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How Handwriting Trains the Brain, by Gwendolyn Bounds:
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Scanners, collectors and aggregators. On the 'underground movement' of (pirated) theory text sharing

September 20, 2009 in [Copyright](#), [Ebooks](#), [Free Knowledge](#), [Information and knowledge](#), [Open Access](#), [Open Education](#), [Reading](#) | Tags: [AAAARG.ORG](#), [Adorno](#), [Adrian Johns](#), [Book Piracy](#), [Books](#), [Copyleft](#), [Critical Theory](#), [Darknet](#), [Digitisation](#), [Discourse Notebook Archive](#), [Downloading](#), [Ebooks](#), [File sharing](#), [Gary Hall](#), [Google Books](#), [Information wants to be free](#), [Inishark](#), [Jonas Andersson](#), [Kenneth Goldsmith](#), [Makeworlds](#), [Mariborchan](#), [Mininova](#), [Monoskop](#), [Multitude of Blogs](#), [Museum of Accidents](#), [Open Access](#), [p2p](#), [Piracy](#), [Piratebay](#), [Revelation](#), [Scanning](#), [Scars of Différance](#), [Scribd](#), [Sean Dockray](#), [Sebastian Lütgert](#), [Sharing](#), [Stephan Dillemath](#), [Text Sharing](#), [Textz.com](#), [The Society of Control](#), [Twitter](#), [Ubuweb](#), [Walter Benjamin](#)

"But as I say, let's play a game of science fiction and imagine for a moment: what would it be like if it were possible to have an academic equivalent to the peer-to-peer file sharing practices associated with Napster, eMule, and BitTorrent, something dealing with written texts rather than music? What would the consequences be for the way in which scholarly research is conceived, communicated, acquired, exchanged, practiced, and understood?"

Gary Hall – [Digitize this book!](#) (2008)



Ubu web was founded in 1996 by poet [Kenneth Goldsmith](#) and has developed from 'a repository for visual, concrete and (later) sound poetry, to a site that 'embraced all forms of the avant-garde and beyond. Its parameters continue to expand in all directions.' As [Wikipedia](#) states, Ubu is non-commercial and operates on a gift economy. All the same – by forming an amazing resource and repository for the avant-garde movement, and by offering and hosting these works on its platform, Ubu is violating copyright laws. As they state however: 'should something return to print, we will

remove it from our site immediately. Also, should an artist find their material posted on UbuWeb without permission and wants it removed, please let us know. However, most of the time, we find artists are thrilled to find their work cared for and displayed in a sympathetic context. As always, we welcome more work from existing artists on site.'

Where in the more affluent and popular media realms of block buster movies and pop music the [Piratebay](#) and other download sites (or p2p networks) like [Mininova](#) are being sued and charged with copyright infringement, the major powers to be seem to turn a blind eye when it comes to Ubu and many other resource sites online that offer digital versions of hard-to-get-by materials ranging from books to documentaries.

This is and has not always been the case: in 2002 [Sebastian Lütgert](#) from Berlin/New York was sued by the "Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur" for putting online two downloadable texts from Theodor W. Adorno on his website [textz.com](#), an underground archive for Literature. According to [this](#) Indymedia interview with Lütgert, textz.com was referred to as 'the Napster for books' offering about 700 titles, focusing on, as Lütgert states 'Theorie, Romane, Science-Fiction, Situationisten, Kino, Franzosen, Douglas Adams, Kritische Theorie, Netzkritik usw'.

The interview becomes even more interesting when Lütgert remarks that one can still easily download both Adorno texts without much ado if one wants to. This leads to the bigger question of the real reasons underlying the charge against textz.com; why was textz.com sued? As Lütgert says in the interview: "Das kann man sowieso [when referring to the still available Adorno texts]. Aber es gibt schon lange einen klaren Unterschied zwischen offener Verfügbarkeit und dem Untergrund. Man kann die freie Verbreitung von Inhalten nicht unterbinden, aber man scheint verhindern zu wollen dass dies allzu offen und selbstverständlich geschieht. Das ist es was sie stört."

