

# Booksapes: Modeling Books in Electronic Space

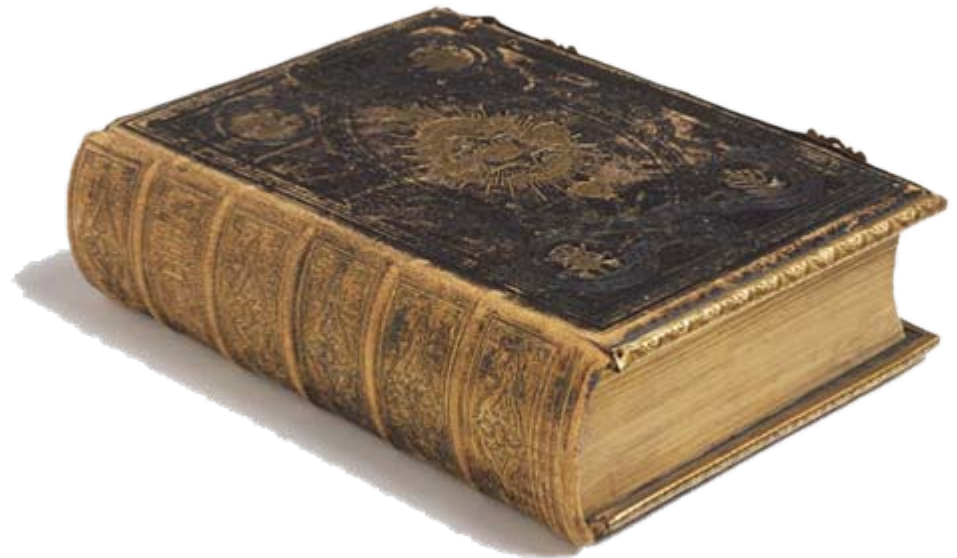
Matthew Kirschenbaum

Department of English and  
Maryland Institute for Technology  
in the Humanities



# What English Profs Study

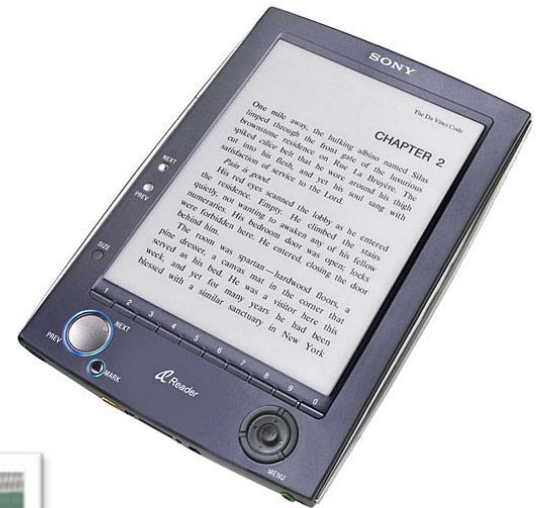
- The book as a material artifact
- Books in culture and society
- Who published what books where & when
- Copyright and the book trade
- Representations of books in literature and the other arts
- Books and changing technologies



# Electronic Books (Many Platforms, Systems, Media, Devices, Formats)



Google<sup>TM</sup>  
Book Search BETA



# This is not a book.





. . . it's a *model* of a book

(predictive)

