

JOHN LATHAM'S LIBRARY

KELLY LLOYD



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Published in the United Kingdom by The Just Business Agency

ISBN 978-1-3999-0513-8

Printed in the United Kingdom

Book design by Kelly Lloyd

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Flat Time House, 2007

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John Latham's Marginalia in Ervin László, *The Creative Cosmos: Towards a Unified Science of Matter, Life and Mind* (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1993), 180-181.

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John Latham's Ephemeral Bookmark in Muhammad 'Ata ur-Rahim, *Jesus, Prophet of Islam* (New York City: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 2003).

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Tears Shared, Marc Camille Chaimowicz featuring Bruno Pélassy, Flat Time House, 16 June–31 July 2016

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Books for Work, Flat Time House, 2007

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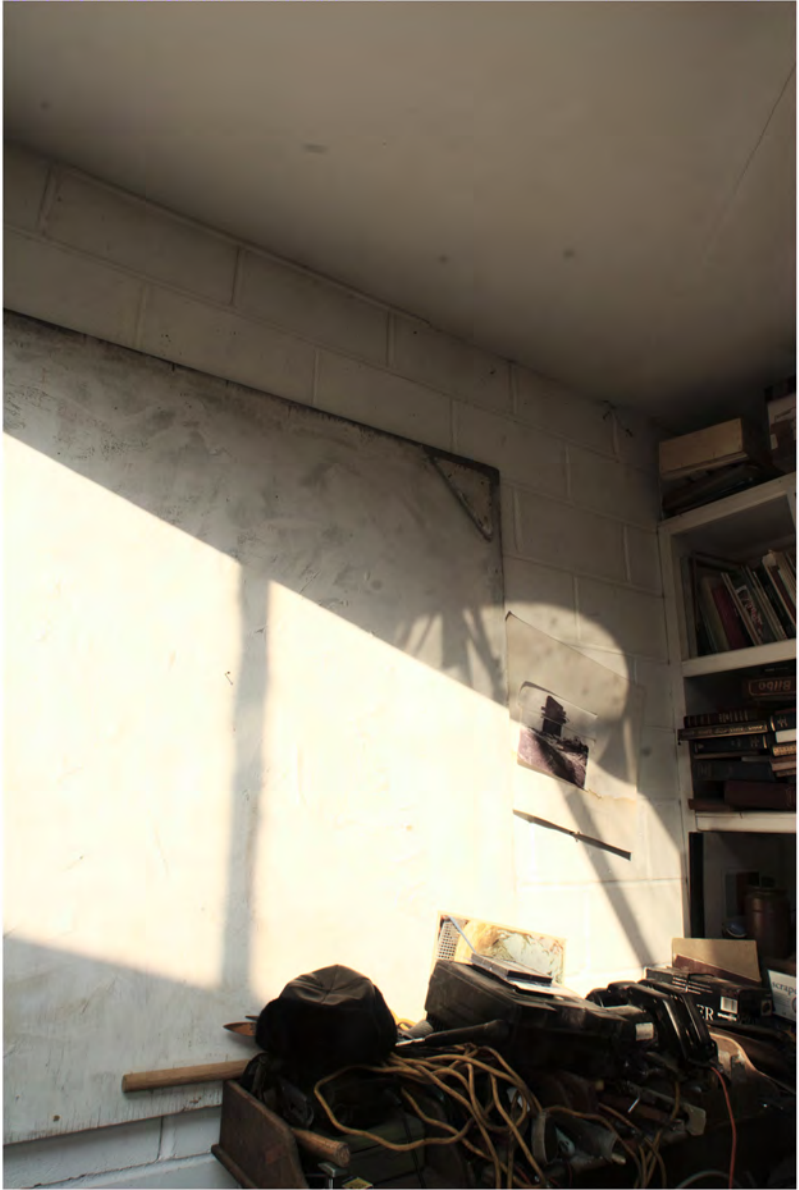
Roger Brown's Marginalia in Roger Cardinal, *Outsider Art* (London: Studio Vista, 1972).

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Introduction.

I've been thinking a lot about organization, legacy, narrative, and what we can do now to make sure our archives are not only properly located and looked after, but also organized in a fashion that reflects the original act of collection or practice. This is something that Flat Time House Director Gareth Bell-Jones said that struck me: what does it mean to use the Flat Time House in the manner in which John Latham approached his work? This was echoed by Lisa Stone, former curator of the Roger Brown Study Collection, who told me in an interview that, 'It has been really important to us *not* to lock the Roger Brown Study Collection in amber, but to preserve his whole process. And all the interrelationships which are endless.'ⁱ

ⁱ Lisa Stone, interview by author, Saugatuck, 19 August 2021.



Dr. Jane Garnett was kind enough to invite her Wadham College advisees into her garden for some prosecco and snacks to celebrate the end of the academic year. When speaking about his PhD topic, one of her doctoral advisees expressed hesitation because his topic dealt with the living. Most of them were art historians other than Alexander and me, and they jokingly spoke about how it was much easier to speak of the dead because they wouldn't show up at your lecture and contradict you. I argued that they should want that, no? They should want someone there who was involved. Someone who could speak to how they were being historicized. Dr. Garnett asked me if I thought about how I would be historicized, and I responded, 'All the time.'

I contemplate how I will be historicized because I relate to people like Edmonia Lewis whose 1876 sculpture *The Death of Cleopatra*, after having been exhibited at Chicago's World Fair, reappeared at a Chicago saloon, and was painted over by a group of boy scouts while serving as a racehorse's headstone, eventually being found in a salvage yard in the 1980's. Edmonia Lewis and I are not the same person but we are both artists, we are both Black American women, and we both attended Oberlin College.

Although I began taking art classes when I was young, and I have studied several disciplines



consistently, I have yet to have a Black woman artist tutor. However, I have had the privilege of having been taught by Dr. Romi Crawford, one of my mentors. Not an artist but an art historian (or rather in her language which I prefer, not a maker but a framer) I relate to Dr. Crawford. Dr. Romi Crawford and I are not the same person, but we are both framers, we are both Black American women, and we both attended Oberlin College.

I relate to the artists in the Black Arts Movement in Chicago, partly because I have learned more about them while working with Dr. Crawford on her research, partly because I was a Black artist in Chicago from 2011-2016, and partly because I was lucky enough to tour young Black students from South Side Chicago around *The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now*, a 2015 exhibition at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art. This past August Dr. Crawford organized the Black Arts Movement School Modality- Chicago (B.A.M. School Modality-Chicago) and facilitated it alongside Dr. Krista Thompson, Dr. Sampada Aranke, Dr. Fred Moten, Dr. Stefano Harney, and Theaster Gates. We heard from those directly involved in the movement including theatre producer and actor Val Gray Ward, dancer Darlene Blackburn, composer Roscoe Mitchell, writers Dr. Abdul Alkalimat and Haki R. Madhubuti, painters Wadsworth Jarrell and



Gerald Williams, designers Jae Jarrell and Robert Paige, and photographers Roy Lewis and Darryl Cowherd. We heard them talk about their work, and about each other as collaborators and friends.

During the two weeks school was in session, Dr. Abdul Alkalimat asked each artist, over and over again, where their personal archives were going. Dr. Alkalimat called upon the students, facilitators, and professors of the B.A.M. School Modality - Chicago to question how the money in our institutions was being directed, and to pressure people in power to find the documentation of such foundational gatherings as FESTAC '77, also known as the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, to care for these archives, and to make them publicly accessible and freely available. Roy Lewis spoke about how he never called his archive his 'stuff'. In this remark Lewis brought up something that I've been thinking about since: who do you give your archive to, to archive, if you already have an archive, and have archived your archive?

This is a book because I've been studying books. In this book you'll find essays reflecting on what I have learned about John Latham and John Latham's Library, and conversations I've had with Gareth Bell-Jones, Dr. Noa Latham, and Lisa Stone, as well as a speculative library full of books John Latham might



have purchased had he not died on New Year's Day 2006.

I relate to John Latham. Things that are not in this book but that I have enjoyed learning about and will continue to pursue are his involvement with Barbara Steveni's Artist Placement Group, The Gallery (on Lisson St) where Latham had two exhibitions, and his use of glass. After interviewing Dr. Noa Latham, he only had one question for me, 'What is thing that most interested you in your research about John Latham?' I answered, vaguely, 'His use of glass.' Latham used glass in his sculptures to represent nothing, and currently there is a large sheet of thick glass propped up against the exterior of the back of Flat Time House which used to be on the floor of Latham's studio. When I asked Bell-Jones why Latham had it on the floor of his studio, Bell-Jones said there could be any number of reasons. He said that perhaps it was a way for Latham to accumulate marks on a surface that he would then use later in his work.



1

John Latham.