Business models

Open Data Open Education
Piracy POD Print Reading

Remix Remix Culture
Robert Darnton Semantic
Web Text text comparison
Universal Library Walter
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Dan Cohen on New Visions For The Book – Part I

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DEL.ICIO.US - BOOKMARKS

Archive of Our Own>>home index

U B U W E B :: An Open Letter to the Frameworks Community

How Handwriting Boosts the Brain - WSJ.com

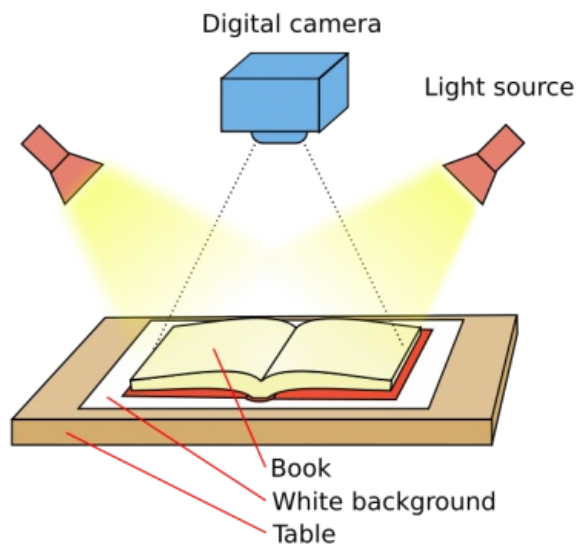
digital digs: the creative community and the digital humanities

d i a p s a l m a t a : Thinking Out Loud: "Storming Scholarly



But how can something be truly underground in an online environment whilst still trying to spread or disseminate texts as widely as possible? This seems to be the paradox of many – not quite legal and/or copyright protected – resource sharing and collecting communities and platforms nowadays. However, multiple scenarios are available to evade this dilemma: by being frankly open about the 'status' of the content on offer, as Ubu does, or by using little 'tricks' like an easy website registration, classifying oneself as a reading group, or by relieving oneself from responsibility by stating that one is only aggregating sources from elsewhere (linking) and not hosting the content on its own website or blog. One can also state the offered texts or multimedia files form a special issue or collection of resources, emphasizing their educational and not-for-profit value.

Most of the 'underground' text and content sharing communities seem to follow the concept of (the inevitability of) '[information wants to be free](#)', especially on the Internet. As Lütgert States: "*Und vor allem sind die über Walter Benjamin nicht im Bilde, der das gleiche Problem der Reproduzierbarkeit von Werken aller Art schon zu Beginn des letzten Jahrhunderts vor sich hatte und erkannt hat: die Massen haben das Recht, sich das alles wieder anzueignen. Sie haben das Recht zu kopieren, und das Recht, kopiert zu werden. Jedenfalls ist das eine ganz schön ungemütliche Situation, dass dessen Nachlass jetzt von solch einem Bürokraten verwaltet wird. A: Glaubst Du es ist überhaupt legitim intellektuellen Inhalt zu "besitzen"? Oder Eigentümer davon zu sein? S: Es ist *unmöglich*. "Geistiges" Irgendwas verbreitet sich immer weiter. Reemtsmas Vorfahren wären nie von den Bäumen runtergekommen oder aus dem Morast rausgekrochen, wenn sich "geistiges" Irgendwas nicht verbreitet hätte.*"



What seems to be increasingly obvious, as the interview also states, is that one can find virtually all Ebooks and texts one needs via p2p networks and other file sharing community's (the true [Darknet](#) in a way) – more and more people are offering (and asking for!) selections of texts and books (including the ones by Adorno) on openly available websites and blogs, or they are scanning them and offering them for (educational) use on their domains. Although the Internet is mostly known for the pirating and dissemination of pirated movies and music, copyright protected textual content has (of course) always been spread too. But with the rise of 'born digital' text content, and with the help of massive digitization efforts like Google Books (and accompanying Google Books [download tools](#)) accompanied by the appearance of better (and cheaper) scanning equipment, the movement of 'openly' spreading (pirated) texts (whether or not focusing on education and 'fair use') seems to be growing fast.

Out Loud: Storming Scholarly Publishing & Peer Review", at Drumbeat next month

Merchants of culture: A study of modern publishing

4oh4 - words not found: Reading Askeu, or What Are We Asking of Our Screens?

De Balie: Beyond Privacy: Siva Vaidhyanathan

Artaud, Deleuze and The Will to Nothingness « Minimal ve Maksimal Yazılar

Scholarly Communication Institute | SCI 8 Report

BBC iPlayer - Night Waves: Is the Book Dead?

Demo-lition 10.11.10 - NUS and UCU 'Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts'

Eurozine - The stranger, the mother and the Algerian revolution - Michael Azar A postcolonial reading of Albert Camus

Go To Hellman: Bounty Markets for Open-Access eBooks

Patricia Pisters: The Matrix of Visual Culture. Working with Deleuze in Film Theory (2003) at Monoskop/log

In Defense of Naïve Reading - NYTimes.com

LRB · Marina Warner · Did she go willingly?

