

### Summary:

“The Future of the Book,” is a technologically based platform that embodies all the narrative elements of a book, except for the paper, and includes three conceptual bases that seek to improve and add to elements of the paperback book. One of such concepts is named, “Alice,” which is used by the reader of the platform to interact with the book itself through activities outside of the platform. The second concept is called, “Coupland,” which agglomerates all books read on the platform into a list, and then analyzes this list to create another list of recommended books. This concept also allows different businesses and organizations to assign certain texts to their workers, and the platform itself will provide texts that inform the reader on the topic of interest beyond the expectations of the association. “Nelson” is the third conceptual basis. It adds opinion, critical analysis and commentary, and news reports to the text being read, so that the reader may gain a more overarching and collaborative contextual foundation for the text.

### Description:

The “Future of the Book” is a conceptual project focused on upgrading modern reading capabilities so that readers may use a digital platform to further their analyses and understandings of texts. The medium of the project is a kindle-sized screen that can flip the subject material being presented to the reader vertically or horizontally, based on the platform’s physical orientation. The object is also a touch-screen that allows the reader to scroll through a text’s pages. The digitized screen has three main applications that are designed to make the reader’s experience of reading more informed and “connected” with the narrative or other readers.

Sidebars can be placed onto the left or right side of the screen to hold information found within the, “Nelson,” application. The Nelson application portrays the screen as full of texts that the individual owns on the platform. The individual would be able to choose a text from the screen, and then have the capability to read any passage within the text, highlight that passage, and then read relevant debates, criticism, research, and comments regarding the text. The application also allows the reader to use fact-check in order to consider the authenticity and authority of the information presented within the work of interest.

The platform also hosts an application named “Coupland.” This application allows owners of the object to view reads by important associations and organizations, whether they be business or of intrapersonal relations, in order to gain a fuller understanding of what texts may be needed to succeed in such associations or organizations. Co-workers have the ability to purchase texts and refer such texts to other co-workers; in the case that many individuals within the same organization or association purchase the text, it will become free to the whole group. Coupland can also refer texts that are relevant to a reader’s past-reads, or the topic of interest to a given conglomeration of individuals, to further the business or social motivations of the group.

“Alice,” the third application, develops the experience of reading fiction into a process that is both interactive and a reconstruction of the reading process itself. Alice will interrupt the reader at designated points in the text with either a phone call to the reader’s phone, a series of deciphering or

pattern-based activities on the platform itself, or an assignment that refers the reader to a specific geographic location; all of these activities reward the reader with extra chapters of the text. The opportunities to play these games with the platform allow the reader to engage in a “non-linear narrative” form, which may fundamentally alter the original understanding of the text itself.



