand to hand.

EVA WEINMAYR: It is a striking parallel, isn't it? And it's the achievement of these activist publishers, that texts, which had fallen between the cracks of capitalism or other proprietary motivations (in the West) or open censorship (in the East) were rediscovered, circulated, and therefore archived. It's quite ironic, that sometimes the book pirates were also seen as a kind of market researchers for the big publishing houses. Once a certain text proved to be popular in the underground networks—it might become a bestseller overground. The Cologne-based publisher Alfred Neven DuMont told Götz von Olenhusen: when the first illegal print appeared on his table, he knew it was time to publish Wilhelm Reich. And subsequently he managed to persuade the Reich estate to give permission. Reich's later controversial works, self-published since the 1920s, hence had to wait for mainstream publication until after his death.[22]

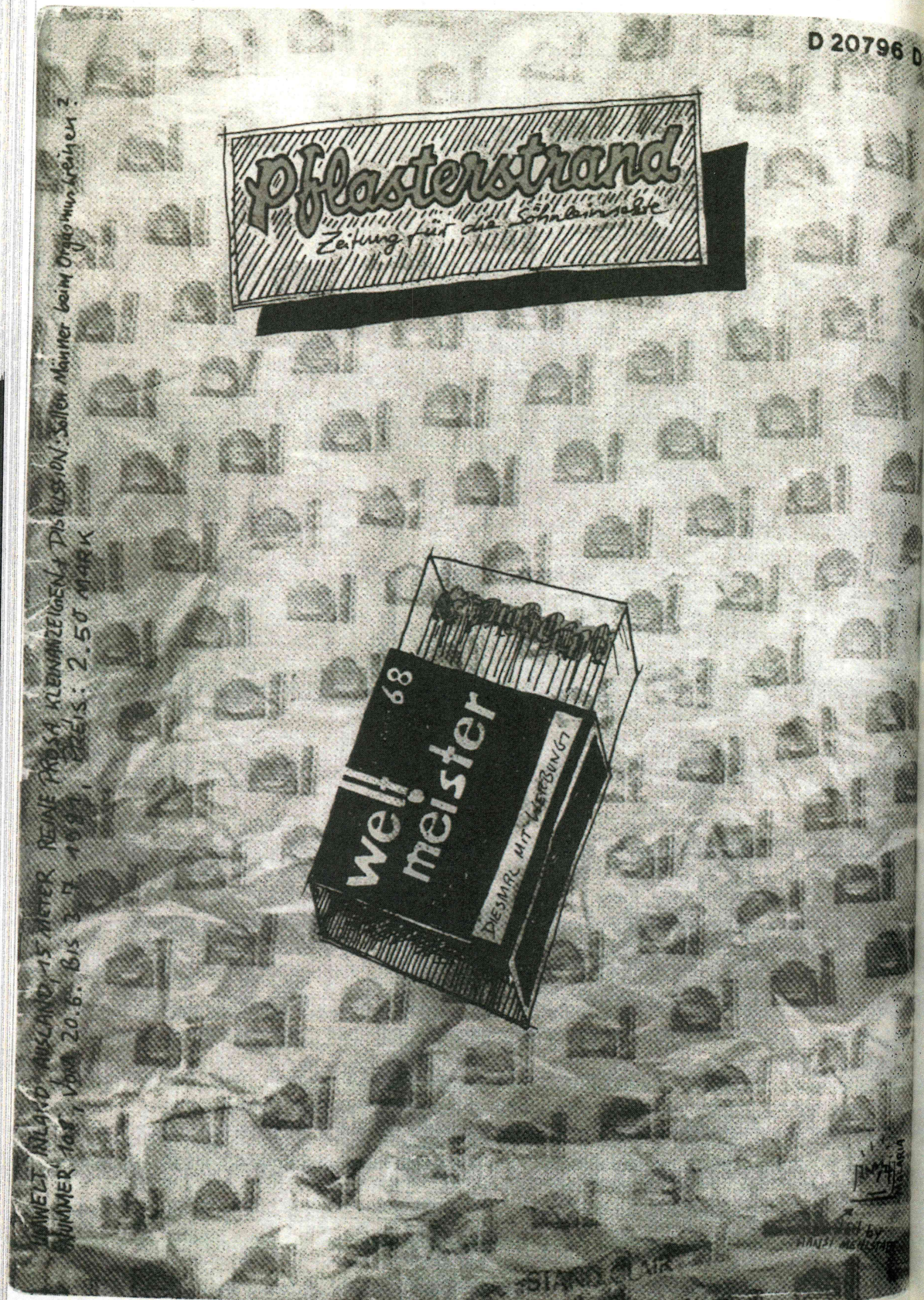
22 Singular texts were published in the late 1970s by Kiepenheuer & Witsch. His collected late writings were only published in 1995–1997 by Zweitausendeins, Frankfurt.



Fig. 8. Götz von Olenhusen and Christa Gnirß, *Handbuch der Raubdrucke. Theorie und Klassenkampf. Sozialisierte Drucke und proletarische Reprints. Eine Bibliographie*, Pullach: Verlag Dokumentation Saur KG, 1973.

→ **Fig. 9.** Haras K. [Sarah Käsmayr], *Ein Raubdruckbuch. Wandlungen der* Chronik eines angekündigten Todes *von Gabriel García Márquez*, Bremen: University Press Bremen, 2014.


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← **Fig. 10.** *Pflasterstrand*, 1981, front cover as shown in: Haras K. [Sarah Käsmayr], *Ein Raubdruckbuch*, ibid.
Fig. 11. Wilhelm Reich, *Der sexuelle Kampf der Jugend*, pirate edition, around 1970 (Raubdruck Archiv). Photo: Andrea Francke.



Fig. 12. Various pirate editions of Walter Benjamin, *Eine kommunistische Pädagogik. Spielzeug und Spielen. Programm eines proletarischen Kindertheaters. Baustelle + Diskussion + Anhang*, published by Zentralrat der sozialistischen Kinderläden, West Berlin, no. 2, 1969 (Raubdruck Archiv). Photo: Eva Weinmayr.

V

Artists and Activists

INNER VOICE: It would be great to think about how such activist publishing practices are playing out today? And what do you think is the relation between such activities and artistic practice?

EVA WEINMAYR: That's a good question. What is the goal of artistic practice? In the cases we discussed earlier, piracy is always associated with the re-appropriation of somebody else's property against the law. It challenges the idea of knowledge as property. For me the role of the cultural pirate is more complex. It is a trickster, similar to the role of the artist, who has no



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predefined territory to roam, connects different areas of thought, and questions established ways of thinking. And this thinking translates into action. Often people who do great stuff just happen to be artists. I don't even think it is helpful to categorize such activities in artists or activists—the main thing is they intervene in the world and envision or create alternatives.

INNER VOICE: What do you think of piratical practices like *Amazon Noir*—an interventionist project by Alessandro Ludovico, Paolo Cirio, and the Vienna-based collective Übermorgen? In 2006, they hacked the code of Amazon's "Read inside the book"-feature and developed a "robot-perversion-technology" giving access to the entire content of a book rather than just a few preselected preview pages.

EVA WEINMAYR: It was such a great hack. It came as a real shock to Amazon who immediately took court action, which eventually resulted in Amazon buying the invention.[23] Other examples would be Sean Dockray and Fiona Whitton, who founded the online archive *aaaaarg.fail*, formerly *aaaaarg.org*, and Marcell Mars's online library *memoryoftheworld.org*. These are activist practices of today who create communities—on- and offline.

INNER VOICE: I came across *memoryoftheworld.org*, when Marcell Mars did the *Public Library* project in Stuttgart in 2014. It's the idea that people share their books online.

EVA WEINMAYR: The cataloging aspect is very important to them. They use Calibre, a flexible online cataloging software designed to organize your own e-book/pdf collection. You can search for a variety of terms such as title, author, date added, date published, size, rating, etc. And with the free downloadable "let's share books"-plugin you can also allow other people in the worldwide web to find and read your own cataloged e-books. A true and socially adequate public library is growing here.[24]

INNER VOICE: By comparison, *aaaaarg.org* comes from a slightly different angle. It is often understood solely as an open source platform for freely sharing books, but is actually born from a desire to share books with others in order to start a conversation.

EVA WEINMAYR: Yes, I think it developed from gatherings of the *Public School*, a self-organized educational project in Los Angeles, which started in 2007.[25] It was founded by Fiona Whitton and Sean Dockray. They felt that a curriculum always comes with an institutionalized agenda defining a prescribed canon

23 See http://www.amazon-noir.com/index0000.html.

24 Their mission statement is: "The Public Library is firstly—free access to books for every member of society, second—a library catalog, and third—a librarian. With books ready to be shared [online], meticulously cataloged, everyone is a librarian. When everyone is librarian, library is everywhere." Marcell Mars, Manar Zarroug, and Tomislav Medak, *End-to-End Catalog: Memory of the World*, November 26, 2012, https://www.memoryoftheworld.org/end-to-end-catalog/.