Molly Kleinman » Blog Archive » Defining Open Access. Again.

Eurozine - The digital Pharmakon - Cristian Ghinea, Constantin Vica

Resources ADHO

YouTube - The future is Open Access

Revolutionary Publishing Model to Be Explored in Radical Open Access in the Humanities

PLoS ONE: Open Access to the Scientific Journal Literature: Situation 2009

UbuWeb

National experiment with Open Access for academic books in the Netherlands

The Crisis of the Humanities Officially Arrives - NYTimes.com

Leonardo Reviews Online - October 2010

VKS Video

Peter Dickinson (ed.): CageTalk. Dialogues with & about John Cage (2006) at Monoskop/log Open Humanities Press

Times Higher Education - Bring on the Books for Everybody: How Literary Culture Became Popular Culture

Kinobserver

YouTube - Citizen 3 0 Trailer

Everything Is a Remix

Dan Cohen's Digital Humanities Blog » Blog Archive » The Maddening Crowd

Online Humanities Scholarship: The Shape of Things to Come

Pattern Knitting- How does a knitting machine become a writing machine? -- IndieGoGo

Machinology: RIP: A Remix Manifesto - film screening and panel discussion

Open Access Publishing takes off in European Research Community « TELL Fleur

The direct harm (to both the producers and their publishers) of the free online availability of (in copyright) texts is also maybe less clear than for instance with music and films. Many feel texts and books will still be preferred to be read in print, making the online and free availability of text nothing more than a marketing tool for the sales of the printed version. Once discovered, those truly interested will find and buy the print book. Also more than with music and film, it is felt essential to share information, as a cultural good and right, to prevent censorship and to improve society.



This is one of the reasons the [Open Access](#) movement for scientific research has been initiated. But where the amount of people and institutions supportive of this movement is gradually growing (especially where it concerns articles and journals in the Sciences), the spread concerning Open Access (or even digital availability) of monographs in the Humanities and Social Sciences (of which the majority of the resources on offer in the underground text sharing communities consists) has only just started.

This has led to a situation in which some have decided that change is not coming fast enough. Instead of waiting for this utopian Open Access future to come gradually about, they are actively spreading, copying, scanning and pirating scholarly texts/monographs online. Although many times accompanied by lengthy disclaimers about why they are violating copyright (to make the content more widely accessible for one), many state they will take down the content if asked. Following the [copyleft](#) movement, what has in a way thus arisen is a more 'progressive' or radical branch of the Open Access movement. The people who spread these texts deem it inevitable they will be online eventually, they are just speeding up the process. As Lütgert states: *'The desire of an increasingly larger section of the population to 100-percent of information is irreversible. The only way there can be slowed down in the worst case, but not be stopped.'*



Still we have not yet answered the question of why publishers (and their pirated authors) are not more upset about these kinds of websites and platforms. It is not a simple question of them not being aware that these kind of textual disseminations are occurring. As mentioned before, the harm to producers (scholars) and their publishers (in Humanities and Social Sciences mainly Not-For-Profit University Presses) is less clear. First of all, their main customers are libraries (compare this to the software business model: free for the consumer, companies pay), who are still buying the legal content and mostly follow the policy of buying either print or both print and ebook, so there are no lost sales there for the publishers. Next to that it is not certain that the piracy is harming sales. Unlike in literary publishing, the authors (academics) are already paid and do not lose money (very little maybe in royalties) from the online availability. Perhaps some publishers also see the Open Access movement as something inevitably growing and they thus don't see the urge to step up or organize a collaborative effort against scholarly text piracy (where most of the presses also lack the scale to initiate this). Whereas there has been some more upsurge and worries about [textbook piracy](#) (since this is of course the area where individual consumers – students – do directly buy the material) and websites like [Scribd](#), this mostly has to do with the fact that these kind of platforms also host non-scholarly content and actively promote the uploading of texts (where many of the text 'sharing' platforms merely offer downloading facilities). In the case of Scribd the size of the platform (or the amount of content available on the platform) also has caused concerns and much [media coverage](#).

