

The summer of 2013 I spent 5 weeks and covered 5,000 miles on my motorcycle. Riding is one of the most inspirational and satisfying experiences in my life.



Slowbook

Updates received via U.S. mail,
November 2012-October 2013,
with correspondence between
the publisher and the bindery.

THE HEAVY DUTY PRESS
Viroqua, Wisconsin
U.S.A.

Preface

Once upon a time, I wondered what would happen if I announced on Facebook that I would make a book out of the first ten status updates I received by U.S. mail, as some sort of grand finale before deactivating my own account.

One thing I found out is you can't count on people sticking to the 420 character limit, which was once enforced by Facebook, the social media network that had one billion users on Monday, August 24, 2015, according to its founder:

We just passed an important milestone. For the first time ever, one billion people used Facebook in a single day.

On Monday, 1 in 7 people on Earth used Facebook to connect with their friends and family.

When we talk about our financials, we use average numbers, but this is different. This was the first time we reached this milestone, and it's just the beginning of connecting the whole world.

I'm so proud of our community for the progress we've made. Our community stands for giving every person a voice, for promoting understanding and for including everyone in the opportunities of our modern world.

A more open and connected world is a better world. It brings stronger relationships with those you love, a stronger economy with more opportunities, and a stronger society that reflects all of our values.

Thank you for being part of our community and for everything you've done to help us reach this milestone. I'm looking forward to seeing what we accomplish together.

The above status update posted by Mark Zuckerberg on August 27, 2015, received 216,000 “likes,” 10,000 comments, and was shared 17,000 times.

Fewer people will like, share, or comment on any of the contents in this book, but some might. **Please add your comments in ink on any page**, and if you enjoy your *Slowbook* experience, add a tally mark to the “Likes” page at the end.

Thank you.

It seems the roads we're drawn to follow the course of water; winding along the low lands or high above rocky gorges. We follow the natural contours over the crests and shoulders of mountains to find the next meander.

A collage on a blue grid background. At the top left, a teal square contains the word "relax" in a cursive font. To its right, a maroon rectangle contains the word "Renew" in a white sans-serif font. In the top right corner, the text "NOV. 25, 2012" is written in a large, bold, black font. Below this, a white rectangle contains the phrase "Feel the love." in a black sans-serif font. A woman in a blue swimsuit is lying down, her head tilted back, with her arms raised. In the center, a white rectangle contains the text "dear timid embracers of change," in a blue sans-serif font. To the left of this, the words "Dear Mike," are written in a cursive font. Below that, the words "I am intrigued by your challenge to become a SLOW MEDIA ACTIVIST," are written in a cursive font. To the right of the central white rectangle, the words "I am noticing more & more how we have all been sucked into this almost 'STEAFORD WIVES' electronic existence. We are all so attached / dependent / addicted to our electronic gadgets - TV's, computers, I pads, I pods, I phones...." are written in a cursive font. In the center, there is a circular diagram with a question mark in the middle. The words "SET YOURSELF FREE" are written in a black sans-serif font above the diagram. The words "NOT THAT" are written in a black sans-serif font to the right of the diagram. The words "THIS" are written in a black sans-serif font to the left of the diagram. The words "BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT" are written in a black sans-serif font below the diagram. The words "WAKE UP" are written in a black sans-serif font below the diagram. The words "be a better you" are written in a black sans-serif font below the diagram. The words "take the 2 week challenge." are written in a blue sans-serif font below the diagram. The words "Shine like the star you are!" are written in a black sans-serif font at the bottom. A large red heart is on the left side of the collage. A large red heart is on the right side of the collage.

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personally, I am sick of it! We seem to be ^{always} texting & talking through our devices, but never really saying anything of any importance.

This "Big Bang Theory" scene says it all:

Howard - "I thought you didn't like facebook?"

Sheldon - "Don't be silly! I'm a fan of anything that tries to replace actual human contact."

Email has replaced "snail mail" which makes me so sad. A letter from a loved one brings such delight & becomes even sweeter with each re-reading of it. Letters bundled & saved are so very precious. When people write letters they share their souls. Along with the "news of the day", they express their hopes, dreams & desires.

I remember when my husband was away from home for an extended period of time how much our love letters meant to us. I always

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Kissed my letters before I placed each one into the mailbox.

So, YES! I want to be a SLOW MEDIA ACTIVIST! I want to disconnect from this electronic madness! I ^{will} want to be BOLD! I ^{will} want to be different! I ^{will} want to live large!

I WILL:

- start sending handwritten/art-filled letters to family & friends.

- CREATE MAIL ART to the astonishment of my local postal authority, my mail will be colorful, joyful, thought ~~provoking~~ provoking.

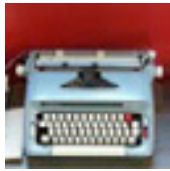
- start a "random acts of art" project to bring inspiration & encouragement to our community.

Gotta go..... lots to do.....

Emily

yes, with handwritten letters, there will be mistakes... THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF IT!!!

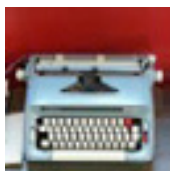
**Red handmade book with beige wrapping paper sheets, listing #114525971
Between you and Irene Lazzarin from SlowBook**



Mike Koppa
Feb 22, 2013

I am initiated a new project in late November and called it Slowbook. I think it would be interesting to work together on this. Let me know how you feel about that.
Most regards, Mike

heavydutypress.com/current-projects/



Mike Koppa
Feb 24, 2013

Listing: www.etsy.com/listing/114525971/red-handmade-book-with-beige-wrapping

Hello again...

Still wondering how many pages in this book. Pray tell.

Grazie!

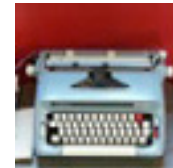
Mike



Irene Lazzarin
Feb 24, 2013

Hi!
sorry for the delay...I sell in my town this red book just in these days and y forgot to delete de articles. but i have all the materials and if you are interested i can made another one book and with how many pages you needs! I see your project "slow book"..so the world is little eheheh! i'm happy that you contact me. uor "slow book" projects are differents but if you want we could try to collaborate! can you explain me a little more how works your project? in what kind of book are you usally inter-ested? What's you work?
if you want, we will keep in contact.
bye!

irene
ps:sorry for my english!



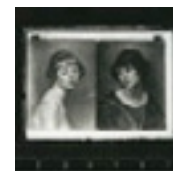
Mike Koppa
Feb 25, 2013

I could respond here, but lately I am getting a thrill out of postal mail, and would rather send you a letter in an envelope. If you would like that, please send your postal address, otherwise I will just reply here. Thank you for the reply!

Warm regards,

Mike

(I see Urbino on google maps and think of what a wonderful place it must be...it makes me want to send an envelope there!)



Irene Lazzarin
Feb 25, 2013

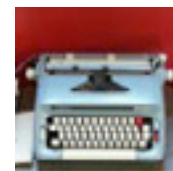
Ok I understand your project. I'm curious of your letter!
Would you start the letters or have I to start writing?
My address is

Irene Lazzarin
Via giro dei debitori 24
61029 Urbino (PU)
Italy

see you in my postbox!

irene

ps: urbino is very beautiful!



Mike Koppa
Feb 25, 2013
I will send a letter.

How sweet it is to have this conversation.

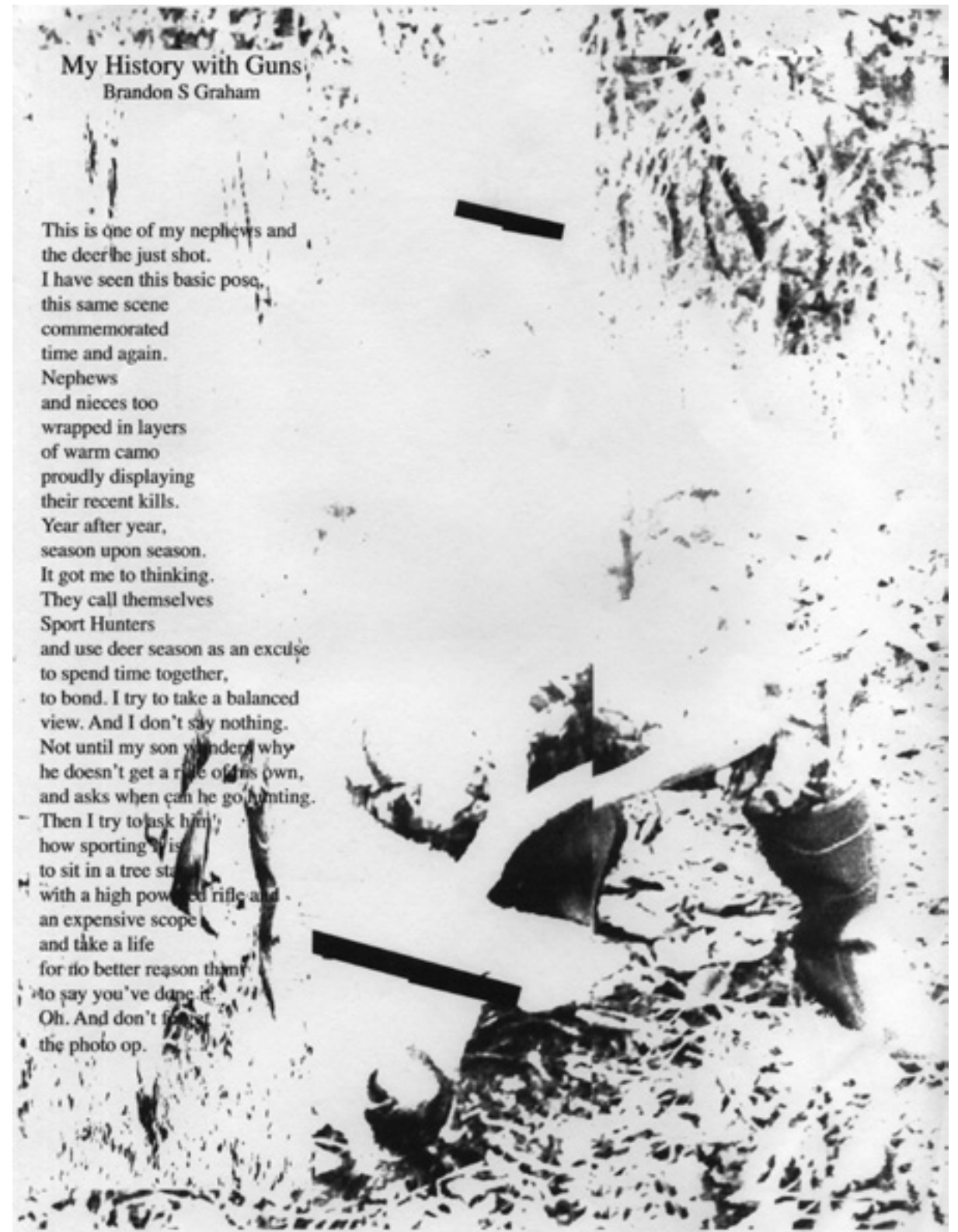
So much better than Facebook.