25 "The Public School was initiated in 2007 in Los Angeles in the basement of Telic Arts Exchange. The Public School is a school with no curriculum. It is not accredited, it does not give out degrees, and it has no affiliation with the public school system. It is a framework that supports autodidactic activities, operating under the assumption that everything is in everything." See http://thepublicschool.org/la.

of learning. People propose classes they want to take or want to teach and collaborate in exploring the proposed subjects together. The German artist Cornelia Sollfrank conducted very informative interviews with Sean Dockray and Marcell Mars as part of her research project *Giving what you don't have* at Postmedialab, Leuphana University, Lüneburg, in 2012. You can watch all the interviews online.[26]

INNER VOICE: I heard that *Public School* has been spreading to other cities?

EVA WEINMAYR: That's right. Buenos Aires, Berlin, San Francisco, New York, Durham, Helsinki, London, Vienna, and the list goes on.

VI

Unsolicited Collaborations • Removing Authorship

INNER VOICE: Okay, maybe first say a few words about your and Andrea's Piracy Project.

EVA WEINMAYR: It started at Byam Shaw School of Art in London in order to fight the closure of its library. We launched an open call for copied, reproduced and altered books, which were added to the library collection. Within months we received an unpredictable variety of book projects taking wild and surprising approaches to appropriating somebody else's work.

INNER VOICE: Was it all material not represented in the library before?

EVA WEINMAYR: Partly. Sometimes several pirated and modified versions—or shall I say "interpretations"—of the same book lived just next to each other on the shelves. In some cases content has been added or erased, the size or graphic design "improved," books printed out from the internet, pushed through different platforms, algorithms, compressors or scanner software, printed professionally or with the just-about-to-dry-out ink jet printer at home. Some books credit the new author, others don't. Some disguise the alterations pretending to be the original book. A playful and subversive tension was created between the modified entries and the original books on the shelves. It is a wild almost freakish set of beasts we never expected to land on our table.

INNER VOICE: I guess, the infiltration of an art college library with such pirates unsettles a few traditional concepts and habits there? I mean, how do you figure out what constitutes the authoritative text and which is a clone variety or its interpretation?

EVA WEINMAYR: Actually some of the most interesting books reach us from outside the art world. Intrigued

26 See http://artwarez.org/projects/GWYDH/.

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ɜ See http://artwarez.org/
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by Daniel Alarcon's article *Life Among the Pirates* [fig. 13],[27] Andrea traveled to Peru in 2010 and discovered a pirate version of Jaime Bayly's autobiographical novel *No se lo digas a nadie* in the street markets. This physical object may look obviously pirated to a trained eye but could easily pass as the original if you were not looking for differences. Crucial however: the pirate version has two extra chapters. And more: these extra chapters are well written—well enough to blend in. Now, here somebody borrows the author's voice, invents two chapters of his life without telling us. There is no indication in the book, that it has been altered [fig. 14, 15].[28]

INNER VOICE: How would a librarian approach the task of cataloging such "unsolicited collaborations"? Who would be accounted as author?

EVA WEINMAYR: That is interesting. When we took the Piracy Collection to New York to install a temporary reading room at the New York Art Book Fair in 2011, a librarian from the Pratt Institute spent a lot of time browsing the books. She was fascinated by the richness of strategies and approaches to unauthorized copying. How people interfered with, copied and altered the book and confronted the questions these authorial hybrids pose. She wondered how this collection could be documented and cataloged from a librarian's point of view. What are the criteria for authorship? How can this category be defined? How do you deal with the awkward relationship between the original, the reference, and the pirate copy?

INNER VOICE: In this respect the books in the Piracy Collection live in a limbo, posing interesting questions and problems when it comes to institutional capture, which aims at streamlining and rendering everything into measurable and accountable units.

EVA WEINMAYR: In a wider sense this question is also relevant when we think of Higher Education, which in the current climate of commodifying education, aims to sell originality and individual authorship as a commercial asset to students. Collaborations among students for example are only valid, when each collaborator's part can be clearly defined—and assessed. This is pretty counter-productive, because the very nature of collaborating is that you inspire each other, that it becomes more than the sum of individual parts.

INNER VOICE: That's interesting, because today's education climate seems to just adopt the mechanism of the art market, which is fully based on signature and individual authorship, and therefore creates speculative commercial value. I am just thinking about what you said earlier about the circulation of Ed Ruscha's book.

EVA WEINMAYR: There is a striking example of what happens, when authorship is suddenly removed: the American artist Cady Noland summarily "de-authored" her work *Cowboys milking* (1990),

27 Daniel Alarcon, "Life Among the Pirates," *Granta* 109 (2009): 9–36.

28 See The Piracy Project's essay "The Impermanent Book," published on *Rhizome*, April 19, 2012, http://rhizome.org/editorial/2012/apr/19/impermanent-book/.

when it was put up for auction by a dealer against her will. Cady Noland has been named as the highest selling female artist ($6.6 m) in history. She removed her authorship of the work a few days before it was scheduled for auction at Sotheby's. As a result, the dealer Marc Jancou, who bought the work a few years ago for $101,000, could enjoy it in his living room, but not resell it as a Cady Noland work. It is a Cady Noland in his living room, but not on the market. Artist Melissa Gordon did a piece in *Persona Magazine* about it [fig. 16] and artist and lawyer Sergio Muñoz Sarmiento has written extensively about the case on his art & law blog *Clancco.org*, because Jancou sued Noland and the auction house.

INNER VOICE: This is an amazing story. It really dismantles the speculative bubble and makes us think about how value is created. Who, and for what reason, defines the value? And how quickly this can collapse with the removal of the signature and authorship.

VII

Just Another Book

EVA WEINMAYR: There is actually a funny anecdote about Ed Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*. Art historian Douglas Crimp was once hired to do picture research for an industrial film about the history of transportation. He went into the New York Public Library and came across Ed Ruscha's booklet *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* in the transportation section, just next to books about automobiles, highways etc. Douglas Crimp recounts: "I remember thinking how funny it was that the book had been miscatalogued [...] I knew, as the librarians evidently did not, that Ruscha's book was a work of art and therefore belonged in the art division. But now, because of the reconfigurations brought about by postmodernism, I've changed my mind; I now know that Ed Ruscha's books make no sense in relation to the categories of art according to which art books are catalogued in the library, and that that is part of their achievement. The fact that there is nowhere for *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* within the present system of classification is an index of the book's radicalism with respect to established modes of thought."[29]

INNER VOICE: Ed Ruscha must have been relieved, that at least in this instance, his book was "just another book."

29 Douglas Crimp and Louise Lawler, "The Museum's Old, the Library's New Subject," *On the Museum's Ruins*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 66–83, 78.

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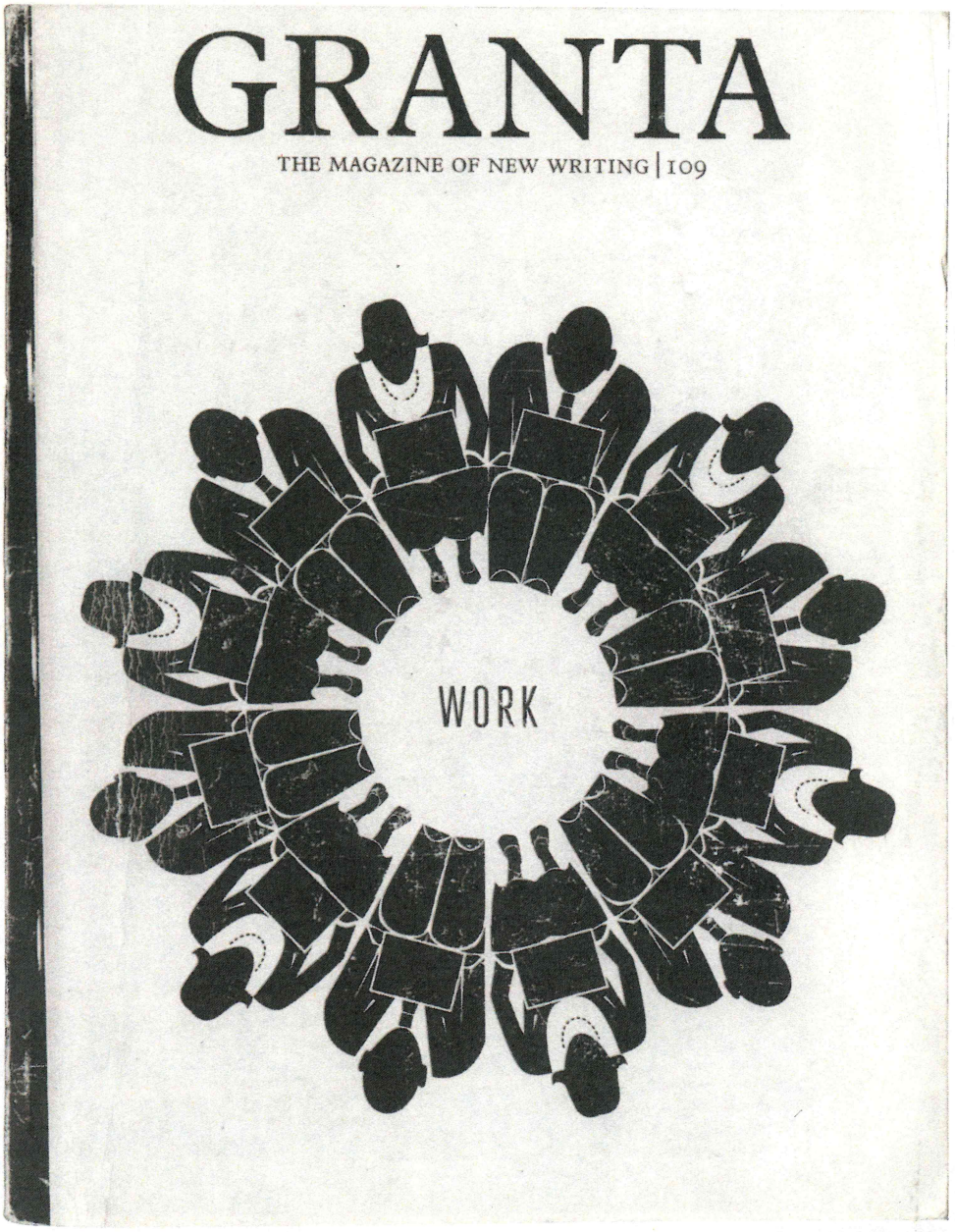


