

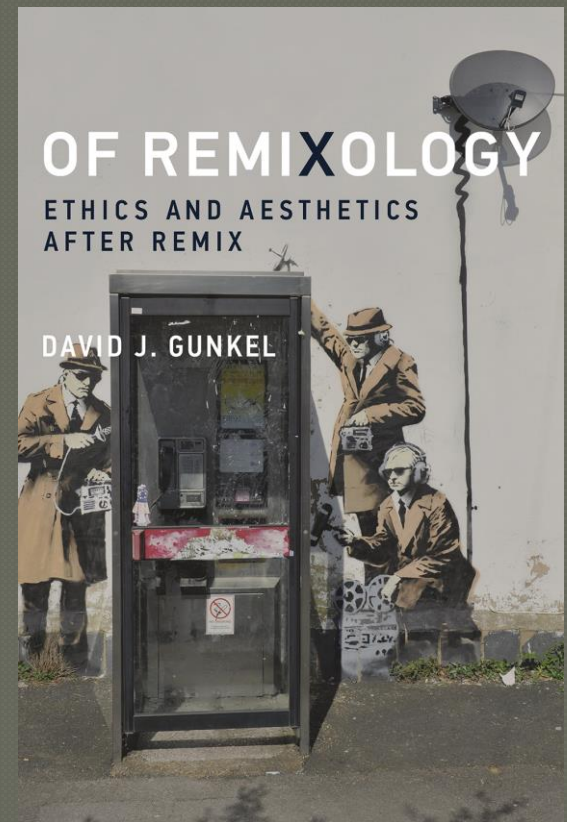
Of Remixology

Ethics and Aesthetics After Remix

Hayden Creasy & Joren Apiquian

Overview

- Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 3-58)
- Key terms: Collage, Sample, Bootleg, Mashup, Remix
- Remixology
- Technology
- Recording



Collage

- Used to designate the practice of appropriating and recombining existing source material into a new work
- Method of content creation
- A calculated and subversive strategy that produces frictions and fusions



Sample

- A representative part or single item from a larger whole or group
- Key element: makes the act of remixing possible
 - For remix to take effect, an original source must be sampled in part or in whole
- The act and outcome of applying digital signal processing to a particular sound



Bootleg

- “An air of illegitimacy” -Sinnreich
- Makes an explicit connection to the often subversive efforts of bootleg recording or “the other recording industry”
- Emphasizes the underground and subversive aspects of the effort
- Compared to “collage”, it retains a direct and explicit connection to illegal and illicit activities
- Remains limited to the field of audio recording and popular music



Mashup

- ◉ De Souza and Horwatt claim the word comes from Jamaican slang, where “mash up” means “to destroy”
- ◉ Mark Vidler called this “genre crossing” and has been marked by the term “vs.”
 - Stroke of Genius (Christina Aguilera vs. The Strokes)
 - Ray of Gob (Madonna vs. Sex Pistols)
 - The Grey Album (The Beatles vs. Jay-Z)
 - Mission Impossible Theme/Norwegian Wood
- ◉ Can apply to any art form, not just music
- ◉ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRcP2CZ8DS8>

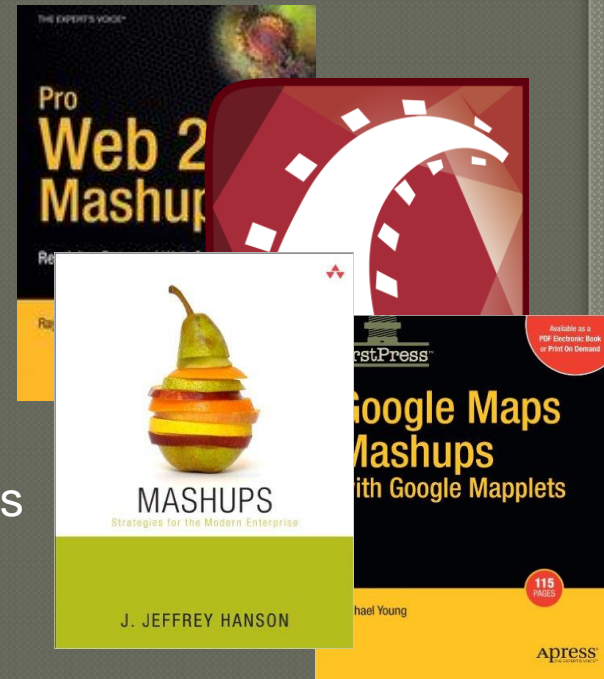


Mashup (Cont.)