When looking at John Latham's book collection, what am I looking for exactly? How am I viewing Latham's book collection as a portrait of sorts and what do I think this portrait says about him? Is this a mistake? Are books somehow more or less reflective of a person than their other personal belongings and their art objects? I had dinner with my friend Ali after my third day at Flat Time House, staring at the bookcase. As soon as I said, 'You know, when you go over to a friend's house, you look through their books...' she interjected saying, 'You do that too, right?!'



When I'm over at a friend's house, I judge their books... and their art, especially if I'm staying there. I remember staying with my friend Lou in her brother's bedroom, and his library put mine to shame. You name it, Islamophobia, Sexism, Marxism, and all the intersecting phobias and isms. On the other hand, I vowed to never look too closely at an Airbnb library ever again after I found *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in my host's library in Kassel.

When looking at/judging someone's library, I first look for their politics to make sure I'm safe, and then I look for things we might have in common. Then, I look for the things I can reference quickly and would actually want to read, in the case of John Latham's Library: *Understanding Astrology* and *The Love of Indoor Plants*. When I'm being watched I veer towards more respectable choices like art theory or politics. Sometimes I pick up books because they trigger some half-forgotten thought.

The real question is, based on his library, would John Latham and I be friends? Would we meet to have coffee in his kitchen or at a coffee shop in Peckham? Would we make plans to have a book club, plans that went unfulfilled but not out of a lack of interest? Standing in a bookshop, could we confidently spot a book that would be perfect to give the other for the upcoming holiday? Could I easily borrow his books



knowing that he would borrow mine? The answer is probably not.

I'm not saying that we have nothing in common. We definitely have things in common, but the things we have in common mark me more as one of his ideological descendants than one of his potential friends. There are a couple of books in the collection which I have spotted and read since the beginning of my residency, however, how many books are enough to know that you could proceed forward without caution into someone's home and into someone's thoughts?

It's fascinating how we see the books on view in someone's library as reflective of the person. Most of the books on my bookshelves are books I've been meaning to read; not books I've read. The books that I have read, and therefore the books that might be more reflective of me as a person, are in boxes in storage in the U.S. or on friends' bookshelves. The books on view in my library are more reflective of the person I want to be. It's aspirational.

Any one library is a part of a larger collection. There are always books missing: books in storage units in other countries; books lost by the post office when an overpacked box broke mid-transit; or books friends have borrowed that they have never given back. There are always books that don't belong: books people have



given you proving they really don't know you at all; or religious books you've been given by Hare Krishnas, or both.

The books on view in someone's library are more a portrait of a person's fleeting thoughts and aspirations. It is weighted in favour of relatively stable periods of time when they have money to purchase books rather than borrow them from a school or public library and are relatively less transient. If you caught Latham ten years earlier or ten years later, chances are a third of the books on view in his library would be different.

If Latham was here, and I chose one of the books that I think particularly represent him, and I said, 'You are this book.' Would he agree or disagree? Would he disagree and choose another book off the shelf, or go digging for it underneath his bed, or call his friend and tell them to bring it back? Would he argue against the entire exercise saying that he can't be distilled to one object nor one genre of his belongings?

I've used *Beauty and the Beast* as an example multiple times. When Belle sees the Beast's vast library she thinks of him now not as a cruel brute, but a learned and wealthy cruel brute, which made all the difference. But what if the Beast bought his books by the yard and spent his time in exile not reading but rather just terrorizing his household staff?



On Zoom everyone has these impressive bookshelves behind them. I listened to a podcast about how one of the new businesses to have emerged during the pandemic was bookshelf curation, especially for politicians and celebrities. People request old-looking books, or classic-looking books, or books of a certain colour. People purchase books for others to make them seem learned or interesting. Performative bookshelves for performative reading.

Director of Flat Time House Gareth Bell-Jones was speaking to me about the Swedish concept of *döstädning*, or death cleaning. If I knew I was going to die soon, would I clean my apartment and storage unit to make things easier on whomever I left behind? My storage unit in the U.S. has toys from my childhood that I can't bear to throw out. The ones that survived my childhood loving were given to cousins or charity shops, and now I only have the ones that really mean something to me: the ones that are old and frayed, or missing an arm, or have a tea stain across the face, or the ones that were made specifically for me. What will I do with these things? Books, however, can easily be passed on, sold, or given to a charity shop. For better or worse, college course reading lists often stay the same.

Also, by cleaning and curating my belongings, could I curate how people will remember me? Can I



remove my belongings that don't fit well into the narrative that I want to be at the core of my legacy? Would John Latham be embarrassed by the books he left behind? When he knew his end was near, did he look at his bookshelf from the perspective of someone else? His children? A judgmental undertaker?

Had Flat Time House not existed, John Latham's work would have been distributed between Lisson Gallery, his family and the bin. His papers would have gone to the Tate, and his book collection would have been redistributed among his family, sold off, or given to a charity shop. What do you do with the things that don't have a place? The odd bits and bobs in the kitchen junk drawer? How can you get as much of a sense of someone from that assortment than any other genre of their personal belongings?



2

John Latham's Library.

Flat Time House Director Gareth Bell-Jones introduced me to this idea of creating a world through the false creation of a moment of stasis frozen in time. Lisa Stone, curator of the Roger Brown Study Collection from 1996 - 2020, spoke about this stasis as akin to being preserved in amber. There are rules and regulations on Artists' Homes and Studios, some of which seek to preserve rooms as the artists left them, like Francis Bacon's studio which they moved to the



Dublin City Gallery, and 'reconstructed piece by piece.'ⁱⁱ These regulations seek to preserve these artists and venerate them, almost like saints. This is very much in line with the idea of the artist as genius. What are we looking for when we look at how they placed their pen at a specific angle to their notebook? An indication of genius, that's what.

I lived in Dupont Circle in Washington D.C. around the corner from a Scientology Museum. My friend Cleo lived next door to the Scientology Museum, and she told me stories of nefarious activities she observed through her bedroom window. Whenever I returned home after an adventure with Cleo, we made sure to take the long way around so that someone outside of the Scientology Museum wouldn't ask us if we wanted to take a personality test again. Years later I was wandering around Washington D.C. with a friend from college, and we were looking for things to do. We ended up going to the Scientology Museum and asking for a personality test.

ⁱⁱ"Francis Bacon Studio," Artist's Studio Museum Network, accessed September 13, 2021, <https://www.artiststudiomuseum.org/studio-museums/francis-bacon-studio/>

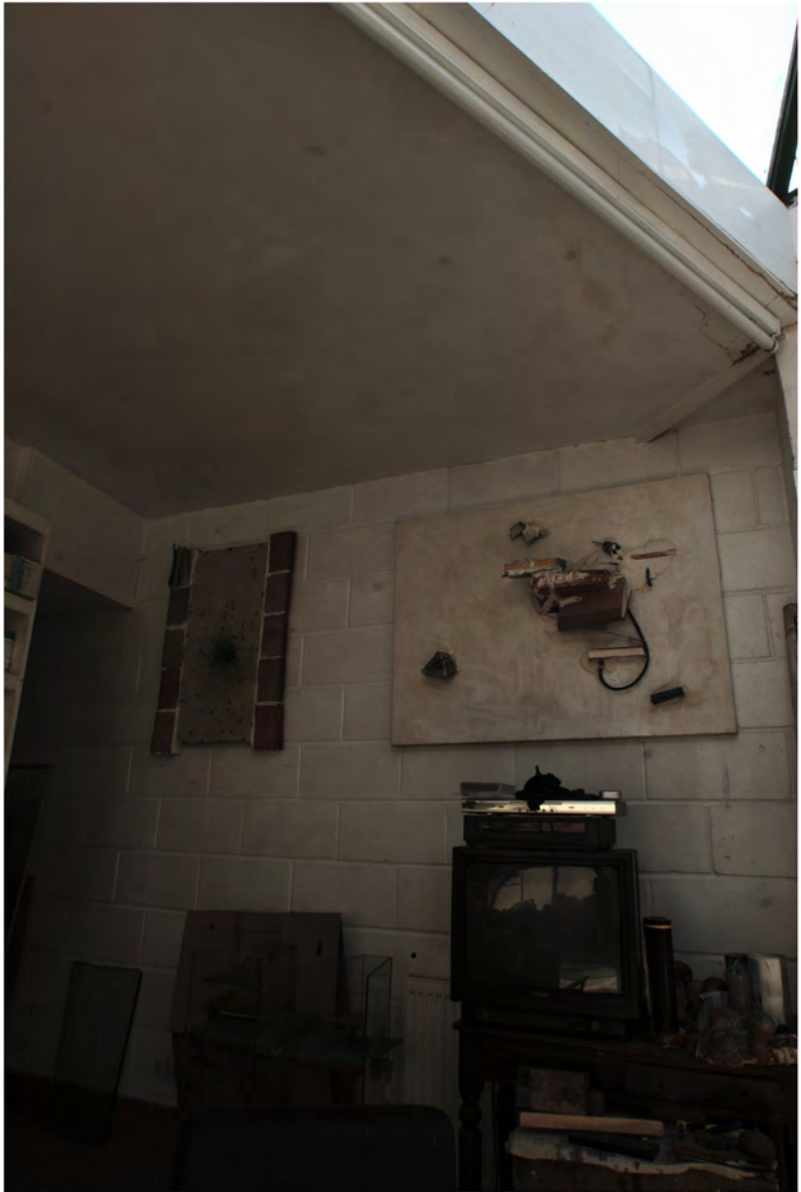


As luck would have it, the system was down, so they ended up giving us a tour. Apparently in every Scientology Museum they have a sealed-off room full of fake books, just in case L. Ron Hubbard's ghost shows up and needs a place to work. I think about this often.