Fig. 13. Daniel Alarcon, "Life Among the Pirates," *Granta* 109 (2009).
© Granta and Portobello Books, 2015.

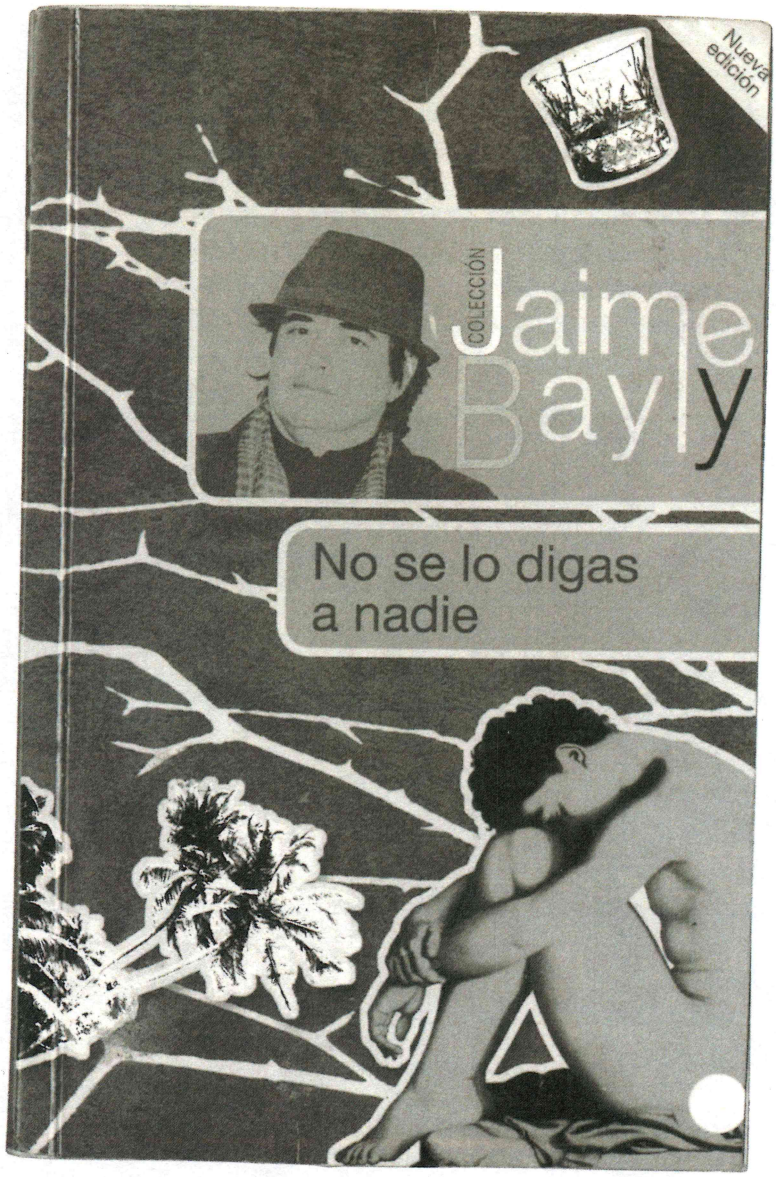
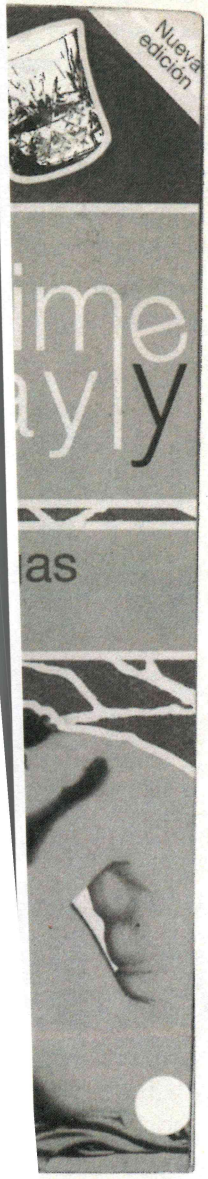


Fig. 14. Jaime Bayly, *No se lo digas a nadie*, Lima: Punto de lectura, 2010 (The Piracy Collection).



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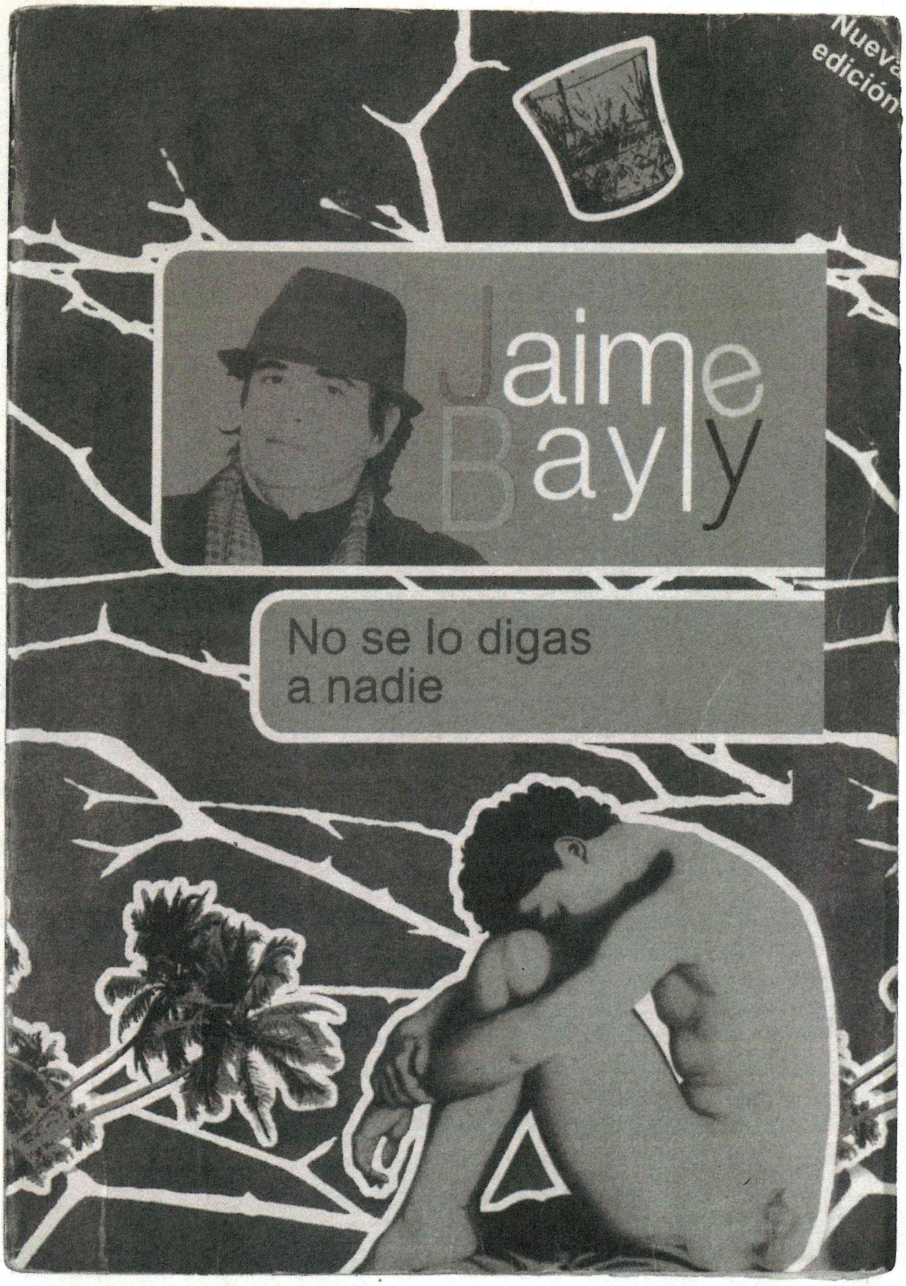


Fig. 15. Jaime Bayly, *No se lo digas a nadie*, pirated copy with two extra chapters added by an anonymous writer. Bought in Lima, Peru (The Piracy Collection).