◉ Web Mashups

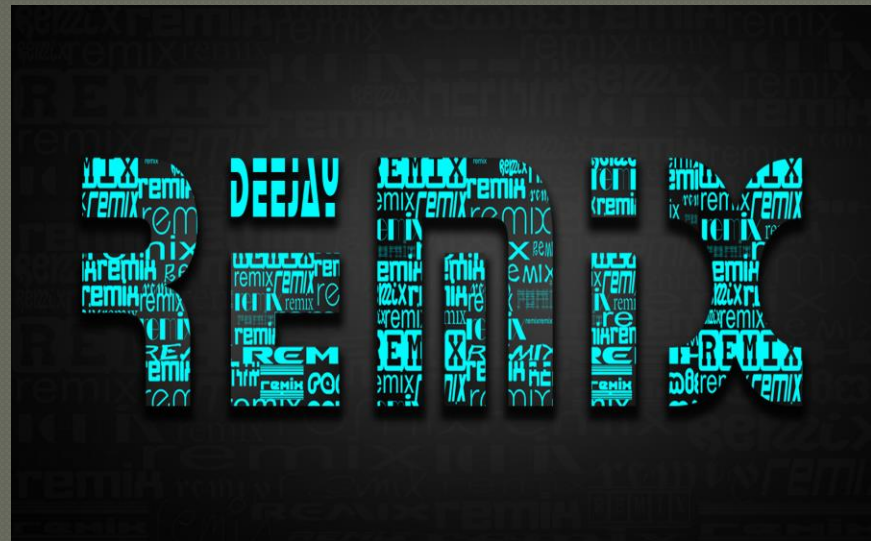
- Pro Web 2.0 Mashups: Remixing Data and Web Services
- Ruby on Rails Web Mashup Projects
- Google Maps Mashups with Google Mapplets
- Mashups: Strategies for the Modern Enterprise

- ◉ “Consequently, the term ‘mashup,’ although initially introduced in the domain of popular music, now identifies a common practice of content aggregation and recombination that has proliferated across all kinds of media and that, in the process, is able to combine and associate very different kinds of cultural activities and products.” (p. 15)



Remix

- The practice of recombining preexisting content
- *Everything is a remix*
- “Reinterpretations of a single song, often quite significant departures from the original work, but nonetheless grounded in that one work.” (IP in the Digital Age- Yale blog)
- Underlying values:
 - Originality
 - Innovation
 - Artistic Integrity

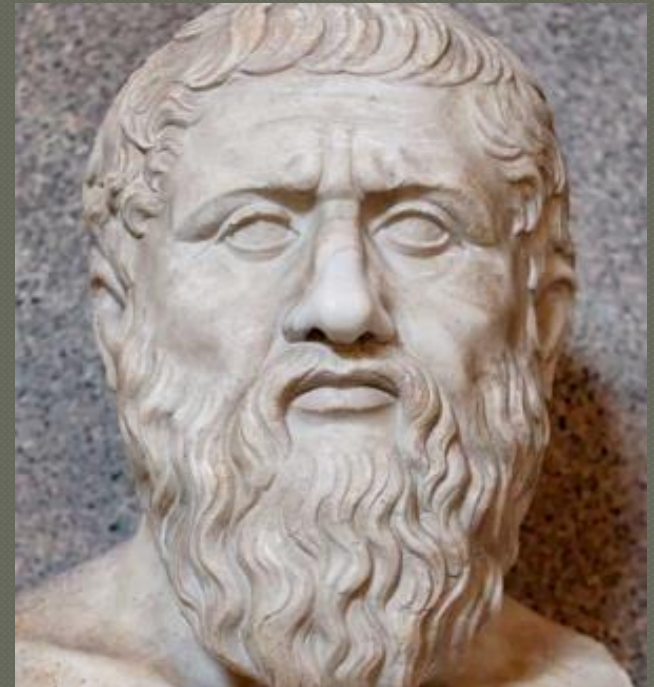


“Remixology”