The Books.

Excluding Latham's catalogues, and the books purchased after Latham died on New Year's Day 2006, Latham has 226 books in his collection. Within Latham's library there are two bodies of books: books for work, and Latham's personal library. Some of the books for work can be picked out easily, with evidence of paint splatter or drill marks. The rest of them are most likely the bookish looking books. Books with assorted hard covers that he could buy by the yard. They look like an analogue version of an expired Wikipedia page somewhere in the Wayback Machine.

However, Latham also used non-fiction books in his work, at times those with particularly evocative titles that he would string together or play off one another, such as *Vanished Species*, and *The Pregnancy Survival Manual* which are on display in the assemblages in the Mind. He would often buy multiples of these books.



Of the newer non-fiction books, it is hard to tell which would be used for work, and which would be used for reading and reference so I have assumed that if there are not multiple copies, if they are not acted upon, and if they are not particularly bookish looking, then would be a part of Latham's personal library.

Of these 226 books, I only found marginalia or ephemeral bookmarks such as a pressed leaf or a plane ticket or a used paper towel in 20 books. Latham has Ervin László's *The Interconnected Universe: Conceptual Foundations of Transdisciplinary Unified Theory*, *The Creative Cosmos: A Unified Science of Matter, Life and Mind*, and *The Whispering Pond: A Personal Guide to the Emerging Vision of Science* in his library, and all three books contain extensive marginalia; commentary and question marks written in pencil and pink and yellow highlighter. Latham corresponded with László who was the first respected physicist to take Latham's ideas seriously.

Most of the books in John Latham's Library were published between 1990-1999, are non-fiction, and are in the Science & Nature genre (followed closely by History, Art & Design and Religion & Spirituality). The library contains multiple books by Ervin László, John D. Barrow and William Shakespeare, and most of the authors in the library are dead white men (60% dead, 96.6% white, 85.5% men). The vast majority of



John Latham's books are in English, although there are enough books in German to suggest that Latham might have been semi-fluent in German.

The Book Collection.

When do books find one another, having previously been scattered around the house in different children's bedrooms and underneath a pile of magazines in the loo? How do they look when altogether, when all along they existed apart? What do you do with books that are not in the library but should be?

Bell- Jones purchased the copy of Anita Kohsen and Christopher Clive Langton Gregory's *The O-Structure: An Introduction to Psychophysical Cosmology* which was foundational to Latham's theories. In *NOIT-4 Reflections*, Dr. Noa Latham writes that his father would read *Kalulu the Hare* and Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories* to them at bedtime, as well as noting that when he, 'was about five John gave [him] a comic book rendition of *David Copperfield*.ⁱⁱⁱ

When I interviewed Dr. Latham on 16 June 2021, I asked him what his father's favourite books were and he listed James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*,

ⁱⁱⁱ Noa Latham, *NOIT-4 Reflections*, (London: Flat Time House, 2018), 17.

produce, but rather conveys the information embodied in the graphic variety of experience: it creates a state of functional regions which the frontolimbic regions become responsive to when the propagations of vacuum-fluctuation impinge. The relaxation of regions relaxes the Gaussian constraints on the neural circuitry to constitute its receptive patches and produces the heightened states of a chaotic scalar interferometer.

If the above analysis is basically correct, our brain does not receive ψ -field transmitted information on an ongoing basis; then, does our consciousness not display the results of such states of awareness should be permanently defined with respect to (time-transcending contents). But they are not ordinarily so defined. The absence of holographic-type experiences in our ordinary states may be due to a number of reasons. First of all, we do not affect our nervous system without our having conscious knowledge that there are various fields and propagations in our environment. The conscious brain registers electromagnetic waves with a relatively small visible range, above and below there is no conscious perception of the existing wave propagations. Yet modern medicine discovering that many frequencies beyond the visible range have a pronounced effect on the nervous system, including the corrected frequency ELF waves emitted by TV sets, computer monitors, fans, transformers, and high power lines.

Thus our brain could be receiving ψ -field signals without our consciousness registering them. This is a strong possibility in regard to ψ -field information: the linear logic of the left cortical hemisphere suppresses perceptions that are anomalous to common sense. In space- and time-transcending experiences tend to occur mainly in altered states of consciousness, where the censorship of the left hemisphere is lifted.

Second, some ψ -field signals may actually penetrate to consciousness without our recognizing them as such. The fact is that the signals analysed by the brain do not come with tags of origin attached. Many interference patterns that would bypass the optical sensory system proceed directly to the cortical region where visual signals are processed would be decoded as objects in the perceptual image plane.

regardless of whether they originated in the electromagnetic spectrum or in the sub-quantum field. Consequently we may be actually experiencing events and images that come to us through the ψ -field without knowing their surprising origins.

We should not forget, however, that even in ordinary states modern western consciousness ignores or suppresses information that does not have an evident sensory origin. Other forms of consciousness on both East and West have been keenly aware of them. Terms used to describe such experiences range from the prosaic 'ESP' to the esoteric 'third eye,' while the subtle energies thought to be conveyed in the experiences have been described on the one hand as scientifically researchable bodily auras and bio-energies, and on the other as astatic force fields, or etheric, Chi, prana and vortex energies.

Permanent memory

It is entirely plausible that the puzzling phenomena at the farther reaches of mind and consciousness should be products of the information of the brain with signals transmitted through the ψ -field. A case in point is memory.

Since the finding of surprisingly distributed memory in rats by Lashley, few neuroscientists would maintain that memory is coded by localized engrams in the brain. Lashley's own conclusion was that, without regard to particular nerve cells, behaviour must be determined by "masses of excitation" within general fields of activity. He likened these fields to the force fields that determine form during embryogenesis; similar lines of forces, he speculated, could create patterns in cortical tissue.⁹

Lashley may have been on the right tack, but few neuroscientists have taken up his suggestion. Instead of fields of force, memory is currently referred to the formation and reformation of neuronal networks. For example, in Gerald Edelman's theory of neuronal group selection (TNGS), cognitive functions are explained in terms of structurally distinct neuronal groups that range anywhere from one hundred to one million cells. Such groups are said to respond as a unit

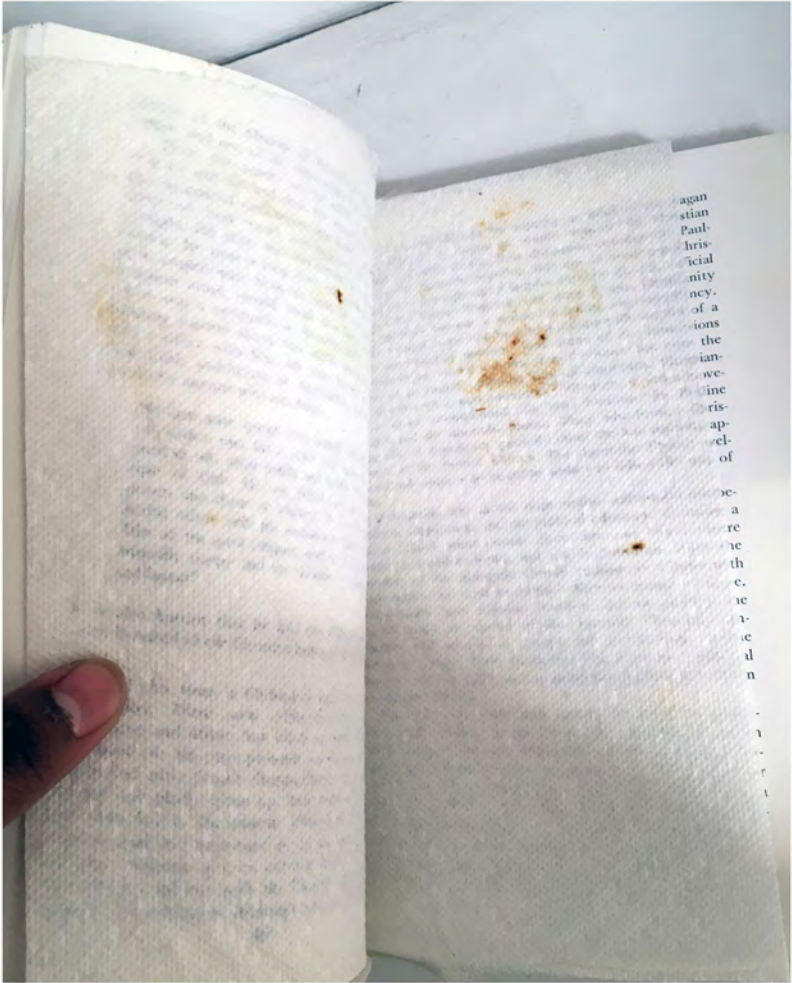
Gerald Howson's *The Flamencos of Cadiz Bay*, and Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* (which although absent in book-form is present in Latham's work and in the organization of his online archive).

