

ein Vortrag im Rahmen des Curriculum 4.0 / TH Köln

## Page vs. Screen:

# A Phenomenology of Contemporary Reading

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**Lizenz:**



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# Page vs. Screen: A Phenomenology of Contemporary Reading

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# Overview

Examine the contemporary experience of reading as “information processing” by comparing it to its previous incarnation as a kind of aesthetic and literary endeavor.

- first reconstruct a phenomenology of absorbed *print* reading using the work of critics Georges Poulet and Wolfgang Iser
- then, examine more recent empirical and theoretical scholarship focusing on distraction, reading and study

Print and the Book

# Georges Poulet & Wolfgang Iser

“thought[s] which manifestly belon[g] to another mental world... Whenever I read,” Poulet continues, “I mentally pronounce an I, and yet the I which I pronounce is not myself. This is true even when the hero of a novel is presented in the third person, and even when there is no hero and nothing but reflections or propositions.”

# Georges Poulet & Wolfgang Iser

- “by reading we uncover the unformulated part of the text, and this very indeterminacy is the force that drives us to work out a configurative meaning while at the same time giving us the necessary degree of freedom to do so.”
- Text and reader no longer confront each other as object and subject, but instead the “division” takes place within the reader himself...  
“Every text we read draws a different boundary within our personality, so that the virtual background (the real "me") will take on a different form, according to the theme of the text concerned”

Medium,  
Bote, Übertragung  
Kleine Metaphysik  
der Medialität



Sybille Krämer  
Suhrkamp

# The Digital Screen



In the e-book, the connection between the text content and the material support is split up, allowing the technological device to display a multitude of content that can be altered with a click. The book, by contrast, is a physically and functionally unitary object where the content cannot be distinguished from the material part.

The Penguin  English Library

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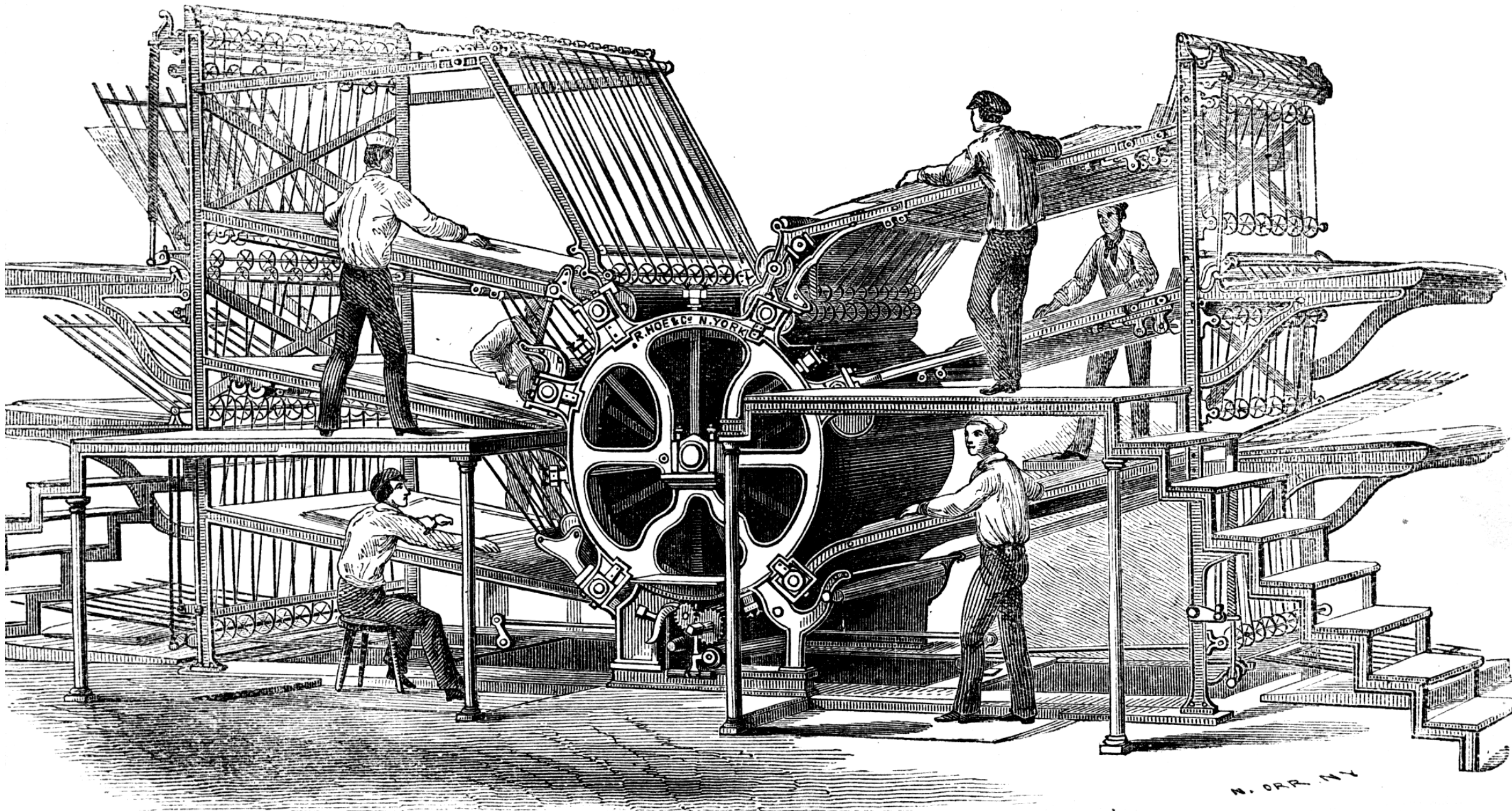


When reading... the text in the book as a static and fixed perceptual phenomenon simply does not provide us with options for attentional switching and for auto-stimulating our attentional response. What we resort to when getting bored by reading a book is usually abandoning the activity altogether.

