REDESIGN OF INTERACTIVE BRAND COMPONENTS FOR

FRONT PORCH: ONLINE JOURNAL OF THE MFA IN CREATIVE WRITING

PROGRAM AT TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY-SAN MARCOS

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REDESIGN OF INTERACTIVE BRAND COMPONENTS FOR

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family, especially my parents, Deepak and Surina, who support me every single day, give me strength, and inspire me more than anyone can imagine. Thank you to Dee and Ryan for all their support and protection.

I am forever indebted to my mentors Bill Meek and Jeff Davis, to whom I also dedicate this thesis.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The *Front Porch Journal (FPJ)* launched in 2006 as an online literary journal run by the students of the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program of Creative Writing at Texas State University-San Marcos. The journal publishes online issues three to four times per year, consisting of submitted and selected pieces in a number of creative writing genres: poetry, nonfiction, fiction, literature reviews, and interviews with writers. A new group of graduate students, selected annually from the Texas State University-San Marcos MFA in Creative Writing program, take over the various editing roles and maintain the journal. *FPJ* has a growing reputation in the online journal market, which required a website and brand to expand upon this growth. Design research, strategy, and new technology lead to a redesigned *FPJ* website and brand, to convey the journal’s creative voice and its integrity in the online journal market.

*FPJ* is a contemporary journal with a large group of contributing writers and an audience of interested readers. The selection process of contributed works, where editors’ consistently chose works resembling to the journal’s voice, drive *FPJ*’s success. On their website, *FPJ* calls for work that is “innovative,” “insightful,” and “relevant.” In addition, *FPJ* promotes writers of all experience levels through written interviews and audio or video recordings of readings and interviews.
Research, Methods, and Results (RMRe) Process

The Communication Designer (CD) and FPJ editors communicated within an iterative process, where the CD and the editors planned every element from concept to creation, greatly benefitting the redesign. The CD divided the process into developmental phases, each with unique goals and outcomes to stage, plan, and address all details in communication design and website technologies. There are a variety of theories addressing different processes in the design and development phase. Author of The Elements of User Experience, Jesse James Garrett (2003), created a design and technology diagram appropriately named “Nine Pillars of Successful Web Teams.” In his methods, Garrett divides a web team’s process into strategic and tactical phases. The strategic includes research and strategy for the site, technology, and content leading into the abstract design, while the tactical phase takes the abstract design, implements the technology and content towards a final design, and management of the site. Garrett believes the only successful web teams utilize all pillars during the process (2003b).

In her book, Designing Brand Identity, Alina Wheeler (2009) presents another model that divides brand identity process into five phases of research, strategy, design, implementation, and management (p. 89). Within Wheeler’s implementation process, the online brand and website process includes planning, building, defining brand, creating content, designing brand, designing technical aspects, site development, and maintenance (pp. 152–3). Wheeler’s process included creating brand touchpoints, which are “opportunities to increase awareness and build customer loyalty” (p. 3).

Finally, Givechi et al. (2006) used design company IDEO’s “human centric” method to incorporate a human touch to the methodology, including “understanding,
synthesizing, creating, and communicating” (pp. 306–7) throughout the research and design process.

Modifications for interactive design made to Garret, Wheeler, and Givechi et al.’s methodologies, created a new methodology called the Research, Methods, and Results (RMRe) process (see Figure 1). The goal of using the RMRe process is to thoroughly examine *FPJ* to a strong website and brand reflective of their reputation, using parts of successful methods in the communication design discipline (CDD). The iterative process included three large phases with parallel design and technical aspects:

1) The Research (R) phase included a brand survey, competitive market analysis, SWOT analysis, and a brand positioning assessment of all research conducted.

2) The Methods (M) phase integrated concept development, technical development, and brand strategy, leading to multiple prototypes of websites.

3) The Results (Re) phase transitioned the final prototyped design into its deliverables: a detailed brand document, a typographic style guide, and newly implemented website using Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) code, published on an active server. Technical refinements and content creation lead to the final design implementation.
Figure 1. The Research, Methods, and Results (RMRe) process used for the *FPJ* redesign.

A majority of the research and creative data came from anonymous, phase-specific surveys given to editors and voluntary feedback from readers received through e-mail. Revision data came from two primary sources Google Analytics™ (GA) and anonymous surveys. Both data sets provided *FPJ* with information about the site visitors, including the location of their audience and technology used to access the site. This data framed the RMRe process, addressing various stages of the redesign, starting with the Research phase.
CHAPTER II

RESEARCH

The assessment of *FPJ*’s current site, strategy, future plans, and place in the online journal market defined the journal’s competitive position and facilitated improvements to the brand. In the Research phase of the RMRe process, the CD conducted an extensive brand audit, a series of strategic exercises to define the positioning and brand values of *FPJ*. Understanding of the organizational culture of *FPJ* directed the initial design development. Initially, the CD conducted surveys about brand with the editors. The e-mailed surveys included questions regarding the editors and CD’s review of the *FPJ* brand and created the goals for the redesign. Secondly, after analyzing the brand’s competitors, the CD compared them against the *FPJ*’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). This research lead to defined a brand positioning.

**Brand Survey**

The first step of the process is the brand survey. The CD studied the brand and collected imagery, sketches, and ideas to brainstorm redesign concepts. In preparation for the site redesign, an *FPJ* representative conducted an internal review with the editors to determine the goals and issues to be addressed by the website redesign. The survey showed a need to move in a direction that reflected the brand and the type of work *FPJ*
publishes. The CD used these data to formulate specific questions to establish initial brand strategies. Asking FPJ editors strategic brand and operation questions based on CDD best practices steered the redesign in a well-communicated, iterative process.

Research questions developed for the FPJ rebrand and website redesign are:

1) Who is FPJ?
2) Who needs to know?
3) How will they know?
4) Why should they care?
5) What are the goals and challenges for the redesign?
6) What journals are in the competitive market?

(Neumeier, 2006, p. 31).

The initial review revealed a need for a “clean, crisp, and professional” (Singh, personal correspondence, June 11, 2010) website with eye-catching elements that engage a viewer without relying too heavily on being ‘tricky’ or gimmicky (Singh, 2010).

Additionally, the CD conducted a thorough editor and reader survey for keywords related to the journal, which included words such as “charming,” “current,” and “stylistically integrated” in the list. The FPJ editors answered the research questions through internal surveys and provided the CD with a list of competing journals for in-depth analysis.

**Competitive Market Analysis**

Analysis of competitive pricing and products is a common practice for corporations and organizations. Conducting a competitive market analysis was imperative for FPJ rebranding process and Research phase. Before beginning the redesign process, the CD
conducted a competing market study which examined the most relevant operations and website designs in order to differentiate *FPJ* in two markets. One competitive market includes other online journal websites. The CD and editors chose literary websites that had designs based on strengths or brand elements that visually interested them, and narrowed down lists to four strong competitors for analysis, based on their content and current design. The four competitive journals were *Pank, Bat City Review, Yale Review,* and *Ruminate.* The editors and CD compiled and analyzed successes and missteps in design and communication of each site, including content, site usability, and use of online branding (Illustration, pp.42–6).

Another competitive market that greatly affects *FPJ* is a collection of websites and brands from other businesses with “front porch” in their name. The CD used search engines to find institutions named “Front Porch” and analyzing both their design and coding, and found *FPJ* was listed eighth in the search results. The other seven Front Porches included multiple restaurants and blogs, of which almost half used a rocking chair silhouetted logo, similar to *FPJ’s* old brand (Illustration, pp. 47–50). With the competitive market study, the team gained insight on reader and writer interaction with each journal, how to implement effective design and gleaned from them crucial information for the remaining steps of the Research phase. This data was then included in the next step, the SWOT analysis.

**SWOT Analysis**

A SWOT analysis is the self-study of an organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The SWOT analysis for *FPJ* (Illustration, p. 51) revealed
detailed information to assess *FPJ*'s current online presence. Completing the SWOT analysis, the editors and CD aimed to “leverage strengths, eliminate weakness, exploit opportunities, and deflect threats” (Boar, 2001, p. 194) in the redesign of the website and brand. The SWOT analysis confirmed *FPJ*'s strong presence and reputation among other journals, while defining areas to improve, such as reassessing presentation of audio and video media, creating opportunities in communicating with their audience, and understanding how other journals use technology to gauge the brand and user experience. This initial Research phase framed the rest of the RMRe process, adhering to CD practices.

**Brand Positioning and Hypothesis**

The research showed a brand identity and web presence ineffective in representing *FPJ*'s reputation for contemporary, well-written work. The website design was the antithesis of the reputation, displaying subdued colors, black and white photography, and inconsistent branding, rather than a strong, clear, and current voice (Illustration, pp. 35–37).

*FPJ*'s main challenge is to bridge the disconnect between their name, representing something old and nostalgic, and a voice that is “contemporary and relevant” (Singh, 2010). *FPJ*'s updated brand must strike a balance between the old and new in a medium that provides the ability to reach a large audience and stand at the forefront of successful online journals. The Methods phase of the RMRe explored website and brand redesign based on the data collected during the Research phase and established CD practices and theories.
CHAPTER III

METHODS

Design and Concept Integration

The Creative Writing program behind FPJ also runs the historical site, the Katherine Anne Porter (KAP) House in Kyle, Texas. Porter (1890–1980) was a Pulitzer prize-winning writer and Texas native (Katherine Ann Porter Society, 2011). The late writer’s childhood home is an extension and symbol of the department, binding together Porter’s historical life and the creativity flourishing from the MFA in Creative Writing program. The concept behind the FPJ redesign already existed in the KAP house’s backyard. Literature and the architecture of the KAP house share common characteristics: structure, value, and history. This common ground became the foundation of the FPJ website and brand redesign. The CD created a photographic documentation showing images, colors, and text inspired by the concept. The purpose of the mood board is to show visual elements that represent the brand and direct the design of the FPJ website and brand identity. The following steps included explorations in brand and brand identity, color, imagery, typography, and layout to implement the concept.