33.1: CC THE REMIXES | Cordite Poetry Review

YouTube - OAPEN Library

Dan Cohen's Digital Humanities Blog » Blog Archive » Searching for the Victorians

A Library Without Walls by Robert Darnton | NYRBlog | The New York Review of Books

Plagiarizing Yourself - Advice - The Chronicle of Higher Education

Open Bookmarks

Walter Benjamin's Aura: Open Bookmarks and the future eBook | booktwo.org

The 100-year leap - O'Reilly Radar

ALCS

Cartographies of Media Archaeology: What is Media Archaeology? - beta definition 0.8

camiwerner's bookbinding Bookmarks on Delicious

ScholarPress

Examples of Collaborative Digital Humanities Projects | Digital Scholarship in the Humanities

Collaborative Authorship in the Humanities | Digital Scholarship in the Humanities

Unbook | Interaction Design Umeå

Life is not read-only

Collapsus Introduction on Vimeo

YouTube - A Fair(y) Use Tale

The New Inquiry - Love Worth Fighting For

Reporting From the Digital Humanities Start-up Grant Project Directors Meeting - ProfHacker - The Chronicle of Higher Education

Portrait of a Bookstore as an Old Man

YouTube - TOC 2010: Frances Pinter, "Rethinking the Role and Funding of Academic Book Publishing"

Learning From Culture Pirates - The Chronicle Review - The Chronicle of Higher Education

TPM: The Philosophers' Magazine | The perverse core of Christianity

Sixth sense and the future of reading | Bookfuturism

FT.com / Books / Essays - No jacket required

The Free-Appropriation Writer - NYTimes.com

The David Foster Wallace Audio Project

Turning peer review into modern-day holy scripture | spiked

TPM: The Philosophers' Magazine | Profile: Spinoza

Edge People by Tony Judt | NYRBlog | The New York Review of Books

Mcluhan-Marshall_On_Cavet-12-1970.mp3 (audio/mpeg Object)

Publishing: The Revolutionary Future by Jason Epstein | The New York Review of Books

DynamicBooks: the next generation of interactive textbooks

All of this gives a lot of potential power to text sharing communities, and I guess they know this. Only authors might be directly upset (especially famous ones gathering a lot of royalties on their work) or in the case of Lütgert, their beneficiaries, who still do see a lot of money coming directly from individual customers.

Still, it is not only the lack of fear of possible retaliations that is feeding the upsurge of text sharing communities. There is a strong ideological commitment to the inherent good of these developments, and a moral and political strive towards institutional and societal change when it comes to knowledge production and dissemination.



As Adrian Johns states in his [article](#) *Piracy as a business force*, 'today's pirate philosophy is a moral philosophy through and through'. As Jonas Andersson [states](#), the idea of piracy has mostly lost its negative connotations in these communities and is seen as a positive development, where these movements 'have begun to appear less as a reactive force (i.e. 'breaking the rules') and more as a proactive one ('setting the rules'). Rather than complain about the conservatism of established forms of distribution they simply create new, alternative ones.' Although Andersson states this kind of activism is mostly *occasional*, it can be seen expressed clearly in the texts accompanying the text sharing sites and blogs. However, copyright is perhaps so much an

issue on most of these sites (where it is on some of them), as it is something that seems to be simply ignored for the larger good of aggregating and sharing resources on the web. As is stated clearly for instance in an [interview](#) with Sean Dockray, who maintains AAAARG:

"The project wasn't about criticizing institutions, copyright, authority, and so on. It was simply about sharing knowledge. This wasn't as general as it sounds; I mean literally the sharing of knowledge between various individuals and groups that I was in correspondence with at the time but who weren't necessarily in correspondence with each other."

Back to Lütgert. The files from textz.com have been saved and are still [accessible](#) via [The Internet Archive Wayback Machine](#). In the case of textz.com, these files contain 'typed out text', so no scanned contents or PDF's. Textz.com (or better said its shadow or mirror) offers an amazing collection of texts, including artists statements/manifestos and screenplays from for instance David Lynch.

The text sharing community has evolved and now knows many players. Two other large members in this kind of 'pirate theory base network' (although – and I have to make that clear! – they offer many (and even mostly) legal and out of copyright texts), still active today, are [Monoskop/Burundi](#) and [AAAARG.ORG](#). These kinds of platforms all seem to disseminate (often even on a titular level) similar content, focusing mostly on Continental Philosophy and Critical Theory, Cultural Studies and Literary Theory, The Frankfurter Schule, Sociology/Social Theory, Psychology, Anthropology and Ethnography, Media Art and Studies, Music Theory, and critical and avant-garde writers like Kafka, Beckett, Burroughs, Joyce, Baudrillard, etc.etc.