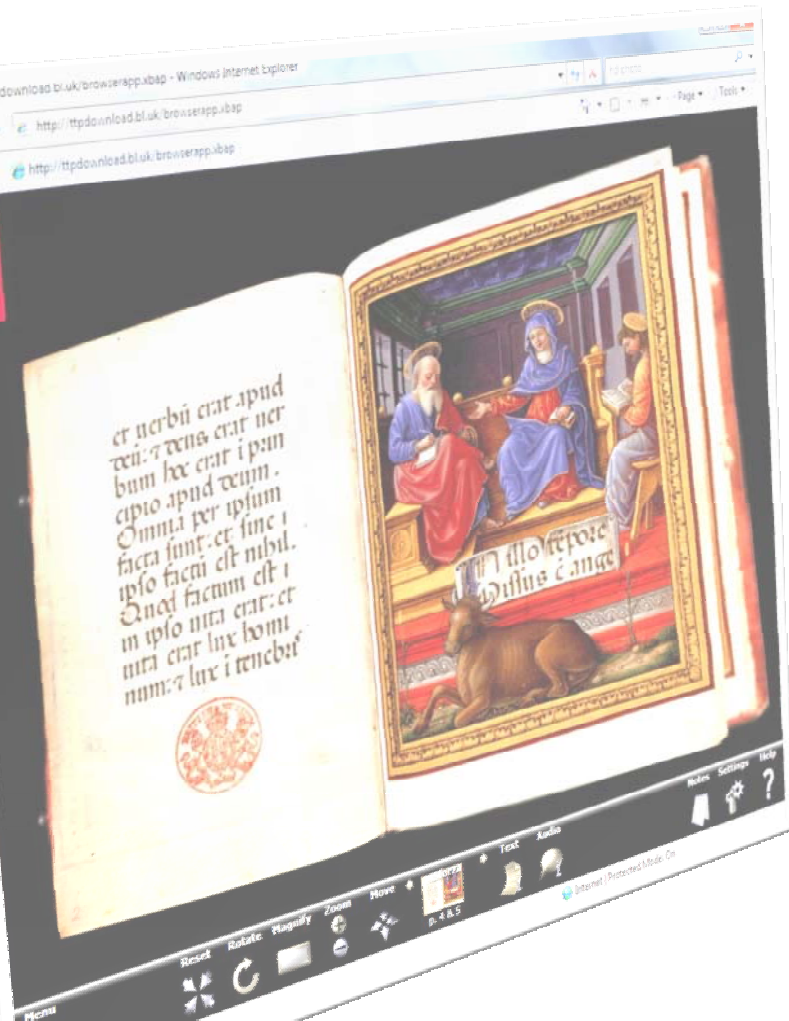


(explanatory)

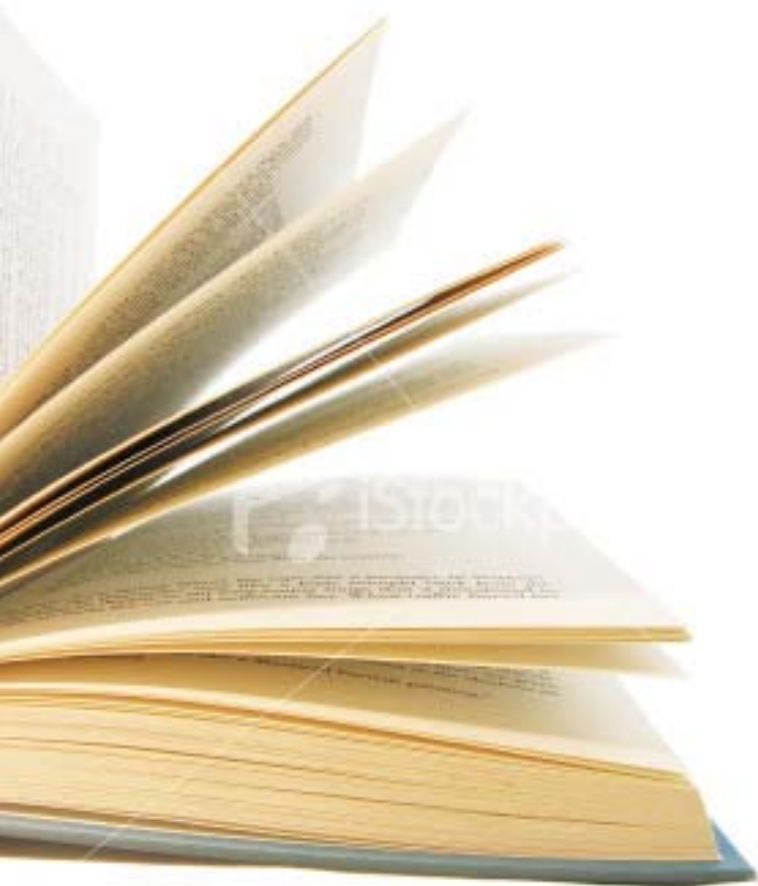
A portion of the periodic table of elements, showing elements from Lithium (Li) to Technetium (Tc). The elements are arranged in rows and columns, with their symbols, atomic numbers, and names displayed.