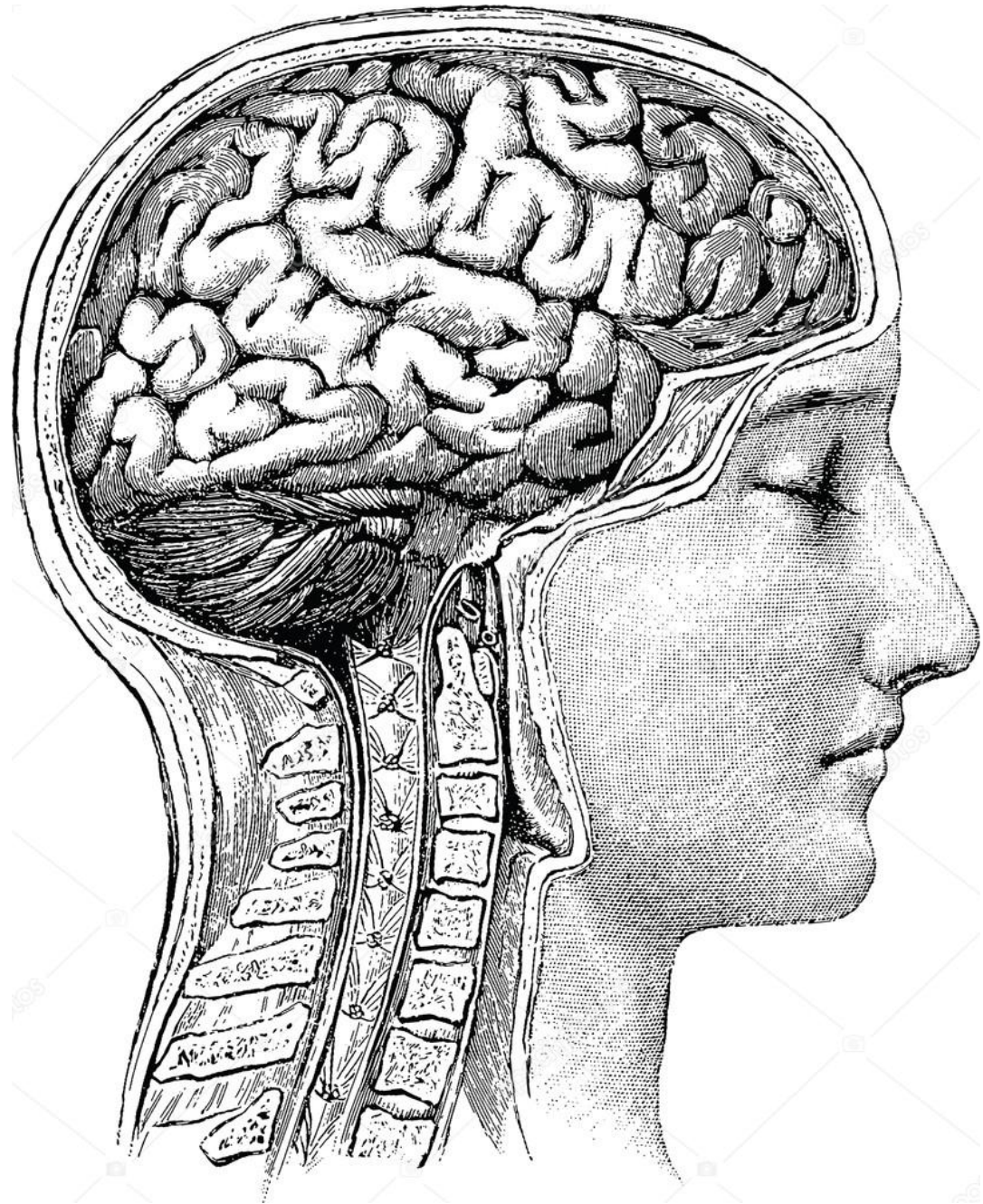
- It just feels natural to log on to Facebook when you get bored”
- “Facebook is just the first thing you think about.... I actually think it happens without you thinking about it”
- “When something gets boring, you just log on to Facebook.”
- “I think it’s in my fingers somehow... When I open my computer, I open the internet, then I type ‘F’, then I type ‘Enter’, and then I’m on Facebook. So you actually have to be a little attentive not to do it.”

- “I know that I end up opening Facebook subconsciously, so I now take an active choice of closing [the computer] so I can’t open Facebook.”
- This turns it into “a very active choice... ‘Now I’m [deliberately] opening the computer to log on to Facebook’. You have to do it much more deliberately.”

# Ecologies of Distraction



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HARLEY

OTELLO

EN

ARTHUR

MAY 10

HARLEY

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THAMES TUNNEL

THE SLAVE

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ADELPHI

MR. MATHEWS

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HOME

Grand Concert

OTELLO

EN

ADELPHI

THE DESTRUCTION OF POMPEII EVERY EVENING

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ADELPHI

# Spengler

“completely expel[ing] the book from the mental life of the people. The book-world with its profusion of standpoints that compelled thought to select and criticize, is now a real possession only for a few. The people reads the one paper, "its" paper, which forces itself through the front doors by millions daily...”







Paper is  
Needed Now!  
Bring it  
in at  
ANYTIME!



# Quellen und Lizenz

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