[Monoskop](#) is, as they state, a collaborative wiki research on the social history of media art or a 'living archive of writings on art, culture and media technology'. At the sitemap of their log, or under the categories section, you can browse their resources on genre: book, journal, e-zine, report, pamphlet etc. As I found [here](#), Burundi originated in 2003 as a (Slovakian) media lab working between the arts, science and technologies, which spread out to a European city based cultural network; They even functioned as a press, publishing the *Anthology of New Media Literature* (in Slovak) in 2006, and they hosted media events and curated festivals. It dissolved in June 2005 although the [Monoskop](#) research wiki on media art, has continued to run since the dissolving of Burundi.

As is stated on their website, AAAARG is a conversation platform, or alternatively, a school, reading group or journal, maintained by Los Angeles artist [Sean Dockray](#). In the true spirit of Critical Theory, its aim is to 'develop critical discourse outside of an institutional

AAAARG
AAAARG

Textbooks That Professors Can Rewrite Digitally

general writing, major rhetorical strategies, and private compositions

NOAM CHOMSKY REMEMBERS HOWARD ZINN

if:book: defining the networked book: a few thoughts and a list

Collaborative Futures Book Sprint | transmediale

LJ Q&A: The Social Life Of Books

PBOS: An implementation of the Processed Book

Esposito

Form, Medium and Function: the Rhetorics and Poetics of Text and Hypertext in Humanities Publishing

Hacking the Academy

Access Space Overview & Site Map

MIT Comparative Media Studies: CMS News Archive

Typee: Fluid Text Edition

Introducing The Book Futurists Video Series - eBookNewser

When the Love of Books Doesn't Increase Sales or Citations « The Scholarly Kitchen

Exposing Assemblages: Unlikely Communities of Digital Scholarship, Video, and Social Networks | Enculturation

Edition #01 – University of Copenhagen

The Anthropology of Hackers - Gabriella Coleman - Technology - The Atlantic

Cyborg Memories: Why Daniel Liebskind's Jewish Museum (plus visitors) is a Cyborg « Justin Pickard