3	Li	4	Be			
11	Na	12	Mg			
19	K	20	Ca	21	Sc	22
37	Rb	38	Sr	39	Y	40
55	Cs	56	Ba	57	La	58
71		72	Hf	73	Ta	

(prescriptive)



# What are the Affordances of a Book?



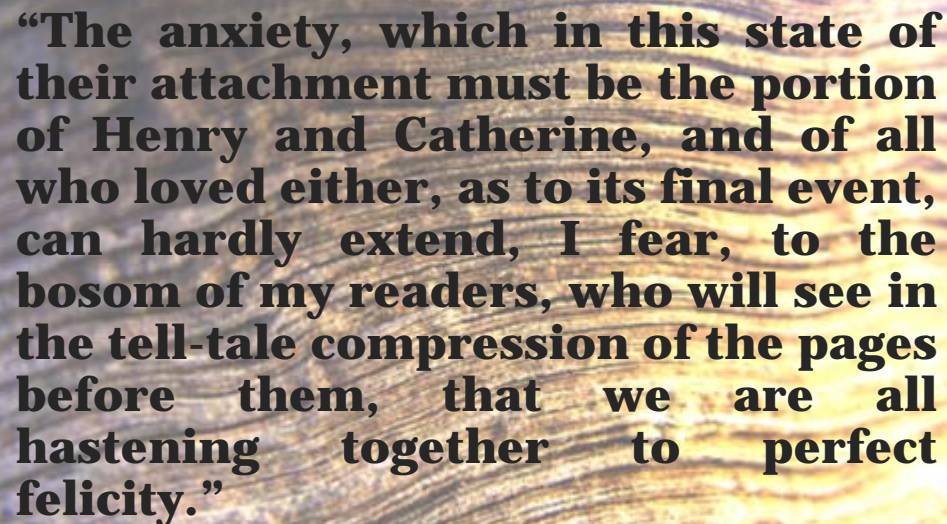
- Random Access *and* Sequential
- Volumetric
- Bounded
- Comparative
- Writeable (as well as readable)

# Random Access *and* Sequential





# Volumetric



**“The anxiety, which in this state of their attachment must be the portion of Henry and Catherine, and of all who loved either, as to its final event, can hardly extend, I fear, to the bosom of my readers, who will see in the tell-tale compression of the pages before them, that we are all hastening together to perfect felicity.”**

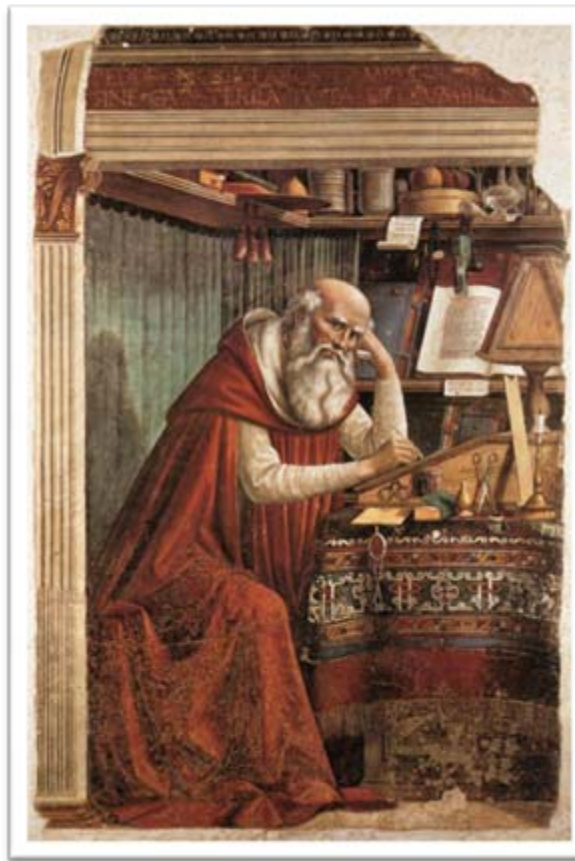
**—Jane Austen, near the conclusion of *Northanger Abbey***



# Bounded



# Comparative





# Writeable

et pro vobis peccata vba superbie blasphemasti?  
et implevisti mala cogitatione tua et ostendisti  
con vni fornicatione tua. **E**t possi facere quod fecimus tractasti  
mee tu ro. **N**unquid irascaris in pepe-  
tuum? aut pleuerabis in finem? **E**cce lo-  
cuta es et fecisti mala: et potuisti. **E**t di-  
xit dominus ad me in diebus ioseph regio.  
**N**unquid vidisti que fecerit aueclatix  
israhel? **A**bijt sibi in super omnem  
montem excelsum et sub omni ligno  
frondoso: et fornicata est ibi. **E**t dixi-  
tum fecisset hec omnia. ad me reuertere  
et non est reuersa. **E**t vidit in arca.


ultra. **I**n to-  
sale solium d-  
omnes geo-  
rusale: et no-  
ten cordis l-  
ibit domus  
veniet simul  
qua dedi po-  
Quomodo pi-  
hi terra desi-



