

The Shifting Author-Reader Dynamic: Online Novel Communities as a Bridge from Print to Digital Literature

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introduction

- novels and adaptations
- online novel communities
- author-reader interaction
- bridging print/digital conventions
- future of digital fiction

tags: intro, talking points, outline

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novels & web 2.0: srsly?

- books are technology too (Landow 2006)
 - printing press >> oral to written
 - authorship
 - progression of media
 - is art through technology still art?
(Benjamin 1936)

tags: technology, authorship, art

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novels & web 2.0: srsly?

'The history of every art form shows critical epochs in which a certain art form aspires to effects which could be fully obtained only with a changed technical standard, that is to say, in a new art form' (Benjamin 1936)

tags: technology, art

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novels & web 2.0: srsly?

- novels have staying power
 - publishing still growing
 - adaptations
 - event films
- digital presence?
 - e-readers

tags: novels, digital presence

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novels & web 2.0: srsly?

- consumer trends >> online & digital
 - digital media outpacing all others in time and spending (Greenberg et al 2003, Radwanick 2009)
- participatory web 2.0 culture (Jenkins et al 2006)
 - fan and slash fiction (Thomas 2007)
 - prolong the experience of novel/storyworld
 - SFF dominance: author, reader, or both?

tags: trends, participatory culture

novels & web 2.0: srsly?

- so where are the digital stories?
 - ELO's Electronic Literature Collection
 - *afternoon* by Michael Joyce – 1987
- cult presence >> not yet mainstream
 - new storytelling conventions
 - lack of reciprocity (Nystrand et al 1986)

tags: conventions, reciprocity, mainstream

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from here to there

- novel conventions >> familiar
 - immersion (Douglas 2000)
- digital story conventions >> unfamiliar
 - nonlinear, participatory
 - engagement (Douglas 2000)

tags: conventions, immersion, engagement

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online novel communities

- author-created and/or -driven
- participatory elements
- interactive elements
- metafictional discourse
- collaboration

tags: interactive, participatory, meta

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stalking neil gaiman(.com)

- author-reader interaction
 - metafictional discourse
- extension of storyworld
 - author notes, discussion, multimedia links
- collaborative elements?
 - interaction >> influence on story

tags: neil!, stalking, author-reader

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And that's so much easier to do with prose than it is with comics.

Neil,

how consciously do you think *Thief of Always* influenced you in writing *Coraline*? (I know how much of the creative process is a subconscious whirlwind that takes in everything you experience and then surfaces whatever amalgamation of them it decides to at the unsuspecting conscious self from time to time, so the question is impossible to answer precisely, but still, I'd be delighted to hear your own opinion, subjective as it can be.

Yours truly (who made sure to read *Coraline* to his kids a week earlier than letting them see it in the movie theatre in order for them to first see it in their own imagination).

Well, I was halfway through writing *Coraline* when Clive Barker's book *The Thief of Always* came out. I looked at the back cover, thought "Mm. Could be a little *Coraline-y*" and so didn't buy it. That was how much it influenced me during the writing process. (It also made me sigh, and regretfully let go of an adult book title I'd been treasuring, *The Thief of Night*.)

About a decade later, some years after *Coraline* had been published, I was sent a copy of *The Thief of Always* and a Bernard Rose film script of the book, and asked if I wanted to work on a film adaptation, and I read and enjoyed them both, and thought that really, the book wasn't anywhere near as *Coraline-y* as I had feared, but thought the Bernard Rose script was really good and there wasn't anything I could add to it, so I passed.