Semiotics for Beginners by Daniel Chandler

RT @ubuweb ~ Derrida The Movie (Documentary, 2002): <http://is.gd/xfUJ>

UbuWeb Sound - Jacques Derrida

Entry 13: Jackson Mac Low as Reading Machine « barrettwatten.net

Barrett Watten over Jackson Mac Low

The Digital Humanities as Imagined Community | Digital Humanities Specialist

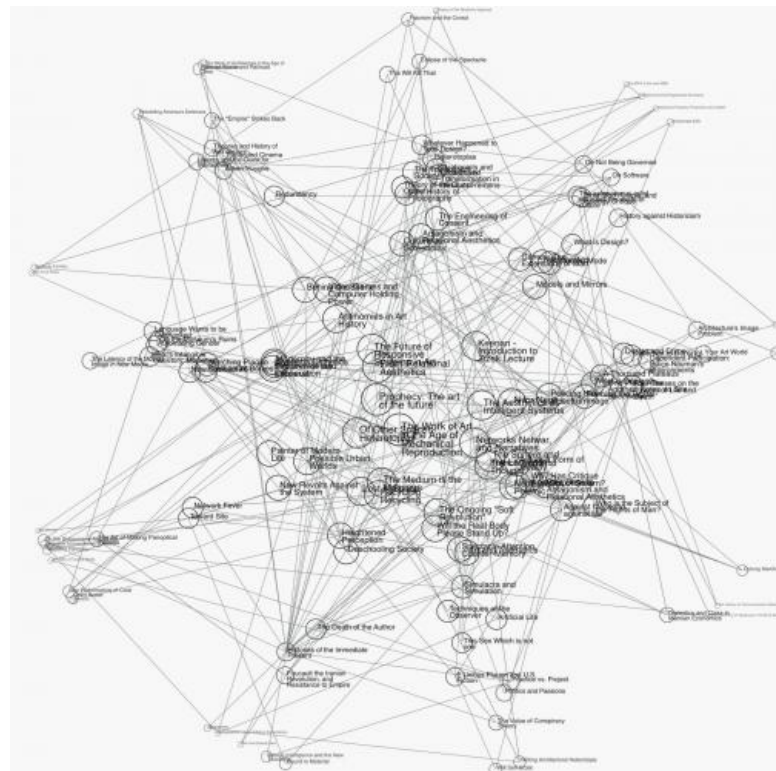
American Book Review :: Home

From Book to Byte - The Chronicle Review - The Chronicle of Higher Education

framework'. Or even more beautiful said, it operates in the spaces in between: 'But rather than thinking of it like a new building, imagine scaffolding that attaches onto existing buildings and creates new architectures between them.' To be able to access the texts and resources that are being 'discussed' at AAAARG, you need to register, after which you will be able to browse the [library](#). From this library, you can download resources, but you can also upload content. You can subscribe to their [feed](#) (RSS/XML) and [like Monoskop](#), AAAARG.org also maintains a [Twitter account](#) on which updates are posted. The most interesting part though is the 'extra' functions the platform offers: after you have made an account, you can make your own collections, aggregations or issues out of the texts in the library or the texts you add. This offers an alternative (thematically ordered) way into the texts archived on the site. You also have the possibility to make comments or start a discussion on the texts. See for instance their elaborate [discussion lists](#). The AAAARG community thus serves both as a sharing and feedback community and in this way operates in a true p2p fashion, in a way like p2p seemed originally intended. The difference being that AAAARG is not based on a distributed network of computers, but is based on one platform, to which registered users are able to upload a file (which is not the case on Monoskop for instance – only downloading here).

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Via [mercurunionhall](#), I found the image underneath which depicts AAAARG.ORG's article index organized as a visual map, showing the connections between the different texts. This map was created and posted by AAAARG user john, according to [mercurunionhall](#).



Where AAAArg.org focuses again on the text itself – typed out versions of books – Monoskop works with more modern versions of textual distribution: scanned versions or full ebooks/pdf's with all the possibilities they offer, taking a lot of content from Google books or (Open Access) publishers' websites. Monoskop also links back to the publishers' websites or Google Books, for information about the books or texts (which again proves that the publishers should know about their activities). To download the text however, Monoskop links to [Sharebee](#), keeping the actual text and the real downloading activity away from its platform.

Another part of the text sharing content consists of platforms offering documentaries and lectures (so multi-media content) online. One example of the last is the [Discourse Notebook Archive](#), which describes itself as an effort which has as its main goal 'to make available lectures in contemporary continental philosophy' and is maintained by Todd Kesselman, a PhD Student at The New School for Social Research. Here you can find lectures from Badiou, Kristeva and Zizek (both audio and video) and lectures aggregated from the European Graduate School. Kesselman also links to resources on the web dealing with contemporary continental philosophy.



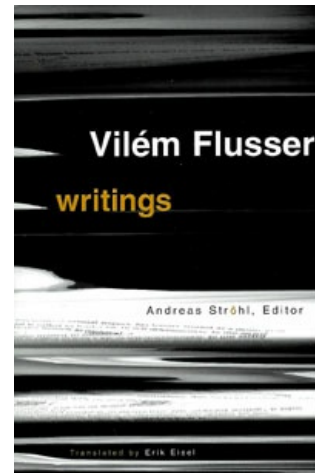
Society of Control is a website maintained by [Stephan Dilemuth](#), an artist living and working in Munich, Germany, offering amongst others an overview of his work and scientific research. According to [this](#) interview conducted by Kristian Ø Dahl and Marit Flåtter his work is a response to the increased influence of the neo-liberal world order on education, creating a culture industry that is more than often driven by commercial interests. He asks the question 'How can dissidence grow in the blind spots of the 'society of control' and articulate itself?' His website, the [Society of Control](#) is, as he states, 'an independent organization whose profits are entirely devoted to research into truth and meaning.'

Society of Control has a [library section](#) which contains works from some of the biggest thinkers of the twentieth century: Baudrillard, Adorno, Debord, Bourdieu, Deleuze, Habermas, Sloterdijk und so weiter, and so much more, a lot in German, and all 'typed out' texts. The library section offers a direct search function, a category function and a a-z browse function. Dilemuth states that he offers this material under fair use, focusing on not for profit, freedom of information and the maintenance of freedom of speech and information and making information accessible to all:

"The Societyofcontrol website site contains information gathered from many different sources. We see the internet as public domain necessary for the free flow and exchange of information. However, some of these materials contained in this site maybe claimed to be copyrighted by various unknown persons. They will be removed at the copyright holder's request within a reasonable period of time upon receipt of such a request at the email address below. It is not the intent of the Societyofcontrol to have violated or infringed upon any copyrights."