Brand and brand identity. A Brand is the relationship between an organization’s mission and services with its audience. Brand strategist and author Marty Neumeier defined branding as the reputation a company has earned, not its logos, imagery, or visual
elements (2006, pp. 1–3). Karin Hibma, strategic partner at Cronan, defined brand as the “provocative and trustworthy relationship” (Creative Summit 25 lecture on March 26, 2011) between a brand and its audience. Hibma also recommended building a brand out of “who [the company] is and what [they] want to be” (2011). The CD created the identity to represent the brand, once the brand was established. The brand identity (BI) of an organization is the “name or visual symbol that communicate a market position” or reputation (Neumeier, 2006, p. 87). These visual representations are symbolized by words, images, or a combination of the two.

FPJ’s existing BI did not reflect its inviting, yet contemporary voice. As revealed in earlier surveys, FPJ required a new BI because the former BI showed a confined, aged rocking chair between distressed words “FRONT” and “PORCH” (See Illustration, p. 54). The CD researched semiotics, the study of symbols, identifying symbols and iconography related to front porches, including swings, beer bottles, a side table, plants, doorbells, and welcome mats.

Studying these symbols contributed in the creation of a unique BI. The ultimate goal of the redesign is for the audience must see the journal’s contemporary reputation through a recognizable BI. Wheeler presented the “Sequence of Cognition” as the order in which a viewer recognizes a brand identity: first by shape, then color, and finally content or typography (2009, p. 52). The BI research and development included the “Sequence of Cognition,” leading to the exploration of symbols, which reflected the ideas most related to FPJ’s brand. Two symbols stood out—doorbells and welcome mats—because they both serve a practical function and have unique shapes. Doorbells require human interaction—pressing down on a button—which is similar to clicking links on a
website. Welcome mats are inviting to a visitor and traditionally have a kind phrase or image, such as flowers or animals, and/or wording such as “Home Sweet Home” or “Welcome.” Hibma treats brands as living organisms assigning them their own personality in her brand process (2011). Neumeier suggested that brands are “built with experiences…the key is to craft those experiences so they create delight for the people who determine the meaning and value of [the] brand” (2007, p. 97). Using these symbols as brand associations, created an experience and personality recalling them as a “mental shortcut to the brand promise” (LePla & Parker, 2002, p. 91). In the new BI, a rectangle forms negative space with the journal name positioned inside it, which extended past the edge of the rectangle—a geometric abstraction of a welcome mat. The journal name was stacked at an angle to reflect porch steps extend the concept (Illustration, p. 76).

The new BI was a central element on the website and applied to brand touchpoints. Brand touchpoints are extensions of the main brand communication (i.e. the website), exploring the use of the BI or brand in secondary mediums to promote the brand or its experience (Wheeler, 2006, p. 10). Secondary mediums include promotional items and online extensions that show the BI. A consistent use of the BI in multiple mediums strengthens the brand, making it recognizable.

**Typography.** Typefaces for both the brand and literary works were chosen based on ideas of legibility, authority, and formality; all important elements of the *FPJ* brand. The previous *FPJ* website used three typefaces: an unclassified, distressed typeface for the BI, and Helvetica and Georgia for the content. The distressed typeface would not be included in the redesign as it aged and distressed the journal’s name and was not appropriate for their contemporary reputation. Helvetica is a sans serif typeface designed
by Max Miedinger and Eduard Hoffmann. Helvetica is a European, ubiquitous typeface that does not convey the all-American idea of front porches, like Georgia, due to its neutral form. Georgia is a transitional serif typeface created by Matthew Carter in 1996 for Microsoft, made specifically for on screen viewing.

Georgia is a native font installed on most computers, designed exclusively for onscreen legibility, allowing a readable typographic style for site visitors. Using a serif typeface, like Georgia, for body copy appears formal, usually associated with literature and writing styles such as American Psychological Association (APA) which recommend the typeface classification because of the serif details in letterforms. Furthermore, the typeface existed in the former design, allowing for a smoother transition from old to new design. For these reasons, Georgia was the only typeface retained in the redesign.

The CD researched typeface classifications for the BI that strongly represented the brand. The CD revisited the word list of associations of front porches and found that support columns are typical front porch elements, and most structurally related to typeface design. Columns were a staple in Southern antebellum architecture, which included the revival of Greek architectural elements. Columns used in plantation-style homes classify as Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. The variations exist in ornamentation, proportion, and the transition from the top to the bottom slabs of a column (Films Media Group, 2000). The architecture of a column, specifically the Doric order, shared similarities to one typographic classification: Egyptian or slab serifs. Slab serifs have the same details in letterform as serifs, but typically have linear, not rounded details (see Figure 2). With this similarity in mind, the CD selected a typeface from the slab serif classification, avoiding typefaces considered “Western,” rather concentrating on
contemporary or timeless slab serifs. The typeface selected was Memphis, a geometric slab typeface designed by Rudolf Wolf in 1929 for Stempel Foundry (now Linotype Corporation). The Linotype website described Memphis as suitable for, “technical fields, making a rational, purposeful impression… Memphis is appropriate for any text which should exhibit a clear, neutral character” (2011). The typeface connected the new BI with photographic backgrounds on the redesigned site. To maintain consistency through the content, the CD created a typographic style guide, who unified all pieces accepted into the journal (Appendix A). The guide’s collection of typographic standards supported the brand, defined style for each type level (i.e. headers, authors, body copy), created consistency, and unified all genres to FPJ’s voice.

![Figure 2. Memphis letterforms compared to the Doric column.](image)

**Imagery.** In contrast to the old website, imagery (specifically photography) is a key component in the creation and development of the new FPJ site. Photography frames the content as the site background, creating an architectural space in which the written works dwell. LePla and Parker (2002) believe “backgrounds add richness to the customer
experience, while allowing for more flexibility in the creative process” (p. 236). All photography, staged in various areas around the Katherine Anne Porter (KAP) house, reflected the editors’ memories of being on porches. The editors’ personal stories (existing content on the site) became the assigned background images of each section or genre of the website. Additionally, it differentiated *FPJ* from other journals since the imagery showed editors’ stories at a unique location owned by the Creating Writing department. This concept—visual storytelling—created a more human feel for the journal and cemented the brand. Wheeler states that a CD must “understand the power of symbols and storytelling to build [the] culture and brand” (2009, p. 32). The redesign increased brand value through photographic imagery, which transformed *FPJ* into a dynamic space with photography creating blossoming life and creativity.

According to Lidwell et al. (2003), the art of storytelling has six fundamental elements: setting, characters, plot, invisibility, mood, and movement (p. 230). On the new *FPJ* site, the use of people in the photography was minimal, so the visitors became the characters of each scene. Only hints of human interaction with the porch are left behind. Books, cigarettes, summer lemonade, empty beer bottles, shoes, and musical instruments, create a vignette of the story. Lidwell et al. (2003) state that when a viewer becomes “engaged in a good movie or book, the existence of the medium is forgotten” (p. 203), allowing the storyteller—*FPJ*— to disappear. Online mediums already face the challenge of connecting the on-screen content with audiences. *FPJ*’s unique photographic backgrounds surrounding written content, create a scene allowing the visitor to get lost in the moment. The warm, summery, and inviting photography set the mood, while the photographic vignettes change with each section, directing the movement of the story
Color. The existing brand identity color palette was black and grey, set on a burgundy and white website, which did not represent FPJ’s contemporary voice. Color has the power to link to a brand (Wheeler, 2009 p. 52). The CD looked for unique colors not used by competing journals to represent the new brand. The former BI hindered the journal’s reputation and antiquated the brand, because of the use of subdued, disconnected colors. Using site photography, the CD chose saturated colors for the new identity and website to contrast the light tones found in the site photography, specifically the exterior paint of the KAP house, a pale sea foam green with pastel yellow trim. This successfully narrowed the possibilities of the color palette down to shades of yellows, reds, grays, and blues.

Color serves both aesthetic and functional purpose in the FPJ redesign. The colors chosen are a bright yellow and saturated red, loosely related to Texas State University-San Marcos’ color palette, gold and maroon. To extend the airy and light nature of the site, a medium-dark grey replaced black content to complement the rest of the site design and elements. The colors worked as wayfinding directors within the website (Garrett, 2003), creating hierarchy and leading the viewer from one area to another. The bright yellow identity draws full attention to itself, paired with a matching navigation to create visual hierarchy so that the user is lead throughout the page. The secondary color, the saturated red, colors interactive and clickable elements such as links, when rolled over with a mouse. The yellow BI is slightly transparent on the page, creating a layered interaction with the background image. This reflects the editors’ wish to see a more “stylistically integrated” site (Singh, 2010), while providing a strong contrast to other
Layout. The layout of the *FPJ* design responded to the problems expressed in the surveys and the new brand concept. The layout needed to utilize the architectural space made by the background and still highlight the content on the site. The new website design separates the navigation from the content, addressing the lack of visual hierarchy in the old design. The different elements of the old website are not integrated. The new design uses the previously stated color strategy and semi-transparent elements so more sections of the site come together. Former design director of *The New York Times*, Khoi Vinh states, “a grid should focus on problem solving first and aesthetics second… The simpler the grid, the more effective it is” (p. 35).

The CD explored various layouts based on dynamic and integrated concepts, specifically centered or left-aligned design with technical aspects and user experience in mind. The process started with loose pencil sketches towards wireframes, digital sketches of sections of where navigation and content are in the layout of a page (*Web Style Guide*, 2011), without the use of designed elements. Next, the CD created multiple layout compositions incorporating the BI, color, type and other designed elements. Through an iterative process, the *FPJ* editors critiqued the digital compositions. Once the editors chose the final layout, the CD began to code the layout into a functioning website (Illustration, pp. 66–72).

**Technical Analysis**

To ensure a successful transition from concept to functional site, the CD addressed the design and website design coding. Furthermore, the CD created *FPJ’s* brand and
operational strategies based on industry standard practices and assessing technology that extended *FPJ*’s offerings to the audience. The use of new website design tools and languages on the Internet assisted in creating new brand touchpoints and services for the journal, such as a two-way conversation between the *FPJ* and the audience, a new media editor position, and new content and features, such as blogs. The Technical analysis and process of the *FPJ* redesign included: the navigation, coding languages, media hosting options such as Vimeo, testing and usability, and coded prototypes.

