search and storage

thinking around information

Concepts of Information

April 24, 2012
overview

Bush's information
backward projection
association
disorganization
open and closed
Bush's information?

When data of any sort are placed in storage, they are filed alphabetically or numerically, and information is found (when it is) by tracing it down from subclass to subclass.

We know that when the eye sees, all the consequent information is transmitted to the brain by means of electrical vibrations in the channel of the optic nerve. ....

The impulses which flow in the arm nerves of a typist convey to her fingers the translated information which reaches her eye or ear, in order that the fingers may be caused to strike the proper keys. Might not these currents be intercepted, either in the original form in which information is conveyed to the brain, or in the marvelously metamorphosed form in which they then proceed to the hand?
mind the gap:
18th-20th Century

"unable to comprehend in what manner body can act upon spirit"

-- Berkeley, *Treatise*, 1710
(responding to Locke & Newton)

to

"one great comprehensive law shall be found to govern both the material and the intellectual world"

overview

Bush's information

backward projection

association

disorganization

open and closed
cultural historians

"every age was an age of information, each in its own way ... hearsay did not satisfy Parisians with their powerful appetite for information"

--Robert Darnton,
"An Early Information Society," 2000

"coping with information overload, ca 1550-1700"

--Ann Blair, 2003
perennial concern

economic historians

"the technology and culture of access to information"

--Joel Mokyr, Riches of Athena, 2002

Alfred Chandler & James Cortada,
A Nation Transformed by Information, 2002
perennial loosening

**presentism to determinism**

"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 ..."

anthropologists, too

"The search for information... the central experience of life in the bazaar

--Clifford Geertz,

where's the information?

dissenting voice

modus operandi vs opus operatum

--Pierre Bourdieu,

*Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 1977
modus operandi

fighting presentism

"what early modern people--rather than the present author and his readers--considered to be knowledge. ... A history of concepts ... is an indispensable part of this enterprise ... changes in the meaning of older terms ... social contexts ... original associations."

--Peter Burke, *The Sociology of Knowledge*, 2000
hold 'em and fold 'em?

"we will use the term 'information' ... relatively 'raw,' specific and practical, while 'knowledge' denotes what has been 'cooked,' processed, or systematized by thought ... "Librarians ... brought information to the notice of their colleagues.... "Oldenburg...[noted] information coming into London."

--Burke, *The Sociology of Knowledge*
what Oldenberg noted

"Relations ... Collections ... Reports ... Instructions ... Essays ... Extracts ... Entries ... Monthly Advices ... Enlargements of our Philosophical Correspondencies .... many particulars ...ingenuities ... Observations, Experiments and Inventions."

--Oldenburg, *Philosophical Transactions*, 1666–7
overview

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open and closed
"selection by association"

a new organization

"To organize the world's information"

MO vs OO or SEO
MO vs OO?

managing information

hierarchy and markets

cathedrals

state

v. Giddens on surveillance and storage

library

"Books are portrayed as information containers, libraries as information warehouses"
books unchained

"The external make-up of a book, its format and the personality of its author are unimportant provided that its substance, its sources of information and its conclusion are preserved and can be made an integral part of the organization of knowledge, an impersonal work, created by the efforts of all ... to strip each article or each chapter in a book of whatever is a matter of fine language or repetition or padding and to collect separately on cards whatever is new and adds to knowledge."

Paul Otlet, "Something about bibliography," 1893
"A book—or, for clarity's sake, let's say a work of literature—is impervious to the constraints of its physical medium. ... every instance of "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" is identical. Whether you read it in a cheap paperback or a first edition, on a computer monitor, an e-reader, or in Yeats' own handwriting, it's the same poem."

--Jim Lewis, Slate Oct 2010
punctuated liberation


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<th>Material</th>
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correct punctuation

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towards the bazaar

[Page & Brin]"dreamed of making the incredible breadth of information that librarians so lovingly organize searchable online."
open source


"laws of quality"

Linus's Law - Raymond

Graham's Law

“The method of ensuring quality” in peer production is “Darwinian ... People just produce whatever they want; the good stuff spreads, and the bad gets ignored” (Graham, 2005)
Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may, but at the length **truth will out**.

--Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*

And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play on the earth, so **Truth be in the field**, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; **who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter**?