Additionally, Dr. Latham said that he was thinking of purchasing an entire run of *Cosmos*, a journal published by Kohsen and Gregory, for the Library at Flat Time House. How do we account for these missing books and journals in Latham's library?

The Bookshelves.

While the two bookcases in the Hand now contain all of Latham's books, at the time of Latham's death, the bookcase on the left contained books and a large roll of canvas on the bottom, and the bookcase on the right contained art supplies. In the images of his home, you can see another bookshelf, the location of which I have yet to determine.

The Hand is often the site of exhibitions. At times the books are taken down, as was the case in *Tears Shared* in July 2016. Marc Camille Chaimowicz created the space and curated the exhibition alongside Marie Canet and Bell-Jones. The shelves have been cleared of books with brown, green and yellow translucent glass houseware sculptures on the shelves instead.



At times the books stay up, as was the case in the recent exhibition *ANTS AND GRASSHOPPERS: REFLECTIONS ON THE ANXIOUS OBJECT* which was on view during my first several visits to Flat Time House. It's interesting that the books weren't removed for this exhibition. Occupying the space was a Sarah Lucas sculpture of a cast Eames lounge chair with a black sculpture perched on top. The sculpture looked like a frozen black alien crawling out of a black piece of alien technology...and then there was the bookshelf. Ordered, yes, but assorted with books ranging in color, texture, and subject matter. I witnessed the books staring at the black globular form on the concrete Eames Lounge Chair which stared back. They both knew they were occupying the same space but ultimately were from two different aesthetic universes. These books would rather a real Eames chair with soft, worn brown leather, and this object would rather virtual books that can be beamed into a vape.



3

Speculative Library.

This is a list of books that John Latham might have purchased if he were alive today as suggested by an algorithm based on the 226 books which constitute Latham's library but limited by a set of rules. Here are the rules of this speculative library:

1. This speculative library can only include items published after John Latham's death on 1 January 2006. He made his choices up until then.
2. All books except for newer science books, would be purchased at a second-hand bookshop nearby.

3. The amount of the books in the Speculative Library will not exceed 43 books (Latham died at 84-years-old with 226 books in his collection, averaging a book purchase of 2.7 books for every year of his life. 16 years have passed since Latham's death which at the rate of collecting 2.7 books per year means that if he were still alive, he would have collected an additional 43 books (rounding down)).
4. When selecting books from authors of particular interest, only single authored books are acceptable.

All books purchased new at review books, 131 Bellenden Rd, Peckham, SE15 4QY.

Barrow, John D. *100 Essential Things You Didn't Know You Didn't Know: Math Explains Your World.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010. ISBN 0393338673.

General Mathematics > Mathematics > Natural sciences and mathematics

'Mathematics can reveal and illuminate things about the complex world we live in that can't be found any other way. In this hugely informative and entertaining book, John D. Barrow takes the most perplexing of everyday phenomena from the odds of winning the lottery and the method of determining batting averages to the shapes of roller coasters and the reasoning behind the fairest possible divorce settlements and explains why things work the way they do. With elementary math and accompanying illustrations, he sheds light on the mysterious corners of the world we encounter every day. Have you ever considered why you always seem to get stuck in the longest line? Why two's company but three's a crowd? Or why there are six degrees of separation instead of seven? This clever little book has all the answers to

these puzzling, everyday questions of existence that need not perplex us anymore.^{iv}

Barrow, John D. *The Book of Universes: Exploring the Limits of the Cosmos*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012. ISBN: 0393343111.

Astronomical objects and astrophysics > Astronomy > Natural sciences and mathematics > Universe

'Einstein's theory of general relativity opens the door to other universes, and weird universes at that: universes that allow time travel, universes where you can see the back of your head, universes that spin and bounce or multiply without limit. *The Book of Universes* gives us a stunning tour of these potential universes, introducing us along the way to the brilliant physicists and mathematicians who first revealed their startling possibilities. John D. Barrow explains the latest discoveries and ideas that physics and astronomy have to offer about our own universe, showing how these findings lead to the concept of the "multiverse" the

^{iv} "One Hundred Essential Things You Didn't Know You Didn't Know: Math Explains Your World", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Hundred-Essential-Things-Didnt-Know/dp/0393070077/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=100+Essential+Things+You+Didnt%27t+Know+You+Didnt%27t+Know%3A+Math+Explains+Your+World&qid=1631647953&sr=8-1.

Universe of all possible universes. New ideas force us to confront the possibility that our visible universe is a tiny region, governed by its own laws, within a Multiverse containing all the strange universes that could be an idea that is among the most exciting and revolutionary in all of modern science.^v

Davies, Paul. *The Eerie Silence: Renewing Our Search for Alien Intelligence*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2011. ISBN: 9780547422589.

Evolution > Life 1.0 > Life Sciences, Biology > Microbiology > Natural sciences and mathematics > astrobiology

'Fifty years ago, a young astronomer named Frank Drake first pointed a radio telescope at nearby stars in the hope of picking up a signal from an alien civilization. Thus began one of the boldest scientific projects in history, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI). After a half-century of scanning the skies, however, astronomers have little to report but an eerie silence...eerie because many scientists are convinced that the universe is teeming with life.

^v *"The Book of Universes: Exploring the Limits of the Cosmos"*, Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Book-Universes-Exploring-Limits-Cosmos/dp/0393081214/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+Book+of+Universes%3A+Exploring+the+Limits+of+the+Cosmos&qid=1631648162&sr=8-1.

Physicist and astrobiologist Paul Davies has been closely involved with SETI for three decades and chairs the SETI Post-Detection Taskgroup, charged with deciding what to do if we're suddenly confronted with evidence of alien intelligence. He believes the search so far has fallen into an anthropocentric trap assuming that an alien species will look, think, and behave much like us. In this provocative book Davies refocuses the search, challenging existing ideas of what form an alien intelligence might take, how it might try to communicate with us, and how we should respond if it does.^{vi}

Davies, Paul. *The Goldilocks Enigma: Why Is the Universe Just Right for Life?* Boston: Mariner Books, 2008. ISBN: 0547053584.

Astronomical objects and astrophysics > Astronomy > Natural sciences and mathematics > Universe

'It's not too hot, it's not too cold, and its forces act together in a way that's just right: why does the universe seem so perfectly tailor-made for life to exist?

^{vi} *"The Eerie Silence: Renewing Our Search for Alien Intelligence"*, Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Eerie-Silence-Renewing-Search-Intelligence/dp/0547133243/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=The+Eerie+Silence%3A+Renewing+Our+Search+for+Alien+Intelligence&qid=1631648295&sr=8-2.

Paul Davies, one of the world's most acclaimed science writers, shows how everything from the humble carbon atom to the speed of light and the laws of physics themselves interact. He asks: is there a theory of everything within our grasp? If there was a big bang, what happened before it? Is there one universe or many? Could we exist within an endless time loop?^{vii}

Dawkins, Richard. *Outgrowing God: A Beginner's Guide*. New York: Random House, 2019. ISBN: 1984853910.

Atheism > Deism and Atheism > Natural Theology and Secularism > Religions

'Should we believe in God? Do we need God in order to explain the existence of the universe? Do we need God in order to be good? In twelve chapters that address some of the most profound questions human beings confront, Dawkins marshals science, philosophy and comparative religion to interrogate the hypocrisies of all the religious systems and explain to readers of all ages how life emerged without a Creator,

^{vii} "The Goldilocks Enigma: Why Is the Universe Just Right for Life?", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Goldilocks-Enigma-Universe-Just-Right/dp/0141023260/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+Goldilocks+Enigma%3A+Why+Is+the+Universe+Just+Right+for+Life%3F&qid=1631648383&sr=8-1.

how evolution works and how our world came into being.

