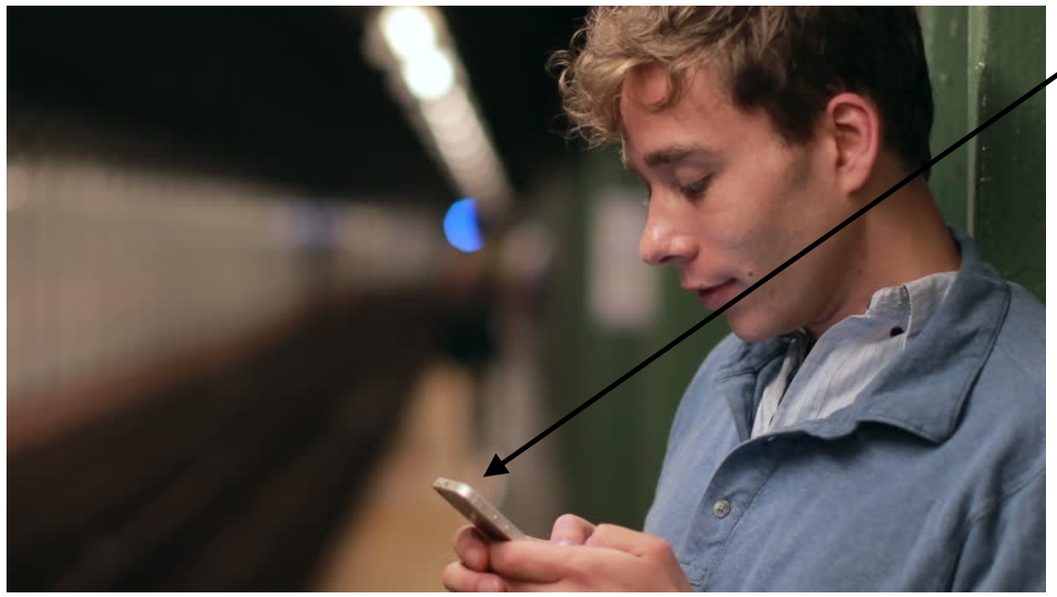
Concept

Unified reading experience that scales between all target audiences, situations, and locations.

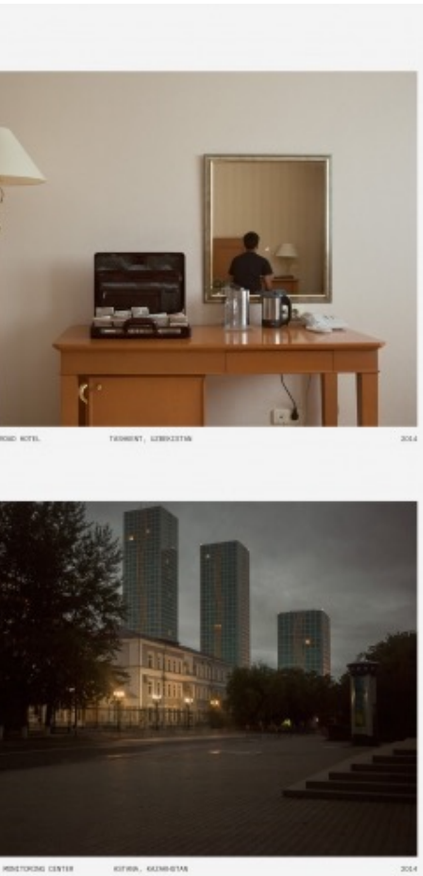
Situation

Location



Audience

New ideas in critical digital reading tools



Observations of the author
Open source, available in English
Open source, available in local language only
Raw data deep web research
Interview, industry insider
Interview, several industry insiders
Expert researchers
Multiple, combined source

Inside the Dedeman Silk Road Hotel in Tashkent, Uzbekistan little hints of a repressive regime. Jazz music flows through the air-conditioned lobby. The willing staff speak almost fluent English. A glass elevator invites to a panoramic view of the city square, interrupted only by a reflection of advertising for a European style spa. The cleaning ladies knock and smile before entering the room. National heritage carpets are sold with certificates of authenticity. The wake-up call comes at the agreed hour, while the car is already waiting.

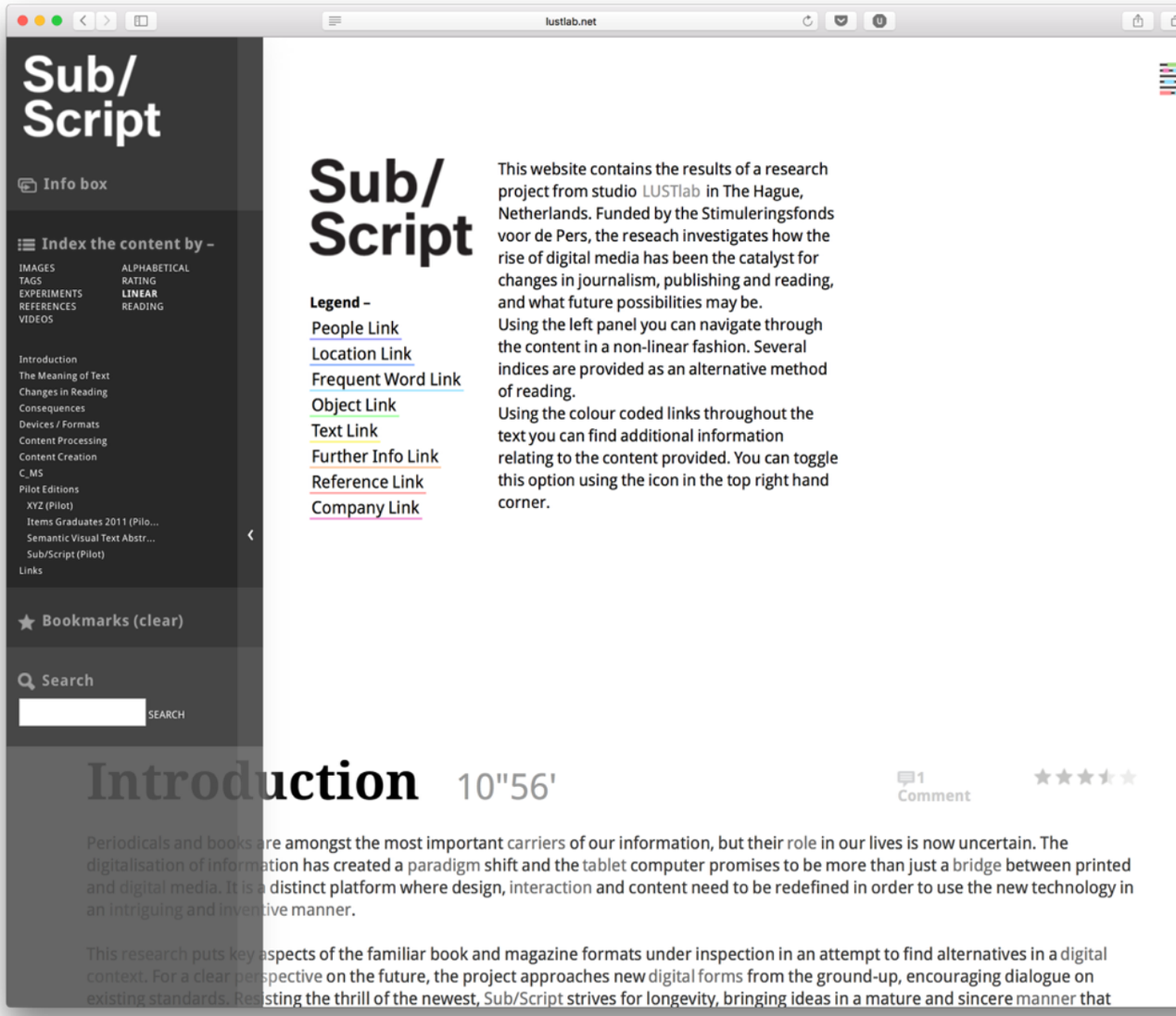
The SNB (National Security Service of Uzbekistan) agents, stationed with the hotel, wear civilian clothing and spend most of their day putzing about the parking lot, or resting on abundant leather couches around the lobby.

IT specialists from one of the world's leading electronic surveillance firms stay at Dedeman at least twice a year. They come to here to set up new contracts, and then to fix and manage the complex sets of devices they've set up inside the monitoring center, at the request of SNB. The contract is all-inclusive and offers years worth of follow up service, remote and in person.

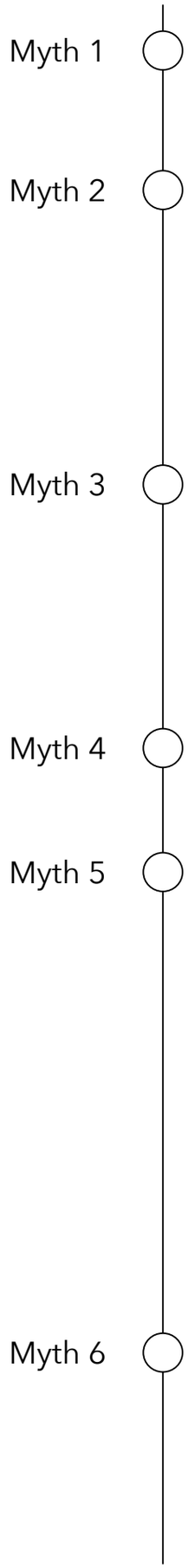
Sometimes the SNB agents pick them up with a minibus. Other times the engineers simply take a cab to the Muslim cemetery. The taxi driver is flummoxed: "Why do a bunch of tourist speaking Hebrew want to go to the Muslim cemetery?" But the locations of the monitoring centers are a strict secret, as are the many other sites of this neighborhood, and the engineers must make the rest of the way on foot.

The center is surrounded by gray concrete wall and is impenetrable. The heat detectors and cameras on it resemble a modern day fortress, or the US embassy. Guards armed with rifles pace around the perimeter, smoking. Long-term data storage devices are stocked in the basement, a room covered in wires and with hard disks stacked from floor to ceiling. Monitors and control devices are nested a floor above. This is where most of the human labor is performed. Targets are added and removed, roughly five hundred for each of the four Uzbek telecoms. Automatic user requests are filed with the telecoms, which have already provided their fiber optic cables in accordance with the law that obliges them not only to share user data, but to optimise their systems to meet the country's SORM (System for Operative Investigative Activities) standards at their own expense. New features added and bugs fixed, usually just in time to review who reads an article particularly sensitive to Islam Karimov, the Uzbek president in power for 24 consecutive years. The rest of the visit is spent on the recurring routine, explaining to the SNB technologists, who are versed poorly in IT, what is obtainable within the realm of modern technology or what cannot be further simplified.

At breakfast, the engineers of Verint Israel nod in direction of engineers from Nice Systems, who are sharing the same hotel with them. The SNB has hired both companies to compare results and keep the prices stalled through competition. The companies understand that and play along to ensure long-lasting mutual benefit. As they attend to their daily tasks in Tashkent, the engineers from NICE Systems go through similar routines. By week's end, everyone gets paid and then flies off, back to Tel Aviv, or onto the next location where their skills are in high demand.



