

Intertextuality reconsidered

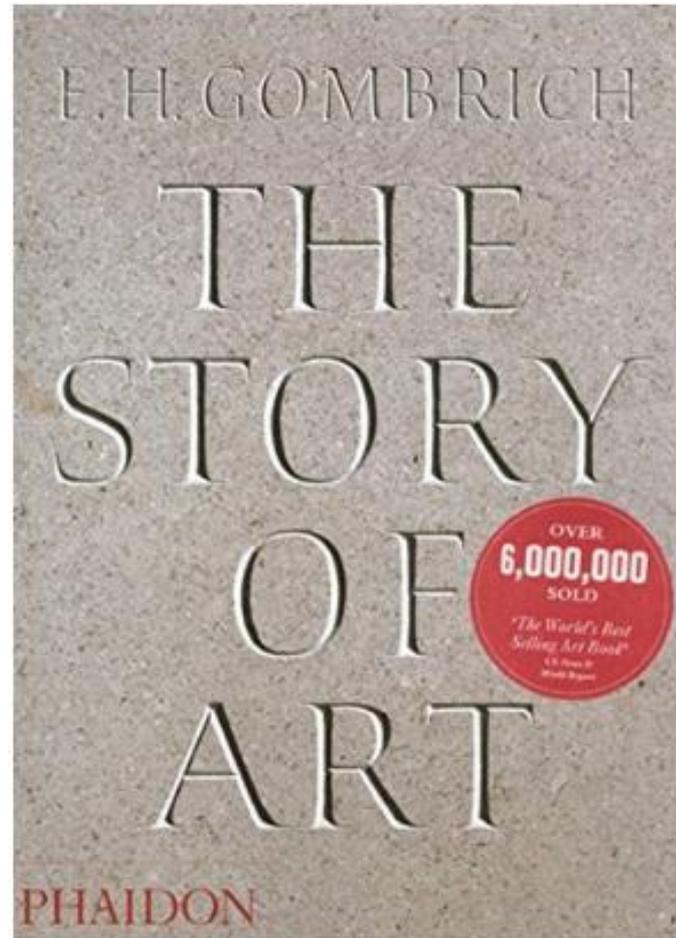
Erik Borg

Centre for Academic Writing

Coventry University, UK

Intertextuality

- Describes the relationships between texts and other texts, and texts and the world.
- It's unavoidable.
- It's desirable.
- It's changing



Tools and literacies

- We remake our tools, and our tools change us.
- Literacy is practiced in different ways when we have different tools.

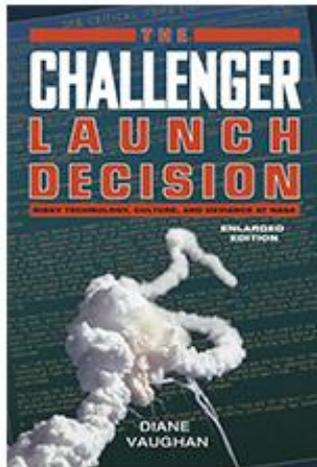
The trope of the individual author and his typewriter

- We imagine authors as solitary, working alone in their garret (Brodkey in Prior, 1998, pp. 140-1).
- This mistaken trope fit well with the typewriter century, from about 1875 to the “word processor”, c. 1970 (Wershler-Henry, 2005).
- Referencing systems developed and are aligned with printed and typed texts (e.g., the development of the Harvard style in 1881, according to Chernin, 1988)

Old news

- Our referencing doesn't fit our use of sources.

There is, however, a third, more alarming, way to interpret the Vix: investors are dangerously complacent about (geo) political risks. More specifically, one way to frame the situation is that markets have stealthily slipped into a “normalisation of deviance” pattern, to use the phrase coined by sociologist Diane Vaughan: so many political boundaries and precedents have been broken that investors have lost perspective on events, because the bizarre seems almost normal.