**Navigation.** The website navigation determines the structure of pages and links, which lead visitors to specific sections of the website, based on the website’s content. Creating successful navigation is similar to a table of contents or index common in literature; both require understanding how a visitor would intuitively move throughout a document and/or site and are easily accessible. CDs use a process to create a successful organization of links, known as site maps. A site map is a hierarchal graphic or list outlining the various sections of a site and its main content. Building two graphics, one of the old navigation and one of the redesigned navigation are created to visually reassess the organization of the site. The revised site map included additional sections such as blogs or reorganizing or removing sections such as media, based on conclusions of the SWOT analysis.

The information hierarchy guides a visitor navigates through a website. Web usability author, Steve Krug, states, “the more important something is, the more prominent it is” (2006, p. 33). The navigation of a website should be accessible and clear. Garrett stated, “communicate the relationship between the elements it contains” (2003, p. 125). *FPJ*’s old website listed all links in one general grouping that did not highlight
specific features of each link or its relationship to other links. Using Garrett’s theory, 

*FPJ*’s new website navigation combined works into four groups:

1. Genres with literature submitted by writers, such as fiction, poetry, and nonfiction.
2. Genres with writing or media reviewed or recorded by *FPJ* editors.
3. A single submission link to isolate and highlight where writers can submit literature.
4. A group with more information regarding *FPJ* such as about, blog, archives, and links.

The old website navigation, placed above the body copy, competed with the section headers and did not create clear hierarchy. To address this, the redesigned navigation lies on left side of the page, away from the main content section and is fixed in place if a user scrolls down on pages with larger content, making it always accessible.

Additionally, to maintain visual hierarchy, each section of the website contains a unique background image to help metaphorically label each section. The opaque bar across the header of the website also labels each section and can bring users back to that menu as an isolated link. Web design languages such as HTML and CSS facilitated the creation of the navigation through the physical and metaphoric space of the website.

**HTML and CSS.** Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) was the coding language used to create content and structure on websites. “With HTML, authors describe the structure of pages using markup. The elements of the language label pieces of content such as ‘paragraph,’ ‘list,’ ‘table,’ and so on” (World Wide Web Consortium, 2011). Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) are pages of code that style the structure, content, and each
element of the HTML page. CSS assigns visual attributes in its styling, such as borders, color, background images, transparencies, controlling scrolling, creating lists, defining text styles, and governing each element’s position on the screen. Further, CSS allowed for one style definition and template to work on multiple HTML pages, which accommodated FPJ’s the high number of new and archived pages, continuing the brand consistency.

Vimeo. One of FPJ’s SWOT weaknesses was how its existing media, such as video, was presented on the FPJ website. The university originally hosted videos of writers speaking at the KAP house on its own servers, which restrained videos to a small size and limited download speeds. An abundance of free or low cost websites currently offer video hosting, which included high quality video, as well as other features that the university servers could not include, such as video forwarding links, full screen viewing, and labeling videos.

The CD and FPJ editors decided to use Vimeo, a smaller service where “respectful” and “creative” videos can be uploaded without the distraction of other non-related videos or promotional advertising banners, frequently found in other video hosting services. Vimeo removes advertising that other video hosting services and websites, like YouTube, use, making it a distinctive tool in the online branding market (Vimeo Guidelines, 2011). Vimeo is suitable for FPJ’s new brand and technical strategy for the following reasons:

1) Videos can directly be embedded into any page while preferences can be changed to stop others from embedding it as their own content.

2) Videos can be tagged in different categories such as “writing,” “reading,” and
“creative,” making it easier for potential of new readers and writers whom would search for those terms.

3) Each account is given a member page, increasing the ways the general public can discover or access FPJ.

4) All videos have customization options such as full screen viewing or auto play.

5) Content is easy to upload by the FPJ editors through Vimeo, without going through the restrictive university-based server process.

Individually moving older videos from the university’s server to Vimeo is the only drawback of using the service to host videos. In order to take advantages of the benefits Vimeo provides, FPJ created a new position, the Audio/Video Editor, allowing an additional graduate student in the program to be involved with the sole responsibility of creating and posting new videos.

**ASP.** Active Server Pages (ASP) is a language that coded server-based HTML and CSS coded pages. The main benefit of ASP is the ability to use of a line of code on each page, called “includes”, that pulls information from separate pages into specific sections of each content page. This makes it easier to update sections of the website, editing the separate content only once, rather than on every page that includes it. The old FPJ website utilized ASP, but only for the BI and navigation. The new FPJ site, loads the BI, navigation, editor masthead, and footer on all pages. This streamlined the Web Manager’s role when updating information for each issue or specifically, when FPJ appoints new editors and switches out their names in the masthead.

**PHP and Content Management Systems.** WordPress, an online blogging software, was initially slated to power the entire FPJ website, because it enabled FPJ
editors to make changes to the content without affecting or accessing the design of a page. WordPress runs on the Hypertext Pre-Processor, or PHP language (The PHP Group, 2011), and incorporates both HTML and CSS. PHP bares a resemblance to ASP in terms of functionality, but is an open-source, free language, able to run on the same servers as ASP and is used by many corporations such as Yahoo (Zeldman, p. 96). While PHP and ASP are comparable, the main reason to use PHP is its use in WordPress. WordPress, a Content Management System (CMS), separates design and coding from content, potentially making it easier for all editors to update the site, instead of the Web Managing editor. The editors create content with the use of only basic text and image editing capabilities that will not affect the HTML, CSS, or PHP code of a page. WordPress is used for blogging or creating a fully functional corporate website.

**Testing and usability.** In the initial Design phase, the CD built two test *FPJ* websites—one using HTML/CSS/ASP and the other one within WordPress—to determine which technology provided *FPJ* with a streamlined content-updating process. Testing revealed unsuspected weaknesses in using WordPress. More tests on usability, updating and capabilities through add-on plugins, revealed that WordPress became more inefficient for each editor. While allowing more editors access to content editing, using WordPress required additional training each year for the new editors and added to the web manager’s responsibilities. Allowing all editors to access the content could lead to inconsistencies of style of content, which could potentially delay the release of future issues. These reasons outweighed the benefits of having WordPress manage the content separately from the design. Keeping the Web Manager in control allows for a consistent filter of all added content. In the end, continuing usage of ASP for most of the website, as
with the old server, was the most efficient way to bring in the new CSS style sheets and restyle over the 15 archived issues.

WordPress, however, is not completely absent in the new site design. Rather than powering the entire website, WordPress powers the journal’s new blog, a brand extension opportunity revealed by the SWOT analysis (Illustration, p. 51). The personalized addition to the journal allows the start of a conversation between the readers and writers who visit the FPJ website and communicate or comment on posts made by editors on a rotating, but regular basis.

**Brand Strategy Integration**

At this stage of the Methods phase, the CD implemented the opportunities listed in the SWOT analysis, into the technical analysis and design phases. The opportunities included creating the blog, presenting video in an effective way that also extends the use of the FPJ BI, and the multiple technical changes made to the code to help streamline usability. This bridged the gap between the visual and the coded elements of the website. These elements integrated together during the prototype with revision stage.

**Prototype Compositions with Revisions**

The CD created various prototypes based on layout sketches and wireframes. The revisions covered details in photography to use for each page, color usage, examining the layout, and cementing the new typographic style. The iterative process entailed two main rounds of revisions with all staff providing input in verbal or surveyed settings, with minor revision rounds with a select group of editors. This crucial step included taking all
the design details, transitioning them into a code website, and completed the Method phase.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The *Front Porch Journal* website redesign included Research, Methods, and Results for the interactive brand and website. The four results of the process are:

1) An extensive brand document which includes brand guidelines, strategies, typographic style, color, layout, website structure, site maps, and expansion of research and implementation past the project scope.

2) A Typographic style guide detailing the format of future entries combining writing guidelines and rules of typographic design, to streamline and define the *FPJ* brand. All outcomes are shown as illustrations following this thesis.

3) Technical Brand Strategy, including extensive testing and SEO, created so *FPJ* gains a larger online presence.

4) A redesigned website and brand using contemporary web technologies (HTML, CSS, ASP, PHP, and Content Management Systems) and supporting social media.

**Brand Document**

The brand document (see Illustration) serves the purpose of fully defining the *FPJ* redesign with documented brand standards, process, and history. Documenting both the brand and typographic standards is crucial for a journal with a yearly, rotating editorial
staff, and even more important for the life of the brand. Wheeler (2009) states that “the role of a designer is to anticipate the future before it happens” (p. 32). The *FPJ* brand document shows the process from past to present design, the present standards to abide by, and the future of the brand through future implementations.

**Typographic Style Guide**

The typographic style guide (Appendix A) is a document that allows section editors to adhere to one defined typographic writing style for all accepted and edited content before it is published with each issue. As with the brand document, the style guide ensures full implementation of the *FPJ* brand. This portable and accessible document is available in PDF form and made available to all present and future editors.

**Technical Brand Strategy**

**Search engine optimization.** Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is the process of coding that helps a page or website rank higher in search engine results. According to the Web Style Guide (2011), visitor traffic controls where a website is indexed in the search engine results, but it does not affect the content on the website. Labeling the content, specifically keywords, using appropriate HTML tags, such as headers, paragraphs, links, alternative text for images, and page title tags, the higher it exists on search engine ranking (Lynch and Horton, 2011). SEO also includes coding relevant keywords into the HTML header of the page. *FPJ* used keywords related to writing terms, genres, and regions such as “writing,” “poetry,” and “Texas.” An additional step in studying what keywords are relevant and statistics on site visitors are, included the use of
Google Analytics™.

**Google Analytics™.** Google Analytics™ is a web and JavaScript based add-on to websites that allows the owner of the website to track who, where, when, and how someone visited their website. Google Analytics™ reveals statistical information about the visitor, all without compromising the personal identity:

1) How the visitor ended up on the site (direct link, referred link, or search engine).

2) How much time the visitor spent on the site (minutes per page).

3) Technical configuration of the visitors’ computer (mobile, browser, and OS).

4) Where the visitors accessed the site from (city, state, or country).

Further, the service captures search keywords used in search engines, which generate results including the *FPJ* site. Determining which keywords result in the most traffic and rank the site higher in search results are a crucial part of the SEO and technical strategy. The new list of keywords included those terms and added terms such as “blog,” “videos,” and “readings,” expressing more of *FPJ*’s offerings. A full 3-month report from Google Analytics™ can be found in Appendix B.