# Random Access . . .



[Divisible Copyright: Hearings Held Before the...](#)  
By United States Congress. House. Committee on... - 1927 - 38 pages  
Bill | Statement of— Butler, Charles Henry | Weil, Arthur W | | Osborne, William  
Hamilton | Burkan, Nathan | Swarts, Louis E | Lucas, George C Solberg, Thorvald |  
Paine..  
Snippet view - [About this book](#)



[Copyright Law Revision: Hearings Before the...](#)  
By United States Congress. Senate. Judiciary - 1967 - 242 pages  
Index filed in 90-1 Y 4.J 89/2:C 79/4/96  
Snippet view - [About this book](#)

[show more »](#)

**Search in this book**

copyright act United States

30 pages matching **copyright act United States** in this book

Page 1

TO AMEND THE COPYRIGHT ACT

Page 2

2 TO AMEND THE COPYRIGHT ACT  
tion of extending the copyright control to such mechanical reproductions, wherever

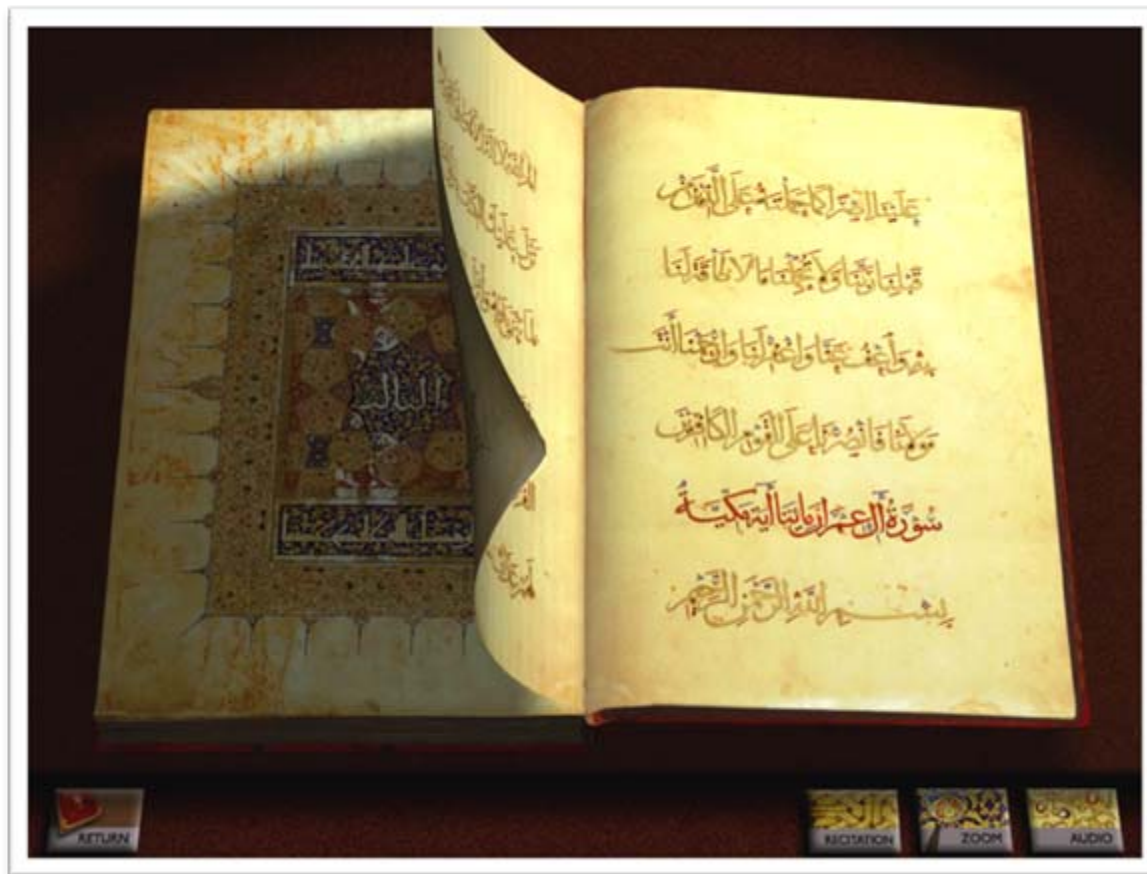
Page 29

TO AMEND THE COPYRIGHT ACT 29  
prays that a preliminary injunction issue restraining the defendant from the