- *Of Remixology* is not some thing, practice, or phenomenon that would be called “remix” but the way it has been conceptualized, studied, and debated, the words that are used to address and describe it take on a particularly important role and significance. (p. 26)
- “Remix,” “sampling,” “mashup,” “collage,” or “bootleg,” each of these terms should be understood as and evaluated for what it is able to disclose about the object.
 - “Sampling” focuses attention on the technology and technique of extraction
 - “Bootleg” discloses the subversive and outlaw consequences of doing so
 - “Collage” provides a justification for these efforts by revealing connections to practices and products in modern art (p. 30)

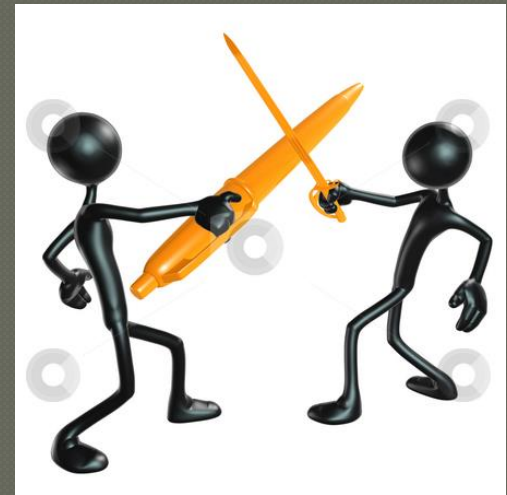
Writing as Technology

- Plato considered writing to be a technology.
- “An artificial and external apparatus that is distinguished from the natural and internal powers of memory and speech.”(p. 37)
- Writing was new media.
- Writing used as a drug.
- Aide for remembering.
- Remedy against forgetfulness.



Technology as Writing

- “... ‘writing’ is contained in the names of technological innovations and apparatus, such as photography (light writing), telegraphy (distance writing), cinematography (movement writing), the phonograph (sound writing), and the gramophone (writing sound).” (p. 40)
- Writing applies to every aspect of human life.



Recording: Preservation Medium

- “Speech is ephemeral and fleeting.” (p.41)
- Not perishable, but evanescent.
- Writing allows speech to be recorded.
- Enter, the phonographic record.
- Sound being preserved allows archival medium.



Preservation Medium cont.

- The innovation of recording technology has allowed the words of the speaker to be preserved beyond their death.
- Observation made after Edison's announcement of invention.
- Speech is immortal.
- Nipper the dog.



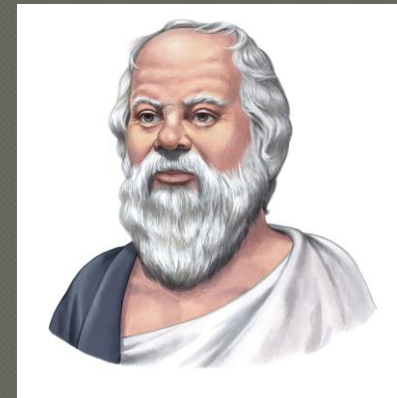
Technological Axiology

- Axiology: a theory of value with both ethical and aesthetic dimensions
- Written records lack traits found in speech records.
- “Live” Music



Writing Problems

- Socrates stated: “Writing has this strange quality, and is very like painting; for the creatures of painting stand like living beings, but if no one asks them a question, they preserve a solemn silence.” (p. 46)
- “And every word, when once it is written, is bandied about alike among those who understand and those who have no interest in it, and it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak; when ill-treated or unjustly reviled it always needs its father to help; for it has no power to protect itself.” (p.46)



Representation

- ◉ Writing like a painting.
- ◉ Philosophy of mediation
- ◉ Painter = Mashup DJ
- ◉ DJs lowest on hierarchy



Repetition

- ◉ Writing = Repetitive and Unresponsive
- ◉ Remix = Curatorial Art
- ◉ Recordings effect on Live Performances
- ◉ Reproduction of the same Formula



Vulnerabilities

- ◉ Recordings are vulnerable, not only unresponsive.
- ◉ Recordings = Abandoned Orphan
- ◉ Copyright Wars
- ◉ Remix = plagiarism?



Final Thoughts

- ◉ Do you believe remixing should be considered plagiarism?
- ◉ Do DJs deserve to be recognized as musicians?