For anyone hoping to grapple with the meaning of life and what to believe, *Outgrowing God* is a challenging, thrilling and revelatory read.^{viii}

Dawkins, Richard. *The God Delusion*. Boston: Mariner Books, 2008. ISBN: 0618918248.

Atheism > Deism and Atheism > Natural Theology and Secularism > Religions

The God Delusion caused a sensation when it was published in 2006. Within weeks it became the most hotly debated topic, with Dawkins himself branded as either saint or sinner for presenting his hard-hitting, impassioned rebuttal of religion of all types.

His argument could hardly be more topical. While Europe is becoming increasingly secularized, the rise of religious fundamentalism, whether in the Middle East or Middle America, is dramatically and dangerously dividing opinion around the world. In America, and elsewhere, a vigorous dispute between

^{viii} "Outgrowing God: A Beginner's Guide", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Outgrowing-God-Beginners-Richard-Dawkins/dp/1787631214/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Outgrowing+God%3A+A+Beginner%27s+Guide&qid=1631648497&sr=8-1.

“intelligent design” and Darwinism is seriously undermining and restricting the teaching of science. In many countries religious dogma from medieval times still serves to abuse basic human rights such as women's and gay rights. And all from a belief in a God whose existence lacks evidence of any kind.

Dawkins attacks God in all his forms. He eviscerates the major arguments for religion and demonstrates the supreme improbability of a supreme being. He shows how religion fuels war, foments bigotry and abuses children.

The God Delusion is a brilliantly argued, fascinating polemic that will be required reading for anyone interested in this most emotional and important subject.^{ix}

Dawkins, Richard. *The Greatest Show on Earth: The Evidence for Evolution*. New York: Free Press, 2010. ISBN: 9781416594796.

^{ix} “The God Delusion”, Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/God-Delusion-10th-Anniversary/dp/1784161926/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+God+Delusion&qid=1631648574&sr=8-1.

Evolution > Life Sciences, Biology > Microbiology > Natural sciences and mathematics

'Charles Darwin's masterpiece, *On the Origin of Species*, shook society to its core on publication in 1859. Darwin was only too aware of the storm his theory of evolution would provoke but he would surely have raised an incredulous eyebrow at the controversy still raging a century and a half later. Evolution is accepted as scientific fact by all reputable scientists and indeed theologians, yet millions of people continue to question its veracity.

In *The Greatest Show on Earth* Richard Dawkins takes on creationists, including followers of "Intelligent Design" and all those who question the fact of evolution through natural selection. Like a detective arriving on the scene of a crime, he sifts through fascinating layers of scientific facts and disciplines to build a cast-iron case: from the living examples of natural selection in birds and insects; the 'time clocks' of trees and radioactive dating that calibrate a timescale for evolution; the fossil record and the traces of our earliest ancestors; to confirmation from molecular biology and genetics. All of this, and much more, bears witness to the truth of evolution.

The Greatest Show on Earth comes at a critical time: systematic opposition to the fact of evolution is now flourishing as never before, especially in America.

In Britain and elsewhere in the world, teachers witness insidious attempts to undermine the status of science in their classrooms. Richard Dawkins provides unequivocal evidence that boldly and comprehensively rebuts such nonsense. At the same time he shares with us his palpable love of the natural world and the essential role that science plays in its interpretation. Written with elegance, wit and passion, it is hard-hitting, absorbing and totally convincing.^x

Dawkins, Richard. *The Magic of Reality: How We Know What's Really True*. New York: Free Press, 2012. ISBN: 9781451675047.

General Science > Natural sciences and mathematics > Philosophy and theory

'Magic takes many forms. The ancient Egyptians explained the night by suggesting that the goddess Nut swallowed the sun. The Vikings believed a rainbow was the gods' bridge to earth. These are magical, extraordinary tales. But there is another kind of magic, and it lies in the exhilaration of discovering the real

^x "The Greatest Show on Earth", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Greatest-Show-Earth-Evidence-Evolution/dp/055277524X/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+Greatest+Show+on+Earth%3A+The+Evidence+for+Evolution.&qid=1631648710&sr=8-1.

answers to these questions. It is the magic of reality - science.

Packed with inspiring explanations of space, time and evolution, laced with humour and clever thought experiments, *The Magic of Reality* explores a stunningly wide range of natural phenomena. What is stuff made of? How old is the universe? What causes tsunamis? Who was the first man, or woman? This is a page-turning, inspirational detective story that not only mines all the sciences for its clues but primes the reader to think like a scientist too.

Richard Dawkins elucidates the wonders of the natural world to all ages with his inimitable clarity and exuberance in a text that will enlighten and inform for generations to come.^{xi}

Dennett, Daniel C. *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon*. London: Penguin Books, 2007. ISBN: 0143038338.

Natural Theology > Natural Theology and Secularism > Religions

^{xi} "The Magic of Reality: How We Know What's Really True", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Magic-Reality-know-whats-really/dp/0552778052/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=The+Magic+of+Reality%3A+How+We+Know+What%27s+Really+True&qid=1631648836&sr=8-2.

'What is religion and how did it evolve? Is it the product of blind evolutionary instinct or of rational choice? Is the only way to live a good life through religion?

Few forces in the world are as potent as religion: it comforts people in their suffering and inspires them to both magnificent and terrible deeds. In this provocative and timely book, Daniel C. Dennett seeks to uncover the origins of religion and discusses how and why different faiths have shaped so many lives, whether religion is an addiction or a genuine human need, and even whether it is good for our health. Arguing passionately for the need to understand this multifaceted phenomenon, *Breaking the Spell* offers a truly original - and comprehensive - explanation for faith.^{xii}

Hawking, Stephen. *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*. New York: Bantam, 2018. ISBN: 1984819194.

^{xii} "Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Breaking-Spell-Religion-Natural-Phenomenon/dp/0141017775/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Breaking+the+Spell%3A+Religion+as+a+Natural+Phenomenon&qid=1631648945&sr=8-1.

General Science > General Science > Natural sciences and mathematics

The world-famous cosmologist and #1 bestselling author of *A Brief History of Time* leaves us with his final thoughts on the universe's biggest questions in this brilliant posthumous work.

Is there a God? How did it all begin? Can we predict the future? What is inside a black hole? Is there other intelligent life in the universe? Will artificial intelligence outsmart us? How do we shape the future? Will we survive on Earth? Should we colonise space? Is time travel possible?

Throughout his extraordinary career, Stephen Hawking expanded our understanding of the universe and unravelled some of its greatest mysteries. But even as his theoretical work on black holes, imaginary time and multiple histories took his mind to the furthest reaches of space, Hawking always believed that science could also be used to fix the problems on our planet.

And now, as we face potentially catastrophic changes here on Earth - from climate change to dwindling natural resources to the threat of artificial super-intelligence - Stephen Hawking turns his attention to the most urgent issues for humankind.

Wide-ranging, intellectually stimulating, passionately argued, and infused with his

characteristic humour, *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*, the final book from one of the greatest minds in history, is a personal view on the challenges we face as a human race, and where we, as a planet, are heading next.^{xiii}

Hawking, Stephen and Leonard Mlodinow. *The Grand Design*. New York: Bantam, 2012. ISBN: 055338466X.

Astronomical objects and astrophysics > Astronomy > Natural sciences and mathematics > Universe

'In *The Grand Design*, the most recent scientific thinking about the mysteries of the universe is presented in language marked by both brilliance and simplicity. Model dependent realism, the multiverse, the top-down theory of cosmology, and the unified M-theory - all are revealed here.

This is the first major work in nearly a decade by one of the world's greatest thinkers. A succinct, startling and lavishly illustrated guide to discoveries that are altering our understanding and threatening some of our most cherished belief systems, *The Grand*

^{xiii} "Brief Answers to the Big Questions", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Brief-Answers-Big-Questions-Stephen/dp/1473695996/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Brief+Answers+to+the+Big+Questions&qid=1631649068&sr=8-1.

Design is a book that will inform - and provoke - like no other.^{xiv}

Hooper, Dan. *At the Edge of Time: Exploring the Mysteries of Our Universe's First Seconds (Science Essentials, 32)*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021. ISBN: 0691206422.

Astronomical objects and astrophysics > Astronomy > Natural sciences and mathematics > Universe

'Scientists in the past few decades have made crucial discoveries about how our cosmos evolved over the past 13.8 billion years. But there remains a critical gap in our knowledge: we still know very little about what happened in the first seconds after the Big Bang. *At the Edge of Time* focuses on what we have recently learned and are still striving to understand about this most essential and mysterious period of time at the beginning of cosmic history.