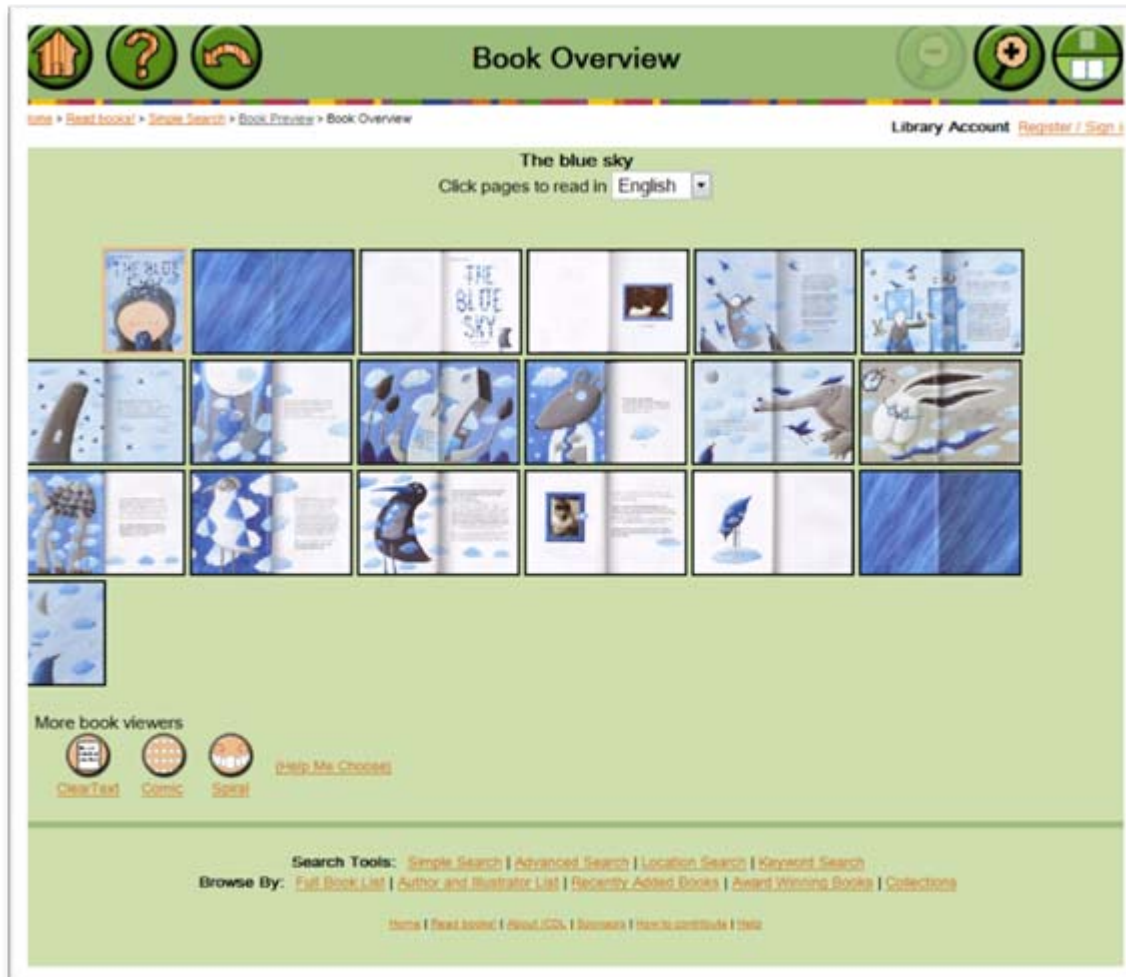
[Where's the rest of this book?](#)