Figure 1: Nelson

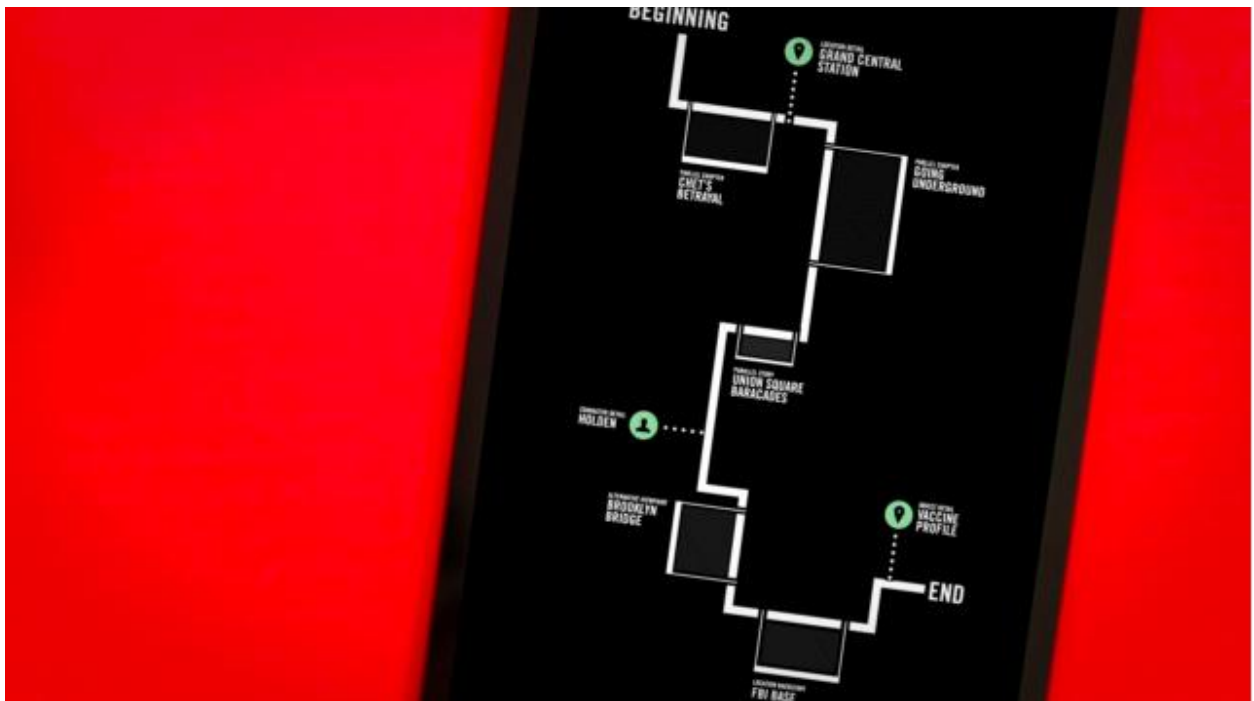


Figure 2: Alice



Figure 3: Coupland

### Research Context:

“Future of the Book” is an experimental project that influences discussions about book culture and the popular shift to digital texts. This realm of study considers the paperback book and its utility in our present time in comparison with its usefulness in past times. Currently, debate is centered on the need for technological modes of representation, and whether this need displaces the propensity toward paper texts. In essence, the project also calls into question the fundamental role of the text as an object that does not include and/or require the reader to necessarily be a co-creator in the span of each narrative read. The project launches its programs with the intent of fostering collaborative spaces where the reader can modify and, outside of the text, perform activities that can alter the course of the text in its totality. By hosting multiple applications that involve social media, coverage of research information, and narrative reconstruction, the “Future of the Book” platform inherently questions the form of the book in the future, and whether a ‘book’ can exist as a singular entity on paper, or if the future of the book lies within an amalgamation of texts and types of involvement with the text.

### Technical Analysis:

“The Future of the Book” is a concept constructed by IDEO, which is an organization dedicated to constructing new projects that serve to further professions and social lives through their works. The concept was first published and shown to the public in 2010, but since then, there has been little to no public display of ventures supporting the market for the product, or any other upgrades to the concept.

“The Future of the Book” is a thin screen that resembles the present-day kindle. As a result, the platform has the appeal of the basic kindle, which allows readers to buy and read all of their downloaded texts on the same medium. Yet, the kindle does not host as many different applications as this platform, which causes the user to question the uses for multiple types of information on a medium that necessarily connotes reading with ease.

“Future of the Book” rejects the notion that without books, the reading experience could not be fulfilled within its utmost potential. Kinesthetically engaging, as a result of its numerous

applications and interactive game-like portions added to its texts, the platform seeks to draw the reader in through its screen and its functions. Rather than duplicate the model and construction of a book, the IDEO concept uses scroll functions to allow page to page navigation, while also adding the ability to read other texts on the side of the main text being read. Fundamentally, the design is a testament to the ways in which modern culture is modifying and combining older mediums to allow this platform to serve multiple purposes at once; the IDEO project intends to respond to the need modern reads have: different sources of information and engagement all combined in a single object.

In effect, the multiple applications offered by the "Future of the Book," also serve for the purpose of organization. Research capabilities are often limited by a lack of organization of tools to properly situate primary, secondary, and historical texts side-by-side. The platform separates its media, fiction-reading, and procedural/research-reading applications as to create a reading environment that fosters the needs of the reader and their own individual needs, rather than plainly offering the reader information through a screen.

### Evaluation of Opportunities in "Future of the Book"

The "Future of the Book" actively displays the multi-faceted capabilities that future readers may be offered by the technological means of displaying texts. The platform inherently incorporates aspects of gaming, research-oriented organization and interpretation of texts, as well as social media platforms. Since the book has not yet been marketed to the wider public, its concept could be evolved to include and extend the sources of engagement the platform already contains. The extensions elicit conversations about gaming as a hermeneutic approach to reading, the construction of a functional application that organizes and recommends research opportunities to the reader, as well as the inclusion of social and business networking as a method of teaching professionals and friends about interesting or pertinent topics related to their jobs or day-to-day lives.

### Links to Further Study:

"Future of the Book for IDEO." IDEO. IDEO, n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.

### Points of Expansion:

"The Future of the Book." The Economist. The Economist Newspaper, 08 Oct. 2014. Web. 19 Mar. 2015.

"GAMER THEORY 2.0." GAMER THEORY 20 RSS. The Institute for the Future of the Book, n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.