--Milton, *Areopagitica*
overview

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organizational issues

gracenote
organizational issues

gracenote
organizational issues
### Organizational Issues

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Don Giovanni</td>
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<td>0. Ouvertura</td>
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<td>Mozart – Don Giovanni</td>
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<td>1.01 Introduzione: Notte...</td>
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<td>Mozart – Don Giovanni</td>
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<td>1.04 Recitativo Accompagn...</td>
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<td>1.06 Recitativo: Orsu, Sp...</td>
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<td>1.07 Aria: Ah! Chi Mi Dic...</td>
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<td>1.09 Aria: Madamina, Il ...</td>
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<td>1.10 Coro: Giovinette Ch...</td>
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<td>1.11 Recitativo: Manco ...</td>
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### Music Track List

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<td>Krips, Siepi, Della Cas...</td>
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<td>Non Ti Fidar, O Misera</td>
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<td>Don Giovanni (2/3)</td>
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<td>Don Ottavio, Son Morta !</td>
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<td>Or Sai Chi L'onore</td>
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<td>Don Giovanni (2/3)</td>
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<td>Dalla Sua Pace</td>
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<td>Io Deggio Ad Ogni Patto</td>
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<td>Don Giovanni (2/3)</td>
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<td>Fin Ch'han Dal Vino</td>
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<td>Masetto, Senti Un Po' !</td>
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<td>In Quali Ecessi, O Nu...</td>
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<td>Ah, Ah, Ah, Ah, Questa...</td>
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going "open"

On Newsstands Now
Issue 11.02 | February 2003

Any Text. Anytime. Anywhere. (Any Volunteers?)

The mechanics of a universal library are simple. The tricky part: harnessing the free labor.

By J. Bradford DeLong

It's a bad day in the stacks.

I go three for seven: three books found, one that should be there but isn't, one recorded lost, and one checked out that will have to be recalled. The seventh is the one I really want: QB54.C661. There's no copy in UC Berkeley's main Doe Library stacks - it's shelved in the Math Library. The Math copy is not where it's supposed to be, but the catalog claims there are two copies on the shelves in Moffitt. Then time's up. It will be 64 hours before I get another crack at tracking down Appendix D of Carl Sagan, ed., Communication With Extraterrestrial Intelligence.

And that's after two hours doing very low grade work: looking up call numbers, wandering down corridors, waiting for the crowds to clear out between the compact movable stacks so I can get at the shelves without crushing grad students in the next aisle. Knowledge revolution, indeed.

So why can't I just call up the text on my computer screen? Where is my universal online library?

In 1971, Michael Hart asked himself the same question, and started Project Gutenberg with the goal of making every single text ever written freely accessible. From a worldwide cost-benefit standpoint, Project Gutenberg is a no-brainer. Sure, it'll cost $750 million in volunteer time (if the typists are in the United States - just $50 million if they're in India), but some 1 million book titles could be called up anytime anywhere from anything with an Internet connection. We're talking 10 cents per person, or less, to create the universal...
"don't break the build" --FreeBSD

containers of information

gutenberg

THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY, GENTLEMAN.

By Laurence Sterne

THE LIFE AND OPINIONS OF TRISTRAM SHANDY, GENT.―VOLUME THE FIRST

(two lines in Greek)
What's the goal of this project?
The Library Project's aim is simple: make it easier for people to find relevant books
[http://books.google.com/googlebooks/library.html]

the mountain view

google books

"we'll scan them all"

"we went to the libraries because that's where the information is"

"artificial impediments"

"what's metadata; we've got algorithms"

"we read books too"
Google's Book Search: A Disaster for Scholars

By Geoffrey Nunberg

Whether the Google books settlement passes muster with the U.S. District Court and the Justice Department, Google's book search is clearly on track to becoming the world's largest digital library. No less important, it is also almost certain to be the last one. Google's five-year head start and its relationships with libraries and publishers give it an effective monopoly: No competitor will be able to come after it on the same scale. Nor is technology going to lower the cost of entry. Scanning will always be an expensive collection may be a disaster, but that the thin is sitting on its own.

Madame Bovary

By Henry James

Overview
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Madame Bovary By Henry James

Hydriotaphia: urne-buriall, or a discourse of the sepulchrall urnes lately ... by Sir Thomas Browne, Bruce Rogers - Gardening - 1907 - 54 pages

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The merchant of Venice

by Christopher Rice, William Shakespeare - Foreign Language Study - 2007 - 72 pages

No preview available - About this book - Add to my library - More editions
trainwreck
Google's Book Search: A Disaster for Scholars

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Madame Bovary By Henry James

Overview

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Reviews (30)

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The Mosaic navigator: The essential guide to the internet interface

by Sigmund Freud, Katherine Jones - 1939 - 218 pages
Includes glossary, index
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The autograph edition of the novels and stories of Willa Cather

by Bruce Rogers, Houghton Mifflin Company - Dummies (Bookselling) - 1937 - 13 pages
No preview available - About this book - Add to my library

Trainwreck
before my time
complaints

"bibliographical fastidiousness"

"snowfall in Mammoth"

"that's the libraries' fault"

"ranting"

"it will improve"
looking for improvement
And the huntsman is myself, and she will give me a glance of her eyes that I may understand. And when she comes, my heart knows all, and no longer beats like a heart, but rings as a bell. I lay my hand on her.