My History with Guns

Brandon S Graham

This is one of my nephews and
the deer he just shot.
I have seen this basic pose,
this same scene
commemorated
time and again.
Nephews
and nieces too
wrapped in layers
of warm camo
proudly displaying
their recent kills.
Year after year,
season upon season.
It got me to thinking.
They call themselves
Sport Hunters
and use deer season as an excuse
to spend time together,
to bond. I try to take a balanced
view. And I don't say nothing.
Not until my son wonders why
he doesn't get a rifle of his own,
and asks when can he go hunting.
Then I try to ask him
how sporting it is
to sit in a tree stand
with a high powered rifle and
an expensive scope
and take a life
for no better reason than
to say you've done it.
Oh. And don't forget
the photo op.



CORRIENONIS, L. V. 2013

Hi, dear Mike!

I'M SORRY FOR MY DELAY, FIRST I WAS REALLY REALLY OCCUPIED BY MY LAST EXAMS AT THE UNIVERSITY, AND THEN I WAS A LITTLE BIT SCARED ABOUT WRITING IN ENGLISH. So, SORRY IF YOU WILL FIND SOME ERRORS! I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR IDEAS AND I ADMIRE YOUR ~~EVAS~~ CURIOSITY ABOUT THE DIFFERENT INHABITANTS OF THIS BIG-LITTLE WORLD. I REALLY WOULD HELP YOU IN YOUR TWO PROJECT, IT'S AN HONOR FOR ME!

IT'S VERY HARD TO HAVE A MARKET IN THESE FIELD, BUT I THINK THAT THE IMPORTANT IS TO START AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHERE TO SHOW AND PURSUE THE PROJECT. THE REFLECTION OVER THE NEW COMMUNICATION MEDIA IS ACTUAL AND VERY IMPORTANT. I'M NOT OF THE IDEA THAT WE HAVE TO REPUSE THESE MEDIA THAT HAVE SYSTEM OF CONTROL, MARKETING AND CHANGE IN THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE, BUT WE HAVE TO BE CONSCIOUS AND TO REFLECT OVER EVERY COMFORT THAT THEY OFFER, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT NEUTRAL, EVERY COMFORT HAS SOME CONSEQUENCE, OFTEN NEGATIVE! WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH WE WANT TO 'PAY' FOR THESE SENSE OF EASIER RELATION WITH FAR AND NEAR FRIENDS. IN FACEBOOK I'VE DISCOVERED ENTIRE WORLDS, IMAGES VERY PERSONAL - FROM STRANGER COUNTRIES. BUT ALSO I LOOSE A LOT OF TIME AND KNOW THINGS, TOO MUCH THING, OVER CLOSE PERSONS. YOU DECIDED TO STAY OUT OF THAT BUT AT THE SAME TIME TO USE ONLY A LITTLE PART OF THE INTERNET GLOBAL COMMUNICATION TO FIND PEN-FRIENDS, COLLABORATORS I DON'T KNOW... CONTACTS, POINT OF VIEWS? AND IS

I'M VERY HAPPY NOW TO KNOW YOU AND THANK TO YOU I DISCOVERED A LESS FAMOUS PART OF USA ~~FOR~~, WISCONSIN, BUT THE FUNNY SIDE IS THAT IS VERY SIMILAR TO MY REGION, FRIULI! I WAS CURIOUS ABOUT WIROQUA AND I ~~SEARCHED~~ ^{SEEK} IT ON GOOGLE EARTH - STREET VIEW (ANOTHER MEDIUM THAT CHANGED A LOT OF THINGS!). YOUR ~~STATE~~ COUNTRY IS A LITTLE BIT GRAY, FULL OF FIELDS AND ANIMALS LIKE FRIULI! WIROQUA HAVE TO BE AN INTERESTING PLACE. DO YOU LIKE IT?

I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR PHOTOS OF YOUR WALK. WALK IS THE BEST WAY TO KNOW A TERRITORY, AND ALSO FOR THINKING. MY PHOTOGRAPHS ARE ALWAYS TAKEN DURING LONG WALKS IN ^{THE} CITY OR IN THE NATURE... AND I'M ALSO INSPIRED ABOUT THE 'WALKING-PHOTOGRAPHY' OF AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS! STEPHEN SHORE, WALKER EVANS, FRIEDLANDER, FRANK, ALSO THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPHERS DURING THE COLONIZATION THAT EXPLORED AN ~~UNKNOWN~~ UNSEEN LAND!

NOW I WILL SEND YOU SOME PICTURES TAKEN IN URBINO, BUT NOW YOU HAVE TO KNOW THAT I CHANGED MY CITY AND I'M BACK IN PORDENONE, FRIULI-REGION, IN THE HOUSE OF MY PARENTS. ONLY FOR SOME TIME, THEN I DON'T KNOW! I WOULD TO TRAVEL.

LET ME KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE PROJECTS OF THE BOOKS. MAYBE IT'S BETTER BROKE THE RULES AND TALK OF THE DETAILS ON INTERNET. IT'S A GOOD IDEA THE HANDMADE BOOK AND THAN THE SCANNING. MAYBE I SUGGEST THAT A PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTION COULD BE BETTER AND EASIER.

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR IDEAS



The Lone Road:

Each summer I log thousands of hours riding some of the most beautiful country in the United States. Sometimes I ride 100's of those miles with only the sounds of rubber on asphalt, other times I'm lulled by music. I absorb the myriad smells each season brings and take in the vistas with a painter's eye.

I stop and sketch or photograph. But nothing seemed to convey the rapid fire panorama of colors, textures, and forms of riding at 80 miles an hour. The world goes by with brief notes glimpsed in my peripheral vision. Some of these I see with amazing clarity and they remain in my mind's eye.

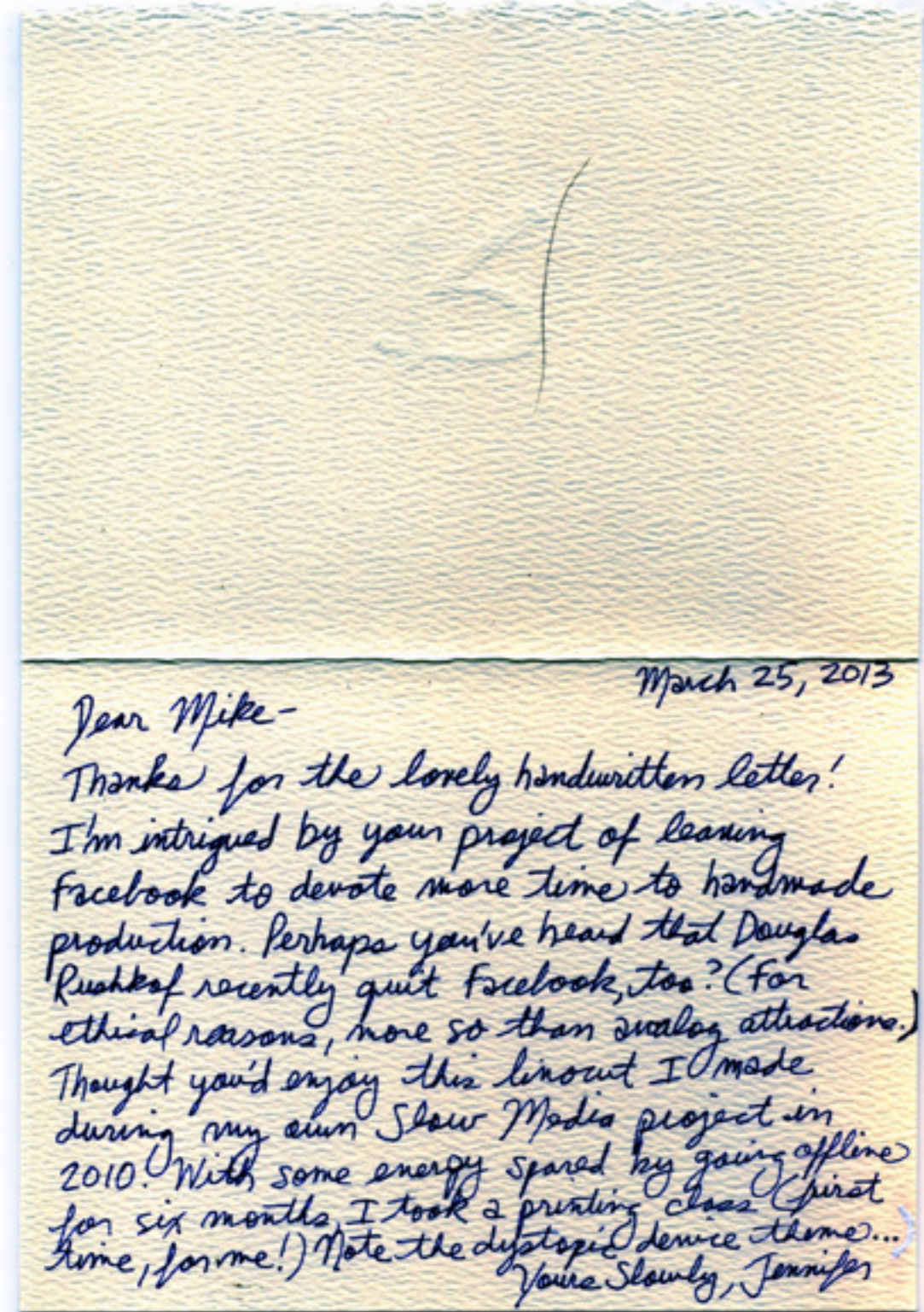
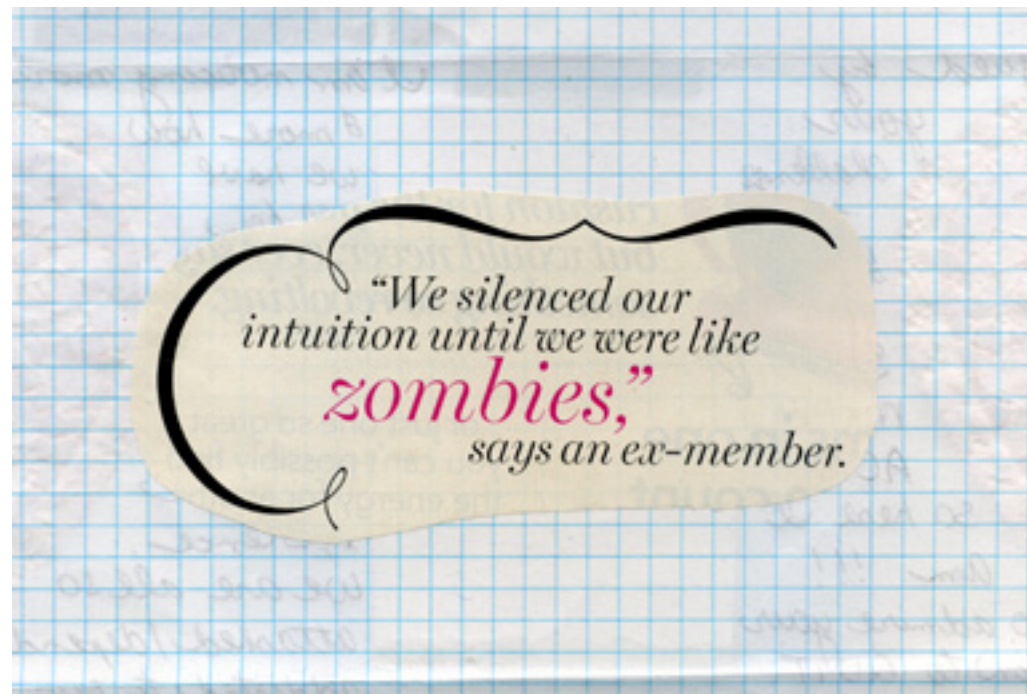
A look down might find a beautiful butterfly stuck to the windshield and moments later it's torn away; a lone sunflower its head above a field of wheat, here then gone. Roads dappled with warm sun and cool shadow, wind through red rock canyons and chilly mountain passes.