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Appendix
Library Bill of Rights

American Library Association (1939, with several amendments until today)[30]

1. As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should any library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors.

2. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.

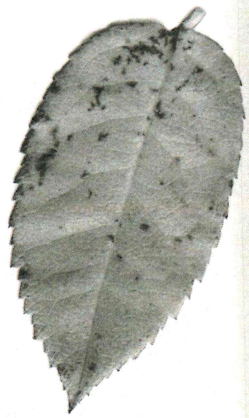
5. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views.

6. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings be open to the public.

← **Fig. 16.** Melissa Gordon and Marina Vishmidt, *Persona*, Berlin: Archive Books, 2013.

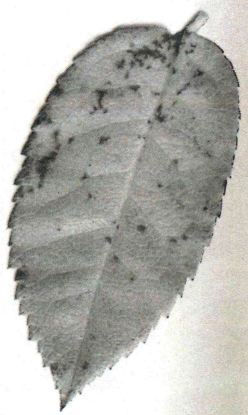
30 "Library Bill of Rights," http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill.

On Unpublishing: Fugitive Materiality and the Future of the Anthropocene Book



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Fig. 1. *Future Library*, 2014–2114. Photo: © Katie Paterson, 2015. Commissioned by Bjørvika Utvikling.

The Undeath of the Book

> Funes remembered not only every leaf of every tree of every wood, but also every one of the times he had perceived or imagined it.
>
> **Jorge Luis Borges, "Funes the Memorious"[1]**

This is an essay, in a volume on publishing as artistic practice, about a corpus of unpublished works of fiction: texts that are to-date mostly virtual and imagined, texts that remain to be read and to be written, texts that in large part do not exist—yet. These texts will comprise the end output of Scottish artist Katie Paterson's *Future Library*,[2] a project started in 2014 with the planting of one thousand trees in Nordmarka, a forest outside of Oslo, Norway, and in progress until 2114, when the resulting paper will be used to print a series of books.[3] Every year between now and then, one author will be chosen by the Future Library Trust—a group composed of Paterson alongside various figures involved in publishing, the literary prize market, and library development—to contribute a text to the project. Canadian speculative fiction author Margaret Atwood, best known for her dystopian feminist novel *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and for her recent trilogy of novels on climate change and genetic engineering (*Oryx and Crake*, 2003; *The Year of the Flood*, 2009; *MaddAddam*, 2013[4]), was selected for the project's inaugural year, and handed over her manuscript on May 26, 2015. Until 2114, when all 100 texts are published, each text will be securely stored as it is written in a specially designed room in the New Public Library in Oslo. This room, designed by Paterson, will be constructed from wood derived from the trees in Nordmarka that were cleared to make room for the thousand trees that will in turn eventually provide the material for the coming books themselves.

Circulating and reverberating across time and space, Paterson's *Future Library* offers a speculative glimpse of the possibilities of publication in the twenty-second century—of the complex, contingent ways in which

print writing might persist within an uncertain future. Projecting old media into new history, the project is, among other things, a complex statement in the ongoing cultural conversation about the future of the book. The death of the book in the face of electronic and digital media has been a common trope of literary discourse at least since Robert Coover's essay "The End of Books" in 1992.[5] These conversations inevitably betray the ideological and technological preoccupations of those involved, whether they be nostalgic or futurist. Paterson's project, by contrast, imagines a future media ecology different from either of those binary reactions, one defined neither by the death of the book nor by its digital afterlife or rebirth. On the contrary, the *Future Library* constitutes an extended meditation—indeed a meditation by way of extension—on the long, deep time of the book,[6] on the complexly recursive ways in which the paper codex circulates through time across a wide range of storage sites, substrates, and potentialities, coming into contact with a varied array of authors, editors, institutions, and infrastructures. Stretching the lifespan of the book ever so slightly toward geological time through the extended delay of storage time between writing and circulation, Paterson opens up a critical pleat in the temporalities of publishing technology, imagining a potential future not through the seemingly abstract futurity of the digital but rather by means of the radical elongation of paper. Her project stages a leveraged play upon the charged material relations between codex, archive, and environment that at once both suggests new temporalities and material configurations of publication and also throws those categories into question as historically overdetermined and profoundly contingent. In this essay, I trace Atwood's as-yet-unpublished and unread text across the spaces that comprise *Future Library*'s complex, delicate ecology—the document, the library, and the forest—in order to offer a theory of how print publication might provide critical purchase on questions of digitization, of its own obsolescence and persistence, and of the place of artistic practice within a space and time increasingly marked by the imminent possibilities of environmental crisis.

The Later Age of Print: Document, Object, Fugitive

> The new radicalism is paper. [...] Publish it on a printed page and no one will ever know about it.
>
> **Kenneth Goldsmith, "If It Doesn't Exist"[7]**

The external face of the *Future Library* is resolutely analog, rooted in the tangible, visible materiality of wood and paper. These old-media trappings are at once both aesthetic and technological: the living forest, the bound paper copies, and the wooden interior of the library room that collectively compose the project seem to speak strongly on behalf of the analog as a format with the capability to persist long after the obsolescence of any single given digital format. The *Library* imagines the old medium of paper growing older, its

historical trajectory elongated into the future in a manner that outlasts the newness of the digital. Indeed, this singular persistence seems intended to supersede and upend the networked materiality and circulation of the digital. Out of the infinite reproducibility of the digital, Paterson seems to suggest, what will remain most secure a century from now is the singularity of the typescripts stored in the *Library*. In a further extension of the project's textual ecology, Paterson has designed a certificate that entitles the bearer to a complete set of the *Library*'s texts in 2114, but even these are only available in a limited edition—far fewer than the traditional print run of a notable author's work—and presumably at considerable cost. Thus in both of these instances, print authorship and publication yield rare artifacts, objects that take on a kind of renewed Benjaminian aura against the backdrop of contemporary digital replication and circulation.

Yet such a conceit elides the underlying digital backstory of the texts in question, at least in the instance of Atwood's inaugural volume. In 1998, N. Katherine Hayles noted that "[a]ll but a handful of books printed in the United States and Europe ... will be digitized during some phase of their existence. ... [E]ven print texts cannot escape being affected by information technologies,"[8] a claim that has surely become true for an even larger percentage of books since Hayles first made it more than fifteen years ago. Indeed, the robust presence of both artist and author on social media, and in particular Atwood's extensive engagement with writing technologies such as the digital publishing platform Wattpad and the remote robotic signing technology LongPen (her own invention) would strongly suggest that the multivalent trajectory Hayles describes applies to this first contribution to the *Library* as well.[9] Thus while the finished product will rest *in situ* in the *Library* as a hard-copy print typescript, handed over as such by Atwood, we have to assume that it existed first (and indeed still exists) as a digital file created by Atwood. The presumably born-digital status of this insistently paper text raises crucial yet unanswerable questions about its materiality and provenance: where does this text reside and circulate—where does it exist besides the hallowed, auratic singularity of the volume placed under lock and key in Oslo for the next hundred years? On Atwood's hard drive? On Paterson's? What other individuals involved with the project or the Trust have accessed it, and in what forms? How might such an origin story complicate the status of the printed text in Oslo, adding layers to its material historicity that augment and complicate its status as a print object rather than detracting from it?

As these questions suggest, Atwood's text occupies a strangely paradoxical state as a media object. A work by a prolific major author widely publicized but paradigmatically not published in any conventional sense of the term, it exists, at least for the next hundred years, in a highly inaccessible print run of one.[10] Its publication status and its technological format simultaneously shape one another and throw one another into relief: the digital version of the text, seemingly infinitely replicable, remains paradoxically secure and all but singular, possessed only by the small group directly involved with

the project. Yet the paper version, the object ultimately destined for publication, is nearly equally singular, strangely no more or less publicly accessible than the digital. Either form could circulate more widely, particularly the digital, of course, yet it is central and definitive to the project that neither form does—that the varied material reproducibility of these parallel textual objects is underscored precisely by being subverted and short-circuited.