Important in this respect is that he put the responsibility of reading/using/downloading the texts on his site with the viewers, and not with himself: *"Anyone reading or looking at copyright material from this site does so at his/her own peril, we disclaim any participation or liability in such actions."*

Fark Yaraları = [Scars of Différance](#) and [Multitude of blogs](#) are maintained by the same author, Renc-u-ana, a philosophy and sociology student from Istanbul. The first is his personal blog (with also many links to downloadable texts), focusing on 'creating an e-library for a Heideggerian philosophy and Bourdieuan sociology' on which he writes 'market-created inequalities must be overthrown in order to close knowledge gap.' The second site has a clear aggregating function with the aim 'to give united feedback for e-book publishing sites so that tracing and finding may become easier.' And a call for similar blogs or websites offering free ebook content. The blog is accompanied by a nice picture of a woman warning to keep quiet, very paradoxically appropriate to the context. Here again, a statement from the host on possible copyright infringement: *'None of the PDFs are my own productions. I've collected them from web (e-mule, avax, libreremo, socialist bros, cross-x, gigapedia..) What I did was thematizing.'* The same goes for [pdflibrary](#) (which seems to be from the same author), offering texts from Derrida, Benjamin, Deleuze and the likes: *'None of the PDFs you find here are productions of this blog. They are collected from different places in the web (e-mule, avax, libreremo, all socialist bros, cross-x, ...). The only work done here is thematizing and tagging.'*



Our student from Istanbul lists many text sharing sites on [Multitude of blogs](#), including [Inishark](#) (amongst others Badiou, Zizek and Derrida), [Revelation](#) (a lot of history and bible study), [Museum of accidents](#) (many resources relating to again, critical theory, political theory and continental philosophy) and [Makeworlds](#) (initiated from the [make world festival](#) 2001). [Mariborchan](#) is mainly a Zizek resource site (also Badiou and Lacan) and offers next to ebooks also video and audio (lectures and documentaries) and text files, all via links to file sharing platforms.

What is clear is that the text sharing network described above (I am sure there are many more related to other fields and subjects) is also formed and maintained by the fact that the






blogs and resource sites link to each other in their blog rolls, which is what in the end makes up the network of text sharing, only enhanced by RSS feeds and Twitter accounts, holding together direct communication streams with the rest of the community. That there has not been one major platform or aggregation site linking them together and uploading all the texts is logical if we take into account the text sharing history described before and this can thus be seen as a clear tactic: it is fear, fear for what happened to textz.com and fear for the issue of scale and fear of no longer operating at the borders, on the outside or at the fringes. Because a larger scale means they might really get noticed. The idea of secrecy and exclusivity which makes for the idea of the underground is very practically combined with the idea that in this way the texts are available in a multitude of places and can thus not be withdrawn or disappear so easily.

This is the paradox of the underground: staying small means not being noticed (widely), but will mean being able to exist for probably an extended period of time. Becoming (too) big will mean reaching more people and spreading the texts further into society, however it will also probably mean being noticed as a treat, as a 'network of text-piracy'. The true strategy is to retain this balance of openly dispersed subversivity.

Update 25 November 2005: Another interesting resource site came to my attention recently: [Bedeutung](#), a philosophical and artistic initiative consisting of three projects: [Bedeutung Magazine](#), [Bedeutung Collective](#) and [Bedeutung Blog](#), hosts a [library](#) section which links to freely downloadable online e-books, articles, audio recordings and videos.

13 comments

Comments feed for this article 

-
- September 20, 2009 at 2:22 am **Humanism at the fringe** < [Snarkmarket](#) UbuWeb to [...]
- [...] recommended: Janneke Adema's outstanding extended look at internet text-sharing networks, from relatively high-profile sites like Scribd and 
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- September 20, 2009 at 4:30 pm **Scanners, collectors and aggregators. On the 'underground movement' of (pirated) theory text sharing** < [Mariborchan](#)
- [...] Other | Tags: continental philosophy, copyright, ebooks, emule, p2p, piracy, sharing, torrent From openreflections: But how can something be truly underground in an online environment whilst still trying to spread [...]
-
- September 20, 2009 at 4:33 pm **Mariborchan**
- I took the liberty to pirate this article. 
-
- September 20, 2009 at 6:31 pm **jannekeadema1979**
- Thanks, it's all about the sharing! Hope you liked it. 
-
- September 21, 2009 at 1:06 am **links for 2009-09-20** < [Blarney Fellow](#) [...]
- [...] Scanners, collectors and aggregators. On the 'underground movement' of (pirated) theory text sha... (tags: p2p art text collaboration publishing) 
-
- September 30, 2009 at 11:20 pm **scars of différence**
- hi there, I'm the owner of the Scars of Différance blog, I'm grateful for your reading which nurtures self-reflexivity. 

text-sharers phylum is a Tardean phenomena, it works through imitation and differences differentiate styles and archives. my question was inherited from aby warburg who is perhaps the first kantian librarian (not books, but the nomenclatura of books must be thought!), I shape up a library where books speak to each other, each time fragmentary.