I also collect scraps of paper and wrappers during my travels which I later incorporate into my images. These bleached and worn fragments speak of other travelers and the passage of time.



About my History with Guns #1
by Brandon Graham

My granddaddy bought my mother
a feminine revolver
to keep under her pillow
while she was in nursing school.
After she married my father,
Granddaddy asked for it back,
but my father liked it,
and kept it in a drawer.
When I was four I found it
among cufflinks,
old black and white snap shots
of women I never met
and shoe shine supplies.
I sat on the floor and
took the loaded gun in my lap
and knew it was special.
To me it was my father:
cold,
hard,
and foreign.
While my mother
fed my sister
a slurry
of rich green peas
in the kitchen
I took
the barrel of the gun,
put it to my nose and
drew the harsh scent
into me.
My father found me there,
jerked me up by one arm
and dragged me to the backyard.
"This is not a toy."
He took aim
at a half rotten fence post
and blew it to fuck.
It scared me so
I jumped straight up
and cried till snot ran into my mouth.
"Now," he said
ripping my hands from my ears
"you know to leave this alone."
Then he put it back in the same drawer.





Then I could face this thing
before language got invented for me
before thought settled in, before criticism, self flagellation and
Before Fear.

DISTANT THUNDER

We live our lives, forever taking leave.
- RAINER MARIA RILKE

What began in heat and the clash of amorous intent soon
settled into fitful misunderstandings we learned to tolerate,
and thought them whole, our world entire. Allowances were made,
as we settled our accounts and allocated blame, each to the other.

There are few surprises left, for all accumulated hurts have been
carefully catalogued by type and stored away. But, oh, remember,
Dear, how in our prime, round and round we went. Mistaking argument
for care, we found reproach - more than enough to share - and share we did,
in wild abundance and abandon. We drew our knives - and sometimes, blood.

No, we have not forgotten much, nor let forgiveness in, this dance we learned,
our substitute for love. And while our hearts seem to have healed - we
still live our measured lives in silence, leaving just this cold night
that shivers into just another day.

PACKAGED GOODS

Most things come pre-packaged these days —
a hundred pills or index cards, a ream of paper.
But who would actually take the time
to count each pill, card, or sheet of paper?
A dozen of anything, sure — but a gross?

Anyway, from what I understand
nothing is actually counted any more,
it's weighed. So many grams or ounces adds up
to a hundred pills or index cards, a ream of paper,
just so many pencil leads, pennies, dimes...

Thus: Change the scale, you change the count.
It really is just that simple. And you didn't
even notice. Did you?

ROUGH DRAFT

I have heard it said
that words frame intent.
I once saved every iteration
of a poem to catch the moment
of an idea, only to find
the secret really does
protect itself, each draft opaque
to itself and to those before
and after...

LOST AND FOUND

(Transcribed from a scrap
of paper left in a library book)

Bridget was going to
have a get together
at her cabin tonight
& tomorrow night.
It would be cool, but
she can't have it.
That reminds me...
At Xmas Mass in Hawaii
We stood to recite
the "Gloria" and
it started w/
"Glory to God on the
highest..."
and I was saying it
out loud,
"and on the earth,
Below, peace &
happiness towards
all men of good will."
I was just daydreaming
& all the people
around me stopped
& listened, & I went
on to say,
The Angel said that a
Whole Host of Militant
Angels, etc.—
I was never so
embarrassed—

Let's do something
tonight.



I have friends who do not have children. Many of them have told me in no uncertain terms that having kids was not the right decision for them, and I respect that. I do not question the steps that people take to create the life they want to lead. On many occasions, though, I have been put on the defensive for having children - and it always leaves me a little out of sorts.

I remember something particularly stinging that a friend said to me. She was married, in her 40s, and had no children. We were having lunch together and talking about another friend whom she had recently found out was pregnant - a friend she thought would never have had kids. She could not understand why the friend had become pregnant, and worse yet, why she was keeping the baby. "I mean, I've seen what motherhood has done to you and my other mom friends," she said exasperatedly.

I had no words to respond to her. I had no way of explaining to my friend that "what motherhood had done to me" was not at all represented in what she was seeing - namely, my thinning hair, under-eye bags, reduced free time, and diminished discretionary income. I could not tell her that "what motherhood had done to me" was to make me want to reach out and comfort a baby I had never seen before who was crying in Target. What it lent me was the physical strength to pace with my daughter back and forth on the living room rug literally for hours, holding her, while her feverish body writhed in discomfort from a virus that was making her whole body itch. What it helped me learn was to pitch underhand to my son and pick up a few notes on the guitar and piano so I could experience what my kids were experiencing when they were learning a musical instrument. What it gave me was nonjudgmental empathy for the woman who stole to feed her kids. What it had prompted me to do was to weep - down right sob - every time I heard a report that a child was kidnapped or had perished in a fire or died of cancer or had been shot to death in school. What it had caused me to do was view every decision I made - what car to buy, what errand to run, what job to take, what parties to let go of, which mistakes to make - in the context of how it would affect my kids. Motherhood had made me realize that nothing that I could do would ever be wasted if it meant creating a better life for my son and daughter... and for others' sons and daughters.

I could not tell my friend this. For one thing, I didn't have the words to reply at that moment. But even if I could have, my words would have been misinterpreted. She might have advised that my job as a citizen of the world was also to think about the consequences of my actions on the world at large - the planet's natural resources, the atmosphere, civil rights, my own karmic existence.