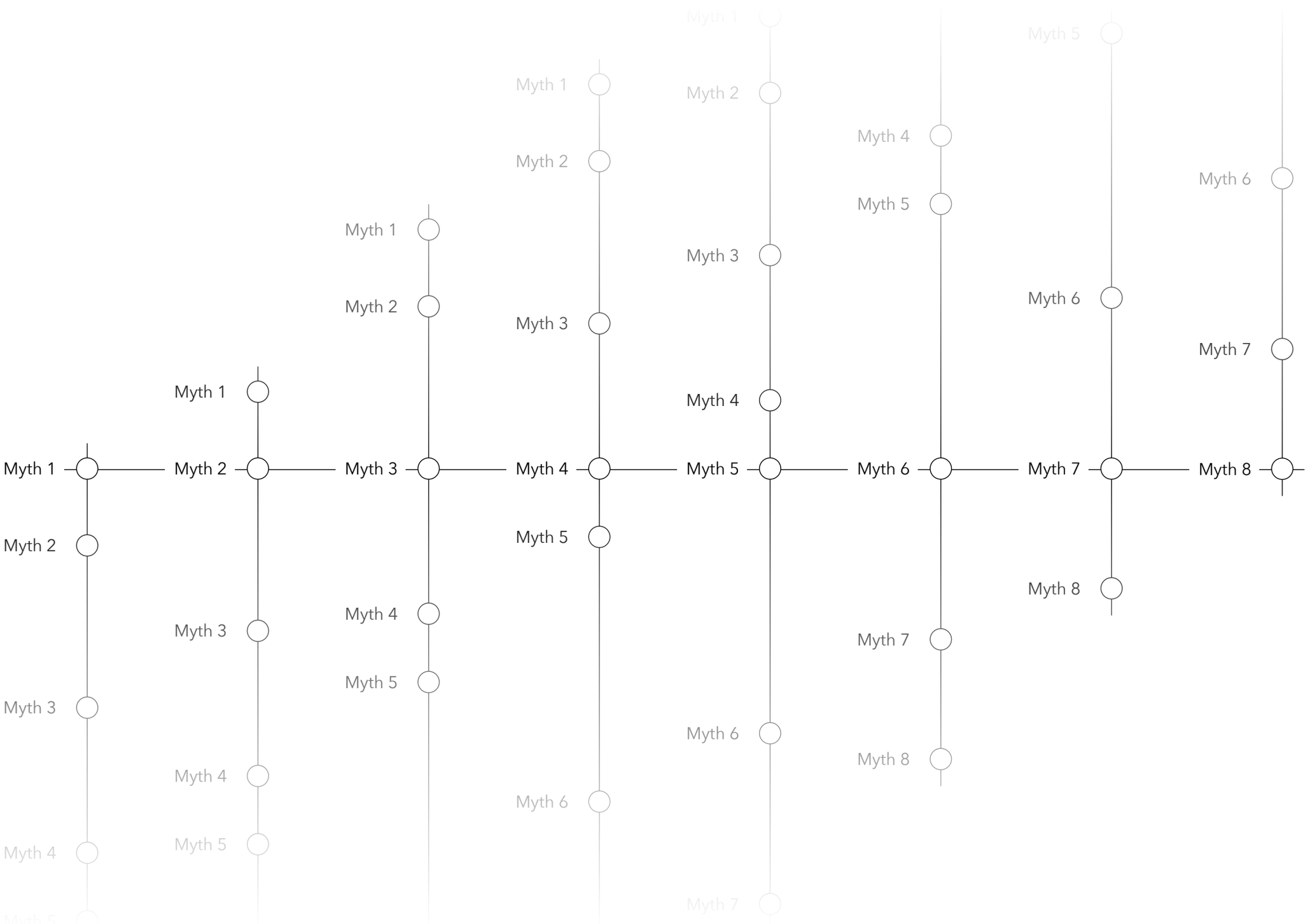
Mental model



Mental model

Myth 1 — Myth 2 — Myth 3 — Myth 4 — Myth 5 — Myth 6 — Myth 7 — Myth 8

Mental model



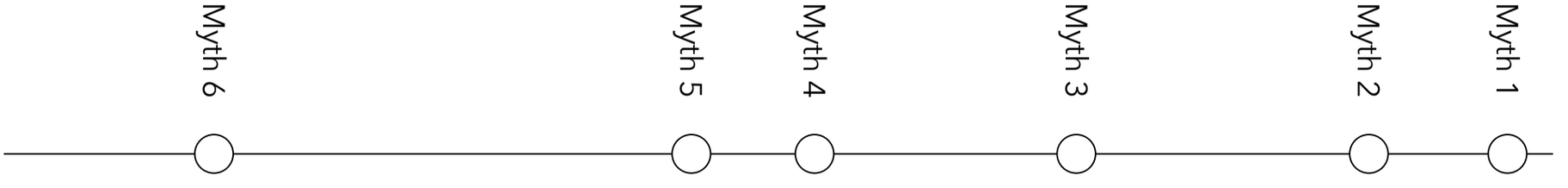
Mental model

MYTH 1: HIGHER DEFENSE SPENDING EQUALS INCREASED SECURITY

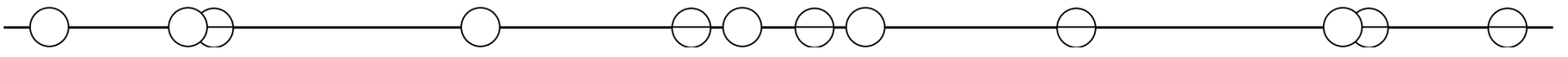
"If you want peace, prepare for war."

So goes the much-repeated phrase, taken to heart around the globe. Indeed, the world spends a great deal preparing for war: at least $1,776 billion in 2014.[2] With such high levels of spending, and the innumerable threats that arms purchases are said to protect us from, it would be easy to accept this adage at face value: why

