manuscript culture

back to the books

history of information

February 3, 2011
The CODEX Foundation

THIRD BIENNIAL CODEX INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

& SYMPOSIUM: BORDERS AND COLLABORATIONS FEBRUARY 6–9, 2011

2011 CODEX BOOKFAIR AT THE PAULEY BALLROOM, UC BERKELEY CAMPUS

2011 BOOKFAIR PUBLIC HOURS

Sunday, Feb. 6 12:00 – 4:00
Monday, Feb. 7 12:30 – 6:30
Tuesday, Feb. 8 12:30 – 6:30
Wednesday, Feb. 9 12:30 – 4:30

http://codexfoundation.org/
"the end of the book"

An Apple E-Book Rule Tightens

By CLAIRE CAIN MILLER
Published: February 1, 2011

When you see people flipping through e-books on iPads or iPhones, there is a good chance they bought the books through Amazon.com, not Apple.

Now, Apple wants to change that.

Apple confirmed Tuesday that it would require app developers that sell e-books outside of their iPad and iPhone apps — through a Web site, for example — to also sell the books inside those apps. And purchases that originate in the app must be made through Apple, which keeps a 30 percent cut.

Apple said it was newly enforcing an existing rule, one that will force Amazon, Sony, Google and other e-book sellers to change the way their apps work.

“We are now requiring that if an app offers customers the ability to purchase books outside of the app, that the same option is also available to customers from within the app,” Trudy Muller, an Apple spokeswoman, said in a statement.
bookends?

Trithemius
1462-1516

Plato
427-347 BC

"Wassup?"
"N' much."

Thursday, February 3, 2011
overview

on determinism (again)
eyewitnesses (and reading)
what were they talking about?
technologies of the book
manuscript culture
the authority of the book
unintended consequences
**how determined?**

**necessary vs sufficient**

"Is industrial technology the necessary and sufficient condition for capitalism?"

-- Heilbroner

**going soft?**

- the handmill* produces feudalism?
- couldn't have feudalism without handmill?
- with handmill superseded, feudalism was in trouble?

[* try writing/alphabet/book/print/telegraph ....]
determining questions

what happened?
"simple" to "complex"

what did (or didn't) come before?
oral

what did (or didn't) follow?
rise of "society," end of oral culture

what contributed?
writing, alphabets

what happened elsewhere?

what's underestimated?
overview

on determinism

eyewitnesses

what were they talking about

technologies of the book

manuscript culture

the authority of the book

unintended consequences
eyewitnesses

Plato,
Phaedrus, ?360bc

Johannes Trithemius,
In Praise of Scribes, 1492
an old idea

"Those who acquire [writing] will cease to exercise their memory and become forgetful; they will rely on writing to bring things to their remembrance by external signs instead of on their own internal resources."

Plato, Phaedrus, c. 370 bc

eyewitnesses

coming up:
manuscript culture

standard view
Socarates didn't like books
Trithemius didn't like print

your thoughts?

3 Feb: Manuscript Culture
Required reading:

NOTE: we are now going back to “primary texts,” texts that discuss the changes we are interested in as they happened. As you read these texts, one almost 2500 years old, the other more than 500 years old, ask yourself whether these have anything to tell us about information in the modern world. Be prepared to discuss your reactions in class. (The Trithemius is a “parallel text” with Latin facing English. Only those fluent in Latin need read the Latin pages.)
overview

on determinism (again)

eyewitnesses (and reading)

what were they talking about?
   Socrates

technologies of the book

manuscript culture

the authority of the book
eyewitness to history

"The discoverer is not the best judge"

Phaedrus
what's the setup?
eyewitness to history

Phaedrus
what's the setup?
Socrates

"The discoverer is not the best judge"
"The discoverer is not the best judge"

"Phaedrus"

what's the setup?

Socrates

Phaedrus

"The discoverer is not the best judge"
eyewitness to history

*Phaedrus*

what's the setup?

Socrates
Phaedrus
Lysias

"The discoverer is not the best judge"
Phaedrus
what's the setup?

Socrates
Phaedrus
Lysias

The Egyptian story?

"The discoverer is not the best judge"
eyewitness to history

*Phaedrus*
what's the setup?

Socrates
Phaedrus
Lysias

The Egyptian story?
Thamus

"The discoverer is not the best judge"
eyewitness to history

Phaedrus
what's the setup?