(Gaiman 2009)

stalking jasper fforde(.com)

- collaborative elements
 - fan fiction, contribution to *The Well of Lost Plots*
- extension of storyworld
 - forums, fan fiction, 'Special Features'
- ludic elements
 - games, contests

tags: fforde, special features, games

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and enter our [Spot the
Hamlet](#) competition.

building convention bridges

- online novel communities >> intermediate
 - immersion and engagement
 - print and digital
 - buttress with given/new technique (Nystrand 1986)

tags: buttress, bridge

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crossing convention bridges

- author-reader dynamic
 - collaboration (*Well, Amanda Palmer*)
 - interaction >> authorship
 - oral vs. print vs. digital

tags: dynamic, interaction

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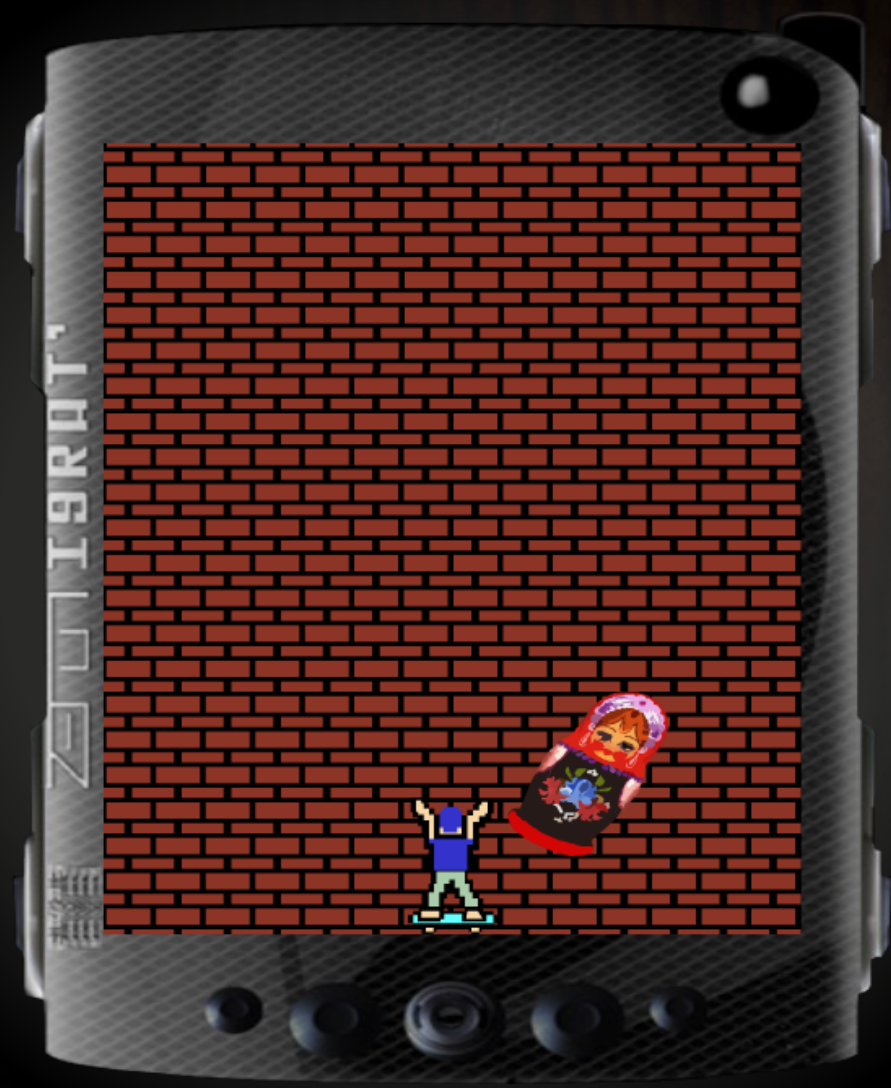
alice in digital-land

- *Inanimate Alice* (Pullinger & Joseph 2007)
 - linear, textual narrative
 - hyperlinks (pages?), visual, digital communication, ludic elements

tags: alice, bridge

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I'm playing a game I made up –
Matryoshka.
I need to collect all the dolls
in order to finish the game.

to digital infinity and beyond...

- digital fiction as a literary genre
 - new tech, new structures
- consumer shift to nonlinear, ergodic entertainment >> rise of digital storytelling
- authorship >> liquid

tags: conclusion, future, shift

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giants' shoulders (references)

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