“Tie my shoe-string,” she says, with flushed cheeks..."

The sun dips down into the sea and rises again, red and refreshed, as if it had been to drink. And the air is full of whisperings.
And the huntsman is myself, and she will give me a glance of her eyes that I may understand. And when she comes, my heart knows all, and no longer beats like a heart, but rings as a bell. I lay my hand on her.

“Tie my shoe-string,” she says, with flushed cheeks.

The sun dips down into the sea and rises again, red and refreshed, as if it had been to drink. And the air is full of whisperings.
pan-dering?

The hunter, that’s me, and she will give me a sign with her eyes to make me understand. And when she comes my heart understands all, and it no longer beats, it peals. And she is naked under her dress from head to foot, and I lay my hand upon her.

Tie my shoelace! she says with flaming cheeks. And a little later she whispers directly against my mouth, against my lips, Oh, you’re not tying my shoelace, sweetheart, you’re not tying . . . not tying my . . .

But the sun dips its disk into the sea and then rises again, red, renewed, as if it has been down to drink. And the air is full of whisperings.

An hour later she says against my mouth, Now I must leave you.
forward to the past

the majority of errors in Tristram Shandy "originate in some popular nineteenth-century edition"

--R.C. Bald

Pan:
Translated from the Norwegian of Knut Hamsun by W. W. Worster

--New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927
A Master of Verse Spreads Bad Cheer
Philip Larkin's Complete Poems, Edited by Archie Burnett

By MICHIKO KAKUTANI
Published: April 9, 2012

Of course, Larkin (1922-85) was also a poetic genius. Though he will never be as popular in the United States as he is in Britain (where he's still regarded as a kind of poet laureate), his finest poems, like "Aubade" — a harrowing meditation on death and the human condition — deserve the broadest possible audience here. The musicality of his verse, his ability to address the most metaphysical of subjects in the most vernacular of tones, his acerbic sense of the absurd — all serve to make him one of the most bracing and unforgettable voices in postwar poetry.

Many American readers know Larkin chiefly from his more darkly funny lines: "Sexual intercourse began/In nineteen sixty-three/(Which was rather late for me) —/Between the end of the 'Chatterley' ban/And the Beatles' first LP" (from "Annis Mirabilis"). Or: They mess you up, "your mum and dad./They may not mean to, but they do./They fill you with the faults they had/And add some extra, just for you" (from "This Be The Verse").
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overview

Bush's information
backward projection
association
disorganization
open and closed
revolution again

French Revolution's new science

"plea for liberty in science and equity for the unrecognized genius" --Gachet

"popular medicine infinitely preferable to, and more certain than, all the often erroneous practices of our physicians"

_Nouveau Plan ... pour la Médecine en France_, 1790
Thomsonian revolution
"medicine, like every useful science should be thrown open to the observation and study of all ... We should at once explode the whole machinery of mystification and concealment--wigs, gold canes, and the gibberish of prescriptions--which serve but as a cloak to ignorance and legalized murder!"

--New York Evening Star 1833
State Threatens to Shut Down Nutrition Blogger

Nutrition board says he needs a license to advocate dietary approaches

By Sara Burrows
Apr. 23rd, 2012

CHARLOTTE — The North Carolina Board of Dietetics/Nutrition is threatening to send a blogger to jail for recounting publicly his battle against diabetes and encouraging others to follow his lifestyle.

Chapter 90, Article 25 of the North Carolina General Statutes makes it a misdemeanor to “practice dietetics or nutrition” without a license. According to the law, “practicing” nutrition includes “assessing the nutritional needs of individuals and groups” and “providing nutrition counseling.”

Steve Cooksey has learned that the definition, at least in the eyes of the state board, is expansive.

When he was hospitalized with diabetes in February 2009, he decided to avoid the fate of his grandmother, who eventually died of the disease. He embraced the low-carb, high-protein Paleo diet, also known as the “caveman” or “hunter-gatherer” diet. The diet, he said, made him drug- and insulin-free within 30 days. By May of that year, he had lost 45 pounds and decided to start a blog about his success.
“It has long been considered a practicable scheme for any barrister and bookseller who unite together with a view to notoriety or profit, to add to the existing list of law reports ... indiscriminately reporting cases ... the enormous mass of constantly accumulating materials ... these evils ... attributable to .. the multiplication of contemporaneous Reports ... has arisen from applying the principle of competition to correct the evils of prolixity, delay, and expense incident to the system of authorized reporting. ... new evils created ... confusion and uncertainty in the law producing perplexity in the administration of justice.

open resources?
recurring theme

revolutionary revolution?

going round in circles?

Abbé Raynal, *Révolution d'Amérique*, 1781

or straight ahead

Tom Paine, *Letter to the Abbé Raynal, on the Affairs of North America*, 1782