Socrates
Phaedrus
Lysias

The Egyptian story?

Thamus
Thebes

"The discoverer is not the best judge"
eyewitness to history

*Phaedrus*

what's the setup?

Socrates
Phaedrus
Lysias

The Egyptian story?

Thamus
Thebes
Theuth

"The discoverer is not the best judge"
memory and forgetfulness

"Those who acquire [writing] will cease to exercise their memory and become forgetful; they will rely on writing to bring things to their remembrance by external signs instead of on their own internal resources."
“I am a lover of learning ... Men lead hungry animals by waving a branch or some vegetables before their noses, and it looks as if you will lead me all over Attica and anywhere else you please ... by waving the leaves of a speech in front of me”

-- Socrates

"Plato ... had such a love of books that he bought three books ... at the price of 10,000 denarii. Aristotle ... acquired a few books for three Attic talents which amounts to 72,000 nummii."

-- ... Celebrated Libraries
the issues?

Phaedrus
the issues?

Phaedrus

speeches
the issues?

*Phaedrus*

speeches

reciting
the issues?

*Phaedrus*

speeches

reciting

writing
the issues?

Phaedrus

speeches

reciting

writing

truth
the issues?

*Phaedrus*

speeches

reciting

writing

truth

dialectic
"for wisdom, your pupils will have the reputation for it without the reality; they will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction, and in consequence be thought very knowledgeable when they are for the most part quite ignorant."

"Writing circulates equally among those who understand the subject and those who have no business with it."
"for wisdom, your pupils will have the reputation for it without the reality; they will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction, and in consequence be thought very knowledgeable when they are for the most part quite ignorant."

"Writing circulates equally among those who understand the subject and those who have no business with it."
"But though books are easily procured, yet, even in this age of information, there are thousands in the lower classes that cannot read. Besides, it is a well-known truth, that the same precepts inculcated by a living instructor, adorned by a proper oratory, enforced by a serious and authoritative manner, produce a powerful effect, not to be experienced in solitary retirement."

Vicesimus Knox, Essays Moral and Literary, 1778
living instructor?

"The people's University of the Air will have a greater student body than all of our universities put together." --RCA, 1932

coming up: social implications
overview

on determinism (again)
eyewitnesses (and reading)

what were they talking about?
Trithemius
technologies of the book
manuscript culture
the authority of the book
"The written word on parchment will last a thousand years. The printed word is on paper. How long will it last? The most you can expect of a book of paper to survive is two hundred years. Only time will tell."
enduring concerns?

Bhaskar Sunkara
enduring concerns?

Bhaskar Sunkara

Behind the News with Doug Henwood - January 29, 2011 at 10:00am

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Behind the News with Doug Henwood, for January 29, 2011 - 10:00am

Resenting Hipsters

WINTER 2011 / ISSUE 1

JACOBIN

WINTER 2011

Hofl II -- Manuscript Culture  21
Trithemius

Abbot of St Martin's, Sponheim, 1483-1505

1483: 48 books in the library
1505: 2,000 books

"It is my greatest pleasure to own and to know all books I ever saw or which I knew to have appeared in print ... To my regret ... money was always lacking ... for the satisfaction of my passion for book." — Trithemius

Socarates didn't like books
Trithemius didn't like print
Trithemius & the press

De Laude Scriptorum

Trithemius "proved particularly deft at exploiting the printing press. ... He had his book... published in Mainz by Peter von Friedberg, his favourite printer, and ... set the work not in Gothic type normally used in Germany, but in an innovative and attractive Roman font".

reading between the lines

internal battles

contemplation, manual labor, preaching

vs

scribal practice

"The dedicated and sincere scribe ... will not receive less than the preacher"

book collecting

"There are some who reproach lovers of books for having ... too many"
"Brothers, concentrate now all your fervor on the sacred books, for the salvation of your souls and the order."

Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly*, 1511

**External Battles**

**Humanism & The University**

"In the 700 years between the Fall of Rome and the 12th century, it was the monasteries .... which enjoyed an almost complete monopoly of book production and so of book culture.... from the end of the 12th century a profound transformation took place ... reflected in the founding of the universities and the development of learning".

Febvre & Martin, *The Coming of the Book*, 1984
survival
survival

LaserMonks.com
COMMERCE WITH COMPASSION

LaserMonks.com
We don’t just sell black powder.