In both formats, then, Atwood's text exemplifies what Mark Sample imagines as the category of fugitive texts, "fading away before our eyes, slipping away in the dark, texts we apprehend only in glimpses and glances. Texts that remind us what it means to disappear completely forever. The fugitive text stands in defiant opposition to the archive. The fugitive text exists only as ... a trace, a lingering presence that confirms the absence of a presence."[11] One of the key models for Sample's theory of the fugitive text is Don DeLillo's novel *Mao II*, in which the reclusive novelist Bill Gray withholds his ever-expanding novel from publication as a means of distinction and resistance against "the always-available logic of the marketplace."[12] In his notes for the novel, DeLillo writes that "[i]n the world of glut+bloat, the withheld work of art becomes the only meaningful object."[13] In its flickering presence, intensely discussed but barely seen, Atwood's contribution to the *Library* resembles Gray's novel as a withheld fugitive text, an exception within and against the constant streams of contemporary media culture that exerts presence by way of its absence. Yet the crucial difference between the two texts is that Gray's is a wholly print and paper object, produced on typewriter (like DeLillo's works themselves) and existing nowhere other than in the author's basement, while Atwood's text presumably has a digital origin point. However, the infinite reproducibility and accessibility made possible by such an origin ultimately constitutes a kind of material null set, leading through the constraints of the project back to singularity, absence, and fugitivity, conditions that are thrown all the more into relief against the digital moment in which Paterson's project takes place.

In this sense, both Atwood's single text and the project as a whole constitute an extreme instance of what Jessica Pressman describes as "the fetishized focus on textuality and the book-bound reading object"[14] that characterizes the early twenty-first century's aesthetic of bookishness. For Pressman, contemporary bookishness

> "is not merely another form of postmodern reflexivity in which the author toys with the reader in a layered process of simulacra. ... [T]his iteration of the aesthetic of bookishness differs from bookish aesthetics of the past. The novel projects digital technologies into the book format as a means of combating the simultaneous peril of information loss and the ideology of transcendental data that constitute discourse network 2000."[15]

Viewed from the perspective of Pressman's theory, Atwood's text is perhaps the most bookish book imaginable. The analog materiality of this media object within the digital world collapses the distinctions between information loss and transcendental data that Pressman notes. It verges on a kind of

technological sublime not because of its transcendent, ubiquitous accessibility but rather through a profoundly immanent absence, the inaccessibility of the text in either print or digital form. Atwood's text registers as most bookish precisely in its status as a fugitive text, and conversely underscores bookishness as defined most urgently in terms of material extremity—the ways in which the presence and absence of a textual object become dually charged and radicalized within a culture of information. Thus Paterson's bookishness goes beyond referentiality or reflexivity, the simulational hall of mirrors Pressman notes as characteristic of an earlier moment. It raises the question of how the extremes of technological reproducibility and singularity lie uneasily alongside and within one another across time as markers of a constantly shifting media culture that is always already split and scattered between analog and digital modes. The future imagined by *Future Library* exists in print, a technology designed for ongoing accessibility and compatibility—qualities that become increasingly difficult for digital texts to sustain over time as they face obsolescence and decay. Yet at least for the present moment, this print archive cannot help but speak of the digital as well, even and especially through omission. It carries the digital into the future as an absent presence haunting paper, one medium tracing and leaving traces upon the other, the fugitive origin of a fugitive text.

Discourse Networks 1614/2114: Archive, Unpublication, Archaeology, Silence

> The absent library takes part in an uncanny accounting: ordering and tabulating every addition to a catalogue by a subtractive deduction; sketching a pinax of absence; and bartering ruthlessly in a general economy of anticipatory and permanent deaccession.
>
> Craig Dworkin, *The Perverse Library*[16]

Can we consider Atwood's text—or any text, for that matter—a publication if it remains private and inaccessible to the public for the foreseeable natural lives of the author, the artist, and the vast majority of the reading public alive at the time of its printing? What might it mean to reimagine publishing—the making public of written work—as by definition a private act? Is Paterson Atwood's future publisher? Her future archivist, editor, curator? Where does she place these roles within the field of public and private action? In his seminal essay "What Is an Author?" Michel Foucault raises a series of dually "theoretical and technical" questions regarding the boundaries of an author's *oeuvre*:

> "When undertaking the publication of Nietzsche's works, for example, where should one stop? Surely everything must be published, but what is 'everything'? Everything that Nietzsche himself published, certainly. And what about the rough drafts for his works? Obviously. The plans

> for his aphorisms? Yes. The deleted passages and the notes at the bottom of the page? Yes. What if, within a workbook filled with aphorisms, one finds a reference, the notation of a meeting or of an address, or a laundry list: Is it a work, or not? Why not? And so on, ad infinitum."[17]

Foucault's questions here are designed to stretch the bounds of authorship past the breaking point, to imagine an archive that includes everything—published, unpublished, deleted, ephemeral, incidental—and in doing so overwhelms and overwrites the very conception of the author. Yet gazing at the locked door of the *Future Library*, unable to access its single text, we find ourselves staring down the inverse of these provocations: while Foucault asks the overarching question of how far we can expand the scope of an author's work, Paterson asks what possibilities and questions emerge through the circumscription of publication. What is a publisher when she does not publish? Rather than imagining an inquiry into "everything," Paterson calls upon us to consider void, absence, and delay.

Should we understand this text as part of Atwood's bibliography, and if so, how? And when? Surely it is a work written by her, but if we take Foucault at his word, so is everything she commits to paper, disk, drive, or network. Paterson's deep concern with literary history and the archive in *Future Library* challenges us to imagine a more granular approach to authorial time at the same time that it dissolves the possibility of such an approach back into time. Should this text appear on the "also by Margaret Atwood" page in the front matter of her next (published) text? If not then, perhaps upon publication a century from now, its author long dead, perhaps no longer even in print? How would such crisscrossing expansions to her catalog—one proleptic, one retrospective—complicate how we understand the temporality of her career? These questions seem trivial, mired in the minutiae of bibliography and biography, yet I raise them precisely for that reason: the extreme Nietzschean archival proliferation that Foucault imagines finds its uncanny double in the extreme withdrawal of this unseen text, its absent presence as a fugitive text in the authorial archive.

Indeed, as much as these are authorial questions, they are also profoundly archival and bibliographical ones, bound up with and within the locked space of the library. Thus as a way of framing the archival stakes of the *Library*, and of turning to the physical space of the library itself, I want to offer the deceptively simple proposition that Atwood's text is unpublished. I mean this not in the simple, literal sense of being not published, written but never publicly circulated, as in the case of the Nietzschean manuscripts Foucault imagines. The unpublication I have in mind here is more dramatic and radical. Whereas Nietzsche's unpublished writings are unpublished as an indirect, incidental byproduct of a larger authorial career, the *Library*'s unpublication is the very center of the project. Indeed, by unpublication I mean not the absence or deferral of publication but its utter inverse: the printing of texts in order to be secreted, held from view, and circulated in the secure space of the library room. Conceptual poet Kenneth Goldsmith,

whom I quote in the epigraph to the previous section of this essay, has famously declared that "If it doesn't exist on the internet, it doesn't exist."[18] If we take Goldsmith's provocation at face value, the *Library*'s space of sequestration becomes visible as the key vehicle in keeping its texts from existing, retaining them within absence and secrecy. The century-long deferral, the secured space, the isolated codex—all of these elements of the project function together to subvert the conventional trajectories of publication, replacing them with absence and with the blankness of enduring space and time, an unseen text locked within an all-but-empty textual space.

Both in spite of and because of the project's name, the library of *Future Library* is a deeply retro space, a library of the past as much as of the future. In addition to the space's focus on printed paper texts and its carefully sourced wooden construction, it also includes a printing press. Given the spatial constraints of the library and Paterson's comment that the project will "hold[] workshops for the next generations in printing and binding books,"[19] it seems likely that this press will be a fairly small and technologically primitive one. These deliberate anachronisms, destined to be all the more anachronistic a century from now, frame *Future Library* as a multilayered project of media archaeology. Jussi Parikka describes this critical and artistic discipline as

> "a way to investigate the new media cultures through insights from past new media, often with an emphasis on the forgotten, the quirky, the non-obvious apparatuses, practices and interventions. [...] Media archaeology sees media cultures as sedimented and layered, a fold of time and materiality where the past might be suddenly discovered anew, and the new technologies grow obsolete increasingly fast."[20]

Indeed, as much as the space of the library preserves the texts chosen for the project, it also preserves an imminently anachronistic scene and practice of reading, providing the apparatus by which future readers might project themselves back doubly in time to the moment of print culture. Writing on the history of storage media, Leah Marcus compares the discursive characteristics of three different technological moments: the mutable noise and collective reading practices of manuscript culture, the silence of the archive and the library in the moment of early print, and the return to the noise of cyberspace in the emergence of the digital. She argues that in contrast to the noisy, dynamic modalities of premodern and postmodern inscription and storage, "so obviously mutable and 'alive,' so vulnerable to alteration and loss," "[w]e associate libraries, collections of knowledge, and systems for memory retrieval with silence and hence with permanence."[21] In keeping with this sensibility, the *Library* resurrects a rapidly receding past for the future, dramatically rehearsing and preserving the very silence that Marcus suggests must accompany and characterize any stable preservation effort.