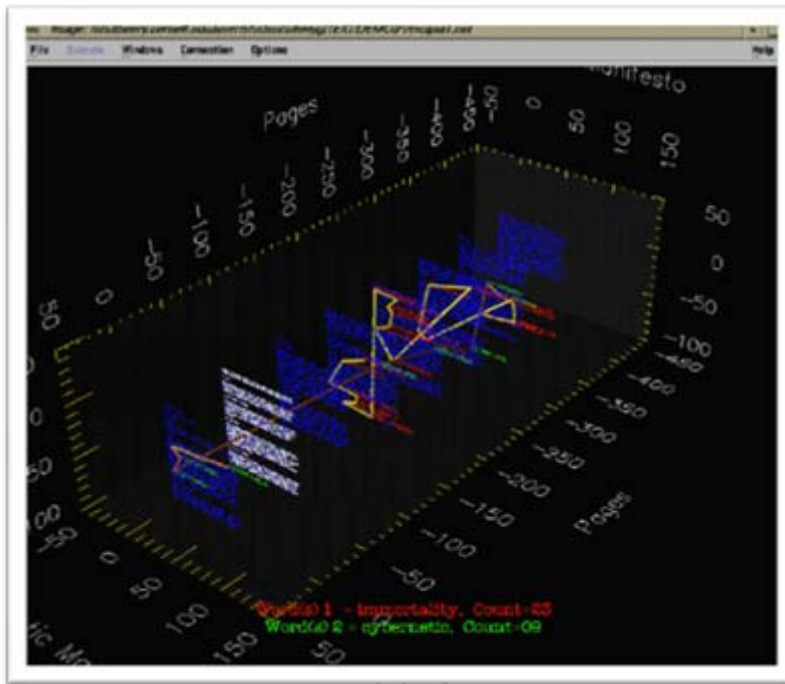
. . . *and* Sequential



# Or (of course) Both



# Volumetric



to him."

**Page 101** "Forgiving arms and doors do open wide, If one repentant **child** implore Outside. "No mother's heart is full, Unless it be with longing, **burning**, wild Heart-throbbings that no cheerful face can ..."

**Page 249** "When David's **child** died, the father spoke of it as only carried over into another home, where it would wait for him. "I cannot bring him back to me,"

Search results for "david miller burning child".

Books Beta

Contents

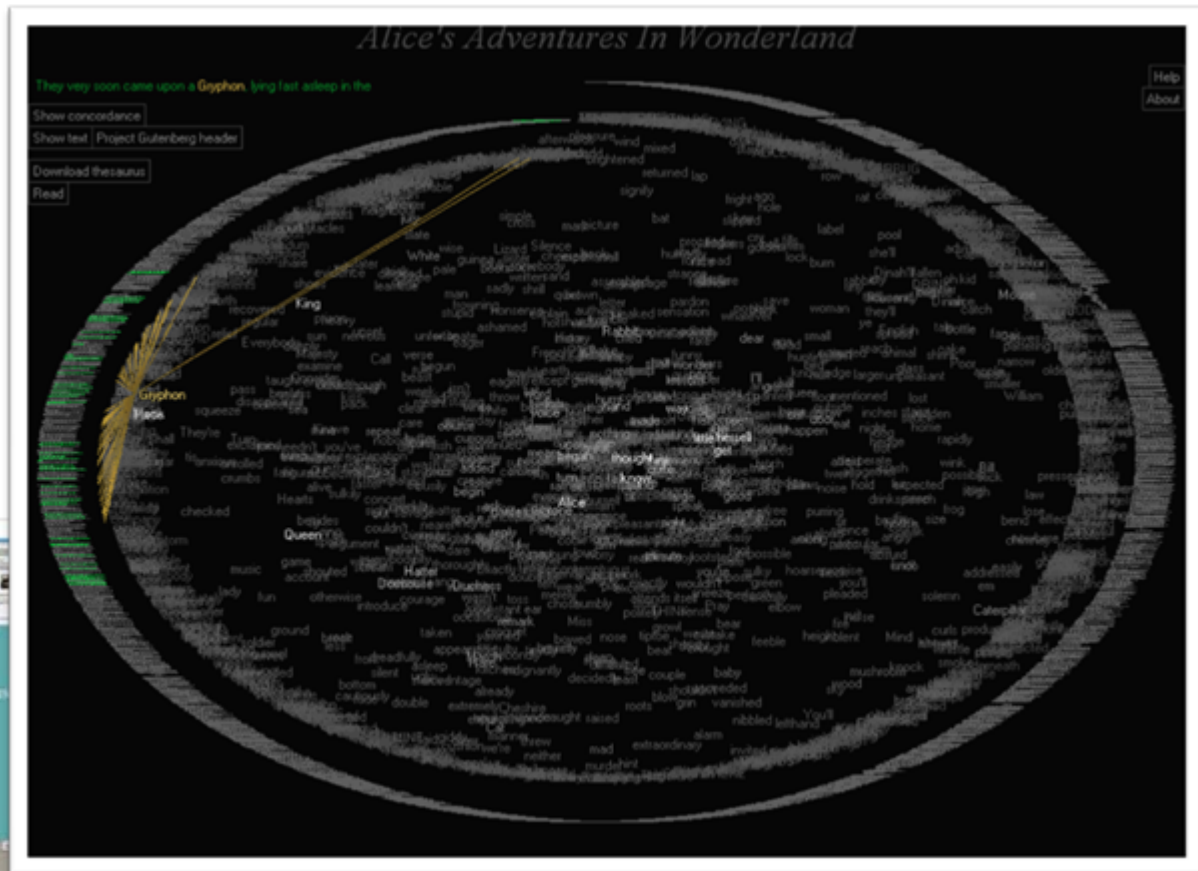
19

LIFE'S BYWAYS AND WAYSIDES. 19

and hands are so full of our own things that we have no time for tasks for Him. We need never fear that our hands will be any less full at the end because we have slackened our pace a little now and then to do some slight wayside service for Christ.