Mental model



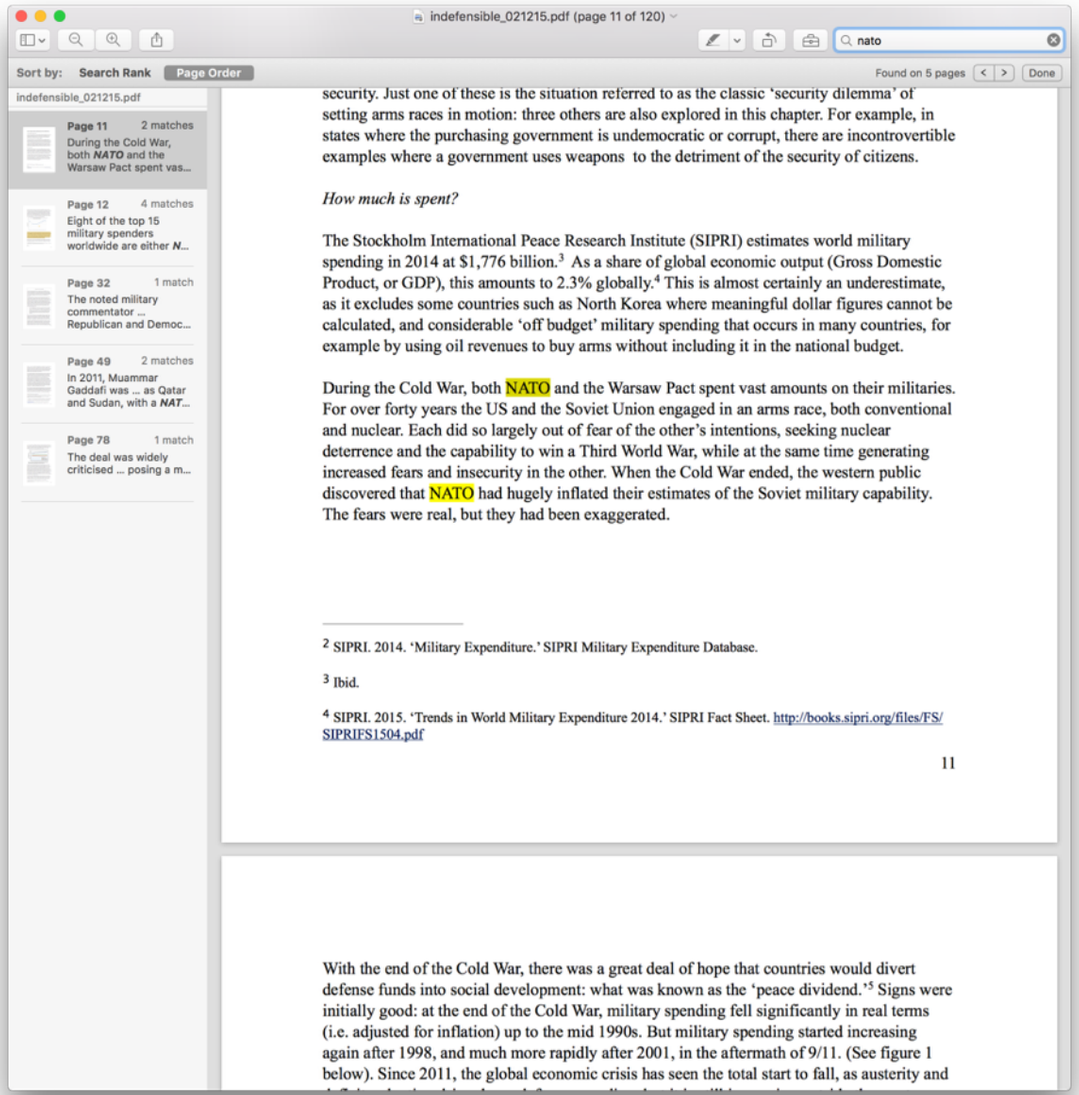
Topic Centered

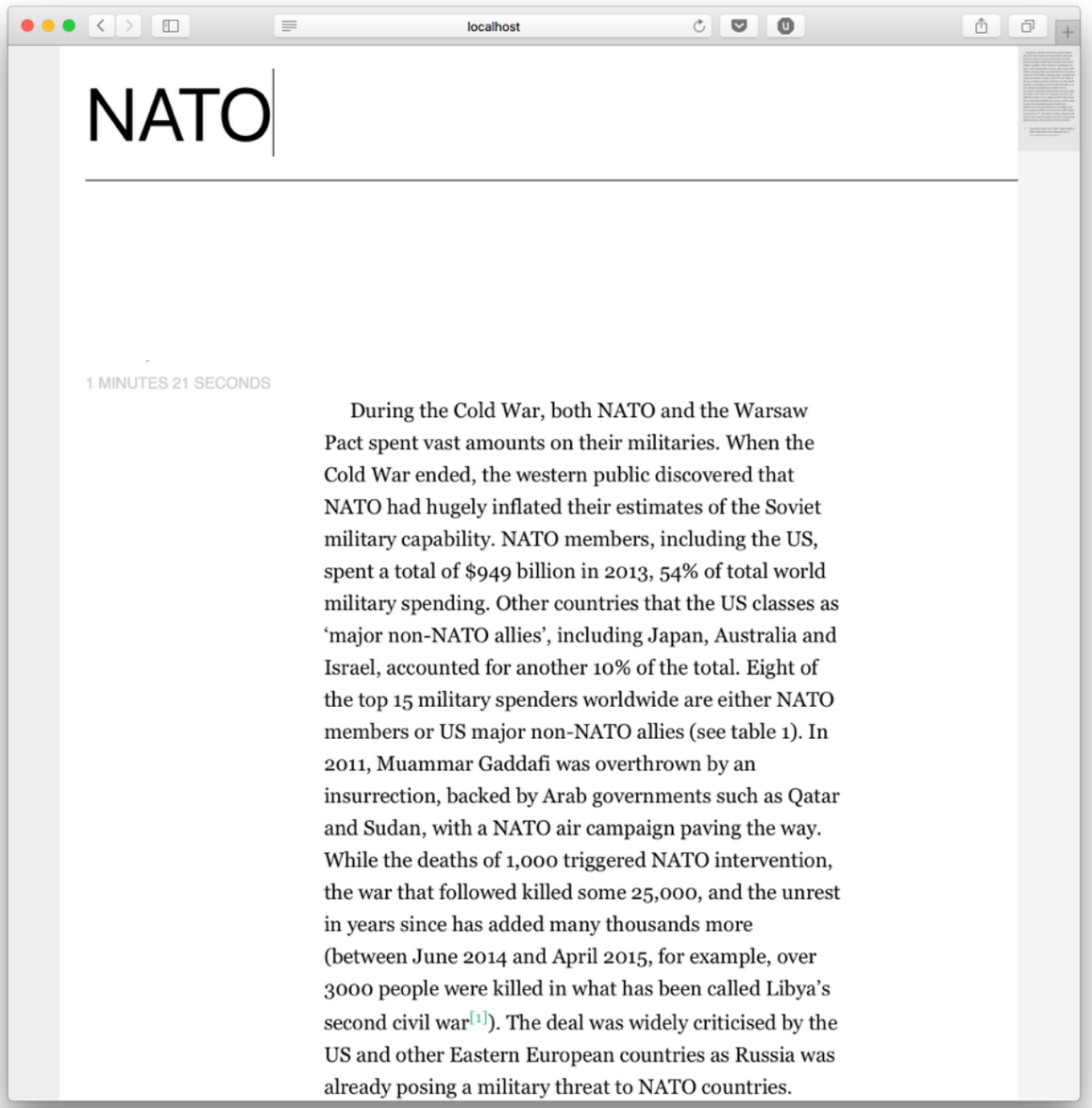


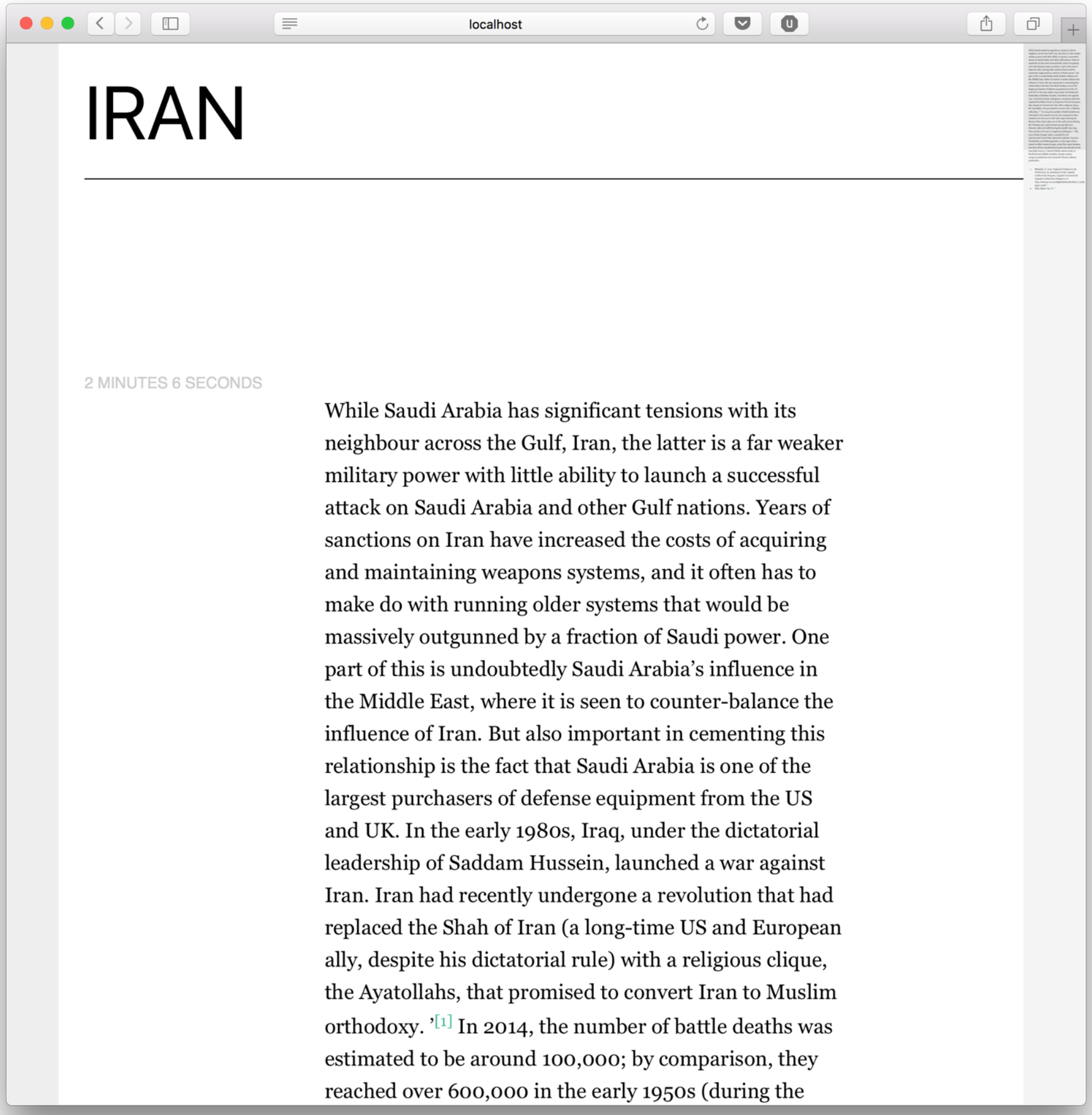
Mini Map

Annotations

Creating new narratives through search



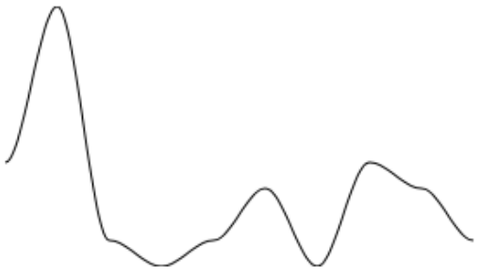




Iran
↳Saudi Arabia
Middle East
Afghanistan
Pakistan
Turkey
Syria

Reading Time
Speed
Frequency

AFGHAN



7 MINUTES 9 SECONDS

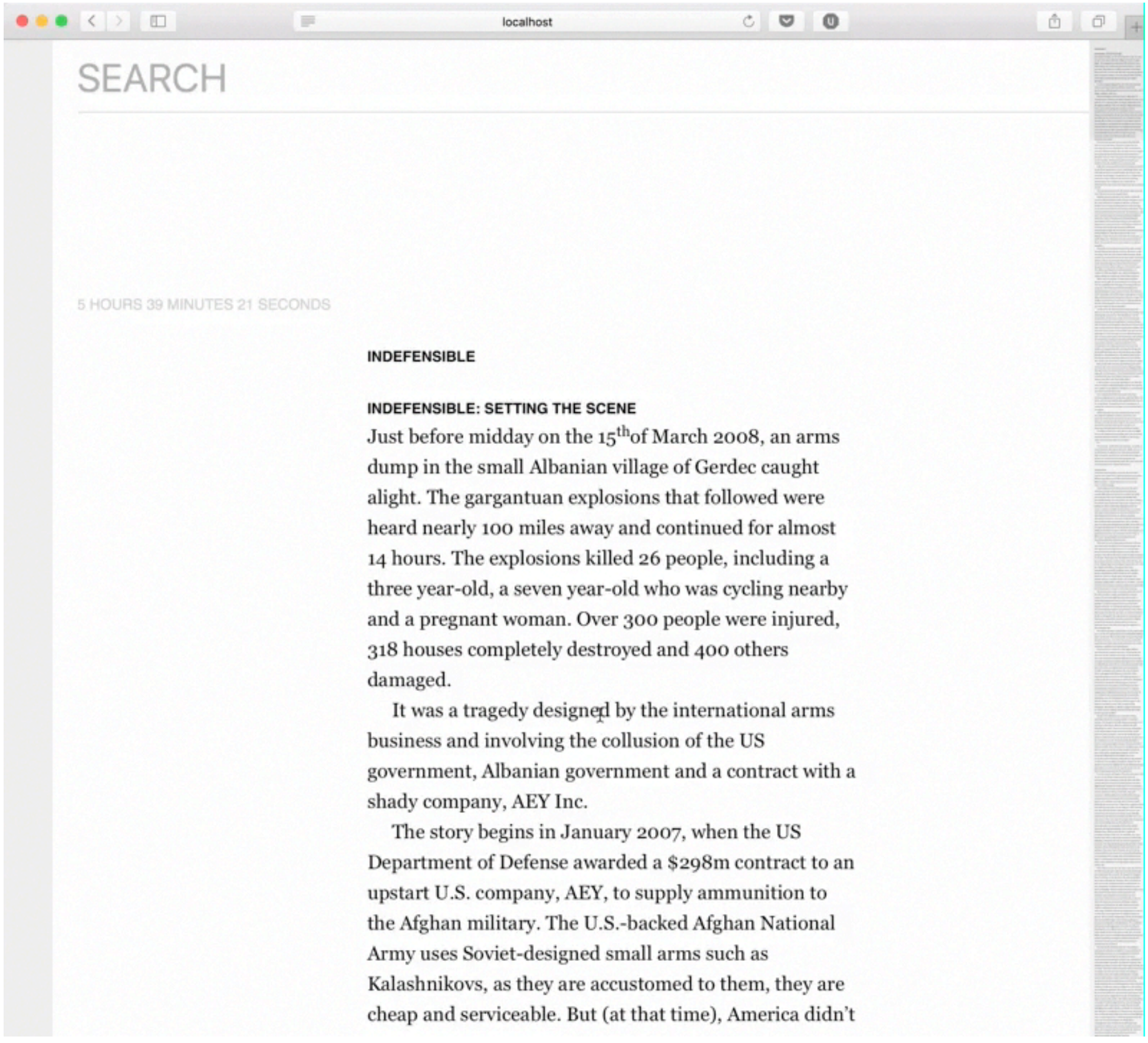
COLD WAR

6 MINUTES 17 SECONDS

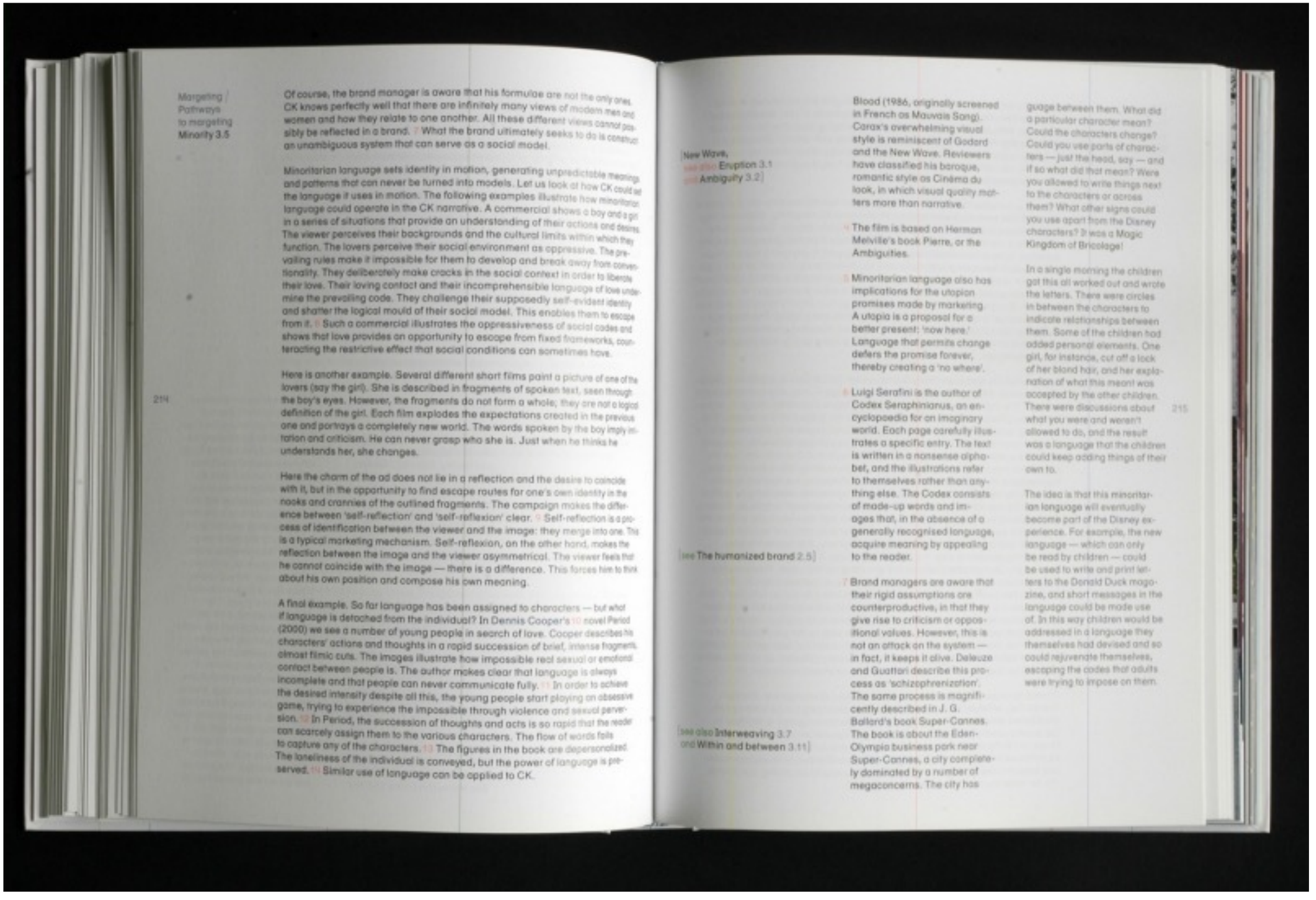
During the Cold War, both N
Pact spent vast amounts on thei
Cold War ended, the western pu
NATO had hugely inflated their
military capability.

With the end of the Cold Wa
of hope that countries would di
social development: what was k
dividend.'[1] Signs were initially
Cold War, military spending fel
terms (i.e. After the end of the C
suddenly became the weapons s

Focus Mode


localhost
SEARCH
5 HOURS 39 MINUTES 21 SECONDS
INDEFENSIBLE
INDEFENSIBLE: SETTING THE SCENE
Just before midday on the 15th of March 2008, an arms dump in the small Albanian village of Gerdec caught alight. The gargantuan explosions that followed were heard nearly 100 miles away and continued for almost 14 hours. The explosions killed 26 people, including a three year-old, a seven year-old who was cycling nearby and a pregnant woman. Over 300 people were injured, 318 houses completely destroyed and 400 others damaged.
It was a tragedy designed by the international arms business and involving the collusion of the US government, Albanian government and a contract with a shady company, AEY Inc.
The story begins in January 2007, when the US Department of Defense awarded a $298m contract to an upstart U.S. company, AEY, to supply ammunition to the Afghan military. The U.S.-backed Afghan National Army uses Soviet-designed small arms such as Kalashnikovs, as they are accustomed to them, they are cheap and serviceable. But (at that time), America didn't

Providing a visual index



Of course, the brand manager is aware that his formulae are not the only ones. CK knows perfectly well that there are infinitely many views of modern men and women and how they relate to one another. All these different views cannot possibly be reflected in a brand. 7 What the brand ultimately seeks to do is construct an unambiguous system that can serve as a social model.

Minoritarian language sets identity in motion, generating unpredictable meanings and patterns that can never be turned into models. Let us look at how CK could let the language it uses in motion. The following examples illustrate how minoritarian language could operate in the CK narrative. A commercial shows a boy and a girl in a series of situations that provide an understanding of their actions and desires. The viewer perceives their backgrounds and the cultural limits within which they function. The lovers perceive their social environment as oppressive. The prevailing rules make it impossible for them to develop and break away from conventionality. They deliberately make cracks in the social context in order to liberate their love. Their loving contact and their incomprehensible language of love undermine the prevailing code. They challenge their supposedly self-evident identity and shatter the logical mould of their social model. This enables them to escape from it. 8 Such a commercial illustrates the oppressiveness of social codes and shows that love provides an opportunity to escape from fixed frameworks, counteracting the restrictive effect that social conditions can sometimes have.