Yet the temporalized space of the library is not simply a space of return, but also a space of deferral and anticipation. The *Library*'s archaic recuperation of the past is inseparable from its speculative projection into the future. Through the near-empty space of the *Library*, the time of the project becomes

dramatically stretched beyond the lifespans of its initial creators: Paterson remarks, "[w]hen I had the idea for *Future Library* I knew instantly it would outlive me (and most of us alive today). It is important that I do not see it fully realised—it is a work conceived for an unknown, future generation."[22] This space, then, is proleptically haunted by the future, paradoxically filled by both the absent presence of the books to come, and the gradual, inevitable disappearance of those texts' mortal writers, selectors, and readers. Its silence is not the silence of solitary, modern print reading, but rather the silence of the unread, of the untimely absence of reading—the silence of a space occupied not by reading humans, but by unread books.

@wood: Place, Trees, Economies, Ecologies

> There was a lot of trash cluttering the streets—burnt things, broken things. Not only cars and trucks. Glass—a lot of that. Shackie said we had to be careful which buildings we went into: they'd been right near one when it collapsed. We should stay away from the tall ones because the fires could have eaten away at them, and if the glass windows fell on you, goodbye head. It would be safer in a forest than a city now. Which was the reverse of what people used to think.
>
> **Margaret Atwood, *Year of the Flood***

The complex, delicate ecology of *Future Library*'s components invokes the equally delicate, deeply contingent ecology that the project resides within. Both Paterson and Atwood have remarked on the project's direct confrontation of an uncertain environmental future: Atwood states, "This project, at least, believes the human race will still be around in a hundred years!"[23] a proclamation that seems almost to protest too much. Paterson, when asked in an interview, "Are you pessimistic about the future? Or does art give you hope?" answers with a sharply hedged description of the *Library*'s physical defenses:

> "The room I'm designing for the Oslo Library that will hold the manuscripts will be on the fifth floor, among the special collections and archives. So they will be kept safe, even if the fjords pour into the land. Which could happen. Margaret even said that, in 100 years, Norway may not even exist as a country. Perhaps these futures that are being written now will come true in 100 years. I don't know who'll read them. Maybe they'll be like the characters in Margaret's books."[24]

Here Paterson imagines the speculative dimension of the *Library* as particularly charged, the projection of literary reading and writing not only into a profoundly uncertain future, but also indeed a future characterized by precisely the uncertainty that has long preoccupied its first contributor. In this sense, Paterson's choice of Atwood as the *Library*'s first author foregrounds the project's self-conscious engagement with the possibility of environmen-

tal crisis; after all, if any living author is aware of the possibilities for radical social upheaval around environmental change in the next century, it is Atwood herself. How, then, to leverage against this imminent threat? How to protect the words, ideas, and materials of the project from the very same ecological crises that they themselves might imagine?

Future Library engages these problems through an uncanny discursive conservation of mass: Paterson's initial clearing of the forest space in Oslo provides wood for the construction of the library room, which will eventually be filled with books produced from trees growing in the repopulated initial space—a kind of Möbius strip between the space of the forest and the space of the library over the next century.[25] Yet Paterson's work is not merely a simple restoration through replanting, as if in some defanged, print culture version of the neoliberal carbon offset. On the contrary, by leaving the texts of the *Library* radically unpublished for as long as 100 years, planting trees that replace the ones she has cut and will only later serve as material for the *Library*'s books, she inverts the conventional terms of this ecological/textual transaction. The project replenishes and accumulates wood in advance, in a manner that simultaneously repays the environmental debt incurred by the library and saves toward the future moment of publication. Here again the self-referentiality from which Pressman distinguishes contemporary bookishness gives way to a complex interdependence between the narrative possibilities of the text and the material and environmental concerns of the project. However much Atwood's text might blur the bounds between fiction and reality, imagining the conditions of the future that it waits to be read within, its position within the *Library* is not a mere metafiction detached from material reality, but rather part of the project's complex reflection on the stakes of its own material and environmental context—a conservational project in both the archival and environmental senses of the word.

My use of economic language—transaction, debt, repayment—to describe the ecology of normal print publishing above is deliberate, and intended to resonate on a number of levels. Most broadly, as recent conversations regarding the temporal boundaries of the Anthropocene period have shown, climate change is inextricably bound up with the *longue durée* of globalization and market capitalism, whether grounded in the moment of European arrival in the Americas, the Industrial Revolution, the emergence of nuclear weapons, or another event.[26] But the economics of climate change also inform *Future Library* in particular given the project's location in Norway, a nation that has been at the forefront of REDD (reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) transactions, in which developed nations pay aid to developing nations in return for an agreement to slow or cease deforestation.[27] A full discussion of the geopolitical, economic, and ecological stakes of the REDD market is beyond the scope of my work here, but the presence of such a history in Norway resonates powerfully against the material, technological, and ecological poetics of Paterson's *Future Library*; in this context, then, the forest of the project stands in not only for other texts and

moments across time, but also for other global spaces within an economically and ecologically uneven present.

Like the library space itself, then, this forest is layered with the uncertainty of human time both there and elsewhere. Indeed, notwithstanding the belief and hope that Atwood and Paterson mention in the passages above, the expanded duration of the *Library* means that the project may not have a chance to end, at least as planned—that some texts may end up unpublished not by choice but by contingency, as well as perhaps altogether unchosen and unwritten, left virtual and latent in the silent forest. Yet uncannily, *Future Library*'s intrinsic silence and emptiness limns this possible end precisely as the project leverages against it, investing now in the unpublished and the unread in order to retrieve new texts through ancient means in the future, storing and sequestering books in the hope of readers. This tension raises an aporia that cuts across time, textuality, medium, and environment: How can literature invest in the future of the planet, not in discursive, linguistic terms, but in material, technological ones? Perhaps, Paterson suggests, only by remaining out of sight and out of reach, locked in the library and latent in the silent forest, teasing and testing us with the challenge of its fugitive inaccessibility. Perhaps, then, literature might remain only by disappearing—at least for now.



Fig. 2. *Future Library*, 2014–2114.
Photo: © Bjørvika Utvikling by Kristin von Hirsch, 2015.
Commissioned by Bjørvika Utvikling.

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1 I would like to thank Katie Paterson and Siobhan Maguire for generously providing information and images to support this essay, and Annette Gilbert and Kristen Mueller for their thoughtful comments on an earlier version of the text. Jorge Luis Borges, "Funes the Memorious," in *Labyrinths*, trans. James E. Irby (New York: New Directions Press, 1962).

2 Katie Paterson, *Future Library – Framtidsbiblioteket – Katie Paterson*, accessed April 1, 2015, http://futurelibrary.no/.

3 The finite number of trees planted for the project raises a complex set of questions regarding how many pages such a forest could yield, and how many sets of the *Library*'s books such an archive could consequently allow for. All of the variables in play here (pages per tree, pages per book, and number of sets) are moving targets: the number of pages per book is of course determined by each individual author (inaugural author Margaret Atwood has noted that each contribution can be "one word. It can be a poem. It can be a story. It can be a novel" [Ed Finn, "An Interview With Margaret Atwood," *Slate*, February 6, 2015, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2015/02/margaret_atwood_interview_the_author_speaks_on_hope_science_and_the_future.html]), and Paterson's website describes the number of sets only as "limited." Different sources also offer different conceptions of the number of pages of paper yielded by a tree. The Sierra Club, an American conservation organization, offers an estimate of between 10,000 and 20,000 sheets of 8½×11" paper per tree (Bob Schildgen, "Green Life: How Much Paper Does One Tree Produce?" *Sierra*, July 4, 2014, accessed May 11, 2015, http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2014-4-july-august/green-life/how-much-paper-does-one-tree-produce).

4 Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (New York: Ballantine, 1986); *Oryx and Crake* (New York: Nan A. Talese, 2003); *The Year of the Flood* (New York: Nan A. Talese, 2009); *MaddAddam* (New York: Nan A. Talese, 2013).

5 Robert Coover, "The End of Books," *New York Times Review of Books*, June 21, 1992, 23–25. On the more recent wave of conversations regarding the death and life of the book, see Jessica Pressman, "The Aesthetic of Bookishness in Twenty-First-Century Literature," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 48, no. 4 (fall 2009), accessed August 17, 2015, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.act2080.0048.402.

6 See Siegfried Zielinski, *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

7 Kenneth Goldsmith, "If It Doesn't Exist on the Internet, It Doesn't Exist," September 27, 2005, accessed April 15, 2015, http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/goldsmith/if_it_doesnt_exist.html.

8 N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 43.

9 See, for example, Atwood's active Twitter account *Margaret E. Atwood (@MargaretAtwood)*, accessed April 14, 2015; her article "Why Wattpad Works," *The Guardian*, July 6, 2012, accessed April 12, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jul/06/margaret-atwood-wattpad-online-writing; and André Voshart, "Robotic arm extends authors' signatures over cyberspace," *Design Engineering*, April 17, 2009, accessed May 12, 2015, http://www.design-engineering.com/motion-control/robotic-arm-extend-authors-signatures-over-cyberspace-10411/.

10 For a record of this unpublished publicity, see the "Press" page of the *Library* website.

11 Mark Sample, "The Archive or the Trace: Cultural Permanence and the Fugitive Text," January 18, 2010, accessed August 17, 2015, http://www.samplereality.com/2010/01/18/the-archive-or-the-trace-cultural-permanence-and-the-fugitive-text/.