Delving into the remarkable science of cosmology, Dan Hooper describes many of the extraordinary and perplexing questions that scientists are asking about the origin and nature of our world. Hooper examines how we are using the Large Hadron

^{xiv} "The Grand Design", Amazon, accessed 14 September, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Grand-Design-Leonard-Mlodinow/dp/0553819224/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+Grand+Design&qid=1631649147&sr=8-1.

Collider and other experiments to re-create the conditions of the Big Bang and test promising theories for how and why our universe came to contain so much matter and so little antimatter. We may be poised to finally discover how dark matter was formed during our universe's first moments, and, with new telescopes, we are also lifting the veil on the era of cosmic inflation, which led to the creation of our world as we know it.

Wrestling with the mysteries surrounding the initial moments that followed the Big Bang, *At the Edge of Time* presents an accessible investigation of our universe and its origin.^{xv}

Kaltner, John and Younus Mirza. *The Bible and the Qur'an: Biblical Figures in the Islamic Tradition*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2018. ISBN: 056766600X.
Islam, Babism, Bahai Faith > Other Religions > Religions > Theological Conceptions and Doctrines

The Bible and the Qur'an provides an overview of all the figures and groups who are mentioned in both the Bible and the Qur'an. Principal focus centres on the similarities and differences between the

^{xv} "At the Edge of Time: Exploring the Mysteries of Our Universe's First Seconds (Science Essentials, 32)", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, <https://www.amazon.co.uk/At-Edge-Time-Science-Essentials/dp/0691183562>.

presentations of these characters in the two texts, with special emphasis placed on how they appear in the Islamic text. References are also included to how many of the individuals/groups discussed are treated in other Islamic sources. Each figure or group includes: (1) a list of relevant Qur'an passages; (2) a description of how the individual/group is presented in the Islamic Texts; (3) questions and issues to consider; (4) suggestions for further readings. An introductory section provides a basic orientation to the Qur'an and other Islamic sources.^{xvi}

László, Ervin. *Reconnecting to The Source*. Santa Barbara: Griffin, 2020. ISBN: 125024644X.

Religion > Religions > Religious experience > Religious experience, life, practice

'Reconnecting to the Source is a powerful new book on the science of spiritual experience by Dr. Ervin Laszlo. A well-known figure in the fields of new science, consciousness, and spirituality, Dr. Laszlo has inspired some of today's most important figures in science and philosophy. In *Reconnecting to the Source*

^{xvi} "The Bible and the Qur'an: Biblical Figures in the Islamic Tradition", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Bible-Quran-Kaltner-Younus-Mirza/dp/056766600X/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+Bible+and+the+Qur%27an%3A+Biblical+Figures+in+the+Islamic+Tradition&qid=1631649386&s=books&sr=1-1.

he unpacks the science behind spiritual experience, investigating the ways in which we can access realms of experience beyond the everyday. It is in these moments, when our conscious minds are in contact or perhaps even overridden by our unconscious selves, that we can explore the depths of spiritual meaning.

In addition to a foreword by Deepak Chopra, the book includes new, never before published contributions from a long list of well-known writers and public figures - including Jane Goodall, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Zhi-Gang Sha, Gregg Braden, and many more. Each contributor has written about a unique spiritual experience of their own, sharing moments in their lives that are outside of the boundaries of the usual and reflecting on the importance of these moments.

This revolutionary and powerful book will challenge you to reconsider the boundaries of our own experience and change how we look at the world around us.^{xvii}

^{xvii} *"Reconnecting to The Source", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Reconnecting-Source-Spiritual-Experience-Transform/dp/B0845ZKZC8/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Reconnecting+to+The+Source&qid=1631649471&s=books&sr=1-1.*

Searle, John. *Making the Social World: The Structure of Human Civilization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. ISBN: 0199829527.

Philosophy and Theory > Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Social Sciences

The renowned philosopher John Searle reveals the fundamental nature of social reality. What kinds of things are money, property, governments, nations, marriages, cocktail parties, and football games? Searle explains the key role played by language in the creation, constitution, and maintenance of social reality. We make statements about social facts that are completely objective, for example: Barack Obama is President of the United States, the piece of paper in my hand is a twenty-dollar bill, I got married in London, etc. And yet these facts only exist because we think they exist. How is it possible that we can have factual objective knowledge of a reality that is created by subjective opinions? This is part of a much larger question: How can we give an account of ourselves, with our peculiar human traits D.S. mind, reason, freedom, society - in a world that we know independently consists of mindless, meaningless particles? How can we account for our social and mental existence in a realm of brute physical facts? In answering this question, Searle avoids postulating different realms of being, a mental and a physical, or

worse yet, a mental, a physical, and a social. There is just one reality: Searle shows how the human reality fits into that one reality. Mind, language, and civilization are natural products of the basic facts of the physical world described by physics, chemistry and biology. Searle explains how language creates and maintains the elaborate structures of human social institutions. These institutions serve to create and distribute power relations that are pervasive and often invisible. These power relations motivate human actions in a way that provides the glue that holds human civilization together. Searle shows how this account illuminates human rationality, free will, political power, and human rights. Our social world is a world created and maintained by language.^{xviii}

Whittaker, Jason. *Divine Images: The Life and Work of William Blake*. London: Reaktion Books (2021). ISBN: 1789142873.

Early 19th century 1800-37 > English > English poetry > Literature

^{xviii} "Making the Social World: The Structure of Human Civilization", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Making-Social-World-John-Searle/dp/0199695261/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Making+the+Social+World%3A+The+Structure+of+Human+Civilization&qid=1631649603&s=audible&sr=1-1.

'Although relatively obscure during his lifetime, William Blake has become one of the most popular English artists and writers, through poems such as "The Tyger" and "Jerusalem," and images including The Ancient of Days. Less well-known is Blake's radical religious and political temperament and that his visionary art was created to express a personal mythology that sought to recreate an entirely new approach to philosophy and art. This book examines both Blake's visual and poetic work over his long career, from early engravings and poems to his final illustrations, to Dante and the Book of Job. Divine Images further explores Blake's immense popular appeal and influence after his death, offering an inspirational look at a pioneering figure.'^{xix}

^{xix} "Divine Images: The Life and Work of William Blake", Amazon, accessed 14 September 2021, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Divine-Images-Life-William-Blake/dp/1789142873/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Divine+Images%3A+The+Life+and+Work+of+William+Blake&qid=1631649658&sr=8-1.



4

Reflections on Conversations with Gareth Bell-Jones.

This residency at Flat Time House was my first thing after the pandemic. It was my first opportunity to go to a place to meet a person to do a thing. I have been so incredibly thankful for this taste of normalcy. I sprung my first visit on Flat Time House Director Gareth Bell-Jones and Programme Manager Mary Vettise, who kindly let me visit the day following our Zoom conversation in March because I happened to be in London. Those first two days I walked the 45 minutes from my friend's place in Stockwell to Flat Time House, past Camberwell Grove which may be the

prettiest street in South London, making a stop along the way at Greggs.

Bell-Jones gave me a tour of Flat Time House first thing, explaining the ideas behind Latham's work in the Mind and the contents of the archive in the Brain. He let me ask questions along the way about how Latham was using blank canvas in his work, how Latham's belongings moved around in the space when exhibitions occur in the Mind, Hand, and Body Event, and where all the books were. Then I sat with the books and made lists: lists of books I could see from my table in the Hand, lists of books with capitalized titles, and lists of books obscured by plants. I flipped through catalogues of Latham's work and Flat Time House Publications. Bell-Jones sent me PDFs of books about Latham and lent me a copy of Dr. Noa Latham's book *NOIT-4 Reflections*.

Most days I would spend sitting in front of the bookshelves, asking 'What am I doing here?' I think the reason why we don't see books in their entirety is because we're used to immediately looking inside of them. Like when you put food into your mouth and immediately swallow it instead of taking the time to taste it. A book's content is only one part of its life and its value, and the only way I've found to slow down and witness the other parts is to completely avoid the impulse to read it. I only read one book in its entirety

while I was in residence at Flat Time House, and that was because I was genuinely interested in the subject matter, it was too rare for me to find a copy of it elsewhere, it was small enough for me to read in one sitting, and it was a beautiful day outside. During my days at Flat Time House, it was really important for me to be there in the space with the books in the Hand, because I knew that other reading, research, writing, and organization could happen afterwards.

While I was in residence at Flat Time House, I was taking a course on Mindfulness. Most of what I took away from the course was how to guide myself into being present and the value of doing so. One day we were asked to identify which activities brought us joy, and which didn't. I tackled 'making art' and was encouraged by my instructor to break down exactly what 'making art' meant: ideation, conversation, jokes, research, reading, writing, travel, experimentation, fabrication, presentation. I then wrote down next to each one of these which activities brought me joy, and which didn't. Surprise, most of these activities don't bring me joy, but the activities which do are the ones in which I am forced to be, or allowed to be, present. It was both important to the task and joyful to be present with John Latham's Library.