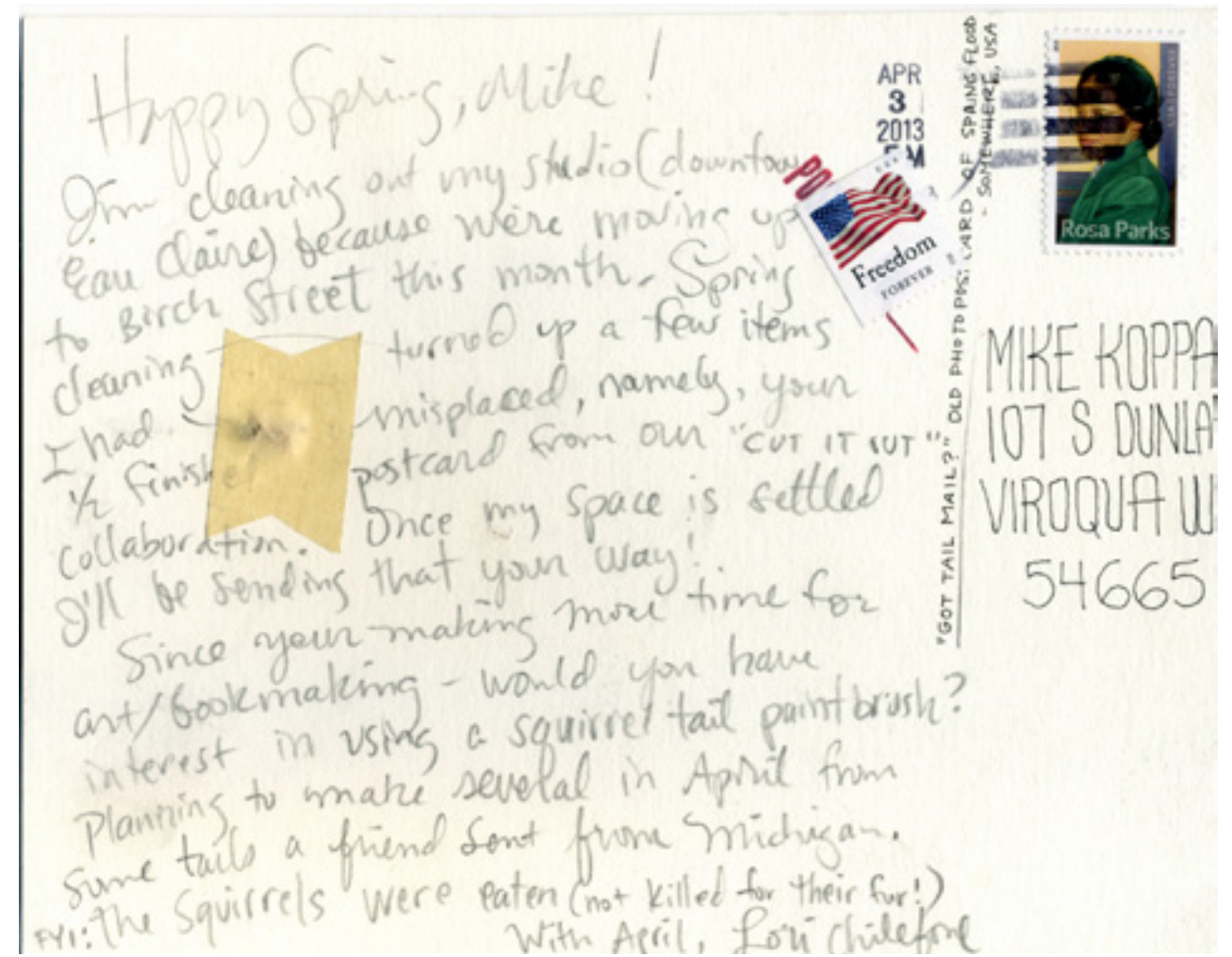
Yes, I earn an income. Yes, I have my own business. Yes, I produce "outside of the home." But being a mother has been my most meaningful, rewarding work. And it is my investment in the world. I wish I could have shouted it to the rooftops. But I kept silent and sipped my lemonade and ate my sandwich.

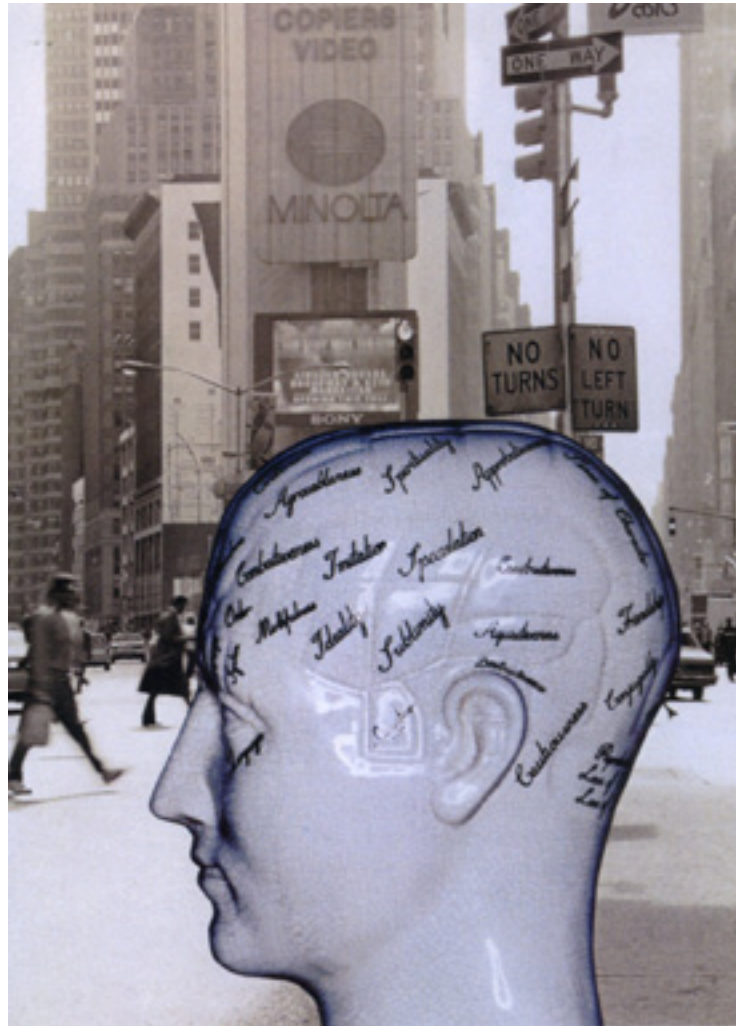
I could not tell my friend.



About my History with Guns #2 by Brandon Graham

On the morning we were to leave
for a three week vacation of
fishing and fish fries with old farm families
my Grandfather and I stood
on his porch
on his mountain
watching the sunlight bleed into the valley.
My grandfather put his face up
and sniffed the air
like an animal.
"You smell that?"
I didn't smell nothing and I said so.
"You stay put now."
When he walked back out on the porch
he brought his shot gun
broke open over the crook of his arm
was stuffing pretty red tubes into the barrels.
He snapped it closed.
"Come with me and stay close."
I followed him onto the gravel drive,
"You smell that now?" he whispered.
I shook my head no
Again he sniffed the damp morning air,
used the gun to point
at his woodpile.
"Copperhead," he said.
He took aim at a spot in the woodpile.
I covered my ears 'cause I knew what came next.
When he was done
the smoke blew away
and the woods
stopped vibrating.
He walked over sideways and cautious
used the end of the gun
to fish out a snake
a blunt and bleeding stump
where the head should be.
He took it in his hand and held it up proud
like a big mouthed bass on a stringer
and made sure I got a good look.
He eyed it over
deciding if it was a keeper
then he pitched it in the grass
where his German Sheppard Tippy
could get at it.
To this day I don't know if it was a put on
if it is even possible to decipher
the acrid metal smell he claimed
a copperhead gave off
in the whipping wind
of a summer morning.
All I know is I never smelled it.





20 April 2013

Dear Mike,

Thanks for your persistent & creative efforts to compel your friends & connections to engage in the apparently almost lost art of correspondence via post. Twenty years ago I would write to friends & family several times a week. I have shoeboxes full of their return (& instigating) postcards & letters. A decade ago I noticed that I had written just a few letters per year, and I noticed this only as I was writing holiday cards. This year I did not even send many holiday cards - only people who sent me a card got one back.

When you first invited us to write to you I assumed you would get 10 letters easily within a week. When I saw people chastising you for quitting Facebook I wanted to send you a letter just to spite them.

Earlier this week after reading an article about the origins of Earth Day & reflecting on my declining participation in it over the years (even as I have made major personal commitments aligned with environmentalism - like not

owning a car) I decided to spend today away from my computer.

I decided this earlier in the week & then quickly forgot. Already this morning (it's about 10 now in Milwaukee) here I went to my email & Twitterfeed. Then I got your email invitation to Gays Mills. And, what???? you still only have 7 letters?!!

I'm a shy person & have an irrational aversion to seeing this letter in print should that Slow Book ever materialize, but it's Earth Day & I needed to write to you. I also needed to write down, with a witness, that I'm spending today away from my computer - FOR REAL!

My plan is to play my vibraphone (I'm trying to learn this new-to-me instrument), go for a walk, cook a good meal at home & then ride my bike to a live performance at Turner Hall.

(If this letter ends up in circulation - or if you are a real stickler secretly - let me say that I KNOW Earth Day is really Monday but I have to teach at Alverno College that day so there is no way to be computer free. I'll do my usual bus commute & vegetarian lunch but a day without computer really has to be today.)

②

Maybe people aren't writing you more letters because it now feels weird to be tentative or mundane in any context that's not ephemeral & quickly generated.

Maybe people feel like they should be doing really important things if they're going to write you a letter about their lives.

Maybe people don't have a post office nearby or a mailbox on their street.

You've probably thought about all of these scenarios & many others, most of which are pretty depressing. I'm glad you weren't content just to know how sad it is that our culture has changed in this way & that you invited, encouraged & inspired me to keep in touch with you, today via a letter. I'm really looking forward to what comes next.

I hope that you & your family are enjoying our slow spring.

Milwaukee says hello!

Jim

A CRITIC AT LARGE

WHEN THE EARTH MOVED

What happened to the environmental movement?

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

On September 20, 1969, Gaylord Nelson, a Democratic senator from Wisconsin, gave a lightly publicized speech in Seattle in which he remarked, "I am convinced that the same concern the youth of this nation took in changing this nation's priorities on the war in Vietnam and on civil rights can be shown for the problem of the environment. That is why I plan to see to it that a national teach-in is held." Nelson had been pushing environmental issues for some years, initially worried that water pollution was hurting fishing, canoeing, and other forms of outdoor recreation in his state. In 1963, as a freshman senator, he persuaded President John F. Kennedy to stage a national "conservation tour" to talk about the issue. Kennedy visited eleven states in five days, just two months before his assassination, but the trip was a bust: anemic crowds, little attention, and not much obvious passion from Kennedy himself.

But Nelson's idea of a national teach-in took off, to an extent that surprised even him. On April 22, 1970, only seven months after his speech in Seattle, the teach-in, dubbed Earth Day, generated more than twelve thousand events across the country, many of them in high schools and colleges, with more than thirty-five thousand speakers. "Today" devoted ten hours of airtime to it. Congress took the day off, and two-thirds of its members spoke at Earth Day events. In all, millions of people participated. This activity was largely uncoordinated. Earth Day had a tiny national staff—a handful of young activists—and there were no big environmental groups around to get behind it. The staff imposed mini-

mal central direction over the local activity, and chose not to put on a main event, like a march on Washington.

