également «la place que les archives occupent dans notre imaginaire et la fonction que nous leur attribuons pour nous rappeler le passé et anticiper ce que sera, demain, l’avenir, notre mémoire» (p. 51). C’est en ce sens que l’auteure parcourt les travaux de Christian Boltanski et revisite Les années d’Annie Ernaux (2008). Ambivalence encore, car cette gestion de l’accumulation est entourée d’un discrédit dicté par les avant-gardes prônant la collecte de l’insignifiant (p. 60).

Cette quête passionnante se termine par un constat selon lequel la démultiplication actuelle de l’archive se traduit sur le plan littéraire par la manifestation d’un inachèvement qui s’accompagne d’une valorisation de l’enquête et par là «la littérature s’est appropriée les dispositifs de l’historiographie pour avoir elle aussi prise sur le passé» (p. 64). Enfin, l’auteure conclut que la passion pour l’archive «dit une hantise de la mémoire et cherche à maîtriser cet envahissement du présent par le passé», en même temps qu’elle fait preuve de la quête à reconstituer «notre propre mémoire par l’écriture, par le geste de trier, classer, garder, jeter». Or, «[l]a passion de l’archive dessine la façon dont le présent aura été» (p. 64).

Ce petit ouvrage est vivement à recommander à tout passionné de littérature pour sa lecture à rebours d’un certain travail d’écrivain, à tout historien pour son analyse quant à l’utilisation et à la signification de son matériau brut et à tout archiviste pour une réflexion renouvelée et décalée par rapport à ses pratiques, à la représentativité et au signifié de cette archive bénie, malmenée, discréditée, mais plus que jamais présente et qui ne semble pas avoir finir de nous interpeller.

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Concern over the changing nature of literary reading, writing, publishing, and selling has intensified over the last decade, with claims about the end of the book or the death of print abounding (Fitzpatrick, Anxiety of Obsolescence; Gomez, Print is Dead; Grafton, Codex in Crisis) even as critics rush to point out the short-sightedness or narrowly negative character of these claims (Duguid, “Material Matters”; Griswold, Regionalism and the Reading Class). In contrast
to previous texts on the topic like Kathleen Fitzpatrick’s *The Anxiety of Obsolescence* (2006), which tackles wide-ranging concerns about print media, popular culture, and postmodernism, Anouk Lang’s 2012 essay collection *From Codex to Hypertext* focuses more narrowly on digital affordances and expressions of reading. As Lang’s introduction puts it, the collection seeks to illuminate the myriad ways “reader tastes, interactions, and interpretive activities can be reconsidered at a moment of technological change” (3).

The introduction cites the influence of reception studies and sociology on the collection to explain its approach to reading and reader interpretation as networked practices, practices “embedded within a network of social and interpersonal relationships” (1). In an allusion to the common sociological paradigm of structural pressure versus individual agency, Lang describes the volume’s inquiry as beginning from a position of attentiveness to the social relations that condition reading, but notes also that “it is important not to let an emphasis on structure and social context lead us to lose sight of acts of individual agency, creativity, resistance, and freedom within the interaction between reader and text” (2). The reciprocal connection between the structural relations and the individual desires and interests that guide reading form the focal point for the collection. Individual essays can in fact be read as representative of one of these two approaches (structuralism or individualism); an indicator of the collection’s overall tendency towards individualist interpretation is the recurring use of ethnomethodological approaches. Many of the essays focus on new technologies or other recent changes that refashion or intervene in the reading structure / reading individual relationship. There is throughout, however, an avoidance of claims about the radical newness of any given technology. Rather, the collection reflects the idea that technological change and reading inform each other and always have; the essays it presents treat technologies like algorithms and online reader forums as elements of the social structures that condition, enable, and are themselves transformed by reading.

Essays cover aspects of contemporary reading from online book clubs to the algorithmic affinities of book purchasing sites to online fan fiction and reader reviews. Few of the contributions take strong argumentative positions; they are intent on explicating how particular technologies or specific contexts affect reading practices rather than making an assertion about what this interaction might mean in a broader sense. Most of these explications are the result of comprehensive and often long-term research, the research question
and methodological approaches of which are clearly spelled out. Some of the clearest reading practice examinations of this kind are Megan Sweeney’s look at the way incarcerated women interpret urban fiction in relation to their own life histories, and Joan Bessman Taylor’s participant observation of the main interpretive approaches taken by book clubs. More digital-minded contributions in this explicatory vein are Julian Pinder’s detailed case study of the way LibraryThing is able to “network” online users into literary communities, and Ed Finn’s clearly-visualized examination of the algorithmically generated reading networks created by Amazon for Toni Morrison’s writing (and of the attendant implications for by-proxy literary prestige). One contribution notable for its firm argumentative line is David S. Miall’s “Confounding the Literary,” in which Miall argues persuasively that hypertext is not, as has often been asserted, a more liberating or agential experience than print reading, but rather one that disrupts the reader’s experience of a Bergsonian durée— one’s sense of presentness in time – with its overt spatialization of the reading process.

The collection, like the reading materials and practices it explicates, is highly interdisciplinary (or “hybrid,” as Lang’s introduction puts it). Given the self-awareness of the contributors regarding the shaping power of their methods, the collection’s division into part 1, “Communities and Practices,” and part 2, “Methods,” seems a bit unnecessary. The most methodologically focused contribution is the final one by Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo, in which the authors describe the benefits (and some of the drawbacks) of using mixed methods and an interdisciplinary team in their own attempt to decipher the literary interpretive frameworks used by respondents to mass reading event surveys.

One of the only things lacking in this well-rounded collection is an awareness of the book’s own materiality. For a study invested in how technological changes inform reading, there is little explanation provided for the collection’s format as a “codex” or traditional print book; the only mention of this occurs in Lang’s introduction when, invoking the common distinction between the fixity of print as compared to the malleability of the digital, Lang states that the rapid and recent changes to reading enabled by technological developments are “worth braving the perils of setting down any conclusions in codex form” (1). An accompanying digital apparatus of some kind – for instance, an Omeka or Drupal site with images of the zines and the full texts of online reviews discussed, as well as a reader forum for the volume itself – could have provided useful material to the
engaged reader while formally echoing the collection’s concerns with hybrid reading.

In bringing together a number of applied investigations into contemporary reading practices, *From Codex to Hypertext* provides not only a trove of information but also useful templates for scholars approaching such examinations. It is a welcome resource for any scholar of reception, and especially for digital humanists engaged in reception or book history studies.

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