12 Ibid.

13 Quoted in ibid.

14 Pressman, "The Aesthetic of Bookishness in Twenty-First-Century Literature."

15 Ibid.

16 Craig Dworkin, *The Perverse Library* (York: Information as Material, 2010).

17 Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin Books 1991), 103–104. For a different extrapolation of Foucault's argument into the digital, see Matthew Kirschenbaum, "What Is an @uthor?" *Los Angeles Review of Books*, February 6, 2015, accessed October 18, 2015, https://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/uthor.

18 Goldsmith, "If It Doesn't Exist on the Internet, It Doesn't Exist."

19 Mariann Enge, "In a Hundred Years All Will Be Revealed," *Kunstkritikk*, June 30, 2014, accessed October 16, 2015, http://www.kunstkritikk.com/nyheter/in-a-hundred-years-all-will-be-revealed.

20 Jussi Parikka, *What is Media Archaeology?* (Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2012), 3.

21 Leah S. Marcus, "The Silence of the Archive and the Noise of Cyberspace," in *The Renaissance Computer: Knowledge Technology in the First Age of Print*, ed. Neil Rhodes and Jonathan Sawday (London: Routledge, 2000), 24.

22 Enge, "In a Hundred Years."

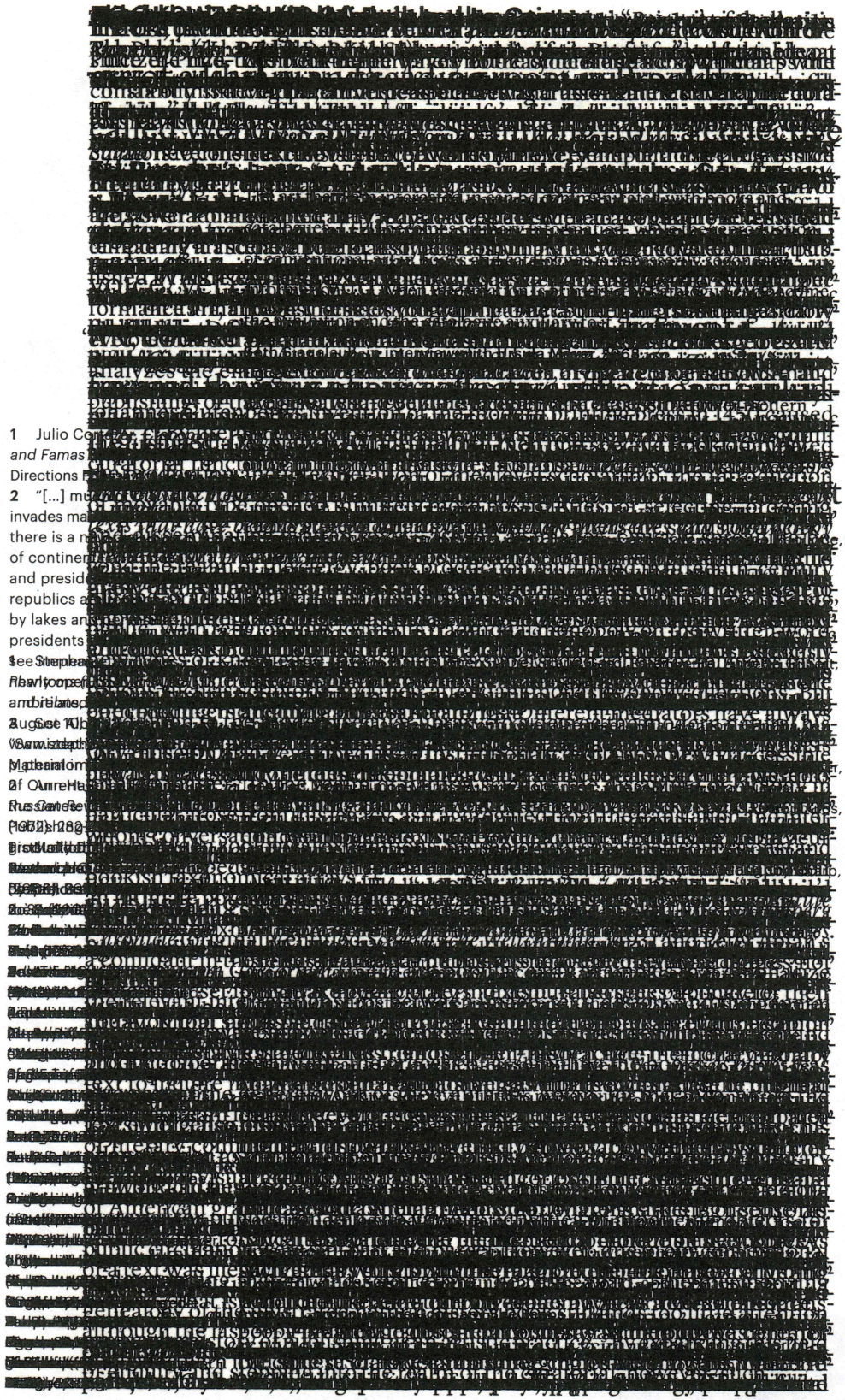
23 M.H. Miller, "Margaret Atwood Joins Katie Paterson's Public Art Project, 'Future Library,'" *ArtNews*, September 5, 2014, accessed April 15, 2015, http://www.artnews.com/2014/09/05/margaret-atwood-joins-katie-patersons-public-art-project-future-library.

24 Neal Frizzell, "An Artist Is Growing a Forest That'll Become a Library of Books in 100 Years," *Vice*, October 22, 2014, accessed April 14, 2015, https://www.vice.com/en_uk/read/an-artist-is-growing-an-entire-forest-in-norway-to-become-a-book-anthology-in-100-years-916.

25 Paterson also sees this kind of material resonance and return at the microscopic level of the project: "The idea to grow the trees to print the books arose for me initially through making a connection with tree rings—to chapters, the material nature of paper, pulp, words, books—and imagining the writer's thoughts infusing themselves, 'becoming' the trees. Almost as if the trees absorb the writer's words like air or water, and the tree rings become chapters, spaced out over the years to come," eventually becoming pages and books that will themselves hold the authors' words. Enge, "In a Hundred Years."

26 See Simon Lewis and Mark A. Maslin, "Defining the Anthropocene," *Nature* 519 (March 12, 2015): 171–180 for one recent, if debated, discussion of the periodization of the Anthropocene.

27 Norway has brokered REDD deals with Brazil, Guyana, Indonesia, and Liberia. For a fuller discussion of the ethics and economics of REDD, see Filipa Ioannou, "Norway Gives Liberia $150 Million to Stop Cutting Down Trees," *Slate*, September 23, 2014, accessed April 17, 2015, http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2014/09/23/norway_liberia_deforestation_money_aid_for_promise_to_save_trees.html and James Surowiecki, "Climate Trades," *The New Yorker*, October 13, 2014, accessed August 17, 2015, http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/10/13/climate-trades.



Hannes Bajohr is a scholar and an author. His subjects are the philosophy of language, political theory, and literature in the digital. He is writing a dissertation on Hans Blumenberg's theory of language at Columbia University, and is a member of the writer's collective for Conceptual digital literature 0x0a. Latest publications: *Timidities* (Berlin: Readux, 2015) and *Code and Concept: Literature and the Digital*, ed. (Berlin: Frohmann, 2016). hannesbajohr.de | 0x0a.li.

Paul Benzon teaches in the Department of English at Skidmore College. His research explores the intersections between literary experimentation, technological materiality, and media history. His work has appeared in *PMLA*, *Narrative*, *electronic book review*, and *Media-N*. His essay here is part of a book project entitled *A Partial History of Deletion: Absence, Obsolescence, and the Ends of Media*.

K. Antranik Cassem is an Armenian Iraqi-American writer living in New York. He is a bookseller and co-founder of Wendy's Subway, a library and meeting space for writers, artists, and readers in Brooklyn. He has written for *The Claudius App V* and participated in the construction of the Domino May, a floating library which sailed down the Columbia River in Oregon.

Bernhard Cella is an artist based in Vienna and founder of the Salon für Kunstbuch (Salon for Artists' Books) and NO-ISBN. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and at the University of Fine Art Hamburg. www.cella.at, NO-ISBN.net, salon-fuer-kunstbuch.at, collectingbooks.cella.at.

Pia Christmann is co-running Pandan, a Leipzig/Berlin-based graphic design studio, with Ann Richter. Their main interest is content- and research-driven design that maintains a focus on visual pleasure. She graduated with honors from the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig after studying graphic design and book art under Markus Dressen, Oliver Klimpel, and Maureen Mooren. www.pandan.co

Leo Findeisen researches constructed languages and their respective communities. From 1996–2008 he was a lecturer for media theory at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. He studied philosophy, composition, and ancient languages. leofindeisen.net.