Adam Rome's genial new book, *The Genius of Earth Day: How a 1970 Teach-in Unexpectedly Made the First Green Generation* (Hill & Wang), brings to life another era. We're as distant from Earth Day as the Battle of

The Environmental Defense Fund was two years old. Things like bottle recycling and organic food were exotic.

Earth Day's success was partly a matter of timing: it took place at the moment when years of slowly building environmental awareness were coming to a head, and when the energy of the sixties was ready to be directed somewhere besides the Vietnam War and the civil-rights movement. A coterie of celebrated environmental prophets—Rachel Carson, David Brower, Barry Commoner, Paul Ehrlich—had already established themselves, and Rome reminds us of the larger context: a suburbanizing, middle-class nation was increasingly aware of the outdoors and prepared to define liberalism in more than purely economic terms.

Earth Day had consequences: it led to the Clean Air Act of 1970, the Clean Water Act of 1972, and the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and to the creation, just eight months after the event, of the Environmental Protection Agency. Throughout the nineteen-seventies, mostly during the Republican Administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, Congress passed one environmental bill after another, establishing national controls on air and water pollution. And most of the familiar big green groups are, in their current form, offspring of Earth Day. Dozens of colleges and universities instituted environmental-studies programs, and even many small newspapers created full-time environmental beats.

Then, forty years after Earth Day, in the summer of 2010, the environmental movement suffered a humiliating defeat as unexpected as the success of Earth Day had been. The Senate Majority Leader, Harry Reid,

announced that he would not bring to a vote a bill meant to address the greatest environmental problem of our time—global warming. The movement had poured years of effort into the bill, which involved a complicated system for limiting carbon emissions. Now it was dead, and there has been no significant environmental legislation since. Indeed, one



Earth Day began as a minimally organized teach-in.

Gettysburg was from James Monroe's reelection, and Rome evokes a United States that feels, politically, like a foreign country. There were a number of liberal Republicans. Most active members of environmental groups were hunters and fishermen. The Sierra Club was an actual club that required new members to be proposed by old ones.

nineteenth century. It envisaged humans and nature as intertwined: landscapes artfully shaped for people's needs, people adapting their lives to natural contours, especially to the inevitability of death. Mount Auburn Cemetery, outside Boston, which opened in 1831, and its imitators (like Green-Wood Cemetery, in Brooklyn) are for him the exemplars of Arcadian America, with their rolling, parklike design and constant use by the living as well as by their belowground permanent residents.

Arcadia was a casualty of the Civil War—not just because the war was so profoundly unpastoral but also because, afterward, the country set itself, with renewed vigor, on a path of industrialism, deforestation, and Western expansion that was the opposite of the gentle equipoise with the land which defined the Arcadian ideal. Civil War cemeteries didn't have meandering layouts. They were grids, and so were cities and the large-scale farms that pioneers established west of the Mississippi River. In opposition to those excesses, the idea arose of wilderness preservation, which led to the establishment of the National Park Service. Sachs mistrusts that approach, because it's based on the idea of humans and nature occupying separate realms.

Sachs's reminiscent, associative style makes for interesting takes on dozens of writers, artists, and landscape architects, but it isn't well suited to forcing a main argument out into the open. It's refreshing to encounter a version of American history before the environmental movement that isn't just a procession of despoilers of nature, but Sachs has a fundamentally nonpolitical mind. When he recounts how Gilded Age writers whom he regards as potentially Arcadian, like Ignatius Donnelly, turned instead to socialism and other economic remedies, he is palpably disappointed. Here's where he winds up:

My hope, for all future generations, is that they will have (in addition to sunshine, fresh air, clean water, and fertile soil) a somewhat slower pace of life, with plenty of time to pause, in quiet places... haunted places—everyday, accessible places, open to the public—places that are not too radically transformed over time—places susceptible of cultivation, where people can express their caring, and nature can respond—places with rough, gnarled roots and tangled stalks, with digging mammals and noisy birds—places of common remembrance and hopeful guidance—places of unexpected encounters—places that breed

solidarity across difference—places where children can walk in the footsteps of those who have gone before—places that are personally up for adoption—places that have been humanized but not conquered or commodified—places that foster a kind of connectedness both mournful and celebratory.

Theda Skocpol, a political-science professor at Harvard and the author of the second report on the failure of the cap-and-trade bill in 2010, represents an academic sensibility that's the complete opposite of Aaron Sachs's. A proud daughter of blue-collar Macomb County, Michigan, Skocpol is hardheaded, plain-spoken, specific, practical-minded, and opinionated. For years, she has been studying the successes and failures of political movements, and her clear preference is for local organizing. Her master example is the pension system for Civil War veterans, which, thanks to the effective efforts of the veterans themselves, became so extensive and generous (at its peak, it accounted for more than forty per cent of the federal budget) that in the eighteen-eighties one of the largest government office buildings in Washington, now the National Building Museum, was built to administer it.

Skocpol dismisses the notion that climate-change legislation failed because Obama and Harry Reid were not sufficiently committed to it. They were initially no more committed to health-care reform, she asserts; a large pro-reform campaign that invested heavily in a fifty-state organizing effort, called Health Care for America Now, helped propel the legislation. By contrast, the forces behind the climate-change bill directed their money chiefly to the inside game in Washington, and secondarily to "messaging," rather than to organizing. (They ginned up an organization called Clean Energy Weeks, which was supposed to build public opinion in support of its bill. Bartosiewicz and Miley report that, after extensive polling, it came up with the slogan "More Jobs. Less Pollution. Greater Security"—not even mentioning global warming.) Skocpol scorns the tactic of trying to mobilize broad support exclusively through the media: "The public" is seen as a kind of background chorus that, hopefully, will sing on key, as the insiders try to manipulate people with focus-grouped phrases. Instead, she argues, "reformers will have to

build organizational networks across the country, and they will need to orchestrate sustained political efforts that stretch far beyond friendly Congressional offices, comfy board rooms, and posh retreats."

That doesn't mean that environmentalists should simply hand the movement over to the grassroots, demonstration-staging left. Reformers "cannot simply turn away from national politics," Skocpol writes. She has argued for years that liberal victories are more likely to be secured by "federated structures": groups that form state organizations and local chapters, which meet regularly to develop their larger political goals. The groups' national headquarters allow the local chapters to function according to their "local variety."

Democratizing the environmental movement may have policy implications, too. Skocpol advocates an alternative to cap-and-trade called cap-and-dividend, because it would put the fees levied on carbon emissions into the hands of individual voters, not companies. Cap-and-trade involves deals made among corporations. With cap-and-dividend, consumers who bought goods made by low-carbon manufacturers would get payments. This approach could give millions of Americans a direct stake in the system.

In the decades since Earth Day, Americans have become attuned to forms of social justice of which we used to be oblivious—the latest example is gay marriage, and the enlargement of the circle of concern that it stands for. Yet the cultural and economic distance between the top of American society and the broad middle has grown enormously. Political distances have grown, too. Gaylord Nelson's state is now a battleground, represented in the U.S. Senate by a Republican who is associated with the Tea Party and a Democrat who is the body's only gay member.

Meanwhile, liberals have come to take as a core creed the urgent need to reckon with global warming, and limit carbon emissions. To turn concern into action requires politics. The science of carbon emissions is there. The politics is not. On its anniversary, Earth Day is worth not just celebrating but also studying—as a story with political lessons. ■

uel said, "They didn't have shit. And folks, they were kicking around for two years. And I had those meetings in my office so it was not that I wasn't listening to them. This is a real big game, and you've got to wear your big-boy pants."

The environmental movement had certainly believed that it was playing the big game. Bartosiewicz and Miley estimate that the groups behind the climate-action partnership spent hundreds of millions of dollars in the effort to pass their bill. The organizers of Earth Day never would have been able to get a substantial group of corporate chief executives to sit down with them and negotiate, even if they had wanted to. Today's big environmental groups recruit through direct mail and the media, filling their rosters with millions of people who are happy to click "Like" on clean air. What the groups lack, however, is the Earth Day organizers' ability to generate thousands of events that people actually attend—the kind of activity that creates pressure on legislators.

Once you get past the cheering that President Obama aroused by mentioning climate change in his Inaugural Address (as he scarcely did during his reelection campaign), it becomes clear that his approach to climate change, in his second term, is to move still further in the same direction. That means entrusting the mission to regulators, and abandoning efforts to mobilize the public and its representatives. "I will direct my Cabinet to come up with executive actions we can take" to limit carbon emissions, he announced in his recent State of the Union address. Here was a President who had won reelection so decisively that there was talk about whether the Republican Party was doomed, and he was starting his second Administration by implicitly acknowledging that Congress would never pass any bill that would address the most serious and obvious environmental problem of our time.

The failure of environmental legislation isn't just a matter of faulty strategy. Part of Earth Day's success, Rome makes clear, was that it promised short-term, tangible, personal benefits in a way that climate-change legislation cannot. Back in 1970, suburban mothers (who, along with college students, made up the core of the new environmental movement) wanted to protect their children from

contaminated air, water, and food; hunters and fishermen wanted their habitats back. The danger of global warming, at least until recently, has been less local and less obvious. Since the original Earth Day, conservatives have grown increasingly hostile to environmentalism. After the rise of the Tea Party in the hinterland and an anti-environmental lobbying apparatus in Washington—and many years of Rush Limbaugh and his imitators mocking "environmentalist wackos"—even the few Republicans in Congress who had been concerned about climate change, like John McCain, were frightened away. Still, Obama's strategy is a short-term one. Republican members of Congress are lying in wait, poised to try to undo environmental regulations that they find excessive. For people who are serious about trying to restrict carbon emissions and slow the onset of climate change, the question is how to restore the environmental movement to the public realm.

