

WHAT YOU CAN DO SOMETIMES TO GET FURTHER.

I NEVER READ IT FROM BEGINNING TO END.

MAYBE I HAVE READ EVERYTHING BUT NEVER IN ONE GO.

I THINK YOU CAN ALSO ALMOST FEEL STUPID IF YOU READ TOO MUCH OF IT.

IT'S TOO MUCH POINTING OUT.

IF YOU'RE STUCK, YOU SHOULD SIMPLY JUST DO THIS AND THIS.

AFTER A WHILE YOU'RE LIKE.

SHUT UP.

STOP SAYING WHAT I SHOULD DO.

IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT ANYBODY SHOULD HAVE AN ANSWER TO.

THE OTHER ADVICE BOOK IS A BOOK THAT I FOUND IN A SECOND HAND SHOP.

IT'S CALLED 'THE WEDDING BOOK'.

IT'S FROM THE SIXTIES AND IT'S ALMOST LIKE A JOKE.

IT'S ABOUT WHAT KIND OF RINGS YOU SHOULD CHOOSE.

ABOUT HOW TO SET THE TABLE.

ABOUT THE SILVER COLLECTION AND PRESENTS YOU SHOULD ASK FOR THE TABLE.

LIKE A CUCUMBER SET AND A FRUIT KNIFE AND A VEGETABLE SPOON.

OR WHAT SHOULD BE ON 'THE SMOKING TABLE':

ASHTRAY, CIGARS, CIGAR-CUTTER, CIGAR BOX, CIGARETTES, CUP.

I REMEMBER MY AUNT AND UNCLE HAD ALL THAT.

THEY MUST HAVE READ THE BOOK.

THE FACT THAT THEY CAN WRITE A BOOK LIKE THIS FASCINATES ME.

TO HAVE A GUIDE FOR A COUPLE THAT JUST GOT MARRIED.

HOW TO DEAL WITH THIS LIFE.

WHAT'S EXPECTED FROM YOU.

IT'S NOT SOMETHING I HAVE OUT OF MY SHELF OFTEN.

MAYBE ONCE A YEAR.

IT'S MORE TO TALK ABOUT THESE KINDS OF BOOKS.

I OFTEN GO TO SECOND-HAND SHOPS.

JUST TO LOOK AT BOOKS.

BUY ONE FOR TWENTY CENTS.

THIS CAN REALLY LIGHT ME UP.

BY THE WAY IT WAS DONE.

OR THE TYPEFACE THEY USED.

OR THE IMAGE MATERIAL THAT WAS IN IT.

OR JUST THE PAPER.

IT DOESN'T MATTER SO MUCH FOR ME.

THAT'S ALSO WHY I HAVE SO MANY BOOKS.

I THINK I LIKE BOOKS MORE AS AN OBJECT ALMOST.

THE WAY THEY LOOK.

I DON'T LIKE TO READ SO MUCH ABOUT GRAPHIC DESIGN.

IT'S MUCH MORE REFRESHING TO LOOK AT SOMETHING THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

THAT IS DONE WITH GRAPHIC DESIGN, THE MORE NAÏVE THINGS.

IT'S NOT A DIRECT INSPIRATION.

BUT IT INSPIRES ME.

I'M NOT THINKING: THAT'S A NICE ILLUSTRATION.

MAYBE I COULD USE IT.

MAYBE I COULD DRAW SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

BUT I THINK IT'S VERY UNCONSCIOUS THAT A LOT OF IT GETS IN YOUR HEAD.

I DON'T KNOW IF NAÏVE IS THE RIGHT WORD.

IT'S THE WHOLE INTENTION THAT I LIKE.

THE BOOK IS MEANT REALLY SERIOUSLY AND I CAN LAUGH ABOUT THAT NOW.

myself to finish the article. But it doesn't work like that.

IT CAN BE WHATEVER SENTENCE THAT SUDDENLY gives me the feeling: 'Oh, that was what I was looking for', or: 'Oh, yeah, that's the direction'. For example, with these Morf magazines, they were lying on my shelves for really long, and then in the beginning of the entire process, one morning when I wanted to start I didn't feel like going out, to the library for example, and then this is what I had at home, so I think: 'Okay, maybe I can read it'. I read the titles and subtitles. Only this little information, the angles that people can choose to approach subjects can already be so inspiring.