In the process of designing a new site, it is important to determine what browsers and resolution visitors use, so the design is compatible with the visitors’ technical settings. This information is particularly helpful when designing the visual layout of the *FPJ* website and the size of the elements on the site in pixels (Google Analytics™, 2010).

**Cross-Browser Testing.** Since HTML and CSS elements translate code into design differently in numerous Internet browsers, the actual style and architecture of the website can vary from the views of the designer or editors’ computers. As it was not practical to
test on physical machines with a variety of browsers and resolutions, two free websites offered services that load the designed site in various predetermined browser, OS, and resolution combinations. The results project each scenario on screen or by downloadable report. The two utilities used in the *FPJ* study are BrowserShots.org and Adobe’s BrowserLab (https://browserlab.adobe.com/). Browsershots generates downloadable images of the pages showing exactly what is viewable on different OS, even if both use the same browser. Adobe BrowserLab shows comparable details of which recent HTML or CSS attributes are compatible with different browsers.

To verify that some of the information generated displays a variety of resolutions, a third test is implemented, using Google Lab’s Browser Size. The free service displays an image over the website dividing the screen based on how much the average viewer can see based on resolution, and what percent of the internet browsing population is able to see each section. These data compared similarly to editors, readers, and writers’ shared screen shots and data from their personal computers, and led to improving *FPJ*’s design on multiple browsers.

**Website**

A fully functional website, accessible and visually appealing to readers and writers interested in creative writing is the final result of the RMRe process, using design and technical methods to create a virtual front porch on the website. The background imagery supports the content of each issue, letting it exist on the front porch of the KAP house. The website is the main form of communication with the journal’s readers and reflects the concept in the new design and BI. The website is coded using HTML, CSS, ASP, and PHP, and includes new features such as a separate archive section and blog.
Launch Analysis

While the old FPJ site did not implement analytic software, the editors and the CD activated Google Analytics™ for the November 8, 2010 relaunch. Since the launch, the website has had over 5,337 visits from 3,797 unique visitors mostly visiting the editor’s letter, submission page, and poetry section. Google Analytics™ tracked 396 visits on the launch day alone (Appendix B). Less than a week after the launch, the Huffington Post published an article about the top 15 online journals, and Huffington Post readers rated FPJ, the #1 online journal. The article brought 277 visits to the redesigned website, and a total of 1,260 visits in the first week. Editors have begun using the typographic style guide for the next issue of FPJ.

Slight adjustments in content and browser testing have been made based on voluntary feedback from the FPJ audience and editors to solve minor issues in browser compatibility and navigation. With the new brand and website fully functioning, the next steps include expanding upon the brand.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This research documents the redesign of the BI and website of Front Porch Journal (FPJ), the online journal of the MFA in Creative Writing program at Texas State University-San Marcos. FPJ faced disconnects between their nostalgic name and contemporary work. The CD studied CDD existing methods and practices to create a custom process for the redesign: the Research, Methods, and Results (RMRe) process, a method combining various CD industry standards and techniques, was used to create a website and brand identity (BI) that accurately represents FPJ’s growing reputation.

Using the RMRe process significantly improved the journal’s authenticity in the market. The brand and website are unlike any other competitive online journal, and portray FPJ as a contemporary journal. The new BI integrates with the website design, creating a virtual front porch for the readers with the use of photographic backgrounds framing the text. By using photographic imagery from a program-owned location and creating a logo without the use of the silhouetted rocking chair (common in other front porch sites), the FPJ brand stands out from both competitive markets. This differentiation is important for FPJ’s redesign, making the journal authentic to the readers and building the brand through the art of storytelling. The underlying narrative in the photographs connects and builds trust with the readers, reducing the distance between the reader and the screen.
The RMRe process did not restrict the outcomes, but rather it built a foundation for the redesign that involves an iterative and transparent process between the CD and the editors. The process also allowed the CD and editors to measure project outcomes through the various phases of the RMRe. The Research phase included brand audits and SWOT analysis that provided *FPJ* editors with an assessment revealing the competitive market and what opportunities were available to the journal. The Methods phase included exploration in BI, typography, imagery, color, and layout, as well as development of technology through HTML, CSS, and SEO capabilities. The Results—the new brand document, typographic style guide, website and brand identity—provide *FPJ* with a strong and unique brand with tools to continue the journal’s growth for years to come.

The creation and implementation of a brand document, writing style guide, and technical brand strategy will ensure the consistent use of the brand for the foreseeable future.

**Expansion of Research**

The *FPJ* website was the first step in the redesign implementation of the *FPJ* brand. The brand will continue to grow in additional phases and continue to bring more writers and readers to the journal’s website.

Tactile touchpoints would include usable or practical writing or porch related giveaways at trade shows, including notebooks, pens, t-shirts, bags, since *FPJ* editors attend conferences, trade shows, seminars and workshops for aspiring writers. Rather than create short-term promotional items, objects either related to writing or that have a long term use were presented. These objects include reusable tote bags, t-shirts, and moleskin notebooks all with the brand screen-printed onto each item.
Online extensions include the implementation of social media, e-mail newsletters (e-newsletters), and/or mobile applications. Devices such as Apple’s iPhone and iPad tablet, and Google’s Android have redefined the CDD role, reflecting the demand for content available in mobile form. Building a mobile application that the end user can take issues of *Front Porch* everywhere they go, would extend the brand experience *FPJ’s* new website design has, creating a virtual porch. Mobile platforms allow users to read content from the latest issues, share content with others, access media from the videos and audio archives, access the blog, download front porch images for the backgrounds of their mobile devices, and contact *FPJ* through e-mail, Twitter, or Facebook.

The success of the process in this *FPJ* redesign lies with the transparency and objectivity between the editors and the CD. However, the process must be used multiple interactive rebrand projects to measure its success. The main phases of the RMRe process will remain, as each step can be customized for the projects that implement the process. Bridging the technical and conceptual, as well as continuing an open dialogue between the CD and the client, will be crucial in the success of the process.
Front Porch is the online literary journal of Texas State University’s MFA program. Founded in 2006 by MFA students, Front Porch publishes exceptional poetry, fiction, nonfiction, reviews, and interviews. The journal features a one-of-a-kind video and audio archive, which offers an assortment of celebrated authors reading and discussing their work.
Front Porch 15 pays homage to Ai, Barry Hannah, and Jennifer Wrisley, who have each been pronounced dead this year, too soon. It is our hope to extend their felt presence. Alongside acknowledging these losses, our summer issue also celebrates beginnings.

In a video recording of a reading she gave in 2003, Ai speaks about living claim to one's own life when she

About Front Porch

...there used to be front porches, and people sat there sometimes at night, talking when they wanted to talk, reading, and not talking when they didn't want to talk. Sometimes they just sat there and thought about things, turned things over... the real reason, hidden underneath, might be they didn't want people sitting like that, doing nothing, nothing, talking; that was the wrong kind of social life. People talked too much. And they had time to think. So they ran off with the porches.

—from Front Porches by Ray Bradbury

Front Porch is the online literary journal of Texas State University’s MFA program. Founded in 2003 by MFA students, Front Porch publishes exceptional poetry, fiction, nonfiction, reviews, and interviews. We’re also pleased to feature a one-of-a-kind video and audio archive, which showcases celebrated authors reading and discussing their work.

At Front Porch, you will find some of the best and most renowned talents in contemporary writing published alongside promising new voices. Our editors seek out both innovative and traditional literature. In short, we’re looking for meaningful and relevant writing that counts, no matter its form. Visit our submissions page, join our mailing list, or do both. We would love to hear from you.
Front Porch Links

Texas State

- Front Porch on Facebook
- Texas State University’s MFA Program in Creative Writing
- The Katherine Anne Porter House
- New York Times article on Texas State MFA program [pdf]

What People Are Talking About

- genius
- Emerging Writers Network
- Moorish Girl
- Mid-American Review
- Saul Newman
- Identity Theory
- New England Review
- NPR on Front Porch
- Pandaklybox

Submission Guidelines

Front Porch accepts fiction (short stories and novel excerpts), poetry, and creative nonfiction. Please submit only one piece of fiction and nonfiction at a time, and no more than five poems at a time as DOC. or RTF. Files only. You must submit via our online system.

Our response time is generally 2-4 months, but may be longer. We accept simultaneous submissions, given that you promptly inform us upon acceptance elsewhere. We do not accept previously published material. Front Porch asks for first serial rights and the right to keep your work in our archives; all other rights revert back to the author after publication. We also ask that authors mention that their work first saw publication in Front Porch in any future reprints.

Please note: We only accept electronic submissions via our online system. Paper submissions will not be read or returned.

Book Reviews

We encourage publishers to send us catalogues and review copies of forthcoming titles. Please email bookreviews@frontporchjournal.com with any inquiries. You may send literary fiction, poetry, and nonfiction books for review consideration to:

Front Porch

MFA Program

Department of English

Texas State University

661 University Drive

San Marcos, TX 78666

Other questions or comments regarding the journal can be sent to frontporchjournal@gmail.com.

Join our Mailing List

Email Address:
First Name:
Last Name:
FORMER WEBSITE »
**QUESTIONS**

1. Who is FPJ?
2. Who needs to know?
3. How will they find out?
4. Why should they care?
5. What are the goals and challenges for the redesign?
6. What journals are in the competitive market?

(Neumeier, 2006, p. 31).

**ANSWERS**

1. *Front Porch Journal (FPJ)* is the online literary journal of Texas State University-San Marcos’ MFA program. Founded in 2006 by MFA students, *FPJ* publishes exceptional poetry, fiction, nonfiction, reviews, and interviews.

2. Creative and literary journals at institutions around the country (and internationally), writers whom would submit work to the journals, and readers whom enjoy contemporary literature.

3. Relaunching the website with a new design, new brand, and other brand implementations to reach out to viewers, running with new fall issue release.

4. Run by students from one of the most notable and recognized Creative Writing Programs in the nation.

5. Front Porch has an added challenge with the name of our journal representing something [old] & provincial... A challenge specific to this journal is to make sure the layout matches the associations people have with front porches, but also to make the site feel contemporary and relevant instead of nostalgic, to match the kind of content [they] are looking to publish.