Perhaps part of the problem is some fundamental mistake in the way we understand our environmental responsibilities. Aaron Sachs, a historian at Cornell, suggests as much in a long, ambitious new book called "Arcadian America: The Death and Life of an Environmen-

tal Tradition" (Yale). He rejects the ideal of protecting nature from human civilization. Instead, he thinks, we should revive an earlier, more integrated American tradition: "Our forebears were obsessed with the possibilities of Arcadia—that ancient society of solid rural values, of pastoralists who wandered free over a broad countryside of mountain meadows and forest glens, yet who also, somehow, established the kinds of stable civil institutions that ennobled Aristotle's Athens." To understand this tradition and then to bring it back to life, he believes, "could be precisely what's needed in the age of global warming."

"Arcadian America" is part of a series that Yale University Press has launched, called New Directions in Narrative History, which promises to publish books that "offer significant scholarly contributions while also embracing stylistic innovations as well as the classic techniques of storytelling." In Sachs's case, a historical essay has been interwoven with a personal memoir, mainly concerned with his rather unremarkable interactions with nature and with death. I could have done without the memoir. The historical sections of the book are executed at a higher level.

In Sachs's account, the Arcadian ideal prevailed in the first half of the



"I don't care what they do, as long as they don't mess with the thirty-two-ounce Martini."



"Do you, Thomas, promise to pay attention for the first year and phone it in for the rest of your life?"

could argue that there has been no major environmental legislation since 1990, when President George H. W. Bush signed a bill aimed at reducing acid rain. Today's environmental movement is vastly bigger, richer, and better connected than it was in 1970. It's also vastly less successful. What went wrong?

In Rome's view, the original Earth Day remains a model of effective political organizing. He believes that Gaylord Nelson's idea of a "teach-in" was more than just sixties jargon. It defined Earth Day as educational, school-based, widely distributed, locally controlled, and mass-participatory. He draws a contrast with Earth Day 1990, a far better planned, better funded, more elaborately orchestrated anniversary event, which turned out more than a million people in Central Park and two hundred thousand on the Mall in Washington but had far fewer lasting effects. That was because Earth Day 1990 was, Rome says, "more top-down and more directive" than Earth Day 1970, and more attuned to advertising and marketing than to organizing. Earth Day 1990 kept its message simple, because

its organizers "sought to 'enlist' people in a well-defined movement, not to enable them to work out their own vision of how they might make a difference."

I was involved in commissioning two reports, published online earlier this year by an organization called the Scholars Strategy Network, on why the big effort to pass carbon-limiting legislation failed in 2010. Both reports confirm the basic picture that Rome describes. Even as the environmental movement has become an established presence in Washington, it has become less able to win legislative victories. It has concentrated on the inside game, at the expense of efforts at broad-based organizing.

The story of the Environmental Defense Fund is illustrative. Rome presents the infant E.D.F. as a raggedy group of amateur activists on Long Island, whose motto was "Sue the bastards." It helped to get DDT banned in New York and elsewhere, and successfully pushed for water-safety standards nationwide. By the mid-eighties, though, it had become moribund, and a new president, Fred Krupp, then thirty years old, advocated an accommodationist direction for the movement, focussed on deal-making

with big business and with Republicans. In the summer of 2006, Krupp and a few allies began assembling a coalition that met regularly at the offices of a professional mediation firm in Washington. He persuaded a number of major corporations with heavy carbon footprints, like Duke Energy, BP, and General Electric, to join. The coalition became an official organization called the U.S. Climate Action Partnership, funded primarily by a handful of major philanthropists and foundations. Shortly before President Obama's Inauguration, USCAP released the fruit of its labors: a draft of the ill-fated carbon-emissions bill.

Back in the Earth Day era, the federal government would deal with such emissions simply by ordering limits on them. Since then, market solutions to big social problems have triumphed. For years, "cap-and-trade," a system of tradable permits for carbon emissions, had been the solution preferred by many of the established environmental groups, because that seemed to be the best way to bring business on board. (For the same reason, Democrats came to favor a market mechanism—private health exchanges—to achieve their long-cherished dream of universal health care.) But in previous years even cap-and-trade bills had repeatedly been defeated by Republican opponents. Petra Bartosiewicz and Marianna Miley, the authors of one of the reports on the failure of the legislation, observe that, as a result, the major environmental groups felt that they had to strike enough deals with big business in advance to guarantee at least some Republican support.

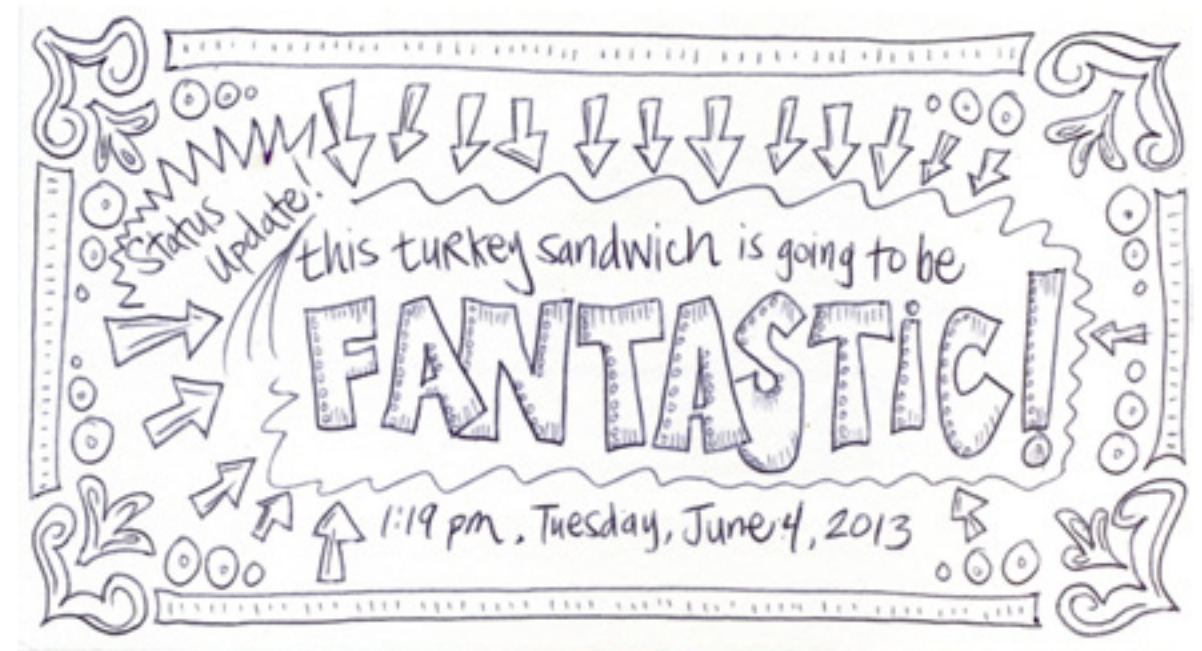
In the summer of 2009, Democrats in the House of Representatives, joined by a handful of Republicans, passed a bill based on the USCAP framework. It was fourteen hundred pages long. Almost immediately, corporate members dropped out of the coalition; as the grand alliance unravelled, the bill languished in the Senate. After Harry Reid, then in a tight reelection campaign against a Tea Party candidate, dropped it, Rahm Emanuel, the White House chief of staff, blasted the environmentalists' political ineptitude at a private meeting. (Bartosiewicz and Miley obtained a tape recording.) The big environmental groups had promised the White House that they could deliver a few key Republican votes in the Senate. Instead, Eman-



About my History with Guns #3
by Brandon Graham

My Daddy always liked to say
"The Blue Ridge Parkway
is the prettiest place
on God's green earth."
'Course his heart
calls that part of the country home
so you have to allow for some bias.
He said it again
the day my cousin Tim drove us
crazy fast,
flipping us around
hairpin switch backs
on a one lane
unpaved country lane
that stepped like stairs
up the side of a round-top mountain
not more than nine miles
from the spot my Daddy was born
and his own Daddy dropped dead.
"This is the cutest little church
you ever seen," Tim is saying
'cause he's a preacher
fresh out of bible school
and he got himself an old country church
he wants to show us real bad.
The road just stops,
butts right up to Blue Ridge Bible Baptist,
like the road was just a long,
twisted ribbon of driveway.
The church is one, cavernous
brown room
with dark pews down
both sides of a central aisle
leading straight to a pulpit.
Tall windows
along the sidewalls
with dried glazing
and cracked panes
let the
honest
God-fearing
mountain air
blow straight through

Tim stands up front,
 strides around,
 his tennis shoe stamping pretty good
 sending echoes off the walls
 telling us this and that
 about his plans
 for the souls
 of the dirt farmers
 who gather to learn the wisdom
 that my twenty-two year old cousin
 has to offer.
 After a time we pop the trunk on his car
 and pull out a squirrel gun
 Tim called it a "four ten twenty-two over under"
 which I know now
 means it had two different barrels for two kinds of ammo
 stacked one on the other.
 Behind the bible church
 we drag an old log
 across a gully
 and line it with the rusted
 tin cans we find
 lying around
 plus the fender
 off an old motorcycle
 that quit running
 decades earlier
 and was left to rot.
 I stand with my back to the church
 close one eye
 line up down the barrel
 and fill the mountain top
 with thunder.
 That first shot kicks,
 I stumble over
 fall on my ass
 in wet leaves.
 I stay there,
 in the wet
 looking up at the sun
 the canopy swaying
 over head
 as the boy preacher
 and my Daddy laugh and laugh.





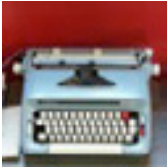
Irene Lazzarin

Jun 19, 2013

Hi! I'm very sorry for haven't write to you yet. I'm very very occupied by my last 8 exams at the university. Write a letter in english for me is not so natural, so I need some time and every day i finish to work very late. But in July I will be free and i will write to you, i very appreciate your letter.

Sorry!! I will repare.

Irene



Mike Koppa

Jul 10, 2013

Irene, thank you for writing, and now it is I who must be sorry for the delay in correspondence!