Here is another example. Several different short films paint a picture of one of the lovers (say the girl). She is described in fragments of spoken text, seen through the boy's eyes. However, the fragments do not form a whole; they are not a logical definition of the girl. Each film explodes the expectations created in the previous one and portrays a completely new world. The words spoken by the boy imply irritation and criticism. He can never grasp who she is. Just when he thinks he understands her, she changes.

Here the charm of the ad does not lie in a reflection and the desire to coincide with it, but in the opportunity to find escape routes for one's own identity in the nooks and crannies of the outlined fragments. The campaign makes the difference between 'self-reflection' and 'self-reflexion' clear. 9 Self-reflection is a process of identification between the viewer and the image: they merge into one. This is a typical marketing mechanism. Self-reflexion, on the other hand, makes the reflection between the image and the viewer asymmetrical. The viewer feels that he cannot coincide with the image — there is a difference. This forces him to think about his own position and compose his own meaning.

A final example. So far language has been assigned to characters — but what if language is detached from the individual? In Dennis Cooper's 10 novel Period (2000) we see a number of young people in search of love. Cooper describes his characters' actions and thoughts in a rapid succession of brief, intense fragments, almost filmic cuts. The images illustrate how impossible real sexual or emotional contact between people is. The author makes clear that language is always incomplete and that people can never communicate fully. 11 In order to achieve the desired intensity despite all this, the young people start playing an obsessive game, trying to experience the impossible through violence and sexual perversion. 12 In Period, the succession of thoughts and acts is so rapid that the reader can scarcely assign them to the various characters. The flow of words fails to capture any of the characters. 13 The figures in the book are depersonalized. The loneliness of the individual is conveyed, but the power of language is preserved. 14 Similar use of language can be applied to CK.

[New Wave,
see also Eruption 3.1
and Ambiguity 3.2]

Blood (1986, originally screened in French as Mauvais Sang). Carax's overwhelming visual style is reminiscent of Godard and the New Wave. Reviewers have classified his baroque, romantic style as Cinéma du look, in which visual quality matters more than narrative.

6 The film is based on Herman Melville's book Pierre, or the Ambiguities.

5 Minoritarian language also has implications for the utopian promises made by marketing. A utopia is a proposal for a better present: 'now here.' Language that permits change defers the promise forever, thereby creating a 'no where'.

6 Luigi Serafini is the author of Codex Seraphinianus, an encyclopaedia for an imaginary world. Each page carefully illustrates a specific entry. The text is written in a nonsense alphabet, and the illustrations refer to themselves rather than anything else. The Codex consists of made-up words and images that, in the absence of a generally recognised language, acquire meaning by appealing to the reader.

[see The humanized brand 2.5]

7 Brand managers are aware that their rigid assumptions are counterproductive, in that they give rise to criticism or oppositional values. However, this is not an attack on the system — in fact, it keeps it alive. Deleuze and Guattari describe this process as 'schizophrenization'. The same process is magnificently described in J. G. Ballard's book Super-Cannes. The book is about the Eden-Olympia business park near Super-Cannes, a city completely dominated by a number of megaconcerns. The city has

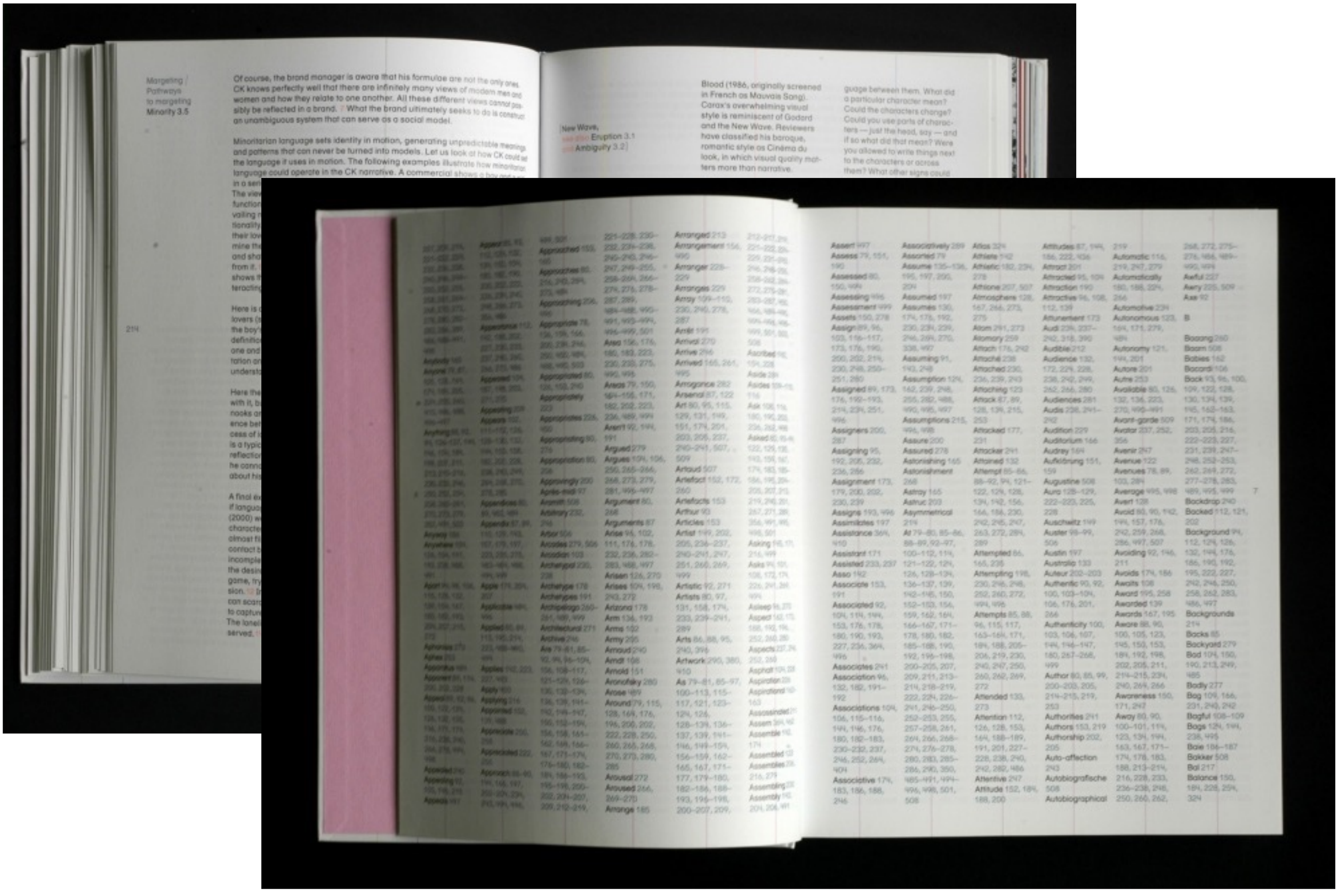
[see also Interweaving 3.7
and Within and between 3.11]

