Digital Books and Flying Cars

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According to a short preface, the text had been taken from a folio edition, undated.

concept of
an “organizational field”
(defined)

often complex groups or
sets of actors involved.
Oddly, the preface was unsigned.

stable industry > stable network
(and vice versa)

for both organizations
and people
Disruption of key fundamentals – book production and distribution – even creates conflicts emerging from redefinition of old assets: a backward lens.
good example:
digital rights for backlist titles

rights to the latent rents
were never arbitrated
confusing enough issue to be a major component of GBS proposal ("Author-Publisher Procedures") ... attempting to draw a “bright line”
as old content is re-commoditized, and new content emerges through different channels,

conflict emerges among existing niches authors | agents | publishers | retailers
Outcome:

Rosetta, Wylie v. Random House
HarperCollins v. Open Road
digital transform permits fundamental shift in corporate control of publishing.
Imagine home 3-d printable aerocar templates on torrents, competing with existing cars.
They checked, but didn’t have the hardcover.

Fundamental turmoil yields frenetic efforts to build a new market stasis-

Locate primary “axis of competition”:

product | pricing | services
deep technology shifts ...

usually remove the ability
to focus on a single axis.
firms able to exploit new opportunities in organizational networks gain supremacy.

e.g. the Amazon Kindle
org fields that have become disrupted are naturally subject to the formation of newly emergent breakthroughs.

(a la the Amazon Kindle)
She found the Lectern Press in a small office building on Shattuck Avenue.

org network components –
e.g. services and standards –
wind up being hijacked,
suborned by new firms
EPUB -> EPUB3 in order to compete vs. Apple/Android apps, only to see EPUB3 adopted as a foundation for proprietary enhancements.
Boutique book formats:

tech platforms want optimal hardware fit, book designers want to maximize artistry.

*Cf. Msft and browser standards*
loss of control of format standards that would otherwise buttress competition.

No MP3 for books.
publishers attempt to re-assert control of market pricing and distribution channels as they steadily lose control over new product production.

agency pricing ...
Apple and Amazon represent something new: comprehensive, proprietary consumer-facing content distribution platforms.
“Agency pricing” cannot disrupt this.

Nothing publishers can do to re-direct the new dynamics of publishing.
Any effort to leverage previous network mechanics only serves to create unintended consequences.
Obvious example – Libraries.

due to potential loss of revenue publishers are very reluctant to provide ebooks to libraries.
ran the couplet,

exercising one remaining factor: disallowing distribution of books but ...
this permits Amazon to innovate in library lending practices through Prime subscriptions.
Basically, the problem for libraries is exactly the problem for publishers – technologically induced displacement of prior relationships in the network.
“Hold Hands”, wickenden, Flickr
in organizational fields like publishing that have had a long period of stability implicit rules formed to govern action

*Who's once been set his tryst with Trystero.*"
whenever (inevitably) conflict arises, the bluffs are not called, and warfare is usually avoided.

(consider *e.g.* Wylie v. Random House – agent and publisher worked it out)
one can see this in technology:

patents are *usually* cross licensed - not worth divisive outright wars if players hold equivalent hands.
widespread lawsuits typically signal a breakdown in normative practices within an organizational field

Puzzled, she saw that this edition also had a footnote:

(this would never happen to a research university ...)
as in today’s mobile phone tech wars, one day AG and AAP are best friends, the next they are suing each other
The earlier Folio has a lead inserted where the closing line should have been.

Author / Agent / Publisher / Retailer

The central publishing industry possessed a self-referential set of linear interactions of actors
digital transformation replaces roles with functions which can be located anywhere.

e.g.: no typists or typing pools now – everyone enters text into machines.
as industry, publishing is lucky it has laid claim to an obvious higher-goal:

disseminating information
Was there yet another edition,

this reference point acts to reduce friction, mitigating damage from rent seeking (or it did)
but networks break when powerful new entrants encounter a previously stable field disrupted by technology.
It is this “asteroid from outer space” characteristic that makes publishing raw and exposed for the first time in decades
by one Emory Bortz, professor of English at Cal, mentioned none.

- Apple
- Amazon
- Google
- Facebook
She spent nearly an hour more,

Not concerned with historical relationships, seeking profit in disruption, and with a *wildly* different understanding of their competition.
Out-of-field (technology) disruption entails radical change in the org. field’s participants and ultimately products.
Transmedia and interactive ebooks are examples of technology-enabled arts that the old industry couldn’t accommodate.
Absorbing external disrupting agents into prior business relationships is not feasible; those networks are long gone.
Attempts to re-gain control by exercising the levers of the past generates unanticipated outcomes.

"that other couplet has the last line suppressed."
The locus of relationships for corporate control has fundamentally shifted.

*The book in the Vatican is only an obscene parody.*
The distinction for entrant firms is that they are monetizing traffic, ultimately to drive the purchase of other goods.
We cannot reclaim a stability that existed in a network among firms that no longer exists.
Instead of responding to publishers, think about how to generate community profit from the disruption in existing networks.
Thanks.

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He that we last as Thurn and Taxis knew

    Now recks no lord but the stiletto’s Thorn,

    And Tacit lies the Gold once-knotted horn.

    No hallowed skein of stars can ward, I trow,

    Who’s once been set his tryst with Trystero.