My days spent staring at John Latham's Library were punctuated by conversations with Bell-Jones. We

would sit six-feet-apart in the Hand with a cup of tea or coffee two or three times a day. He would let me ask him questions that I had written in my notebook, or in the notes app on my phone, or on my computer. The questions ranged from questions about Latham and his work, to questions about the formation of Flat Time House and the exact location and movement of specific materials in the house, to broader questions that would prompt longer conversations around the nature of personal archives and of Artists' Homes and Studios. Some questions were quite basic and easily answerable like, 'Who is Xenia?' (Latham's daughter); some were seemingly inconsequential to the task at hand like, 'What's the deal with the glass in the back?' (It's hard to say. Latham possibly was accumulating marks on the surface to use later in one of his works), and some questions were all-encompassing and not easily answerable like, 'Is the reason why there are so few books with marginalia because Latham didn't write in his books but rather journals? If so, where are these journals?' (TBD).

Bell-Jones was generous in the amount of information he gave me about Latham, passing on his enthusiasm and passion for John Latham, his ideas, his work, and Flat Time House. He never treated any question I asked like it was misguided or

inconsequential, and for that I am very grateful. Thank you, Gareth.

5

Conversation with Noa Latham.

John Latham's Library gives us a window into the constellation of thoughts occupying his mind, and at work in his art and theories, as well as a window into his relationships to people and to material. What is missing is a clear understanding of how he used his library. I had an opportunity to speak with John Latham's son Dr. Noa Latham on 16 June 2021 about precisely that. The idea of how we read being just as important as what we read was on my mind because of something one of my advisors said the prior

academic term. Dr. Eve Ess had been leading a seminar on precarity and she asked us not only to read a text and speak about it, but also to speak about *how* we read the text. When given the chance, we spoke about our families, work obligations, and illnesses. We spoke about shifting priorities and extended timelines; all of which impacted the pace we were able to read, the amount of the text we were able to read, and where we chose to read. Here are the questions I asked Dr. Latham:

Did you not call your father, dad?

Dr. Latham stopped calling Barbara Steveni mom and John Latham dad when he was 12.

What were John's reading habits?

John read a few days a week in the afternoon, unless he really got fixated on a book and then he read that to completion. He read classical literature earlier on in life, and that turned into mostly theory especially in the last 20 years. He read to find an argument to contend with, or quotes to use in his writing.

Did John read on public transportation?

No.

Did John have a favorite book that you can recall? If so, what?

Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*

James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*

Gerald Howson's *The Flamencos of Cadiz Bay*

Did John give books as gifts?

Not often. Dr. Latham can clearly remember the comic book rendition of *David Copperfield* he was given when he was five (which he mentioned in *NOIT-4 Reflections*), but usually he received gifts that were practical, like a bicycle.

Where were books in the house?

There was a bookshelf where they were all mixed up. John tended toward chaos though so they would also be scattered around the house.

No books in the loo?

No.

When John and Barbara Steveni split up, their book collection must also have been split up? Was it similarly split up when you went off to college?

Dr. Latham left some of his schoolbooks in a box, and he was pleased to see that it ended up in one of John's works. He was a mathematics major at

Cambridge and *Finite Dimensional Vector Spaces* ended up in a work that he now has at home.

There are books in Barbara's book collection that he is sure are John's, for example Michael Faraday's *The Chemical History of a Candle*. Although John did not have a particular interest in candles, he did mention Faraday's work. Similarly, there are books in Barbara's book collection that he believes are John's because John had mentioned this author or had an interest in this particular subject matter.

To this point, there are also books in Barbara's book collection that are from her and John's parents. For example, there are books about cricket. John's father was a cricketer and took handwritten notes of scores from cricket matches in these books. And some of the books John read to his children, like *Kalulu the Hare*, were formerly John's parents' books that they read to John during his childhood in Zambia.



THE NAKED APE
DESMOND MORRIS

TOTAL FITNESS
In 30 Minutes a Week
Laurence L. Mendonca, Ph.D.
and Leonard Green

Let's Get Well
Adele Davis

The American Heritage Book of INDIANS
William Brandon

GIOTTO
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Grossel & Dunlap

BRUEGEL
Grossel & Dunlap

MASACCIO
Grossel & Dunlap

EDMUND WHITE
THE BEAUTIFUL ROOM IS EMPTY

A SHORELAND GUIDE TO MEXICO
JAMES NORMAN

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS
PETER R. PETERSON
and
McKENNY

A FIELD GUIDE TO WILDFLOWERS
PETER R. PETERSON
and
McKENNY

TREES OF NORTH AMERICA
BRITTON
and
BRainerd

The Audubon Society
Field Guide to
North American
Reptiles & Amphibians
Robert and Kring

6

Conversation with Lisa Stone.

Although I lived in Chicago for five years and attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago for four years, I only managed to make it to the Roger Brown Study Collection (R.B.S.C.) twice. The first time was in a course, I couldn't tell you which one, and the second time was for a meeting with HAIR CLUB. Suzanne Gold, Michal Lynn Shumate and I (HAIR CLUB) needed a place to meet, and Lisa Stone was kind enough to offer the R.B.S.C. No one else was there except for us. We didn't venture upstairs but remained in the working space on the ground floor.

The first time I visited the Roger Brown Study Collection it struck me as such a valuable resource to be able to see an art movement from the inside in a collection marked by friendship and collaboration. Thinking of the work I have collected from friends and colleagues: I've gotten the beginnings of ideas that would spawn bodies of work; and I've also gotten the ends of ideas having salvaged the work from the bin. What does it mean to have a place like the Roger Brown Study Collection, and how would one go about setting up such a resource that could steward the legacy of yourself, your friends, your colleagues, and your community?

A lover of books, Lisa Stone was the Director of the Roger Brown Study House from 1996 - 2020, having been able to work directly with Roger Brown in the early years. I actually wasn't supposed to meet up with Stone. Her schedule over the summer had proved busier than she had expected, and the Art Preserve of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center proved further away from Chicago than I had expected, but as luck would have it, I ran into her at Ox-bow School of Art and Artist's Residency in Saugatuck, Michigan. A place where I was visiting a friend, but a place where I had been to several times before, once as a student, once as an artist in residence, and once as a tutor. Stone had been to Ox-bow many times before and had been

there that time to give a lecture to the Saugatuck-Douglas Historical Society about two artist homes on Ox-bow's campus that she had been researching. We spoke inside of one of these homes on 19 August 2021 after she had taken a dip in the lake.

Roger Brown decided to bequeath his property and collections to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (S.A.I.C.), his alma matter for both his bachelor and master's degrees, in order to create a place for Chicago Imagists' collections because, in Stone's words, 'there's so much porosity between them... and their collections are absolutely integral to their thinking and their work.'^{xx} Roger Brown was living with and dying of complications from HIV AIDS for about ten years and so in the years leading up to his death on 22 November 1997, Brown organized and consolidated his three homes, studios, gardens, and collections in New Buffalo, Michigan, Chicago, Illinois and La Conchita, California to bequeath them to S.A.I.C.

Brown's first major donation to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago was of his home, studio, and art collection in New Buffalo, Michigan in 1995. The same year, he leased out the first floor of his Chicago home at 1926 North Halsted Street in Chicago's Lincoln Park/DePaul neighborhood, to Intuit:

^{xx} Lisa Stone, interview by author, Saugatuck, 19 August 2021.

The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art of which Brown was a founding member. At the time, he put his whole ground floor which had been comprised of a front room, back room, studio space, and storage in boxes in his long painting storage closet. This first room would eventually become the Roger Brown Study Collection, while the top two floors are kept as Brown had left them. Stone told me that, 'It has been really important to us *not* to lock the Roger Brown Study Collection in amber, but to preserve his whole process. And all the interrelationships which are endless.'^{xxi}

Roger Brown's books had mostly been in his studio space and in the back room on the ground floor although he would take them upstairs when he was reading them. When put into storage they were placed in '30 or more banker's boxes'^{xxii} in no particular order, and there they remained until 2016. Having commuted to Chicago from her home in the country for over 25 years, Stone knew that the day would come when she would step down as curator of the Roger Brown Study Collection and there were certain things that she wanted to get done beforehand. Brown's books were

^{xxi} Ibid.

^{xxii} Ibid.

number one on her list, feeling like she couldn't leave these books stuck in an archive.

Stone got money from SAIC to build a full wall of bookcases designed by the University of Chicago, and that year Nick Lowe focused his annual Special Collections Practicum Class on Roger Brown's Library. Stone filled the room with tables and instructed all the students to bring the boxes in, put the books on the table, organize them by size, and then put them on the shelves. Taking cue from the initial randomness in which Brown had placed the books in the boxes, she assured the students that they would inventory them, and then be able to locate them.