As for the "SLOWBOOK" I am making, I think I told you I was waiting for 10 people to send something for me to include. I received the tenth (#10) in the mail last month and will have time to put it all together in the coming months. My goal is to be finished with the project by middle November. I am not sure how many pages and what size book I need, but will give you that information as soon as I get it figured...I am hoping that will be in a week or two at the most.

More soon!



Irene Lazzarin

Jul 11, 2013

Ok perfect! today my last exam and next week i'll write you! send me all the information you have and then i purpose you some solution for the book :)

see you soon!

irene

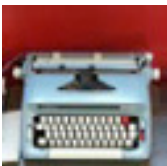


Irene Lazzarin

Sep 19, 2013

Hi...have you received my letter in august? or is it lost? I hope it's all ok!

Bye :) Irene



Mike Koppa

Sep 19, 2013

I did receive your letter and it was a real treat. I am sorry I have not been able to write back yet. I hope to get to that soon. I keep trying to figure out how I can get you involved in this Slowbook project, but I'm just not sure how it's going to be possible.

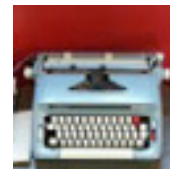
The only thing I can think of is maybe to just buy a book from you and use it to scrap-book in all the entries received. Do you have any blank books to sell? Apx 40 pages, at least A4 page size?



Irene Lazzarin

Sep 20, 2013

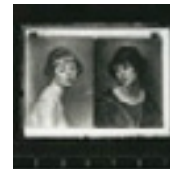
Hi! Yes I have this book with A4 pages...but I don't know what is your project, do you want to put the letters on the pages with the possibility to take out the sheets? like the old albums of photo? or do you want that the letter is also the page? maybe is better for read the two sides. As you want! If you want explain me what is your idea we can project a book tighter that i can send you with your collage (do you remember?), or if you prefer i can send you an A4 book. Don't worry! I'm sure your project will be great :)



Mike Koppa

Mar 13, 2014

I am still here, and this correspondence is still on my mind. Always busy with too many things. I will compose a letter to you someday soon, I hope. This note is only to tell you that I have not forgotten about this dialogue. I hope all is well for you over there! Mike



Irene Lazzarin

Mar 13, 2014

Thank you! What a surprise! but have you send yet? because i have a new adress! i'm not in urbino, my new address is

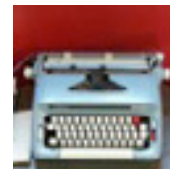
irene lazzarin

via monte raut 1

33084 cordenons (PN)

italy

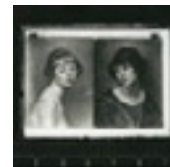
but if you sent yet the letter is not a problem, in my old home live my friends maybe they will receive your letter and can send to my. bye! i'll wait your message!



Mike Koppa

Aug 18, 2014

Checking here for address and composing a letter today. Is the address above current?



Irene Lazzarin

Aug 20, 2014

Yes I'm in Cordenons yet! I'll wait for you letter, see you soon (on paper) Mike!

THE HEAVY DUTY PBE22

107 S. Dunlap Ave. | Viroqua, WI 54665 | U.S.A.

19 August 2014

Dear Irene,

It has been a long time since I wrote to you last about the Slowbook project. Some things take a long time to complete, but I have a good history of finishing the projects I start — especially the ones that involve other people — and I intend to see this one through to completion.

Before discussing the Slowbook project, however, I want to thank you for your beautifully written letter from last August. The thoughts about the communication conveniences at our fingertips today, consequences, and benefits, were all well received. I also can

Mike Koppa, proprietor
viroquacreative@gmail.com

appreciate your interest in travel and curiosity about other parts of the planet — to take a few moments to view satellite images of the area where I live — this is such an amazing technology and it is most definitely changing the way we humans perceive our very existence. The "small world" becomes smaller, both in the ways we can view it and in the ways we can communicate with people all around it, in an instant, whenever we wish. Yet while it gets smaller, we wade in shallow water — some of us — and take less time to dig deeper into the soil beneath our feet or to look into the eyes of strangers we meet on the streets of cities we live in. Or so it seems, generally speaking. What's fun — more fun, maybe — is to take advantage of this old tech-

nology while it's still available to ⁽²⁾ us, to slow our minds down enough to draw individual letters with ink pens, seal them in envelopes, address them, put our thoughts in boxes to be picked up and delivered to a mailbox, by hand, on another continent far, far away. All for less than \$1⁰⁰! The practice of this ritual is so uncommon in today's world that it almost seems like a secret. And, from what I've seen through Facebook posts, the people who embrace this are the artists—perhaps this is because, as my friendly and wise older neighbor suggests, artists are highly sensitive people, and physical mail is more sensitive than the electronic options popular today. Thus, the question, Is the human race becoming less

sensitive with every technological advancement? I suspect yes, and it's a little frightening, because that can't be good, and I wonder what will happen, eventually, to make the pendulum swing back the other way. I am hopeful that the artists will lead the way. I see it happening and I hope it gains momentum in the decades to come.

I didn't expect to carry on so much on that subject. And I am amused to think about how this communication began—me with a "Slowbook" project and a google search leading to you, these thoughts and this pen on a Tuesday morning in Viroqua, more than one year after the first electronic communication, slowly sharing ideas one letter, one word at a time. And it wouldn't

be happening if there was no will ⁽³⁾
to do it, if there was no will to do
something, no will to be creative,
to make a spark, to start a fire.

Let's talk about the book.

I came up with a solution yesterday,
but it would require a lot of help
from you. If you could make 25
blank books (A4 page-size), ~~64~~ pages
per book (16 pieces of paper folded
in half to make 32 leaves = 64 pages),
I could print out duplications of
all the content for the books and
"tip-in" the contents for each copy
of the book by hand, like a ~~scrap~~
scrap book. Basically I would be
making the same scrap book 25
times using the 25 books you make

and ship to me. 25 books, page size
is A4, 64 pages + cover. I will let
you choose the paper and cover. Covers
should be ~~th~~ blank but do not need
to ^{be} the same color. I will pay you for
the books and send you one copy
when it is completed. I can pay
\$10-\$20 per book, so you will need
to tell me whether or not you can
make the books for this price. I would
like to include our correspondence as
documentation within the book, if you
will give permission for that, and you
will be given credit as the maker
of the books. If you would please
respond ~~th~~ to this idea at your
earliest convenience I would greatly
appreciate it. I hope you can do it!

Best wishes,

C120

MIKE



About my History with Guns #4
by Brandon Graham

My Daddy and his two brothers

My Daddy and his two brothers
Were all in the military
Three different branches
During Vietnam.

Years later, at a cookout
At Old Mill Park
After feeding the ducks
And filling in the pond
I asked uncle L.G.
If he had any guns.
I'm not sure why.

But I remember he said
"I had two guns in my life,
a rifle
and a .38 revolver
I carried them with me over there
in the war.

"On the day I flew out
I handed them to my best friend,
Sammy,
I told him he might need them
Because he was going to be
Four more months in the shit."

I remember he cussed just like that,
Real easy.
"Did he give them back?" I asked
He said, "No. He got back and
Married a woman that was hard to be around
So we never got together.

"That's too bad."
"No," he said.
"All we had to talk about was the war
and I didn't want to think about that.
He can keep the damn guns.
I don't ever want to hold one again.



Irene Lazzarin

Aug 28, 2014

Hi! I received your letter, thank you very much for your words....and thank you for choosing me to prepare your books! I understand your idea. I can do it, by now in this next weeks. But I have a question: whydon't bind directly the prints of your letters? Usally do you print with your personal printer or you go in a shop? If you prefer to print at home ok, i'll do the books and then you will paste the letters. But if you want, i purpose to print there in my city a pdf with the scanned letters and bind the printed pages. Usally i go to my uncle, he print digital books for family, so the qualiity is medium, non bad but not the best one, but with a good price. If you want I can ask.

Or, returning to the original project, I can do white books. As the books will have few pages, i suggest the "bodoniana" cover, i attach you an image. I can do a black spine for all the books and different colors (not too much saturated) for the cover.

The price that you purpose it's ok, if you want an hardcover you have to calculate that i'll need to buy a lot of cardboard that it's not cheap. When I buy the materials and start to work I will suggest if is better 15, or 17 dollars, or 20 ok? depends from the time and the materials.

I'm sure that will be a great project, and I'm really curious to read the other letters!

Ok , let me know....I think that for this communication the mail is faster! so i can start in these days...

have a nice day!

Irene



Mike Koppa

Aug 28, 2014

Good morning, Irene! What a treat to find your message this morning...it's something how a project can get sidelined for so long and then a little spark makes everything fresh and exciting again. The image you attached is absolutely beautiful.

I considered your idea to have the book pages printed by your uncle, but I think I would rather have you send me blank books. Here's why: 1) It will be easier for me control and judge the quality of the printing if I do it here, either at home or with the local printer, 2) I still like the idea of pasting in reproductions of the contributions like a scrap book...it will be truer to the "Slowbook" title, both that it will be more intimate and immediate and take longer to create, and the perception of the viewer/user of the book will be altered as far as possible from electronic speedy media...it will be extra-physical, and 3) I just really like what I see in that photo you attached.

To get started, I suggest you make just one book and send it to me so I can see and hold it and approve it. When I have a prototype in my hands I will be able to confidently tell you to make the next 24, or give you specific instruction about what needs to be changed (if anything). This will eliminate the chance of you misunderstanding my request and making 25 books of the wrong size. We don't need any tragedy!

So, to repeat once more: I will need 25 blank books, pages can be white/natural (unbleached), A4 page size, 64 pages (32 leaves) + cover. I like a deckled fore edge, but if the paper/cost prohibits it, please trim as necessary. I REALLY like the book in the picture you sent. The cover is perfect as it is. I don't know if this is what you call hard-

cover (it looks like it is), but whatever it is, I would like to know the price for making 25 of those.