There is a story of one who began to run in a race, and ran well—was foremost of all. But by-and-by he stopped to lift up a fallen **child** and place it out of danger, thus losing something of what he had gained. Farther on, a fainting comrade appealed to his sympathy, and he turned aside to help him

# Bounded





# Comparative

BRITISH LIBRARY

## TREASURES IN FULL

### SHAKESPEARE IN QUARTO

Main The basics Background The afterlife **The texts**
Expert views References Links Glossary

Hamlet; 2nd variant quarto 1605;  
C.34.k.2; Provenance: Garrick



Page 1 Sig. B1r

Go to page

☐ Compare with another text

Hamlet; 1st quarto 1603;  
C.34.k.1; Provenance: Halliwell-Phillips



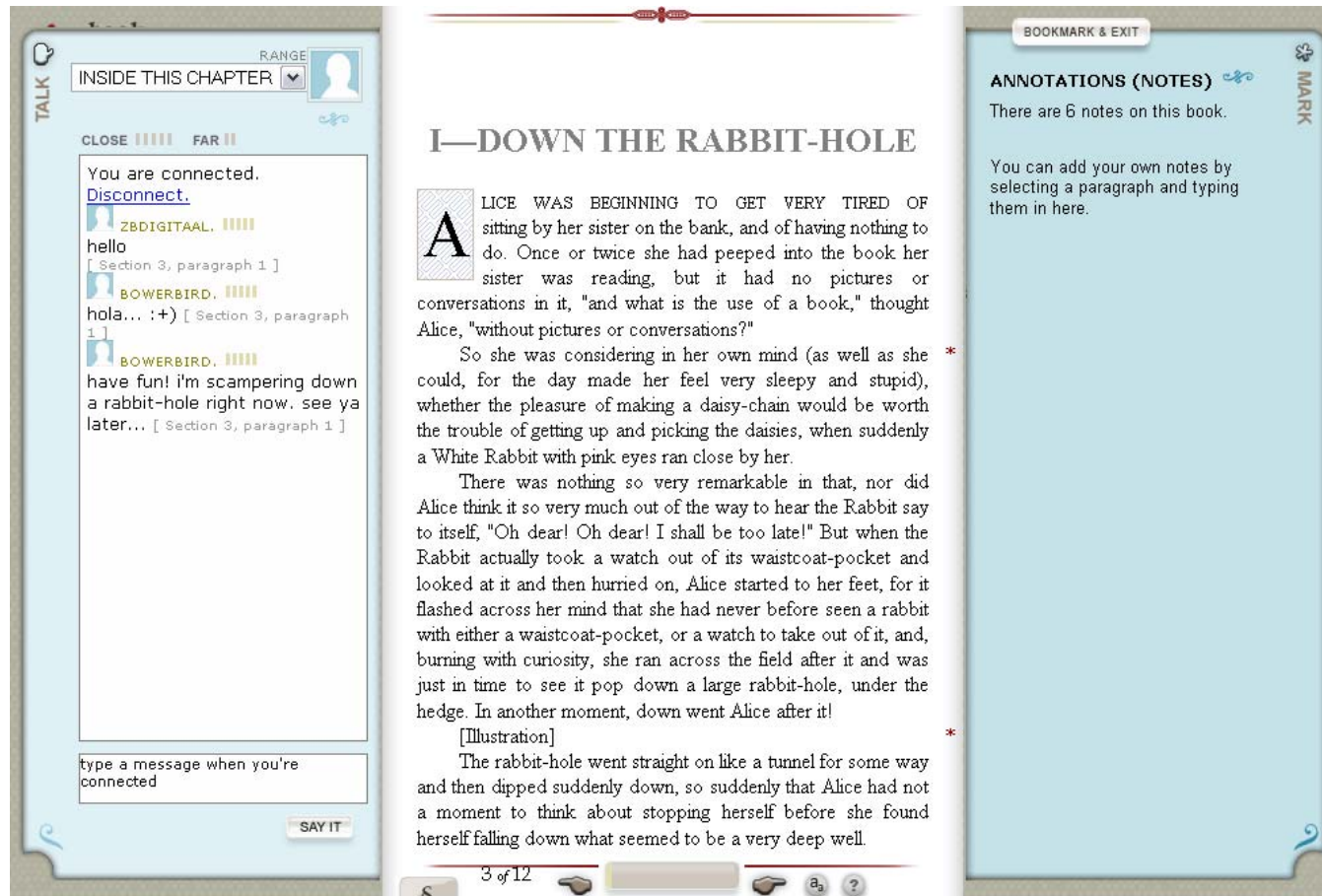
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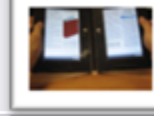