Annette Gilbert works in comparative literature, focusing on experimental literature and artists' books as well as on issues of materiality, mediality, and theory of literature. She was head of a Junior Research Group at the Free University Berlin, and is currently a fellow of the Research Group "The Ethics of Copying" at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Bielefeld. She is the editor of *Reprint. Appropriation (&) Literature* (Luxbooks, 2014) and of the German edition of *Do or DIY* (Salon, 2013).

Hanna Kuusela, PhD, is a researcher in cultural studies and an Adjunct Professor of Media Culture at the University of Tampere, Finland. She focuses on contemporary literature, cultural theory, and contemporary politics. Currently, she is doing research on collaborative writing and the culture of crowdfunding. She is also a frequent contributor to newspapers and magazines, and a proud owner of a secondhand bookstore in Helsinki—where she can experiment with books and the literary culture.

Since 2015, antoine lefebvre editions is the publishing structure and nom de plume of artist publisher **Antoine Lefebvre**. Lefebvre holds a PhD in Fine Arts from the Sorbonne where he teaches. He created La Bibliotheque Fantastique (2009–2014), a publishing structure for artists' books that was shown in several countries and acquired by numerous libraries and museums, such as MoMA, Kunstbibliothek Berlin, and Centre Pompidou Paris. His latest research project is a database for artists' fanzines: www.artzines.info.

Matt Longabucco is the author of the chapbooks *The Sober Day* (DoubleCross Press, 2016) and *Everybody Suffers: The Selected Poems of Juan García Madero* (O'Clock Press, 2014). Other work has appeared recently in *Prelude*, *Haunt*, and *The Brooklyn Rail*. He is a co-founder of Wendy's Subway, a library and meeting space for writers, artists, and readers in Bushwick. He teaches at New York University and Bard College, and lives in Brooklyn.

Alessandro Ludovico is an artist, media critic, and chief editor of *Neural* magazine since 1993. He received his PhD degree in English and Media from Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge (UK). He has published and edited several books, and has lectured worldwide. He served as an advisor for dOCUMENTA (12)'s *Magazine Project*. He teaches at Parsons Paris School of Art & Design and he's one of the authors of the Hacking Monopolism trilogy of artworks (*Google Will Eat Itself*, *Amazon Noir*, and *Face to Facebook*). http://neural.it.

Lucas Wichmann Melkane is a visual artist working in an interdisciplinary mode, with sculpture, public interventions, living systems, writing, and non-linear strategies. He is a graduate student at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, in Copenhagen, where he is earning a MA in theory and communication and a MFA.

Anne Mœglin-Delcroix is professor emeritus of the philosophy of art at the Sorbonne. From 1979 to 1994, she was in charge of the collection of artists' books at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. She is the author of several books on this subject including the revised and expanded edition of *Esthétique du livre d'artiste. Une introduction à l'art*

contemporain (2012). She is currently preparing a book of interviews by artists' book publishers of the 1960s and 70s.

Aurélie Noury is head of the Cabinet du livre d'artiste in Rennes and co-director of the publishing house Éditions Incertain Sens where she runs the magazine *Sans niveau niveau ni mètre* and, together with Leszek Brogowski and Anne Mœglin-Delcroix, the Collection Grise dedicated to studies on artists' publications. She is the author of several monographs, book contributions, and magazine essays. In 2009 she founded Éditions Lorem Ipsum.

Valentina Parisi holds a PhD in Slavic Studies from the State University in Milan (2005). As a EURIAS fellow at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg (2014–2015) and at the Central European University, Budapest (2012–2013), she has researched topics related to unofficial Soviet culture. She is the author of the volume *Il lettore eccedente. Edizioni periodiche del samizdat sovietico, 1956–1990* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2013). She is currently a lecturer at the Department of Foreign Languages, Fondazione Milano.

Michalis Pichler is an artist/author based in Berlin who works on both sides of the imaginary border between art and literature (with occasional political overtones) and also organizes annual community gatherings such as the Conceptual Poetics Day and MISS READ: The Berlin Art Book Fair. Recently Printed Matter, Inc. and Spector Books published *Thirteen Years: The Materialization of Ideas from 2002–2015*, the first extensive monograph of his practice (ed. Annette Gilbert and Clemens Krümmel). www.buypichler.com.

Priscilla Posada is an editor and literary translator from Spanish into English. She lives in New York.

Ann Richter is co-founder of the graphic design studio Pandan. Together with Pia Christmann, she focuses on content-driven design and creating visual translations, which should be both challenging and enjoyable. With Agnieszka Roguski she works as *A.R. practice* on curatorial projects. Her works were recently shown at HKW Berlin, KV—Kunstverein Leipzig, Designer's Open Leipzig and the 26th International Biennial of Graphic Design Brno. www.pandan.co.

Anna-Sophie Springer is an editor, curator, and the co-director of K. Verlag, a Berlin-based independent press exploring the book as a site for exhibition making. As a member of the SYNAPSE International Curators' Network, she is the co-founder and co-editor of the *intercalations: paginated exhibition* series published as part of *Das Anthropozän-Projekt*. She has written widely on exhibition histories, experimental publishing, and curatorial practices, most notably in the book *Fantasies of the Library* (Berlin, 2015).

Alexander Starre is Assistant Professor at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies at the Free University Berlin, where he works in American cultural history, practices of knowledge creation, media theory, and print culture. He received his PhD in American Studies in 2012 from the University of Göttingen. He is the author of *Metamedia: American Book Fictions and Literary Print Culture after Digitization* (University of Iowa Press, 2015).

Nick Thurston has exhibited and performed internationally and published extensively, ranging from poetry to prose essays. Since 2006 he has been one of three co-editors of Information As Material. He is Programme Director of interdisciplinary undergraduate Fine Arts at the University of Leeds and in 2014 he was an Artist in Residence at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (Dublin). For 2016, he is Visiting Fellow in Contemporary Writing at the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia).

Rachel Valinsky is a curator, writer, and translator based in New York. She has presented projects at Judson Memorial Church, Lisa Cooley, and Spectacle Theater, and written for *East of Borneo*, *Millennium Film Journal*, *BOMB* and *C Magazine*. She is a co-founder of Wendy's Subway, a library and reading room in Bushwick, a co-curator at Haeler Echo, New York, and a contributor at Éditions Lutanie, Paris. She is a doctoral student in Art History at The Graduate Center, City University of New York.

Eva Weinmayr is an artist, writer and co-founder of AND Publishing. Her work asks: Why publishing, how, and for whom? She lectures widely and runs workshops at academic institutions and art and activist spaces. Recent projects include *The Piracy Project* (with Andrea Francke), *Feminist Pedagogies* (Valand Academy), *Why Publish?* (Central Saint Martins). Eva Weinmayr worked with SALT Istanbul, Kunstverein Munich, MayDay Rooms London, The Showroom London, and is currently conducting a PhD at Valand Academy in Göteborg.

Vadim Zakharov is an artist, editor, archivist of the Moscow Conceptual art scene, and collector. Since 1978 he has participated in exhibitions of unofficial art and collaborated with such artists as V. Skersis, S. Anufriev, A. Monastyrskiy, and Y. Leiderman. Since 1992 he has published *Pastor* magazine and founded Pastor Zond Edition. His retrospective *25 Years on One Page* was held at the Tretyakov Gallery in 2006. He is the editor of *Moscow Conceptual School* (2006) and the founder of www.conceptualism-moscow.org (2008). He represented Russia at the 2013 Venice Biennale.

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Here are some sources and references for the cases where we cite external works:
The spread on pages **32–33** refers to Marcel Broodthaers' *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (*A Throw of the Dice will Never Abolish Chance*, 1969).
The title on page **40** depicts a variation of Ed Ruscha's *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1963).
The black rectangle on page **58**, the marble pages on pages **127–128** and the title on page **206** are designed in reference to the novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759–1767) by Laurence Sterne. Marble paper by Studio Pandan.
Page **89** shows a film still from Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012). It depicts Suzy Bishop with one of her favourite books. The books in the film are fictitious, written and designed especially for the movie, and build a story-within-a-story. The still is borrowed from the video *Bibliophilia – Books in the Films of Wes Anderson* (2015) by Luís Azevedo (www.theatozreview.com/2015/06/25/books-in-the-films-of-wes-anderson/). Courtesy: Luís Azevedo.
Pages **116–117** are borrowed from Douglas Coupland's novel *Microserfs* (1995).
The image on page **183** is taken from *Kleksographien* (inkblots, 1890), a collection of poems on inkblots, by Justinus Kerner.
The punctuation image on page **218** stands in the tradition of *Prix Nobel* by Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd (1960/66).
The photo on page **262** points to *The Medium Is the Massage* (1967) by the media theorist Marshall McLuhan, designed by Quentin Fiore.
The leaf on page **282** shows a resemblance to an insert by the artist Susanne Kriemann in *Reading Susanne Kriemann* (2011), edited by Hans Dickel and Lisa Puyplat, designed by NODE Berlin.
Page **302** quotes an illustration of Douglas Coupland's *JPod*, which comments on the act of writing—or graphic design and (digital) publishing.

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