6. Pank, Ruminate, Bat City Review, and Yale Review.

» Professional
» Clean
» Clever
» Detailed/Layered
» Charming
» Inviting/Welcoming
» Current, yet timeless
» Stylistically integrated
GOALS
Create a website and brand identity that is clean, crisp, and interesting without looking gimmicky. The website should be contemporary, visually appealing and easy to use, and the brand should be different than any other journal, while reflecting the journal’s content.

CHALLENGES
The journal’s name, Front Porch, represents nostalgia and novelty, different than the work that is accepted by the editors. The challenge of the redesign is to make the website and brand identity reflect the associations readers have with front porches in a contemporary style that resonates the content chosen for the site.
Understanding the present market and learning from the successes and missteps of other online journals listed in the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses (CLMP) can help FPJ differentiate its brand against other CLMP sites. Studying both the successes (in blue) and missteps (in maroon) of each journal’s website can help FPJ find the right combination of successfully working elements. Competing journal websites studied included:

» Pank
» Bat City Review
» Yale Review
» Ruminate
CHANGING PHOTOGRAPHIC HEADER

PHOTO HEADER TAKES OVER PAGE

REAL ESTATE

TRANSPARENCY AND LAYERING

CLEAN SITE

IMAGE POWERS OVER LITERATURE, WHICH SEEMS SMALL

LESS ADVANTAGEOUS NAVIGATION POSITIONING

COMPETITIVE MARKET ANALYSIS » PANK
INFORMATION HIERARCHY IS NOT EFFECTIVE

RELIES HEAVILY ON TYPOGRAPHY

REPEATING SUBSCRIPTION MESSAGES THROUGHOUT THE WEBSITE

HIERARCHICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

NOT ENGAGING AS A WHOLE. TOO MUCH WHITE SPACE. FIXED WIDTH IS INEFFECTIVE
COMPETITIVE MARKET ANALYSIS » RUMINATE

- LOGO AND WORD MARK CREATE A STUTTER WITH REPEATING R (HAPPENS REPEATEDLY ON SITE)
- RELIES HEAVILY ON VISUALS TO SET TONE
- TEXTURES ADD VISUAL INTEREST
- IMAGE OVER POWERS LITERATURE
- UNREADABLE ACTION BUTTONS
OTHER FRONT PORCHES

Other front porch-related websites searched on Google showed businesses such as digital companies, restaurants, neighborhood forums, and bars all with the same namesake.

The seven websites appear before FPJ in a Google search for “Front Porch”. These findings help navigate what to avoid in the redesign as well as providing crucial information for the SEO process.
FRONT PORCHES (cont’d.)

Further, 3 out of the 7 sites showed rocking chairs in their logo, and none of the 7 appear to have any trade or service-mark attached to their names.
COMPETITIVE MARKET ANALYSIS » OTHER FRONT PORCHES
**STRENGTHS**
- Organized by category
- Colors reminiscent of TxState
- Associated with a strong academic program
- Brand equity (reputation of brand) ie. Program strength

**WEAKNESSES**
- Website is not reflective of FPJ content
- Website is not reaching a large enough audience
- Videos are too small/pixelated
- Archive needs reorganization
- BI is not unique (three other businesses named “Front Porch” with silhouetted rocking chairs)

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Blogs for editors
- New job opportunities (A/V manager)
- New A/V Section (streamlining video uploads)
- Create brand extension through various means:
  - Social media
  - Mobile apps/site
  - Web banners
  - Press opportunities
  - Photo Contests for user-created imagery

**THREATS**
- Saturated market of literary journals
- Loss of personal, tactile touch
**BRAND STRATEGY**

» Website and Brand Positioning
  » Google Analytics
  » Vimeo Channel
  » Social Media
  » Blog/E-Newsletters
  » iPhone/Mobile Media
  » Promotional Materials

**WEBSITE**

A fully functional website, accessible and visually appealing to readers and writers interested in creative writing that implements opportunities listed in the SWOT analysis:

» Google Analytics
» Vimeo Channel
» Social Media
» Blog/E-Newsletters
» iPhone/Mobile Media
» Promotional Materials

All brand communication means will be produced in addition to the website.

**BRAND DOCUMENT**

An extensive brand document which includes brand guidelines, strategies, typographic style, color, layout, website structure, site maps, and expansion of research and implementation past the project scope, like apparel, posters, and other marketing means. Also included will be digital files of brand elements and how to use them correctly.

**TYPOGRAPHIC STYLE GUIDE**

The typographic style guide is a document that is available for genre editors of *FPJ* to adhere to one defined typographic writing style for all accepted and edited content before it is published with each issue. The style guide ensures consistent implementation of the *FPJ* brand.
Front Porch’s old brand identity did not reflect its inviting yet contemporary voice. The logo has words “FRONT” and “PORCH” confining an aged rocking chair between them.
» Rocking chairs
» House numbers
» Doors
» Doorbells
» Welcome mats
» Ash trays
» Books
» Journals
» Evening / Sunset
» Iced Tea
» Steps
» Pets
» Shoes
» Plants
» Cards
» Whisky
» Beer

KEYWORDS RELATING TO FRONT PORCHES »
Photos by Sameera Kapila and Jeff Davis

IMAGES DESCRIBING FPJ »
Initial digital brand identity sketches explored various parts of a front porch and its associations. Some options explore manipulating text to symbolize architectural flourishes, recalling steel or wooden house numbers or vintage doorbells. Others use light, motion, or dimension to create shadow, steps, or imply rocking.

The type variations experiment with the use of both the fluidity and formality of Georgia, with the architectural stability of Memphis.
Having one word and image mark and then shorter mark or logo with recognizable and familiar elements can give the brand more flexibility in application. For example, these shorter marks can be a great watermark for all videos embedded into the site. Further, a square shape for secondary brand elements is required in social media or technological implementation such as avatars and favicons, the icons that appear next to the website title in a browser.

Using metallic or wooden house numbers to create issues numbers for each new issue launched.
FPJ looked for fresh, creative, warm, and welcoming colors which are not easily outdated. The colors should loosely reference the garland and gold colors of Texas State University-San Marcos. The size of each square represents how much each color could be used on the page. White space should be integrated to complement any color palette and add professional value to the site and brand.
The final colors chosen are bold, contrasting the photographic backgrounds, differentiating FPJ from the competitive market, and slightly referencing Texas State University-San Marcos’ color palette.

PANTONE 102 C
PANTONE 1815 C
PANTONE 425 C
WHITE
MEMPHIS, TYPEFACE USED IN BRAND IDENTITY

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 !@#$%^&
*()-=\';,:/`~\_+{}:"<>?

BODY COPY SET IN GEORGIA

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890 !@#$%^&
*()-=\';,:/`~\_+{}:"<>?
Imagery on the website showing warm and cool tones or showing natural or architectural elements text in written pieces suggested by the CD. However, any architecture elements would be too vague and could potentially age FPJ’s brand. Architecture that related to the journal left on campus buildings and the historic and program-owned Katherine Anne Porter house in Kyle, Texas. Over the course of 6 months, two photography shoots, staged at the landmark, captured architectural elements that created a tableaux of metaphors for the FPJ brand.
A site map is a hierarchical graphic or list outlining the various sections of a site and its main content. Building two graphics, one of the old navigation and one of the redesigned navigation was created to visually reassess the organization of the site, and included adding or removing sections based on SWOT analysis. The navigation for the new website was reorganized, grouping links into different sections with the same purpose. New sections were added for the blog portion.
Eight variations of layout that experiment with color, front page elements, concept, and layout of the *FPJ* site.
Wireframes are digital compositions of the website design layout without content. This allowed teachers to concentrate on the final layout and refined areas for each part of the website without the distraction of visual elements (Web Design Ledger, 2011).
After the team assessed digital compositions from Round 1, client feedback and sketches were made by the FPJ staff and designer to specific layouts to mock up for Round 2. The sketches focused on visual hierarchy of the page.
VIMEO

Using a video library like Vimeo, an ad-free, media-hosting site like YouTube specifically for creative topics, allows like-minded creative people to stumble across talks on Vimeo, which would then link back to FPJ’s site, increasing page visits.
BRAND IDENTITY » SECONDARY (AND FAVICON)
APPLICATION »

TRANSPARENCIES ARE A MODERN DESIGN TAKE ON LAYERING DIFFERENT ELEMENTS AND SIGNIFY THE AIRY, NOSTALGIC FEEL

BRAND MARK IS MODERN TO JUXTAPOSE NOSTALGIC IMAGERY

IMAGE SUGGESTS ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS OF A PORCH AND HUMAN REMNANTS OF BEING ON A PORCH

COLOR SUBTLY REFERENCES TEXAS STATE AND THE MFA PROGRAM, AND THE IDEA OF COOLING DOWN IN A PORCH

HOW MIGHT KATHERINE Anne Porter feel seeing her historic childhood porch, imbued with present-day human interaction and its remnants?

Front Porch 16 pokes and probes, in various ways, at notions of preservation, restoration, renovation, and ground-up construction in relation to that which is old and that which is new in an ever-shifting literary landscape and in the broader cultural landscape.

Our reviews respond to the work of authors who are young in their literary careers (Aaron Kunitz, Mathias Svalina, Christian Telbord), as well as to new books from veteran writers such as Deborah Eisenberg, Don DeLillo, and Richard Burgin.

In fiction, a conventional story-telling method is highlighted by the work of John Matthew Fox, who presents a man struggling against the conventions of marriage and aging. Appropriate to the story’s form, the character comes to realize the relevance of conventions. On the other hand, Dan Macsill, Richard Palo, and Leslie Doyle dare to explore the less common forms short fiction takes. Macsill’s piece is written as a feature story from the perspective of a journalist; Palo’s story, written entirely in second-person point of view, magnifies the life and disappearance of an adolescent boy. Doyle denies expectations about how many characters must breathe “in scene” and relies on meticulous linguistic choices to pace her work.

The poets in this issue, including Lindsay Faber, Chist, John Estes, and Jen Joubly-Blackburn, all have excellent ears for rhythm and sound. While their styles are wildly disparate in approach and subject, their poems carry the reader on a journey of observing the breadth of contemporary poetry.
Front Porch 66 pokes and prods, in various ways, at notions of preservation, restoration, renovation, and ground-up construction in relation to that which is old and that which is new in an ever-shifting literary landscape and in the broader cultural landscape.