guage between them. What did a particular character mean? Could the characters change? Could you use parts of characters — just the head, say — and if so what did that mean? Were you allowed to write things next to the characters or across them? What other signs could you use apart from the Disney characters? It was a Magic Kingdom of Bricolage!

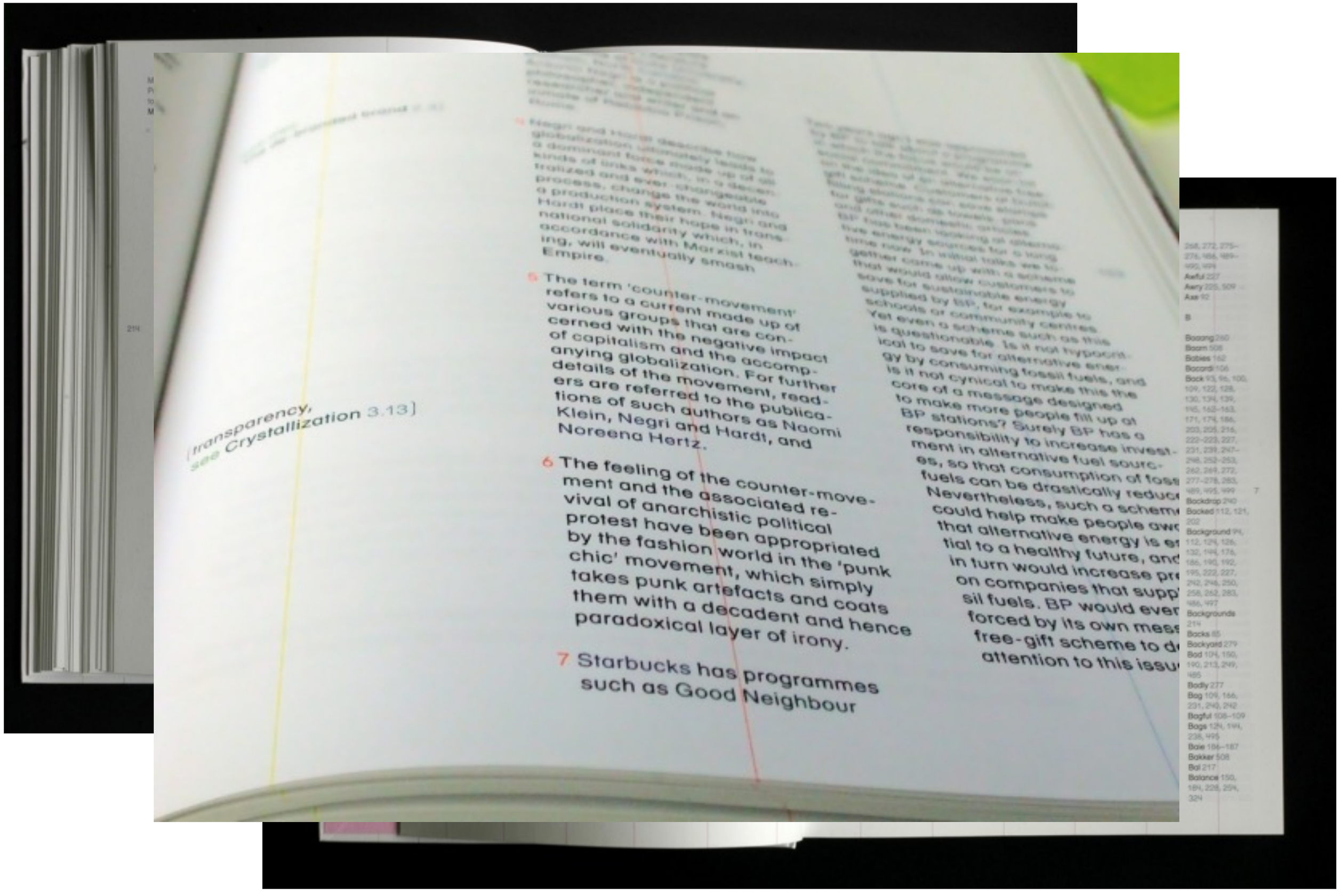
In a single morning the children got this all worked out and wrote the letters. There were circles in between the characters to indicate relationships between them. Some of the children had added personal elements. One girl, for instance, cut off a lock of her blond hair, and her explanation of what this meant was accepted by the other children. There were discussions about what you were and weren't allowed to do, and the result was a language that the children could keep adding things of their own to.

The idea is that this minoritarian language will eventually become part of the Disney experience. For example, the new language — which can only be read by children — could be used to write and print letters to the Donald Duck magazine, and short messages in the language could be made use of. In this way children would be addressed in a language they themselves had devised and so could rejuvenate themselves, escaping the codes that adults were trying to impose on them.