Stone, Lowe, and the five students scanned the front cover, back cover, and spine of the books, and then went through carefully noting and scanning any marginalia, insertions, or things related to Brown's work. Stone mentioned to me one 'extreme example'^{xxiii}:

In 1972, this British art historian Roger Cardinal's book, *Outsider Art* was published. I abhor the term 'outsider', I don't use it... But it's just not a book. It just hammers into an orthodoxy that I don't believe in, and a way of approaching material that I don't believe in. And Roger Brown took that book, and I don't

^{xxiii} Ibid.

know what the term is that's like completely beyond marginalia, he rewrote the book. So, he made numbered chapter tabs with that really, really nasty packing tape...an archivist's nightmare, and then in each section, he crossed out whole paragraphs with a big thick black gel pen, and then write and write... He debated the book. He put a stake in the ground, saying 'No, I'm not buying this.' And it just cracks me up so much.^{xxiv}

When I mentioned the fact that I had found only 20 of the 226 books in John Latham's Library to contain marginalia or ephemeral insertions, begging the question if he even read the majority of the books in his library, Stone reflected on teaching with Jim Zanzi for 30 years. From 1998 to 2015 (when Zanzi retired) on Fridays, for class, they would,

Bring around 50 pounds of books and put them out on the table, and talk about books, and encourage students to be as book dependent as possible, at least whoever was interested in books. But Zanzi would always say, 'it doesn't matter if you ever even take the wrapper off. You have to support book culture, and you have to be engaged in it. And you have to build your personal library.' [Zanzi had been] told by his mentor, Harold Allen, 'I've got books I've

^{xxiv} Ibid.

never been taken out of the bag. Doesn't matter. You need to buy books!^{xxv}

I just listened to an episode of *No Stupid Questions*, a podcast with Angela Duckworth and Stephen Dubner, and in it they ask, 'Why Do We Forget So Much of What We Read?' In the episode they talk about physical books as memory aids. Even though you have read a book, you can forget the entire contents of it until you find the book and open it again. The smell of the book, the image on the cover, these haptic memories all trigger information that you didn't have the bandwidth to store.

What is the point of buying books? What is the point of having books if don't read them? If you don't even take them out of the wrapper? What is the point of reading books if you can't remember what you've read?

The point of buying books is to support book culture, and to get everyone who is interested as book dependent as possible. The point of having books, even if you don't read them and even if you don't take them out of the wrapper, is to live with an object that will help you witness your life. The point of reading books, even if you can't remember what you've read, is assorted, joyful, and endless.

^{xxv} Ibid.

Something that struck me about the Roger Brown Study Collection is that it was run in conversation with others. Lisa Stone spoke to me about, 'The process of involving faculty and students in every single project. For instance, I say I want bookshelves, but I'm not going to be in charge of saying, "this is how it's going to be!" It's like, "what should it be?" So, the *what* should it be is always part of the process.'

The Roger Brown Study Collection includes 1,188 books and periodicals. While they don't lend books, if you are in Chicago you can go to the Study Collection and look through them. At the moment, Roger Brown's Library is not accessible online, but they are working on it.

understandably, articulate little more than a lyrical prophecy.

For the moment, Dubuffet's counsel to those who are confronted with art brut is to reject that colossal prejudice of *le beau*—beauty which 'comes down to us directly from the song of angels and the burning bush' just so that learned professors of Aesthetics can point out its dogmas with cane in hand—'Beauty? Beauty my eye'. Dubuffet's 'aesthetics' are strictly

other.) The vocabulary he would use to evoke the impression received from true creation *d'art* is of a different, more vital order. Terms such as *intéressant* or *passionnant* are indeed lacking in objective verification, unlike *beau*, which can be checked against an aesthetic canon.) But Dubuffet, individual to the core, insists that objectivity smacks of 'value', and opts for personal caprice as the only real standard if one is to get any pleasure or instruction from art.

I deny that there are beautiful colours and ugly colours, beautiful shapes and others that are not. I am convinced that any object, any place without distinction can become a key of enchantment for the mind according to the way one looks at it and the associations of ideas to which one links it. At this new level any evaluation of the work of art must take account not of its plastic 'beauty' but of its greater or lesser capacity to stimulate the mind.

End

Dubuffet
59p

Last week it was suggested that perhaps the failing of Wallace Art in being great art was its obsessive repetition & rigidity in fact that Phrynicus it may have kept them from being a great artists. I suggest that repetition & rigidity are simply elements which an artist may choose to incorporate or discard and that those elements are found throughout art of the world whether high art or the art of our Western culture or the respected art from the East. Roger Cardinal says of one artist he feels he mistakably regarded as insane - page 37 Another quote from Leo Stanley, critic on Picasso in his month's Art in America uses the term "obsessively repeated gesture" (p. 10) and yet throughout Picasso's fine known composition studies for the "Three Women", Cezanne is acknowledged, all of them

7

How to Look at a Book Without Reading It.

What do we expect to find in a book? If we're reading it, it's clear; beginning to end something is offered. Whether or not it's useful or applicable or what you want or how you want it is a different matter. If you're using it as reference, you can look through the Table of Contents, or better yet the index to pinpoint precisely the thing you need. Otherwise, why do we look at books? Perhaps to find some reference of the reader, in their marks or in the envelopes or the ticket stubs they used as bookmarks. How can I look at a

book, not just for the knowledge it contains, but as an object in the world: something handled by someone; something wanted by someone; something collected by someone; something that can easily be gifted or ruined without a feeling of loss; something that, if it went missing, probably only the owner would notice, and they might not even dwell on it too long unless it was of sentimental or monetary value. These sentimental things die along with the owner of the book.

If you can't read the contents of a book, or don't want to, what are the other parts of the book that you can read?

1. **The Book's Physicality.** The aura, the smell. The thing that connects it to other things you touch every day. Everyone probably touches a book at least a couple of times a week, even if only to move it from one part of their room to the other, or to pick it up off the floor. A real thing, something that takes up space, and is a character in your life whether you invited it into your life or not.
2. **The Book's Size.** Squeezing out other books or getting lost in the mix.
3. **The Book's Weight.** Too heavy to carry often or too delicate to casually browse.

4. **The Book's Colour.** Some older books don't have any images on the cover, they're just entirely one colour with the author's name or the title in gold lettering along the spine.
5. **The Book's Texture.** Smooth for paperback, a bit rough with a visible weave for some hardback, and some smooth hardback like thick cardboard.
6. **The Book's Endpapers.** Marbled or not.
7. **The Book's Jacket.** Containing a blurb about the book and the bio of the author, sometimes is used as a bookmark, and sometimes it just gets in the way.
8. **The Book's Title.** Do you read through books like you watch movies, waiting in anticipation for the titular moment? The titles of biographies of women are often their first name or nickname, whereas the titles of biographies of men allow them their last names and titles. A particularly egregious example is Brenda Maddox's 2004 biography of Margaret Thatcher titled *Maggie*.
9. **The Author.** A name that is recognizable or not. Regardless, a name speaks to a time period. Sir whomever, Maggie whomever, Dr. whomever.

10. **The Book's Origin.** Did it come from a charity shop? Had it been deaccessioned from a library? Is there a receipt inside of the book, or is there a price tag still stuck on the back cover? Was it a gift?
11. **The Book's Generation.** Is it a book that everyone has? One that was easily accessible at the time and a marker of some pervasive conversation?
12. **The Book's Condition.** Has it been well loved? Carried around in too many bags and passed around between too many people?
13. **The Book's Publisher.** Is it self-published or published by an academic publisher, or by a press known for its socio-political concerns?
14. **The Book's Identifier.** Does it have an ISBN number? An ASIN number? Is it without a number?

About the Author

KELLY LLOYD is a transdisciplinary artist who focuses on issues of representation and knowledge production and prioritizes public-facing collaborative research. Lloyd received a dual M.F.A. in Painting and M.A. in Visual & Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2015 and earned a B.A. from Oberlin College in 2008. Lloyd has recently held solo exhibitions at the Royal Academy Schools (London), Crybaby (Berlin), Bill's Auto (Chicago), Demo Room (Aarhus), and Dirty House (London) for which she won the Art Licks Workweek Prize. Lloyd was the Starr Fellow at the Royal Academy Schools during the 2018/19 school year and is currently studying at The University of Oxford's Ruskin School of Art and Wadham College for her DPhil in Practice-Led Fine Art with support from an All Souls-AHRC Graduate Scholarship, an Open-Oxford-Cambridge Doctoral Training Programme Studentship, an Oberlin Alumni Fellowship, and an Alpha Kappa Alpha Educational Advancement Foundation Graduate Scholarship.

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ISBN 978-1-3999-0513-8



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