you are right about the "fear", that's why I don't reupload books that are deleted from mediafire. blog is one of the ways, for ex there are e-mail groups where chain-sharings happen and there are forums where people ask each other from different parts of the world, to scan a book that can't be found in their library/country. I understand publishers' qualms (I also work in a turkish publishing house and make translations). but they miss a point, it was the very movement which made book a medium that de-positis "book" (in the Blanchotian sense): these blogs do indeed a very important service, they save books from the databanks. I'm not going to make a easy rider argument and decry technology.what I mean is this: these books are the very bricks which make up resistance -they are not compost-, it is a sharing "partage" and these fragmentary impartations (the act in which 'we' emancipate books from the proper names they bear: author, editor, publisher, queen,...) make words blare. our work: to disenfranchise.

to get larger, to expand: these are too ambitious terms, one must learn to stay small, remain finite. a blog can not supplant the non-place of the friendships we make up around books.

the epigraph at the top of my blog reads: "what/who exorbitates mutates into its opposite" from a Turkish poet Cahit Zarifođlu. and this logic is what generates the slithering of the word. we must save books from its own ends.

thanks again, best.

p.s. I'm not the owner of pdf library.

November 24, 2009 at 12:58 pm Here, an article that might interest: 

Bedeutung
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/libertycentral/2009/nov/24/file-sharing-free-piracy>

November 24, 2009 at 3:04 pm
jannekeadema1979

Thanks for the link, good article, agree with the contents, especially like the part 'Could, for instance, the considerable



resources that might be allocated to protecting, policing and, ultimately, sanctioning online file-sharing not be used for rendering it less financially damaging for the creative sector?'

I like this kind of pragmatic reasoning, and I know more people do.

By the way, checked Bedeutung, great journal, and love your [library](#) section! Will add it to the main article.

January 7, 2010 at 8:53 am
Borderland » Critical Readings

[...] say about academic text sharing in an article that serves as an introduction to a budding movement, Scanners, collectors and aggregators. On the 'underground movement' of (pirated) theory text sha.... Adema looks at a few examples, and offers some reasons why publishers are not more upset about [...]

February 3, 2010 at 3:05 pm
Mariborchan » Scanners, collectors and aggregators. On the 'underground movement' of (pirated) theory text sharing

[...] openreflections But how can something be truly underground in an online environment whilst still trying to spread or disseminate texts as widely as possible? This seems to be the paradox of many – not quite legal and/or copyright protected – resource sharing and collecting communities and platforms nowadays. However, multiple scenarios are available to evade this dilemma: by being frankly open about the 'status' of the content on offer, as Ubu does, or by using little 'tricks' like an easy website registration, classifying oneself as a reading group, or by relieving oneself from responsibility by stating that one is only aggregating sources from elsewhere (linking) and not hosting the content on its own website or blog. One can also state the offered texts or multimedia files form a special issue or collection of resources, emphasizing their educational and not-for-profit value. [...]

May 29, 2010 at 3:15 pm
Urgh! AAAARG dead? < transversalinfections



[...] successfully it would appear. Here an interview with aaaarg architect Sean Dockray, an extensive article by Janneke about the sharing of pirated [...]

June 18, 2010 at 5:52 am
nick knouf

This is Nick, the author of the JJPS project; thanks for the tweet! I actually came across this blog post while doing



background research for the project and looking for discussions about AAAARG; found out about a lot of projects that I didn't already know about. One thing that I haven't been able to articulate very well is that I think there's an interesting relationship between, say, Kenneth Goldsmith's own poetry and his founding of Ubu Web; a collation and reconfiguration of the detritus of culture (forgotten works of the avant-gardes locked up behind pay walls of their own, or daily minutiae destined to be forgotten), which is something that I was trying to do, in a more circumscribed space, in JJPS Radio. But the question of distribution of digital works is something I find fascinating, as there are all sorts of avenues that we could be investigating but we are not. The issue, as it often is, is one of technical ability, and that's why one of the future directions of JJPS is to make some of the techniques I used easier to use. Those who want to can always look into the code, which is of course freely available, but that cannot and should not be a prerequisite.

June 18, 2010 at 11:26 am
jannekeadema1979

Hi Nick, thanks for your comment. I love the JJPS and it would be great if the technology you mention would be easily



re-usable. What I find fascinating is how you use another medium (radio) to translate/re-mediate and in a way also unlock textual material. I see you also have an Open Access and a Cut-up hour. I am very much interested in using different media to communicate scholarly research and even more in remixing and re-mediating textual scholarship. I think your project(s) is a very valuable exploration of these themes while at the same time being a (performative) critique of the current system. I am in awe.

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