Our inaugural blog post ponders which books we should revisit to discover, and perhaps restore, the foundational truths they teach us about the craft of writing. In a collection of interviews with owners and representatives of nationally recognizable independent bookstores, we question how the traditional bookstore is persisting and reinventing itself in the age of Amazons and e-books. Our reviews respond to the work of authors who are young in their literary careers (Aaron Kent, Mathias Svalina, Christian Tseberkos), as well as to new books from veteran writers such as Deborah Eisenberg, Don DeLillo, and Richard Burgin.

In fiction, a conventional story-telling method is highlighted by the work of John Matthew Fox, who presents a man struggling against the conventions of marriage and aging. Appropriate to the story’s form, the character comes to realize the relevance of conventions. On the other hand, Dan Mancilla, Richard Felos, and Leslie Doyle dare to explore the less common forms short fiction takes. Mancilla’s piece is written as a feature story from the perspective of a journalist. Felos’s story, written entirely in second person point of view, magnifies the life and discoveries of an adolescent boy. Doyle denies expectations about how many characters must breathe “in scene” and relies on meticulous linguistic choices to pace her work.

The poets in this issue, including Lindsay Faber Christ, John Estes, and Jen Jabolay-Blackburn, all have excellent ears for rhythm and sound. While their styles are wildly disparate in approach and subject, their poems seem to the editor poems of discovering the beauty of contemporary poetics.
Lately, when Annie first wakes up, she tries to imagine what really exists in the empty space in her head. Cerebral fluid, they have told her, the same stuff that bathes her brain to cushion it from injury.

[Read full piece]

**Three Chords and the Truth**

by Richard Fulco

**Landscape with Grief Approaching**

by Melissa Barrett

There are footprints here, staring back at each other—nearly identical

[Read full piece]

**California Ice Age**

by Elizabeth Cohen

You stand under the caves. I'll watch from the house.

[Read full piece]
Issue 16 Nonfiction

Attention Shameless Owners
by Alan C. Cook

There’s a sign somebody’s posted in front of a derelict corner grocery in my neighborhood:

ATTENTION SHAMELESS OWNERS
OF THIS PROPERTY

[Read full piece]

Memoir of a Psychomante
by Carey Ginsburg

When I arrive at Andy’s house, I’m ready to go. I know from past experience my body often goes into shock from hallucinations; even though it’s a muggy July night in Pittsburgh, I’m wearing a T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, and a hooded jacket. I’m carrying a bag full of pot brownies, Kahunas for when my bruises drain, two boxes of sparklers, a quarter ounce of dried mushrooms, gamma waves, glow sticks, and a notebook to record any drug epiphanies the night may afford. Once, while tripping, Andy wrote a note to the pockets on his cargo shorts, begging them to please never run away.

[Read full piece]

Where the Sexual Meets the Sacred
by Wendy Beal Hahn

table and stared at my exposed stomach. My white

Issue 16 Interviews

From its inspiration to its final arrival in the hands of the reader, writing undergoes a lengthy and complex process, and one that is too often overlooked. Each issue, Front Porch sits down with people who are engaged daily with the processes and industries of writing, be it by running community workshops, buying books at a used bookstore, organizing translations, and much more. These interviews seek to examine the many forces that shape literature, and to highlight the perceptive and passionate people to whom we owe the books on our shelves.

Interview with Don Allen, Publications Director, Teaching for Change’s Busboys and Poets Bookstore, Washington D.C.

Don Allen: The bookstore is very popular. We receive great foot traffic from Busboys and Poets, but book-selling is a tough industry with small markups. Our sales are strong enough to keep us afloat on a weekly basis but not strong enough to pay back our start-up expenses. We are also extremely concerned about Amazon’s efforts to undermine independent bookstores.

[Read full piece]

Interview with Michel Cantor, Owner, Salemander Books, Baltimore, MD

MC: What is the most enjoyable thing about being in the book-selling business?

FP: The healthy cross-section of people that come into the shop.

[Read full piece]

Interview with Cameron Moss, Book Reviewer, Seed Bookstores
Issue 16 Reviews

**Richard Burgin, Rivers Last Longer**
Reviewed by Marc Wadkins

_Barry Auer, the anti-protagonist of Richard Burgin’s Rivers Last Longer, is charming and intelligent, yet his alternate personality, Gordon, is a sexually violent psychopath who..._ [Read full piece]

Michael Aoki Craig, _This Kimono_
Reviewed by Karen Wood

_Michael Aoki Craig’s collection of poems, _This Kimono_, has a simple, unassuming off-white cover. Picking up the book, you wouldn’t expect to find poems that demand to be..._ [Read full piece]

Don DeLillo, _Point Omega_
Reviewed by Will Arensen

_Don DeLillo is one of the few authors with a distinctive tone. Many writers have a style, and all writers have some sort of voice, but DeLillo, author of such novels as White..._ [Read full piece]

Deborah Eisenberg, _The Collected Stories of Deborah Eisenberg_
Reviewed by David Norman

Moathead

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Translation Editor: Emily Nickerson
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Readers: Shlach Boaler, Shana Chalmers
APPLICATION

Front Porch accepts flash fiction, short stories, poetry, and creative nonfiction. Please submit only one piece of fiction and nonfiction at a time (up to or around 500 words), and no more than five poems at a time as DOC or RTF files only. You must submit via our online system.

Our response time is generally 3-4 months, but may be longer. We accept unsolicited simultaneous submissions, given that you promptly inform us upon acceptance elsewhere. We do not accept previously published material. Front Porch asks for first serial rights and the right to keep your work in our archives; all other rights revert back to the author after publication. We also ask that authors mention that their work first saw publication in Front Porch in any future reprint.

Please note: We only accept electronic submissions via our online system. Paper submissions will not be read or returned.

Book Reviews

We encourage publicity to send us catalogues and review copies of forthcoming titles. Please email frontporchjournal@gmail.com with any inquiries. You may send literary fiction, poetry, and nonfiction books for review consideration to:

Front Porch
MFA Program
Department of English
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666

Other questions or comments regarding the journal can be sent to

To read or to re-read?

November 2, 2010 — 5:38 pm

I’ve been my fellow MFA students pull books out of their pockets along with cigarettes as though the paperback was as necessary as the lighter in facilitating the cigarette break. We’re all constantly trading books and scribbling down recommended titles. One student at Texas State posted her summer reading list to Facebook—and actually carried enough to post a follow-up note, at the end of the summer, tracking her progress and chalking herself for those titles she didn’t quite make it to in her off. I live with a post, and our mailbox is regularly filled with padded manila envelopes: We both have an Amazon problem. It’s all with good reason, too.

Reading is research; reading is worth as much as workshop instruction (or more); reading is obligatory. A thousand quotes from a thousand respectable writers gives us the same advice over and over again: In order to write, you must read, and read a lot. We nod respectfully. Yes, we will read, and we obey cheerfully. We’ve always been reading nerds. But there are so many new titles, so many popular classics, so many fucking words, that one thing that sometimes gets left behind, at least for me, is re-reading.

Last week, Tim O’Brien assigned the first few chapters of The Sun Also Rises for a workshop he was leading. And so, Friday, I sat outside in seventy-degree weather and re-read. It had been several years since my first time around with the book, and to my surprise, I found it difficult to stop after the first few chapters. I found myself eager to re-meet Jake Barnes and Lady Ashley; I found myself looking for a pen to underline Hemingway’s words.

Part of my interest may have been that in the time since I first read The Sun Also Rises, I have actually been to Spain, actually seen reruns of bull fights on Spanish television, actually driven in a car through olive tree-covered hillsides. In the same way that anyone who has ever lived in New
APPLICATION
Google Analytics allows FPJ to view where visitors are coming from, how long they spend on their site, where they got the link from, and other information that can help FPJ see who their audience is. A report can be found in Appendix B of this document.
Brand touchpoints are applications that extend the brand into other means to communicate with an audience (Wheeler, 2009, p. 142) and “increase awareness and build customer loyalty” (p. 3). As most of FPJ’s communications are online, finding innovative and effective ways to reach viewers is important. Tactile applications include “giveaway” items, such as notebooks, t-shirts, and bags, because staff promote FPJ through trade shows. Online brand extensions include further developing FPJ’s social media strategies using Facebook, Twitter, E-newsletters, and mobile applications.
SOCIAL MEDIA
Using social media to connect with readers and writers who enjoy the journal can provide priceless opportunities to FPJ. Benefits include the possibility of reaching an even larger audience, increasing the number of submissions, readers, and site visitors. Social networking websites offer ways to share content, update users constantly on issues or website updates, and begin online conversations about literature. Tapping into the social media phase interested FPJ staff, but they preferred to wait to push their launch until the new website and content were up and will be integrated actively in an upcoming issue. Fan pages on networks such as Facebook and Twitter will drive the actions to create the virtual space of Front Porch.

E-NEWSLETTERS
E-mailed newsletters can keep people up to date on release dates of issues and is another way for FPJ to communicate with their readers and writers. Designing the newsletter and any e-communication will help brand consistency.
**IPHONE APPLICATION**

Building a mobile application would extend the brand experience *FPJ*’s new website design, where the end user can take issues of *Front Porch* everywhere they go, creating their own virtual porch.

Users would be able to read content from the latest issues, share content with others, access media from the videos and audio archives, access the blog, download background front porch images for the backgrounds of their mobile devices, and contact *FPJ* through e-mail, Twitter, or Facebook.
TRADE SHOW GOODS
Wheeler states “a trade show is not a trade show without stuff” (2009, p. 170). However, trade shows can leave a visitor with more ephemera than they need. Rather create short term promotional items, objects related to writing or have a long term use were presented. Objects include reusable tote bags, t-shirts, and moleskin notebooks all with the brand screen printed onto each item.

The tote bags were realized shortly after the launch, and incorporated the brand with the KAP house’s new branding, set in Bodoni. To keep the type consistent on the bags, Bodoni replaced Georgia in the FPJ website address.
BRAND EXTENSIONS » T-SHIRTS
APPENDIX A

Front Porch Typographic Style Guide
Writing Style Guide

Updated: April 2, 2011
General Rules

ALL sections should be left justified (unless specified by author)

Author Name: Georgia 12pt Bold

Title of Piece: Georgia 19pt (or headers of any section)

FIRST 3 WORDS OF PIECE: 12PT SMALL CAPITALS (FOR ALL GENRES EXCEPT FOR INTERVIEWS AND POETRY) [INSTRUCTIONS FOR WORD ON NEXT PAGE]

Body copy: 11pt (do not justify)

Author name Bio is same as body copy (Georgia 11pt, no justified text), where name of publications are italic.