I SEE FOR INSTANCE A TITLE LIKE 'SKETCHING: Conversations with the brain'. 'That's a nice title', I think. And then it says: 'Sketching is a way of visual thinking that can set the creative mind free', which is of course exactly what I am searching for: 'Set the creative mind free'. So this is the moment when I throw the thing I was reading away, and go to write my ideas and feel open suddenly, like everything is possible.

I THINK I USE READING AS A METHOD TO come into the right state of mind, at a point when I need help. It's kind of another method to start working. It could also be taking a walk outside by the Amstel. In a way it's like looking around, if I'm not in a research stage and I just want to get going, to get into some kind of mood, then I read on a wide variety of topics, it doesn't matter that much what exactly. Morf isn't especially a magazine I like, and many times when I read further I'm disappointed. But in a way that doesn't matter, because the moment when I'm into a project, the entire existence around me is one big link to make my project grow. I'm really wandering around in the way that I'm thinking. It's like day-dreaming, or fantasizing about something very concrete: my work.

I THINK THAT WHEN I'M READING YOU CAN many times find me gazing into the distance. When I sit like that, looking around, reading a little piece, it can go on for hours. Then at one moment comes the butterflies. Then the thing I'm reading is way behind me and it happens in my head. I go through this magazine or article like a hunter. I'm coming to hunt this butterflies. When I have it, then I just sit behind my computer to work.

EVEN IF I WOULD INTEND TO READ FROM beginning to end, it wouldn't be a linear reading. At a certain point it would become multi-directional, it would be reading one or two chapters, starting working, and then the reading starts to be in conversation with the work. I feel that everything around is moulding towards my project, like pouring itself into my project.

IN A FURTHER STAGE OF THE PROCESS I'M more into reading things on the web. That's more the instant stuff, when I already know what subject I want to read about. In this jungle of internet, many times I come across something and I don't immediately have the time to read it, I then put it in my bookmarks, and I use it later, for instance to get back into a project that I wasn't busy with for some time. I could read my own notes in this case, but that's boring, so I would start to read on the internet. It's not so much about butterflies anymore, and it's also not so much about knowledge anymore, because I already gained the knowledge earlier in the process, but I would use it to come back to the neighbourhood. To remind me where it was that I wanted to go. It's also a method to step out the cage of my own brain.

REVOLUTION
On situationists
Joseph Miceli

1

I met a weird guy in New York, we were having some conversations about politics and he suggested a book called 'Communists like us' by an Italian guy who's in prison and writes books from there. I expressed that I didn't really like the core ideas in it, and then he asked me: 'Have you ever

heard of the situationists?' and he gave me this name 'Guy Debord'. So I went and looked up this guy and found this book 'The Society of the Spectacle.' From the first time I read the first page, I really got into it.

2

It reminded me of the experience with Taoism. When I was young I was very much into Taoism, through Buddhism, just reading about it, not practicing it. In Buddhism I found some theoretical ideas I didn't agree with totally and Taoism was like situationism, it worked in the same way. There's a kind of a parallel in the sense that Taosim is a very independent, non institutional kind of theology. They had a saint who was a drunk, part of what he was about was that he was not a perfect individual. I found that very open and flexible.

3

So I guess in a similar way I liked situationism; it also doesn't really have a definition or a sort of manifesto. It's a kind of critical thought. I think what characterizes the situationists' thinking is that it doesn't limit itself in speaking about superficial problems, like other kind of political theories such as communism. These theories always talk about what seem like little bubbles on the surface of a huge thing. Situationists want to talk about something called 'the totality', which is, how I understood it, more of a world view, seeing how things are interconnected to other things. I call it political, but that's not really the right term for it. They also talk a lot about everyday life, as a term.

4

Communism has big ideas, but communism I think at the source already sets up some structures with which it wants to either help or control certain things, where situationists are more into allowing diversity. The quickest way to say it is that situationism is the ideology of no ideology.