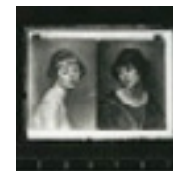
Hmmm...my only concern: pasting in additional paper to every page will make the book 3x thicker than your original blank book (depending on the thickness of the paper of the reproductions + adhesive). Now I'm wondering what kind of binding would accommodate this scrap book approach best. Any ideas/suggestions?

Let me know if you have further questions!

Thanks and ciao!

Mike

(ironic how we are choosing to use fast media to communicate about this book...it is the world we live in)



Irene Lazzarin

Sep 1, 2014

Good morning Mike!

Yes we are in a strange world, between the afraid of living all day "online" and its comfort!

I think that your idea of a first book as "test" is really good...as you see in my letters, my english is not so good (ahaha, what a shame!).

I reflected on your concern of the thickness. The binding can't do so much but the materials can. I think that the book's pages must be about 80/90 grams (light, a little bit heavier than the normal photocopy paper). Also the paper for the print must be not too much heavy (not more than 100 grams).

Moreover, i think that you could paste the letters with the spray glue, do you know? Is good because is like a sticky layer on the paper, but you have too use absolutely a good one, because the bad ones stains the paper. It's only a suggestion, but I think that could be a good solution. If you prefer, you can also use the transparent corners that you see in the image that i have attached.

A question: you named the book "scrapbook". Whydon't add an elastic strip like in the famous Moleskine? It could help to keep close the book also if is a little bit thicker for the letters. And is really "scrapbook". I think that finally the book, as you said, will be "intimate" and really concrete, so if is a little bit thicker is normal, like in every scrapbook where the people paste tickets and photos...

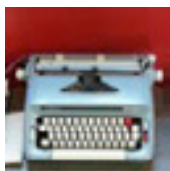
About the deckled fore edge i'm not sure that could be good...I looked some photo on Google and usally you find it in this books that looks like "medieval". They are made with natural/artisanal paper...if I cut A3 paper the results will be not the same! I don't know, if you have a photo of the result that you imagine for the fore edge send me a photo! I attach you the photo that I found today. But if you love it I can try for this "test" book and than we can decide if continue with this or not.

Last information: for realize all the hardcover (the two rigid plate of each book) I need six 100x70 cm sheets of cardboard. I have something at home, I can use it for free. If you see that is too thin I can buy a heavier cardboard. Usally is 5 euro for each 100x70 cm sheet.

I think that's all! Let me know!

Now me too I'm exited and curious about your project that is going to see the light!
I'll wait the last information from you for start working! :)
Have a nice day!
Bye! (and sorry for my english!!!)
Irene

ps: Sorry for my little delay, in these days I had hosts at home this weekend!



Mike Koppa
Sep 5, 2014
Dear Irene,

Good thoughts. Yes, I agree, lightweight pages and lightweight paper for the prints to be pasted in. I am not much interested in spray adhesive, but I know of an adhesive applicator called a Xyron machine, and this would be the right time to invest in one of those. It is basically a roll of 12" wide double-sided adhesive film, and there is an acid free adhesive available for it. I wonder if the weight of the pages should match the weight of the prints, or if the pages should be heavier than the prints. Do you have an opinion on that?

I like the idea for the elastic strap very much. Good thinking. Please add, if possible.

Forget about the deckled fore edge.

Go ahead and make the prototype with the thin cardboard. I am guessing it will be heavy enough.

Really looking forward to seeing your work. Maybe it's possible we could have it done by the end of the year!



Irene Lazzarin
Sep 11, 2014

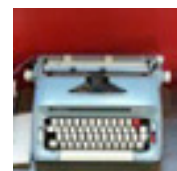
Hi! the inner pages are ready :)

Before start working to the cover i would send you an image with a color test. I have a lot of light grey cardboard for the cover. You can see it in the centre of the image. This color will be visible on the spine, as we decided to use the "bodoniana". So I tried to put close other possibles colors that I could use for the hardcover. I really like the hot yellow, the black and also this white paper that you see in the inferior parte of the image, is white paper with little coloured pieces of recycled paper. Do you like it? I can use also light green, beige, light blue, brown.

But, first of all: do you like the light gray or you prefer a dark color? I have a lot of this for free, but if you prefer a dark gray or brown cardboards, I can find it!

Let me know and thanks. Bye!

Irene



Mike Koppa

Sep 11, 2014

Thank you for the update.

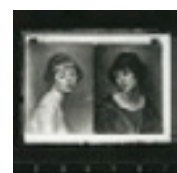
I am not sure what you mean by "bodoniana." Is this the binding you showed me in another photo...the one that I said I liked so much? I am guessing so.

If that is so, then what you mean is you will wrap the light grey boards with a colored paper, and if that is correct, I prefer the yellow also. Here in the U.S. we have traffic signs that read "SLOW" and they are that same yellow. So this is very appropriate. The spine...in the other image it looks like there is a colored paper over the cardboard of the spine also. If so, black would be the best choice, I think. But you mention in your message above that the spine would be the color of the light grey board...am I misunderstanding something?

It won't matter too much if the spine is grey or black. Either will be okay. But the hot yellow cover will be perfect.

Can't wait to see the prototype!

Mike



Irene Lazzarin

Sep 13, 2014

Ok so I go on with this beautiful yellow! Your idea of the traffic sign is perfect, and i really love this color.

I have to say that I always imagined your 25 books with different variation of color, but maybe is good to use the same for alls. A little "problem": the yellow paper in the photo is from an old hospital (it was used for the folds, I suppose) and I can't have other sheets. I have for realize 8 books like this. But don't worry! I can buy new normal paper with this color. I say you this little detail only because maybe you will see a little difference between the old and new paper.

I run to the shop!

Last thing: you said that the bodoniana' spine (yes, the bodoniana is the first photo that you liked) is covered. In the photo you see that is covered not whit paper but with a canvas, used in the binding laboratory. It's another added cost (7.75 euro for all the books) but is beautiful.

(This is a really busy week for me, two photo museums called me for job! Incredible! I think that soon I'll change again my address :))

It's good also because in a bigger city I'll have more paper shops that in my town!

Ok see you soon with the prototype! :)

Have a good weekend!

Irene



In Montana and Idaho, each dripping spring or melting glacier merges on its downward path gaining volume and speed. The rivers become like arteries of the nation, commerce, travel. The Blackfoot to the Clark Fork, the Pend Oreille to the Columbia, the Northfork to the Gunnison, and on to the Grand The Missouri to the Mississippi. Each defines a region, the Pacific Northwest, the South West, the Mid-West. A huge resounding rendition of Smetana's Moldau!

While in a bookstore

Every day, my mind swims.
Some days, it's in tranquil Northern Minnesota
On a 95-degree day, when no human can deny
Diving into a cool lake
And side-stroking to the buoy with the red stripes

Other days, it treads water
Shifting gaze frantically
Left-right-left-right
Wishing for some safety
Wondering why it jumped in
Chastising itself for not making a toe
Test the temperature

Today, it is somewhere in between
It darts from thought to thought with frenetic fluidity
Happy at the birth of a friend's daughter
Fearful about the feasibility of financing retirement
Eager in the prospect of re-reading Margaret Craven
Fretting over a relative's health
Tosky with that insufferable medical director who
Perpetually declares he is "right again."

I have a chocolate soft serve ice cream stain
on my sleeveless lavender top
I should have had more coffee this morning.
The heat has topped 101; can our kohlrabi survive?
I have no motivation to write about China's gold-standard guidelines for the clinical
treatment of dyslipidemia
So instead I pick at my cuticles
Watch my son pore through a book on sharks
And smile at my daughter, who has found
sanctuary in teen fiction.

Here—
in this air-conditioned bearer of books—
My mind at last reaches
its own retreat
Made familiar and homey
By life's customary chaos



Contributors

Irene Lazzarin

binder of the books

Deborah Mitchell

all the writing about motorcycle travel

Musta Fior

frontispiece

Emily Sytsma

*colorful handwritten letter with
collage on graph paper*

Brandon S. Graham

*poems about his history with guns and
inkjet prints of plastic army men*

Juliet McAra

five collage images on postcards

Jennifer Rauch

*handwritten letter on heavily textured paper and
linocut print depicting users of dystopic devices*

Lisa Chun

two original collages on boards

William Cody

the four poems between Lisa's collages

Jeanne Mettner

*short essay passively defending motherhood
and a poem about being in a bookstore*

Lori Chilefone

postcard with squirrel tail paintbrush

Jennifer Mikulay

*handwritten letter on canary note paper with article
regarding Earth Day from THE NEW YORKER*

Eric Widi

*the bit about the turkey sandwich being so excellent
with accompanying photographic image*

Tim Vermeulen

ransom note

Likes

Please add your tally mark here. Thank you.

Colophon

November 10, 2015, 6:45 p.m. Today set a record for latest motorcycle ride in any year—a 50-miler including Wisconsin State Highway 56 East from Viroqua to Liberty, County Trunk S north to Avalanche, Y due west across 14/27/61 to the Newton Valley on O, O south to 56, and 56 back into Viroqua with the sun setting behind me and the temperature an exhilarating 49°. The motorcycle is my favorite invention of all time.

I returned to my email to find a quote from the printer—WHOA! I CAN'T AFFORD TO PUT THAT MUCH DOUGH INTO THIS PROJECT! So, with the layout complete and the blank books on hand, I put faith in an old lesson once professed to me—"Books design themselves!"—and reduced the size of some of the contents to maximize use of the 11 x 17 sheets, to be printed locally and Proline Printing by Chet Melcher and his crew, and compromised a bit on the paper quality. It is what it is!

It has indeed been an extra slow project, largely due to other things being more important. But here it is, full documentation of the results of a whimsical call for submissions for an experiment comparing the value of creating something like this to three years of surfing online social media.

This limited edition of 21 books, handmade by Irene Lazzarin in Italy, and scrapbooked together by the publisher in Viroqua, Wisconsin, contains digitally printed text (set in contemporary Open Sans), scans of poems and prose hand scribed by the publisher, and reproductions of visuals received in the post box in 2013.

