Breaking The Page: Transforming Books And The Reading Experience

PETER MEYERS

BREAKING

THE PAGE

TRANSFORMING

BOOKS

—— and the ——

READING EXPERIENCE

Synopsis

Do books need to change as they move from paper to screen?I've written "Breaking the Page" to answer that question. My investigation isn't a blank survey of what technology makes possible. It's a study conducted on behalf of those who care most about books: writers and readers. I cover the fundamental aspects of the reading experience. How we become aware of books and come to know what's inside them; how we comprehend, retain, and recall what we have read; how we share with others the parts we love. As a guidebook "Breaking the Page" aims to serve those with a professional interest in bookmaking. I have included many specific design ideas, including new kinds of opening sequences, text and video integration techniques, and multi-scale document designs. But I think general interest readers will also find the discussion worth their attention. The transformation of the book has implications that range from the personal to the political. Books shape how we raise our kids. They control how ideas spread and how we change the kind of person we have become. Understanding this epic shift from paper to screen...- what we gain,- what we lose,- what is to be done...is a topic worthy of its own book.

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Customer Reviews

I love how Pete Meyers peers into the future of books with passion and originality. For example, his idea of the reading dashboard intrigues me. It would help navigate not only a specific book but entire topics of interest, "a living interest cluster of what's important to any reader." How cool would THAT be?Instead of pining for yesteryear, when we could settle down with a long, text-only book for hours on end, sipping tea and smoking a pipe, Pete dreams up clever inventions like "skim/grok/master" for plucking a non-fiction book's key points. It's a combination of skimming and deep reading, a way to hack a book's content in order to arrive at precisely what you want and need from the book to benefit your own life and understanding.You will find useful trails to follow from this book to the work of other book visionaries and innovators, as well as text-bending apps to try, such as Robin Sloan's Fish: A Tap Essay and a scrubbable-video-enhanced confection named Hello Cupcake.When it comes to the future of books, Pete Meyers dares to see through a screen, darkly. Will everything he envisions come to pass? Assuredly not. But his zest and savvy inventiveness make him a great guide for book lovers and makers alike. He's turning the pages of a great story: what happens next to the way we read.

Nobody has thought more about the potential for digital reading experiences than Peter Meyers--and this volume gives a taste of his ideas. I hope to see publishers, device-makers, app-builder and web developers read this and experiment accordingly!

This book made me think about reading and the future of books in a whole new way. I'm not a professional book person -- just a passionate reader -- and what Meyers has done in this short volume is written something like a love letter to the future of the book. Reminded me a lot of Strunk and White and made me thankful that there are people like Meyers who have a special understanding of what readers need and how technology can help...rather than get in the way. This book made me think about reading and the future of books in a whole new way. I'm not a professional book person -- just a passionate reader -- and what Meyers has done in this short volume is written something like a love letter to the future of the book. Reminded me a lot of Strunk and White and made me thankful that there are people like Meyers who have a special understanding of what readers need and how technology can help...rather than get in the way.

We moved abroad this year and couldn't take our books. I had to make the leap, finally, to all digital. I miss books! This creative and thoughtful short read helped me understand why, exactly. It shows clearly what I'm missing, and helps me appreciate the digital world. For a booklover, this is an

inspiring and optimistic look at what we have to look forward to, and why the change to digital is worth it. I needed to hear this!

I am the former Editor-in-Chief of Teleread, the web's oldest blog about ebooks. I currently run a curated Twitter feed on ebook news. In my capacity of "ebook journalist" I've known Peter for a number of years and have to follow him closely because he is such an important figure in the area of ebook design and conception.For anyone interested in the design, potential, future or impact of ebooks and epublishing, this book is a must read.

I've been involved in electronic storytelling for 3 years now, and Pete has absolutely one of the gurus since the time that I got started. He can translate the written word into a compelling on-screen experience like nobody else. I consider this book a must read for anyone looking to tell powerful stories in a digital format!

The author correctly points out that e-books are not just print books turned into pixels. They're both more and less than their printed counterparts and many of the early attempts at e-book publishing have shown this to be true. With examples and theory the author addresses why we read -- not just why we read printed books -- and discusses the many ways that e-books can help us fulfill our passion for reading in ways that print can't. He presents many useful examples where e-books currently succeed and fail, and explores details of how e-books can greatly increase our experience of reading.

Peter Meyers has promised a "book" about the transformation of books from print to digital that is not solely for the technophile or design enthusiast. And he has delivered. Breaking the Page begins a thoughtful discussion about print versus digital in the context of the ever-evolving way we read, including a thought-provoking chapter on how we share our favorite reading material in this new digital world, without losing the average reader with too much tech talk. Like Mr. Meyers, you may not yet have picked sides, but Breaking the Page will better equip you to think through the conflict, and talk about it.

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