5

Guy Debord put together the Situationist International. That was the original grouping of people interested in this, and they put out a journal called The Situationist International. That journal was their interface and their study ground. Before Debord used to be in a French avant-garde group called the 'Letterist International', a sort of literary movement that dealt a lot with poetry and free writing, Raymond Queneau was also involved. One of the concepts that was born during the Letterist period was the idea of creating situations. Situations that would liberate people's desires. Psycho-geography for instance came out of this idea. In fact the first place they did psycho-geographic experiments was in Amsterdam. They tried to connect parts of the city through the idea of humans acting freely upon their desires, and not follow into the way the urban space was planned. That was one of the first situations; it was a material event, which had an effect on the people doing it.

6

'The Society of the Spectacle', is the central document in which the situationists' ideas are expressed. The whole book is written in an interesting form, it's written in maxims. That's a literary form where condensed paragraphs of information are presented separate from one another. It's not a flowing text. When I read this book I would read one and go and think about it for half a week. It's almost similar to a religious text in its form, but not at all in its content.

7

The style of writing is also very interesting because it's a reference to Marx on one side and to Sun-tzu on the other side, that's a Chinese philosopher, who wrote 'The art of war'. What I liked so much about Debord, which connects to my fascination with Buddhism and eastern thought, is that he often uses the parable way of describing things. In parables they say things like: 'The poverty of architecture, the architecture of poverty', these weird back and forth things, that make you think.

8

The first phrase is: 'All life in those societies where modern conditions of production prevail, presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles.' It means: anywhere in the modern world where things are governed by economy and industrial modes of production and relations, life presents itself as an accumulation of appearances and spectacles. It doesn't mean life is not real, but there's an unspoken setting. The way you know what's proper, how we're dressed; it's kind of made up, it's a mediated, myth-like relationship to what's actually happening. Debord came up with a lot of words that became famous and one of the biggest ones is 'the spectacle'. It's his term for this invisible, these intangible agreements that keep the social order through appearances, through the visual. It's very much about visual communication.

9

This Italian edition of it includes two books, 'The Society of the Spectacle' which he wrote in 1956 and 'Comments on The Society of the Spectacle', that he wrote in 1988. It's basically a part two, where he's updating his ideals. Everything written in 1956 is very scary similar to what has happened. It's almost like a Nostradamus kind of thing. The things he was describing were already present in the background by the time he wrote them, and today they're much more in our face.

10

This is a book that is also very important to me: 'Teaching as a Subversive Activity'. It's written by two American educators from the sixties, who both worked in very normal public schools in America. It's a research on what the educational system does to people. How it causes them to think. This was written in the sixties and seventies, so it's easy to understand that they were attracted by these sort of revolutionary ideals and bringing them into schools, about more freedom etc.

11

I've never been into these hippie kind of things, or anarchist kind of 'not give a fuck about anything'. The reason why I like this book, and also the situationists is because it's revolutionary, but it's not negative, it's proposing real methods for taking it back. The main concept in this book is about question-based education. There's a part that I always remember where they say: if you ask a child: 'What's the main river in Uruguay', or you ask a child: 'How would you find the main river in Uruguay?'. You can see that through those two questions the motor turns on in a different way. If you ask: 'What's the main river in Uruguay?' either you know or you don't, those are the possibilities, but if you ask: 'How would you find it?', there are millions of ways to find it. They're more for this kind of questioning.

12

These guys never went beyond writing this book and being academically revolutionary. In a way I like this because if you ask me: 'Joe, how do we do the revolution?' It's not like: 'Let's all get guns and shoot the bad guys'. It's more like: 'Make really cool schools and make bullshit proof people'. That's a term they use. It's a way of describing this general sense of awareness that's more than just receiving things, but understanding them. I'm not sure what revolution means, I believe in the need for change. In differentiated change, every block, every country, every region. Not a big thing where some guy comes in with a formula and we all do it.

FORUM
On technical questions
Liron Ross

[liron](#)

08.05.06 [13:08 UTC]

i have to deal with a lot of technical stuff for the website i'm making for radio rietveld. what i wanted to do is make a radio station that is very open in communication, and also in what it can do;

CAPTIONS
On starting and not finishing

Naama Iron

I CAN BE COMPLETELY TAKEN BY A CAPTION, A headline, a foreword, and I can stop my reading there, sometimes. Maybe it says something about the way I divide my concentration, and I don't necessarily like that that's the way I do it, I would expect from