We offer Ink & Toner
that Changes Lives

Hofl 11 -- Manuscript Culture
overview

on determinism (again)

eyewitnesses (and reading)

what were they talking about

technologies of the book

manuscript culture

the authority of the book

unintended consequences
He who saw the deep...
...set all his labours on a tablet of stone

See the tablet-box of cedar,
Release its clasp of bronze
Lift the lid of its secret,
Pick up the tablet of lapis lazuli and read out
The travails of *Gilgamesh* ...
rolled to flat

"the revolution between the second and fourth centuries that changed the very structure of the book by substituting the codex for the roll"

--Roger Chartier, *Forms and Meaning*, 1995

"Gutenberg did not so much start an information revolution as introduce a second technology for the creation of the familiar codex."

"The need for readily available information, which had been steadily rising, was accelerated by the advent of Christianity ..."

"The need to find information more rapidly than is possible in a papyrus-roll-form book initiated the development of the Greco-Roman codex in the second century ..."

supersession?

Pompeii, c 79 ce
supersession?

random access

Pompeii, c 79 ce
supersession?

random access

one handed
supersession?

random access
one handed
two-sided
supersession?

random access
one handed
two-sided
pagination
supersession?

random access
one handed
two-sided
pagination
marginalia
supersession?

random access
one handed
two-sided
pagination
marginalia
footnotes
supersession?

random access
one handed
two-sided
pagination
marginalia
footnotes
indexes
supersession?

random access
one handed
two-sided
pagination
marginalia
footnotes
indexes
supersession?

random access
one handed
two-sided
pagination
marginalia
footnotes
indexes

Pompeii, c 79 ce

Hofl II -- Manuscript Culture 31
underestimated?

handy pages
collection divisions
(incipits, explicits, colophons, sillyboi)
pages?
doesn't crack?
material changes

geographical determinism?

parchment at Pergamum
papyrus at Alexandria
palm in India
(sattachitra)
silk in China

"the parchment alone in a fine Bible, even allowing for the shorthand script of the day, represented a flock of perhaps three hundred sheep"

John North, *God's Clockmaker*, 2005
evolutionary doubts

"No evidence whatever to indicate whether the change of material influenced the change of form, or vice versa... papyrus roll, the papyrus codex, the parchment roll, and the parchment codex... all perfectly adequate and acceptable forms of book."

material changes

papyrus/parchment to paper

China, 200 BCE
Korea, 3rd century
India, 5th century
Japan, early 7th century
Islam, 8th century
Jews, 10th century
Byzantium, 9th century
Western Europe, 11th century

Ts'ai Lun
62-121
formal changes

scroll to codex

Christians, 2d century

Islam, 8-9th century

Jews, 8-9th century

China, 13th century, (thread binding)

Korea, ?12th century (sutra binding)

Japan 18th century
formal changes

scroll to codex

Christians, 2d century

Islam, 8-9th century

Jews, 8-9th century

China, 13th century, (thread binding)

Korea, 12th century (sutra binding)

Japan, 18th century
technological triumph?
technological triumph?
technological triumph?
technological triumph?
technological triumph?
"In late antiquity, all authority was founded on Scripture...and the highest authority, the authority of the church, was represented by the codex."

--Cavallo, "Du Volumen au Codex," 1997

"[P]agans ... continued to regard it as a culturally inferior form. In contrast, the great majority of Christian texts were already in the form of codices."

--Peter Stallybrass, "Books and Scrolls," 2002

"the ordinary believer could easily stumble in this thicket of discordant editions"

--Resnick, "Codex in Early Jewish and Christian Communities,"
changing readership

"The late medieval book differs more from its early medieval predecessors than it does from the printed book. ...

"The expectation of readers was changed, and this was reflected in changes in the physical appearance of books. A writer organized his work for publication, and if he did not ... then a scribe would .. The production of books became more sophisticated ... ."

--Parkes, "Influence of the Concepts " 1976
pre-prints

still with the manuscript
gloss
running heads
subdivisions: books, chapters
analytical tables of contents
chapter headings
cross references
alphabetical order
page numbers
indexes
overview

on determinism (again)

eyewitnesses (and reading)

what were they talking about

technologies of the book

manuscript culture

the authority of the book

unintended consequences
down to business

"The oldest writings to survive to our time were inscribed five thousand years ago by temple bureaucrats recording economic transactions ... crops, animals, manufactured goods"


"In the twelfth century... magnates used documents occasionally ... In the thirteenth .. laymen began to convey property to each other by charter; in the latter half ... this practice extended below the gentry class to some peasants.

-- Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record, 1993
an information age?

preparing the ground
Domesday
cadastras
dates
names
spelling
written evidence
centralization
overview

on determinism (again)

eyewitnesses (and reading)

what were they talking about

technologies of the book

manuscript culture

the authority of the book

unintended consequences
a linear model?

**reversible trends**
"Up to the eleventh century, western Europe could have returned to an essentially oral civilization. But by 1100 the die was cast."
--Stock, *Implications of Literacy*, 1983

**the return of the roll**
"the reason why medieval England ... kept its records predominantly in rolls remains a mystery."
--Clanchy
material backing
"If you ask [documents] what they mean ... they simply return the same answer over and over again ..."

Socrates

"[B]y the mark of a single impress the mouths of the pontiffs may be opened."

-- Theobald of Canterbury

"We don't accept the evidence of monks against bishops, why should we accept that of a sheepskin?"
overview

on determinism (again)
eyewitnesses (and reading)
what were they talking about
technologies of the book
manuscript culture
the authority of the book
unintended consequences
"No document coming from such centres of proved fabrication as Westminster, Evesham, Winchester cathedral, Chertsey and Malmesbury should be accepted at its face value without close examination.

"Ancient monasteries like Chertsey had traditionally forged charters. Now that the king was keeping copies ... abbots ensured that their forged documents were reinforced by inspection in the Chancery and enrollment among the royal records. The Chancery rolls, which were intended to prevent fraud, thus became a means of making forgeries official."

--Clancy, From Memory to Written Record
Jean Mabillon (1632-1707)
*De Re Diplomatica, 1681*

"the Reformation era ... bringing to light thousands of documents .. hitherto inaccessible and unknown. ... France pioneered in this new historical research ... Mabillon .... Montfaucon."

-- James Thompson, "The Age of Mabillon," 1942
The science of diplomatics

Jean Mabillon (1632-1707)
De Re Diplomatica, 1681

"the Reformation era ... bringing to light thousands of documents .. hitherto inaccessible and unknown. ... France pioneered in this new historical research ... Mabillon .... Montfaucon."

-- James Thompson, "The Age of Mabillon," 1942
"Mabillon frankly admitted that the authenticity of a charter could not be proved by any metaphysical or a priori argument; a decision could be reached only after the expert had examined a whole series of different indications -- the material used, the seal, the signature, the grammar and orthography, the modes of address, the plausibility of the dating, the intrinsic consistency of the whole document."

David Knowles, "Jean Mabillon," 1963
Mabillon "had exposed the fabricated charters of the Carmelite Father Andrew, in a model memorandum which later fell into the forger's hand, and was taken by him to heart with such good effect that he was able with a subsequent fabrication to have his revenge by planting one of his forgeries ... on Mabillon himself"

--David Knowles
not by books alone

the chain of custody

isnad or chain of transmission
"some of the advantages which manuscript publication gave over print in other periods--immediate appearance, relative freedom from censorship"


"this will kill that"?

**manuscript after print**

single documents

accounting

scribal publishing

note taking

personal communication

music

"subversive forms" (Love)
"some of the advantages which manuscript publication gave over print in other periods--immediate appearance, relative freedom from censorship"


"this will kill that"?

manuscript after print

single documents

accounting

scribal publishing

note taking

personal communication

music

"subversive forms" (Love)
overview

on determinism (again)

eyewitnesses (and reading)

what were they talking about

technologies of the book

manuscript culture

the authority of the book

unintended consequences
print beyond manuscript

Week 4
8 Feb: Print culture
Required reading:

- [SPCK], The History of Printing, London: SPCK, 1855, read pp 3-43

Additional material:

Eisenstein argues that “The impact of printing, experienced first by literate groups in early modern Europe, changed the character of the Italian Renaissance and ought to be considered among the causes of both the Protestant Reformation and the rise of modern science.”

- Does Eisenstein strike you here as a technological determinist?
- Are you convinced by Eisenstein’s argument?
- What evidence does she give to support her argument?
- Does anything in The History of Printing challenge it?
- How does what you learned at the Bancroft support or challenge Eisenstein’s argument?