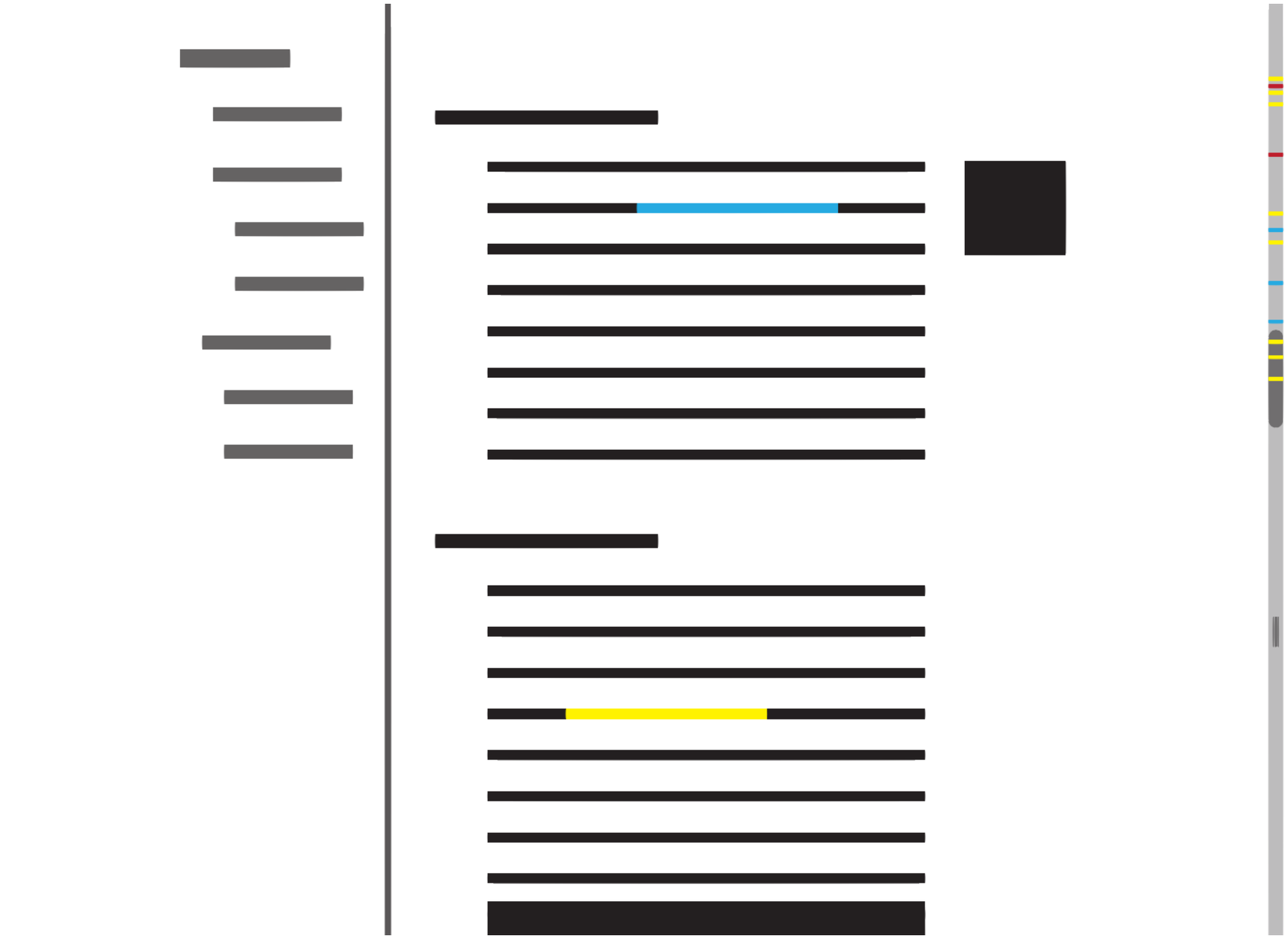
Providing a visual index

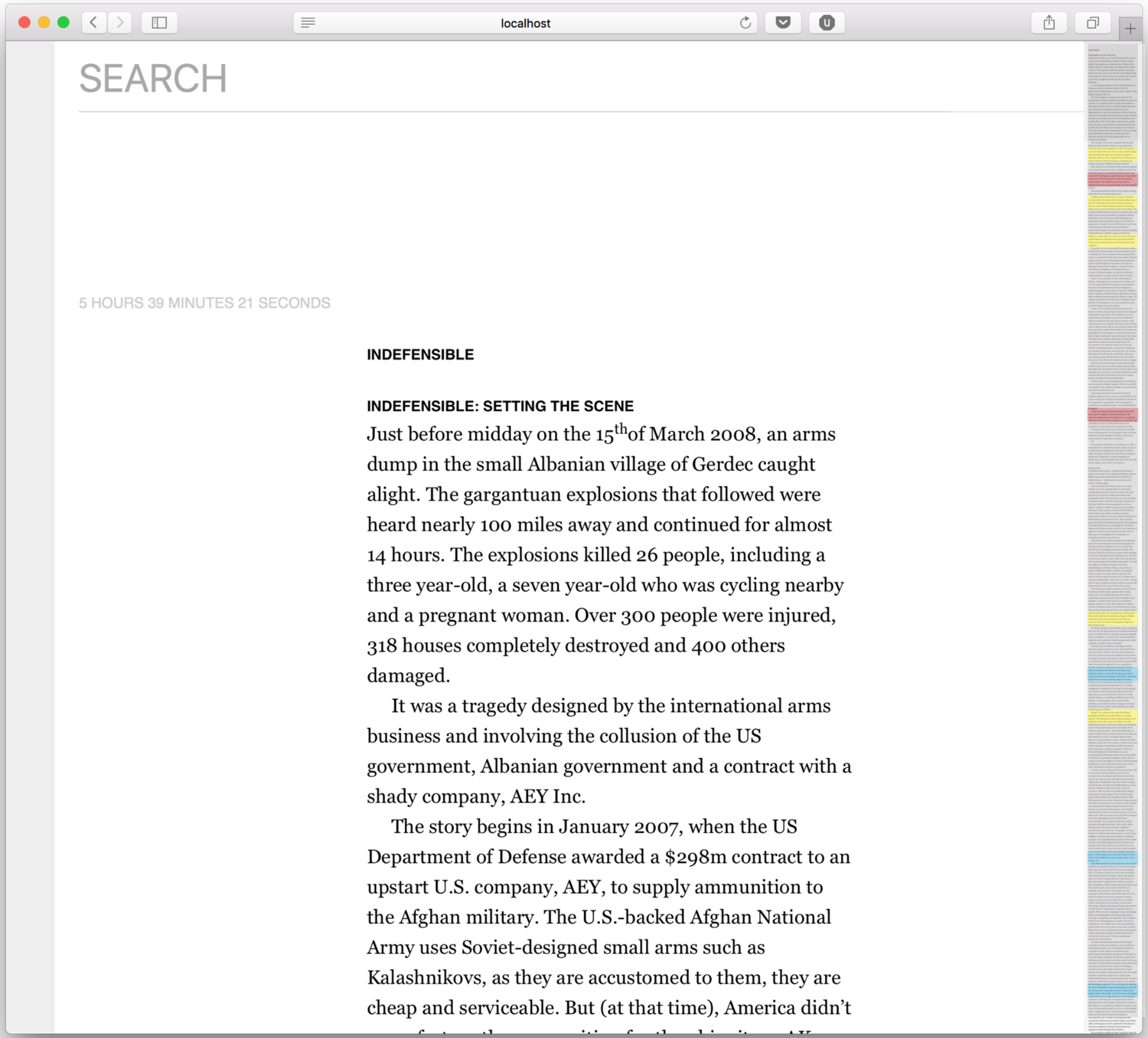


Providing a visual index



Providing a visual index





Highlights

Annotations

Key passages

Personal Path

LINEAR

Indefensible

Indefensible: Setting the Scene

Introduction

Section 1: There is no problem

- Myth 1: Higher Defense Spending Equals Increased Security
- Myth 2: Military Spending Is Driven by Security Concerns
- Myth 3: We Can Control Where Weapons End Up and How They Are Used
- Myth 4: The Defense Industry is a Key Contributor to National Economies
- Myth 5: Corruption in the Arms Trade is Only a Problem in Developing Countries
- Myth 6: National Security Requires Blanket Secrecy

Section 2: The arms trade can't be beaten

- Myth 7: Now is not the time
- The final myth: there is nothing we can do about it

RESEARCH TRAJECTORY

Indefensible

Indefensible: Setting the Scene

Introduction

Section 1: There is no problem

- Myth 1: Higher Defense Spending Equals Increased Security

Section 2: The arms trade can't be beaten

- Myth 7: Now is not the time

Section 1: There is no problem

- Myth 2: Military Spending Is Driven by Security Concerns
- Myth 3: We Can Control Where Weapons End Up and How They Are Used
- The final myth: there is nothing we can do about it

Introduction

- Myth 4: The Defense Industry is a Key Contributor to National Economies
- Myth 5: Corruption in the Arms Trade is Only a Problem in Developing Countries
- Myth 6: National Security Requires Blanket Secrecy

Introduction

Indefensible: Setting the Scene

- Myth 3: We Can Control Where Weapons End Up and How They Are Used

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Master of Design

Course

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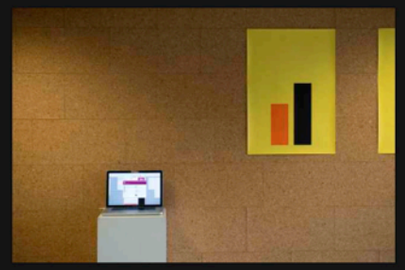
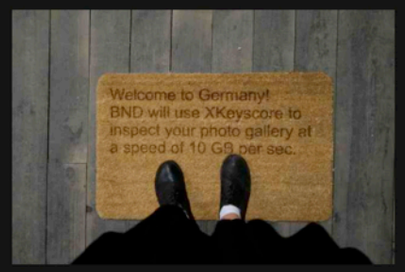
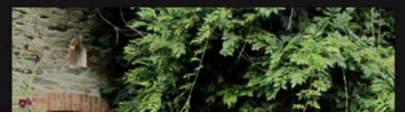


