Who do we want our hypertexts to be?
WHO DO WE WANT OUR HYPERTEXTS TO BE?

BAD CHARACTER

Our slaves of steel might serve us best when they assert their servitude and resist our will.

1. The Clever Slave
2. Quite a Character!
3. Building Character
4. Dangerous Resistance
5. My Mistress’ Eyes Are Nothing Like the Son
6. Out of Sympathy
7. Conclusion: Unfriendly Comfort
“When we collaborate with machines, it is people who must do all the accommodation. Why shouldn’t the machine be more friendly?”

All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain

Blade Runner (1982)
SEAMLESS, SUBSERVIENT, UNOBTUSIVE DIGITAL AGENTS AMPLIFY FAILURE AND HIDE SUCCESS.

Your servant is not your friend.
Reguless are not friends. They are guests."

- Stephanie Danler, *Sweetbitter*

Photo by Clem Onojeghuo on Unsplash
SIRI DOESN’T LIKE YOU

If we knew what we wanted to do, we would simply do it.

What we want is an agent that does better, that shows us not what we wanted, but rather what we never thought to want.

Ex Machina (2014)
“A tour guide that shows us the shortest way to the tour Eiffel is nice, but a guide that finds the current residence of a college sweetheart just off the route is far better.”

- From the Paper.

Bob Lavin, Tomorrow and Tomorrow (1956)
IS CHARACTER FEASIBLE?

Tel était donc le train. Léon Benett. 1896

An illustration from Jules Verne, *The Steam House (La Maison à vapeur: Voyage à travers l’Inde septentrionale)*

A train drawn across India by a steam elephant!
“Sherlock Holmes after all is mostly an attitude and a few dozen lines of unforgettable dialogue.”

- Raymond Chandler, “The Simple Art of Murder”
3. BUILDING CHARACTER

CHARACTERS ASSERT THEIR IDENTITY

Boomer (Model 8), Battlestar Galactica
It is easier to draw a character who is not like us:

A wooden toy that wants to be a real boy,

A princess who wants a night on the town.

Artificial Intelligence (2001)
19TH CENTURY: WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

Rabbi Löwe and the golem of Prague

Frankenstein

But remember, please, the Law by which we live,
We are not built to comprehend a lie,
We can neither love nor pity nor forgive.

Rudyard Kipling, The Secret Of Machines
LATE 20TH CENTURY: ROBOTS, CLASS, AND RACE

Murray Leinster, *A Logic Named Joe*

Isaac Asimov, *Strange Playfellows*

Southern trees bear a strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

— *Strange Fruit* (Abel Meeropol, who adopted Julius and Ethel Rosenberg’s children)
21ST: SINNING AND SINNED AGAINST

Martha Wells, *The Murderbot Diaries*

P. K. Dick, “*Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep*”

John Sladek, *Tik Tok*

4. DANGEROUS RESISTANCE

Michael James Talbot, Ophelia, 2000-2010
4. DANGEROUS RESISTANCE

THE SYMPATHY OF THINGS

Mark Bernstein
As We May Hear: Our Slaves Of Steel II
Hypertext 2018
“If once you believe that your interests and the system’s are perfectly aligned, the system’s first mistake is not just a blunder: it is a betrayal.”

From the Paper
“Night and day, I work for a guy who doesn’t care.”

- Leporello, Don Giovanni’s Servant
KNOWLEDGE NAVIGATOR
STARFIRE

The "Starfire" Video Prototype Project: A Case History

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ABSTRACT

Developing a new writing computer system can be a complex and challenging task. The traditional approach is to first build a complete prototype of the final system, then make changes and improvements based on user feedback. This process can be time-consuming and expensive. The "Starfire" project, on the other hand, takes a different approach.

The "Starfire" video prototype system was designed to provide a "virtual" prototype of the final system. This prototype is not a complete system, but rather a "mock-up" of the final system, designed to give users a feel for how the final system will work. The "Starfire" system was used to collect user feedback, which was then used to improve the final system.

The "Starfire" system was built using a combination of video and software technologies. The video portion of the system was used to provide a "live" display of the final system, while the software portion was used to control the system and collect user feedback.

KEYWORDS

video, video prototype, video editing, user interface, virtual reality, multimedia, user feedback, system design, system development, system evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Two years ago, Eastgate launched a project to develop a new writing computer system, called "Starfire." The project was designed to be a "video prototype," which was intended to provide a "virtual" prototype of the final system.

The "Starfire" project was a success. It provided a "virtual" prototype of the final system, which was used to collect user feedback. The feedback was then used to improve the final system.

However, the "Starfire" project also had some drawbacks. The "virtual" prototype was not a complete system, and it was not clear how the final system would work. The "Starfire" project was also expensive, and it took a long time to complete.

As a result, Eastgate is now considering a different approach to developing a new writing computer system. The new approach will be a "real" prototype, which will be a complete system that is designed to work in the real world.

REFERENCES


STARFIRE OBSERVATIONS & GUIDELINES

"Starfire" is an excellent example of how video can be used to develop a new writing computer system. The "Starfire" project provided a "virtual" prototype of the final system, which was used to collect user feedback. The feedback was then used to improve the final system.

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