DIANE VAUGHAN

With a New Preface

620 pages | 54 line drawings, 2 tables | 6 x 9 | © 1996, 2016

When the Space Shuttle Challenger exploded on January 28, 1986, millions of Americans became bound together in a single, historic moment. Many still vividly remember exactly where they were and what they were doing when they heard about the tragedy. Diane Vaughan recreates the steps leading up to... [Read More](#)



New ways with texts

- Texts are increasingly collaborative:
 - “This is, of course, the way of electronic discourse, which—because it is easier to do so than it was with print—encourages cutting and pasting, repurposings, reusing, evocations, allusions, and associations as well as self-reflection and self-plagiarism...” (Joyce, 2006, p. 76).

New ways with texts (2)

Our daily texts are as much assembled—curated—as written.

- Students' (and our) most frequent interaction with texts involves selecting and forwarding (share) them.



The image is a screenshot of a Facebook post. At the top left is a small profile picture of Erik Borg. To its right, the name "Erik Borg" is written in blue, followed by the date and time "May 17 at 1:48pm" and a small "Public" icon. The main text of the post reads: "Heard a great programme this morning while I was walking the dogs, Soul Music on Radio 4, all about Waterloo Sunset by the Kinks. It was a mix of how the song was made and interviews with people who were deeply affected by it. It's a good song, too. Here's the link to the programme, but it'll go into their iPlayer at some point." Below the text is a large, vibrant illustration of a woman's head and shoulders in profile, facing right. Her hair is rendered as a thick, flowing stream of multi-colored lines in shades of purple, blue, yellow, and pink. She is wearing white headphones. Below the illustration, the text reads: "Waterloo Sunset, Series 24, Soul Music - BBC Radio 4" followed by "Waterloo Sunset by The Kinks, in its 50th anniversary year." and "BBC.CO.UK". At the bottom of the post are three interaction buttons: "Like", "Comment", and "Share". Below this is a comment from Sheila Medlock, with a small profile picture, stating: "Possibly one of the best singles ever made. Two bars in and I'm straight back to the Isle of Man in the summer of 1967." followed by "Like · Reply · May 17 at 6:17pm".

Erik Borg
May 17 at 1:48pm · Public

Heard a great programme this morning while I was walking the dogs, Soul Music on Radio 4, all about Waterloo Sunset by the Kinks. It was a mix of how the song was made and interviews with people who were deeply affected by it. It's a good song, too. Here's the link to the programme, but it'll go into their iPlayer at some point.

Waterloo Sunset, Series 24, Soul Music - BBC Radio 4
Waterloo Sunset by The Kinks, in its 50th anniversary year.
BBC.CO.UK

Like Comment Share

Sheila Medlock Possibly one of the best singles ever made. Two bars in and I'm straight back to the Isle of Man in the summer of 1967.
Like · Reply · May 17 at 6:17pm

New ways with texts (3)

Curation continued:

- “In the digital cut-and-paste culture, it is much easier to reproduce content than it was in the analogical era... As Benjamin observes, in the reproduction process, the original message acquires a different meaning. It is objectified or indexed, becoming data or information.” (Soffer, 2016, p.3)



New ways with texts (4)

We are increasingly mediating our interactions with texts digitally.

- Bibliometric measures of academic research
- Automated essay scoring
- Plagiarism detection software

Reshaping

- Our tools are reshaping students and teachers.
 - Our texts are more collaborative.
 - We interact with our students texts through the medium of a PDS.
 - Intertextuality is reduced to character strings and percentages.

Ways forward?

We need to focus on argumentation, not plagiarism.

- “...knowledge is not just ‘copied’ the way genes make copies of themselves when they multiply. Instead, they are sent, received, and then interpreted (Sperber, 1996, pp. 101-6). What matters is persuasion, the decision by the receiver to choose to accept the cultural message and add it to his or her set of beliefs or preferences” (Mokyr, 2017, p. 46).

Ways forward?

- Understand that texts are more collaborative.
- Encourage students to understand real intertextuality, not character strings.
- Reduce our interaction with texts through digital systems.
- Contribute to the development of new ways formal referencing.