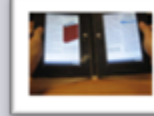





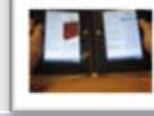




☐ Compare with another text



# Writeable

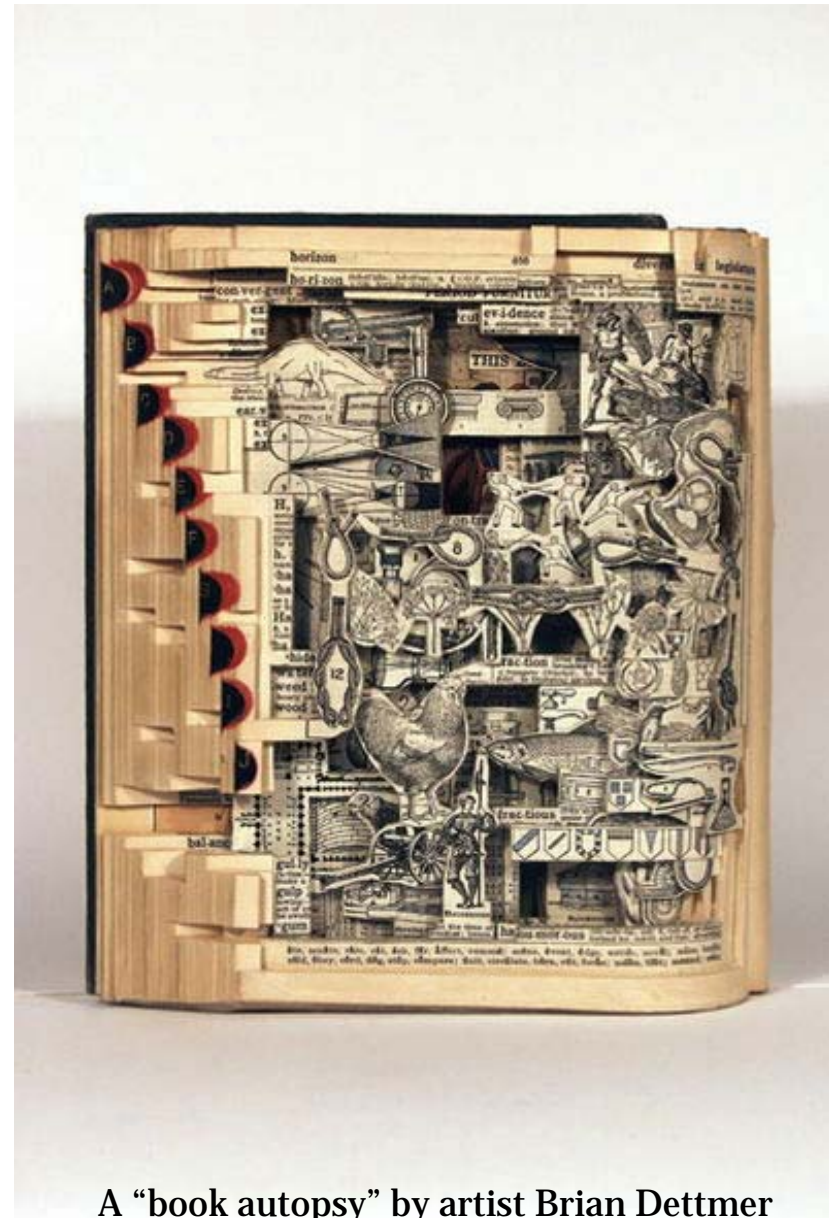


# Bookscares: Different Affordances Modeled

	Random Access	Sequential	Volumetric	Bounded	Comparative	Writeable
Facsimile of a Rare Book						
Professional Journal Article						
Middle School Textbook						
Children's Story Book						
Legal Brief						

# Conclusion

- Most affordances will be important most of the time
- But our model-making is always constrained: time, labor, funding, bandwidth, etc.
- Choices and trade-offs are inevitable
- Awareness of the affordances of a bookscape can help us make better *models of* electronic books
- Different models (with different affordances) will serve different audiences and communities



A “book autopsy” by artist Brian Dettmer



# Thank You!