On Masthead:
FPJ staff roles are always italic, while staff member names are not.

Issues names and Front Porch (i.e. Front Porch 16 or Front Porch) are always italic and in the same font size as context they are in.

University name is always Texas State University-San Marcos (use hyphen without spaces between University and San).
How to create Small Caps in Word.
Small caps are Capital letters that are the same height as lower case letters.

FIRST 3 WORDS OF MOST PIECES ARE 12 PT SMALL CAPITALS (FOR ALL GENRES EXCEPT FOR INTERVIEWS AND POETRY)

1. Make all letters in the first 3 words of piece lowercase (not title or author).
2. Highlight first 3 words of piece.
3. Go to the FORMAT menu and select Font. [Image of menu below]
4. Change font to “Georgia”, size to “12” and in the check boxes below select small caps.
5. Hit “Done” or “Okay.”
FRONT PORCH

Front Porch at palor and prod, in various ways, at notions of preservation, restoration, renovation, and ground-up orangeries, in relatives to that which is old and that which is new, from ever-shifting literary landscape and in the broader cultural landscape.
EDITOR’S LETTER

HOW MIGHT KATHERINE Anne Porter feel seeing her historic childhood porches, pictured throughout this journal, imbued with present-day human interaction and its remnants?

Front Porch 16 pokes and prods, in various ways, at notions of preservation, restoration, renovation, and ground-up construction in relation to that which is old and that which is new in an ever-shifting literary landscape and in the broader cultural landscape.

Our inaugural blog post ponders which books we should revisit to discover, and perhaps restore, the foundational truths they teach us about the craft of writing. In a collection of interviews with owners and representatives of nationally recognizable independent bookstores, we question how the traditional bookstore is persisting and reinventing itself in the age of Amazon and e-books. Our reviews respond to the work of authors who are young in their literary careers (Aaron Kunin, Mathias Svalina, Christian TeBordo), as well as to new books from veteran writers such as Deborah Eisenberg, Don DeLillo, and Richard Burgin.

In fiction, a conventional story-telling method is highlighted by the work of John Matthew Fox, who presents a man struggling against the conventions of marriage and aging. Appropriate to the story’s form, the character comes to realize the relevance of conventions. On the other hand, Dan Mancilla, Richard Pulpo, and Leslie Doyle dare to explore the less common forms short fiction takes. Mancilla’s piece is written as a feature story from the perspective of a journalist. Pulpo’s story, written entirely in second person point of view, magnifies the life and discoveries of an adolescent boy. Doyle denies expectations about how many characters must breathe “in some” and relies on meticulous linguistic choices to pace her work.

The poems in this issue, including Lindsay Faber Chiat, John Estes, and Jen Jabally-Blackburn, all have excellent ears for rhythm and sound. While their styles are wildly disparate in approach and subject, their poems open the wider currents of exploring the breadth of contemporary poetry.

Masthead

Executive Editor
Tom Grimes
Managing Editor
Harpreet Singh
Fiction Editor
Andrea Benavides
Poetry Editor
Colin Pope
Nonfiction Editor
Emily Housworth
Book Review Editor
Sarah Collins
Interview Editor
Evan McMurry
Copy Editor
Owenne Mcdonald
Webmaster
Chris Margawa
Publicity Manager
Jalene Netzer
Video Manager
James Kippen
Readers
Shira Beker
Alana Christie

Body: 11pt

(do not justify text—this happens in web coding)
Backyard Astronomer

LAST WEEK, LIAM ran his thumb down the right side of her head, looking for the bulge in her skull—“remodeled” according to the radiologist report. But he found nothing; the changes, they tell Annie, are all on the inside.

Lately, when Annie first wakes up, she tries to imagine what really exists in the empty space in her head. Cerebral fluid, they have told her, the same stuff that bathes her brain to cushion it from injury. Cerebral fluid—smart liquid? No. Head juice, the stuff that flows up and down her spine, and sloshes carefully (painfully, she wants to say) around her brain, filling up this space. Actually, creating the space, pushing her brain one way, her shall another. She wonders—what stray thoughts, ideas, memories might be floating in that barren sea that takes up a quarter of her cranium—what might be getting lost in there? She imagines driftwood, flotsam, seaweed mats. A compass, pointing true north.

This is what Annie is thinking about, waiting for Liam to get back from his run, the night she sees the comet. She sits cross-legged, tucked into herself, at the kitchen table, an old tabletop Liam has found in the basement, repainted and nailed onto a couple sawhorses. She pores over the newspaper, the lingering cough from the cold she can’t shake rattling her thoughts so that they bounce back to the empty space.

The cough, annoying as it is, has nothing to do with the hole in Annie’s head.

The hole in her head has nothing to do with anything, according to both the neurologist and the neurosurgeon who looked at the pictures back when she still had insurance. It’s one of those things that she might never have known about if she hadn’t started seeing double. She tries to concentrate on the comet, but Maybe Liam can get her one at Wal-Mart. In what she decides to think

Author: Georgia 12pt Bold

Title of Fictional Piece: Georgia 19pt

FIRST 3 WORDS OF PIECE: 12PT SMALL CAPITALS

Body: 11pt (do not justify—this happens in web coding)

Author name Bio is same as body copy (Georgia 11pt, no justified text), where name of publications are italic.
Attention Shameless Owners

THERE’S A SIGN somebody’s posted in front of a derelict corner grocery in my neighborhood:

ATTENTION SHAMELESS OWNERS
OF THIS PROPERTY

PLEASE CLEAN UP THIS EYESORE,
MENACE TO SOCIETY MAGNET,

TOXIC
WASTELAND

THANK YOU,

CAPITAL HEIGHTS

The sign’s staple-gunned to a telephone pole. The derelict grocery, an eyesore for decades, has disintegrated further in the past year or so. About 15 years ago, the old guy who ran the place filled it with hoarder junk and still kept it open—nominally—as a store. I went in once during my garage sale years and tried to buy a guitar, a lamp, and a box of reel-to-reel tapes, but the guy told me none of those items were for sale. “Display items,” he growled from a vinyl lawnchair, holding court among his treasures. He begrudgingly sold me a tape measure, the one item on my list of things to buy from an actual store later that day. I never went back, figuring that’s all I was getting out of him.
Melissa Barrett

Landscape with Grief Approaching

There are footprints here, staring back
at each other—nearly identical
but I can’t remember which way I came,
and when. It’s the same dream:

running after you, after the sun, after
you, on a blacksand beach with daisies
glowing in both hands. The trees
rattle their poms and the breath of water
tinctures the air. Each moment grayer,
your name rolls from my mouth less alive.

I’m chasing you with dying flowers, don’t
you see? Our bloodorange September—

I was stable on this world, my conviction
with the strength of barbells. You pulled

my hair around the heart of my chin
and now I can’t even write your address

(do not justify—this happens in web coding)

Author: Georgia 12pt Bold
[One 12pt line space]

Title of Poem: Georgia 19pt
[One 12pt line space]

NO SMALL CAPITALS FOR FIRST 3 WORDS

Body Copy: Georgia 11pt (if no style or size is specified by author) but formatting and tabs are defined by author as well.

Author name Bio is same as body copy (Georgia 11pt, no justified text), where name of publications are italic.
INTERVIEWS

Interview with Don Allen: Publications Director, Teaching for Change’s Busboys and Poets Bookstore, Washington DC

Front Porch: How’s business?

Don Allen: The bookstore is very popular. We receive great foot traffic from Busboys and Poets, but book-selling is a tough industry with small markups. Our sales are strong enough to keep us afloat on a weekly basis but not strong enough to pay back our start-up expenses. We are also extremely concerned about Amazon’s efforts to undermine independent bookstores.

FP: What is the most enjoyable thing about being in the book-selling business?

DA: Even with all of the so-called new media out there, books still have the potential to be the most powerful medium of them all. Complex ideas are explored over hundreds of pages and over several days, giving the ideas time to sink in and take root, changing a person. Being exposed to an idea or concept through social media or an article just doesn’t have the same impact. Meeting authors who yield this power wisely is still a thrill.

FP: What is the hardest part about being in the book-selling business?

DA: First and foremost, it is hard to convince people that a company like Amazon is not acting in their best interests. Sure, it is cheap, but only in the short term. As Amazon uses unfair pricing and proprietary electronic book readers to drive independent bookstores out of business, the industry will produce fewer books because there will be fewer outlets. Plus, unless people learn to support local, community bookstores, they will not have a place to hear authors, share ideas, and organize. A world with only an online marketplace and virtual social organizing will be a poorer place with less chance of creating positive social change.

(do not justify—this happens in web coding)

Title of Interview: Georgia 19pt
[One 12pt line space]
FP: Georgia, bold, 11pt (do not justify)
[One 12pt line space]
Interviewee: 11pt (do not justify)

Author name Bio is same as body copy (Georgia 11pt, no justified text), where name of publications are italic.
Rivers Last Longer
Richard Burgin, Rivers Last Longer
Publisher: Texas Review Press
2010, 224 pages, paperback, $19

BARRY AULAR, the anti-protagonist of Richard Burgin's Rivers Last Longer, is charming and intelligent, yet his alternate personality, Gordon, is a sexually violent psychopath who carries around the ashes of his recently departed mother when he visits prostitutes. Elliot, Barry's estranged best friend, reenters Barry's life unaware of his friend's dangerous hobbies. The two attempt to start a literary magazine in New York; Elliot does not have Barry's wealth, but he is a talented writer, a trait Barry does not possess, and together, the pair moves forward with the magazine, rekindling their lost friendship. But when Elliot falls in love with Cheri, a beautiful artist, Barry and his alternate personalities feel threatened, and Barry's world is in peril. Rivers Last Longer marks Richard Burgin's thirteenth published book, and this five-time winner of the Pushcart Prize shows his keen wit throughout the novel.