Sandberg Open Day

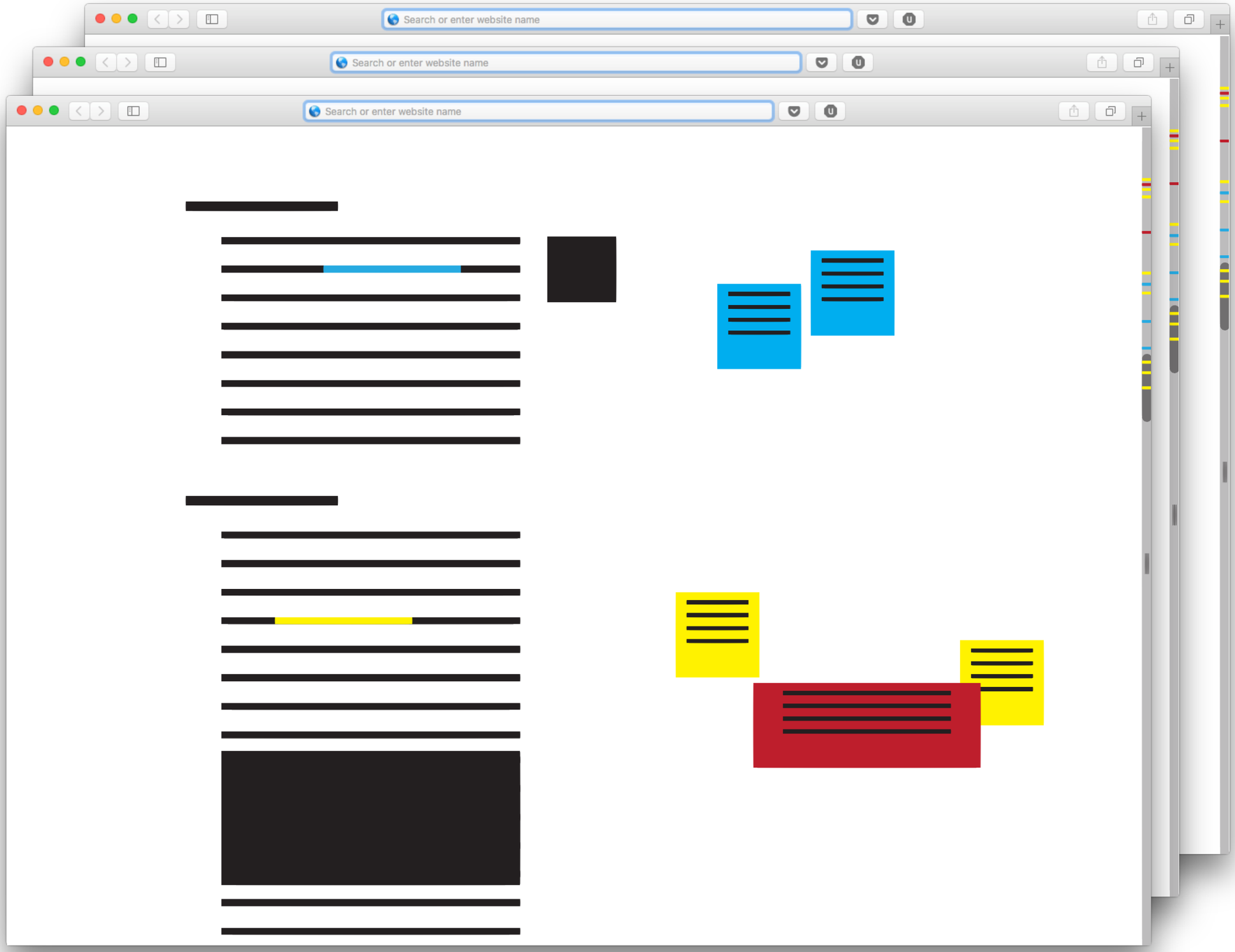


Introduction weekend, September 2012

Introduction weekend, September 2012



Collaboration



armstrade.project

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Source

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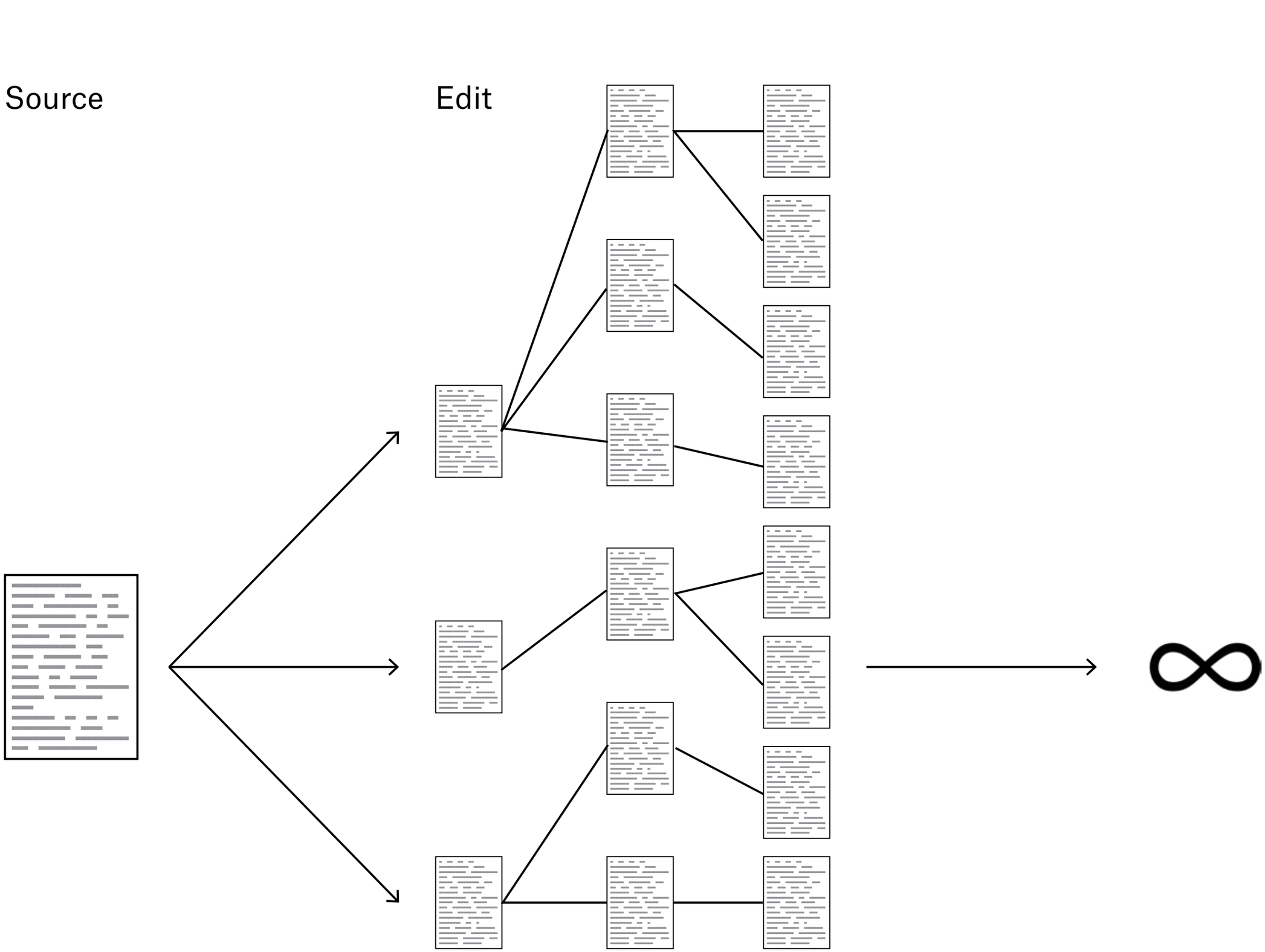
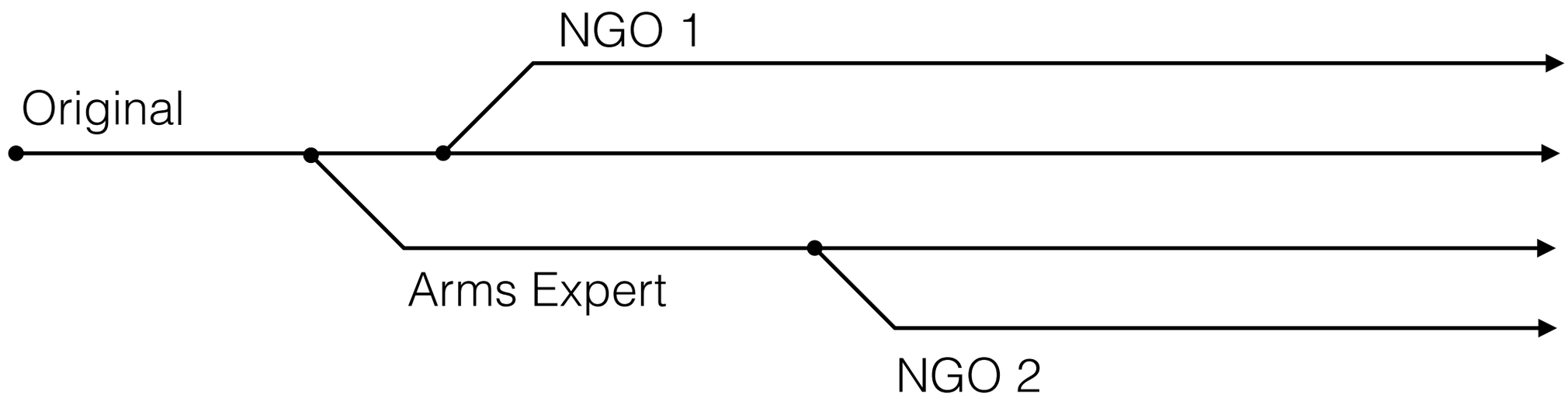
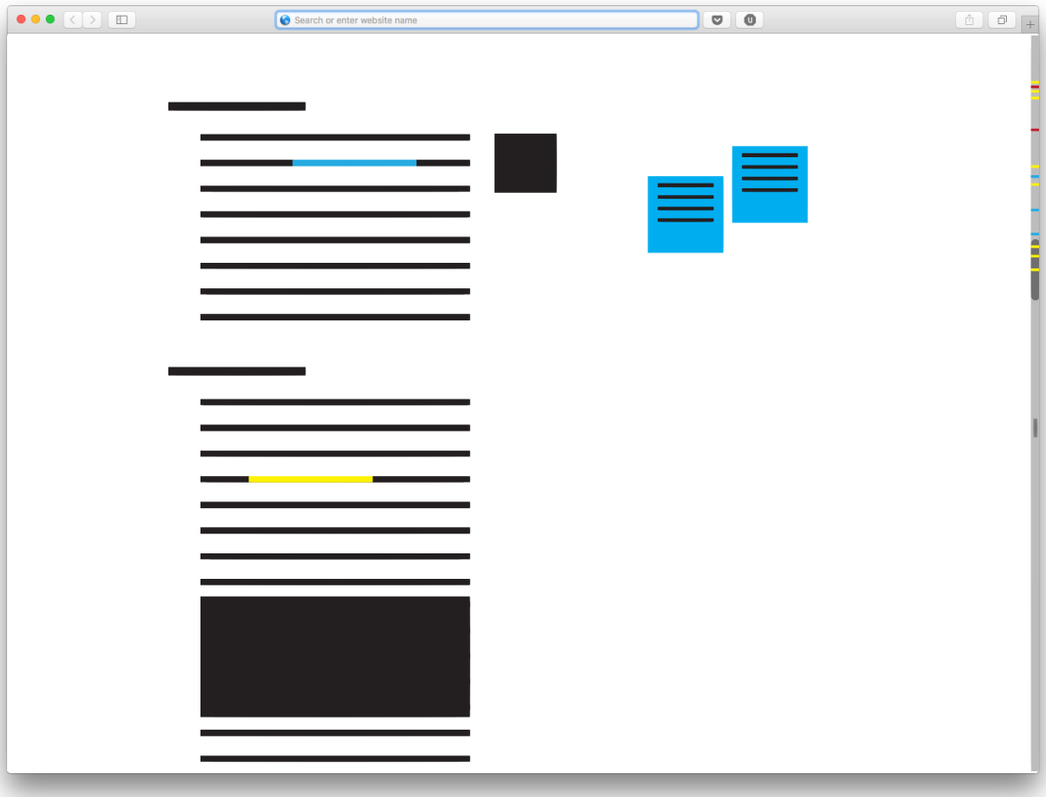
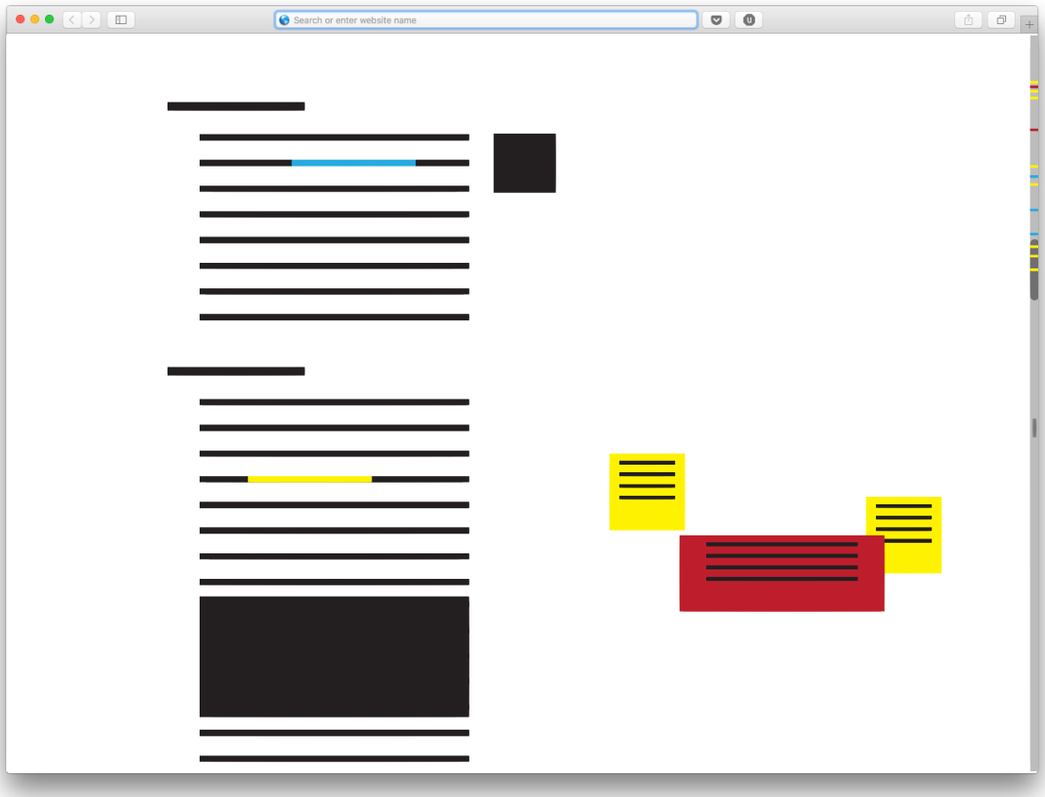