We're never asked to sympathize with Barry. He wasn't abused as a child. His mother wasn't emotionally distant or controlling. The reader finds none of the typical devices often employed in literary thrillers to help us empathize with an anti-protagonist like Barry. Instead, the reader is rewarded by Burgin's lavishly detailed portrait of a psychopath, which engages the reader through fascination rather than mock empathy or shock. The private world Barry has made for himself threatens to dissolve at any moment, a threat that fills his life with anxiety and gives his character an almost manic voice:

Lately, women had been tricking him a lot one way or another.
There was Marianne and the whore in Madrid and then Jordan,
who had more than tricked him. It was the essence of humiliation,
he thought, the very essence, and yet it hadHammond again.

Title of Piece: Georgia 19pt
Author Name in Georgia 11pt, Author's piece in same font but italic
Publisher: Publish Name in Georgia 11pt
Year, pages, paperback/hardcover, $price in Georgia 11pt (on one line)
[One 12pt line space]
FIRST 3 WORDS OF PIECE: 12PT SMALL CAPITALS
Body Copy: Georgia 11pt (do not justify)

Author name Bio is same as body copy (Georgia 11pt, no justified text), where name of publications are italic.
Caption Copy: Georgia 11pt below each video.
SUBMIT

Front Porch accepts flash fiction, short stories, poetry, and creative nonfiction. Please submit only one piece of fiction and nonfiction at a time (up to or around 5000 words), and no more than five poems at a time as DOC or RTF files only. You must submit via our online system.

Our response time is generally 3-4 months, but may be longer. We accept unsolicited simultaneous submissions, given that you promptly inform us upon acceptance elsewhere. We do not accept previously published material. Front Porch asks for first serial rights and the right to keep your work in our archives; all other rights revert back to the author after publication. We also ask that authors mention that their work first saw publication in Front Porch in any future reprints.

Please note: We only accept electronic submissions via our online system. Paper submissions will not be read or returned.

Book Reviews

We encourage publicists to send us catalogues and review copies of forthcoming titles. Please email frontporchjournal@gmail.com with any inquiries. You may send literary fiction, poetry, and nonfiction books for review consideration to:

Front Porch
MFA Program
Department of English
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666

Other questions or comments regarding the journal can be sent to

Masthead

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Gwynne Middleton
Webmaster
Chris Margrove
Public Relations Manager
Jaime Netzer
Video Manager
James Kallgren
Headers
Shibley Porter
Grace Christia

Sub headers are Georgia 11pt Bold

Body Copy: Georgia 11pt (do not justify)
ABOUT

“...there used to be front porches. And people sat there sometimes at night, talking when they wanted to talk, rocking, and not talking when they didn’t want to talk. Sometimes they just sat there and thought about things, turned things over. ...the real reason, hidden underneath, might be they didn’t want people sitting like that, doing nothing, rocking, talking, that was the wrong kind of social life. People talked too much. And they had time to think. So they ran off with the porches.”

—From Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

Front Porch is the online literary journal of Texas State University’s MFA program. Founded in 2006 by MFA students, Front Porch publishes exceptional poetry, fiction, nonfiction, reviews, and interviews. We’re also pleased to feature a one-of-a-kind video and audio archive, which showcases celebrated authors reading and discussing their work.

At Front Porch, you will find some of the best and most renowned talents in contemporary writing published alongside promising new voices. Our editors seek out both innovative and traditional literature. In short, we’re looking for insightful and relevant writing that excels, no matter its form. Visit our submissions page, join our mailing list, or do both. We would love to hear from you.

Front Porch Staff Reminisces

"Sitting on porch swings that hung from porches at my various dwellings in lush-green and humid Baton Rouge, the place I most naturally call home, I have witnessed a panic-stricken girl break

Body Copy: Georgia 11pt

For Staff Reminisces
Body Copy: Georgia 11pt

Use an Em Dash (—), not a hyphen (-) then state your name, your position (in italics).
I.e. — Herpreet Singh, Managing Editor.
Title of Post: Georgia 19pt. (Unless blog title is a question with a specific formatting use initials capitals in title.)

FIRST 3 WORDS OF PIECE: 12PT SMALL CAPITALS

Body Copy: Georgia 11pt (do not justify—this happens in web coding)

[IN WORDPRESS]
Title: Formatted by WordPress.
WordPress will add post time and date.

(The PR Manager must format Blog)
FIRST 3 WORDS OF PIECE: START BLOG POST WITH THIS HTML CODE: <span style="font-size: 12pt; font-variant: small-caps; letter-spacing: 1px;">REPLACE WORD IN HERE ONLY </span>

The first 3 words code should be added after writing and formatting entire post. Then click HTML tab at top right and then replace first 3 words of code with this.
ARCHIVES

Archives are coming January 2011.
Please visit our audio archives until then.

Heading: Georgia 19pt
[One 12pt line space]
Body Copy: Georgia 11pt (do not justify)
LINKS

Texas State
Front Porch on Facebook
Texas State University’s MFA Program in Creative Writing
The Katherine Anne Porter House
New York Times article on Texas State MFA program [pdf]
Los Angeles Times article on Front Porch Journal
The Wittliff Collections
Southwestern Writers Collection

What People are Talking About
42opus
Emerging Writers Network
Moorish Girl
Mid-American Review
Maud Newton
Identity Theory
New England Review
NPR on Front Porches
Pindeldyboz

Heading: Georgia 19pt
[One 12pt line space]
Title of Link, link address (link will be made active through coding)
APPENDIX B

Google Analytics™ Report
FRONT PORCH JOURNAL

Google Analytics Report
ovich, 2010 - Feb 8, 2011
Comparing to: Site

**Site Usage**

- **5,359 Visits**
- **15,136 Pageviews**
- **2.82 Pages/Visit**
- **49.23% Bounce Rate**
- **00:02:09 Avg. Time on Site**
- **70.93% % New Visits**

**Visitors Overview**

**3,803 Visitors**

**Traffic Sources Overview**

- **Direct Traffic**: 2,603.00 (52.30%)
- **Referring Sites**: 1,917.00 (35.77%)
- **Search Engines**: 639.00 (11.92%)

**Number of Visits in Three Months**

**Number of Unique Visitors**

**How Users Are Getting to the FPJ**

**Most Visited Pages**

**Content Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
<th>% Pageviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>3,143</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>/submit.asp</td>
<td>1,452</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>/poetry.asp</td>
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<tr>
<td>/fiction.asp</td>
<td>775</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>/interviews.asp</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>3.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3,803 people visited this site

5,359 visits

3,803 absolute unique visitors

15,136 pageviews

2,82 average pageviews

00:02:09 time on site

49.23% bounce rate

70.93% new visits

### Technical Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Browser</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>% visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firefox</td>
<td>1,931</td>
<td>36.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Explorer</td>
<td>1,445</td>
<td>26.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safari</td>
<td>1,254</td>
<td>23.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chrome</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>9.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>2.82%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connection Speed</th>
<th>Visits</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cable</td>
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<td>45.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSL</td>
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<td>19.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>17.69%</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Dialup</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BROWSERS USED BY VISITORS

INTERNET SPEED OF VISITORS

NUMBER OF VISITORS EACH DAY
INCLUDING THE 396 VISITS ON THE LAUNCH DATE.
SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION » GOOGLE ANALYTICS

All traffic sources sent a total of 5,359 visits

- **52.30%** Direct Traffic
- **35.77%** Referring Sites
- **11.92%** Search Engines

**Top Traffic Sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>% Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(direct) ((none))</td>
<td>2,803</td>
<td>52.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>google (organic)</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>10.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facebook.com (referral)</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>5.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huffingtonpost.com (referral)</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>5.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duotrope.com (referral)</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>3.02%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Keywords**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>% Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>front porch journal</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>william reese hamilton</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>front porch literary journal</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>front porch poetry</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>front porch review</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Most Common Keywords**

1. number of visits linked from other websites; direct represents the number of visits just from typing in the website address
2. most common keywords searched to find the journal

**Traffic Sources Overview**

![Traffic Sources Graph]

Nov 7, 2010 - Feb 8, 2011
Comparing to: Site
5,359 visits came from 67 countries/territories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Territory</th>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>Pages/Visit</th>
<th>Avg. Time on Site</th>
<th>% New Visits</th>
<th>Bounce Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>4,795</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>00:02:13</td>
<td>70.68%</td>
<td>48.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>00:02:01</td>
<td>94.00%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>00:01:18</td>
<td>81.58%</td>
<td>52.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>00:01:40</td>
<td>1.37%</td>
<td>56.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>00:01:41</td>
<td>87.50%</td>
<td>53.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>00:02:24</td>
<td>92.86%</td>
<td>39.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>00:01:15</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>58.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>00:00:32</td>
<td>73.91%</td>
<td>69.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>00:00:09</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>64.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>00:01:20</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COUNTRIES WHERE VISITORS ARE FROM
Pages on this site were viewed a total of 15,136 times

- **Pageviews**: 15,136
- **Unique Views**: 11,804
- **Bounce Rate**: 49.23%

**Top Content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
<th>% Pageviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/index.asp</td>
<td>3,143</td>
<td>20.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/submit.asp</td>
<td>1,452</td>
<td>9.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/poetry.asp</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>6.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/fiction.asp</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>5.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/interviews.asp</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>3.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MOST VISITED PAGES
REFERENCES


**VITA**

Sameera Kapila was born in Bombay, India to Deepak and Surina Kapila. At the age of five, she moved to the island of Curaçao, a Dutch island in the Caribbean, with her parents and sister Dee. In 2003, she moved to Gainesville, Florida, and received her BFA in Graphic Design at the University of Florida. After graduation, she worked at the advertising agency Southern Brand Collective, in Miami, FL, as an Art Director before moving to San Marcos, Texas to begin her masters.

In August 2008, she joined the MFA in Communication Design at Texas State University-San Marcos as a graduate student and graduate teaching assistant. In 2010, Sameera was the Outstanding Graduate Student in the School of Fine Arts and Communication, and received a scholarship from the dean of the school. She has received awards for her design work from competitions such as Good50x70, Posters for Tomorrow, AIGA Blue Ridge, AdFed Miami, the American Advertising Federation, Creative Summit, Art Directors Club of Houston, and *CMYK Magazine* #49 Top 100 New Creatives.

**Address:**

sameerakapila@gmail.com

This thesis was typed and designed by Sameera Kapila.