NGO 1
Original
Arms Expert
NGO 2

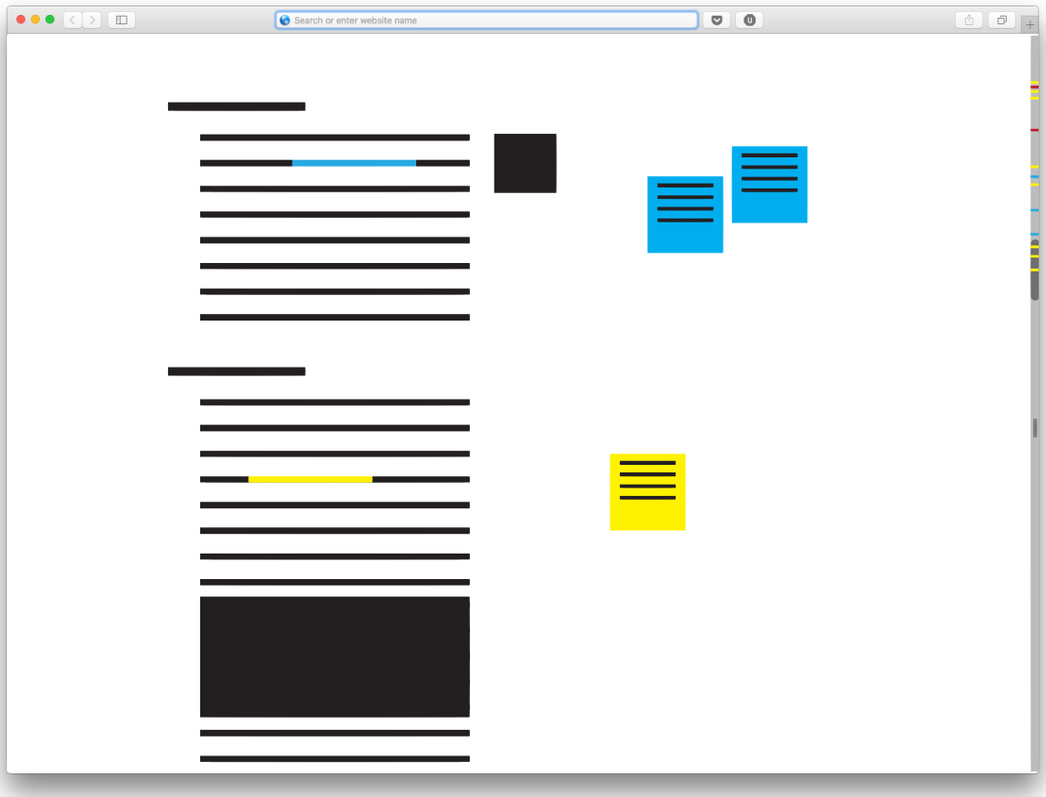
NGO



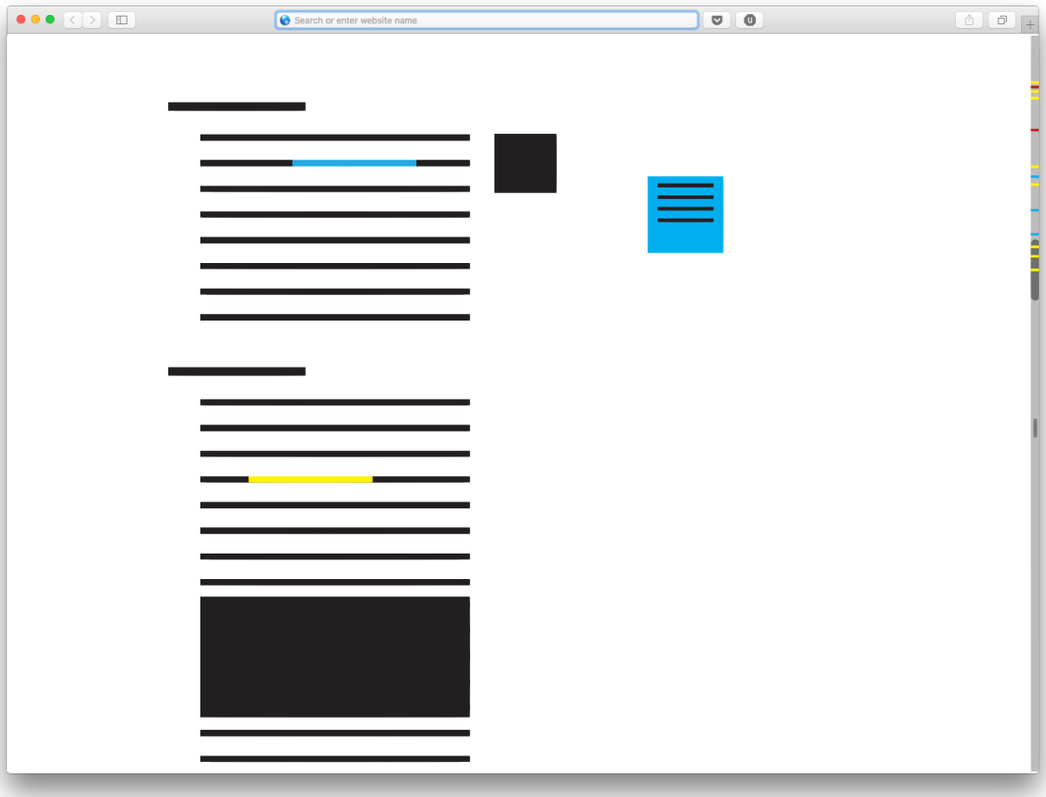
Professor of Middle Eastern Studies



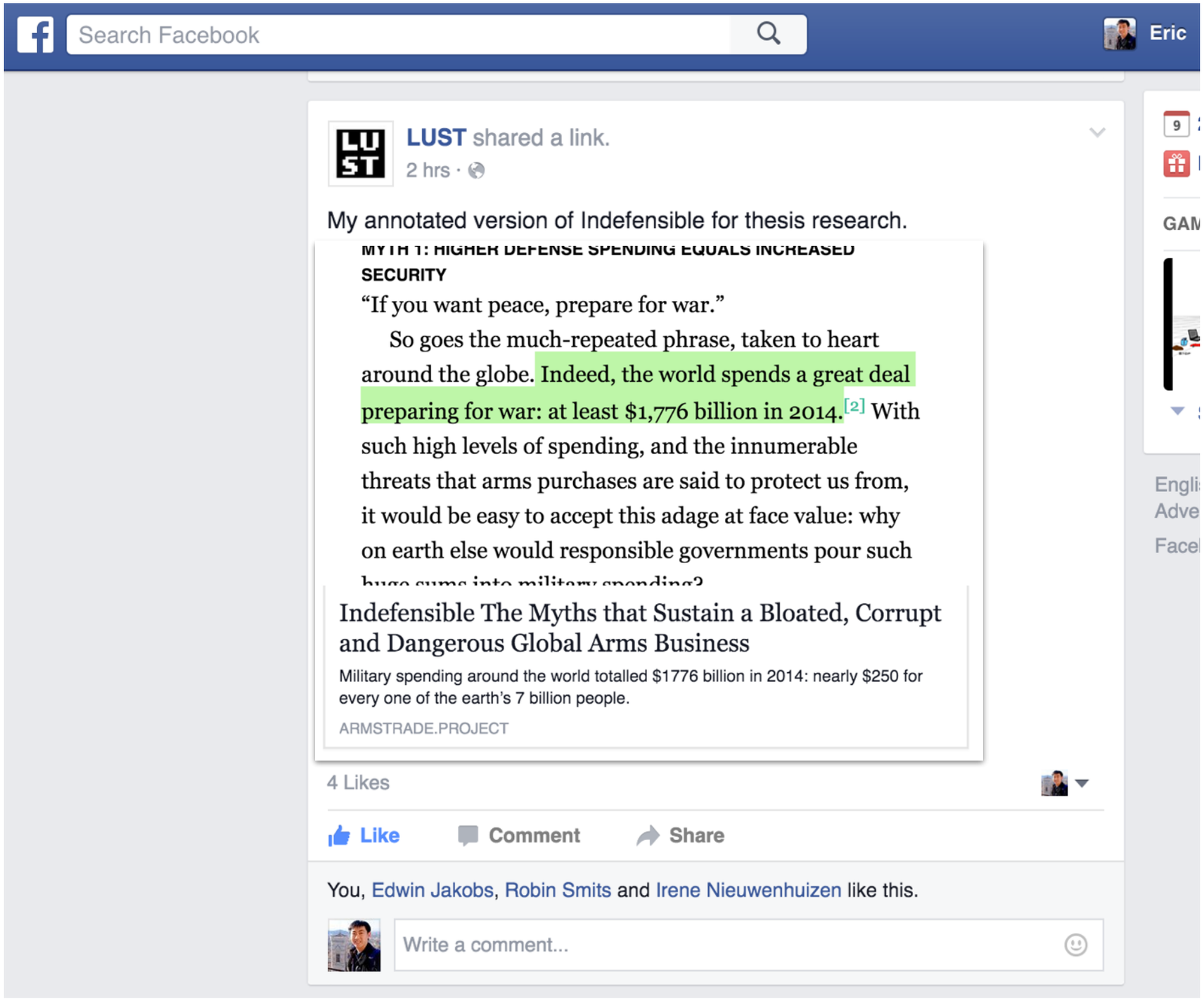
Journalist in the Field



Casual Reader



Social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My annotated version of Indefensible for thesis research.
MYTH 1: HIGHER DEFENSE SPENDING EQUALS INCREASED SECURITY
"If you want peace, prepare for war."
So goes the much-repeated phrase, taken to heart around the globe. Indeed, the world spends a great deal preparing for war: at least $1,776 billion in 2014.[2] With such high levels of spending, and the innumerable threats that arms purchases are said to protect us from, it would be easy to accept this adage at face value: why on earth else would responsible governments pour such
Indefensible The Myths that Sustain a Bloated, Corrupt and Dangerous Global Arms Business
Military spending around the world totalled $1776 billion in 2014: nearly $250 for every one of the earth's 7 billion people.
ARMSTRADE.PROJECT
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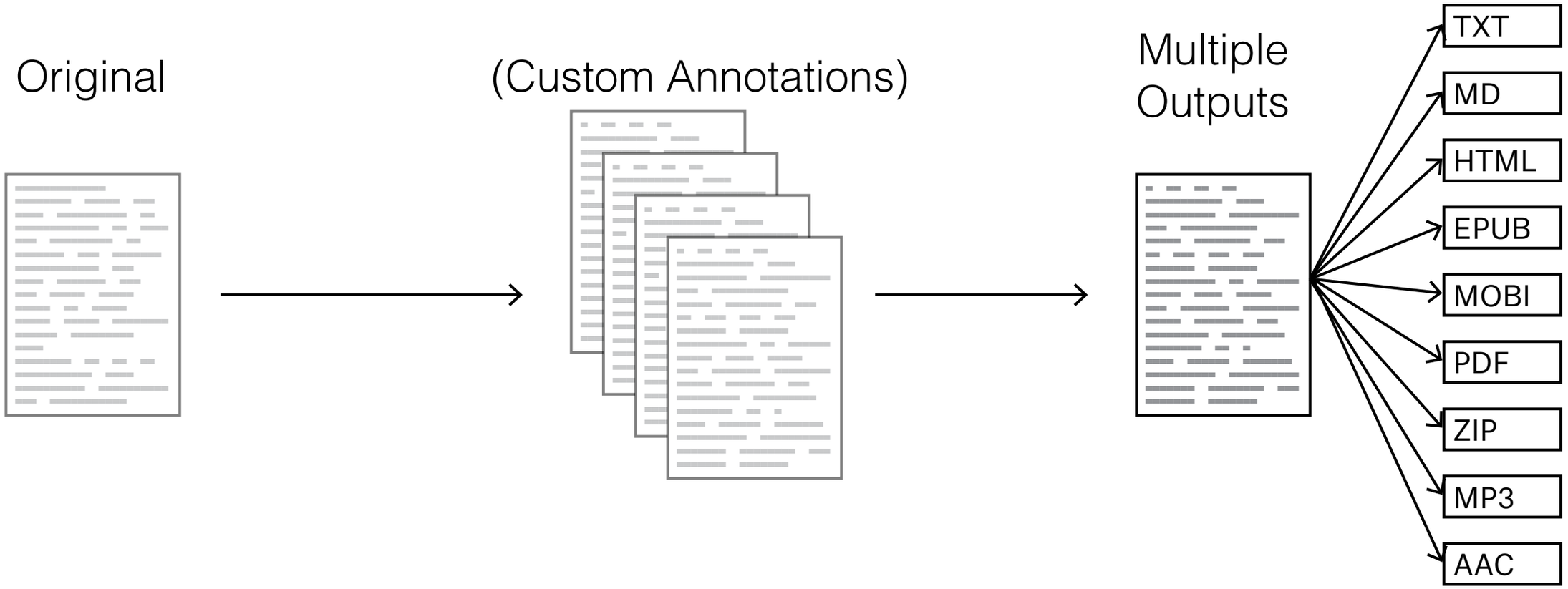
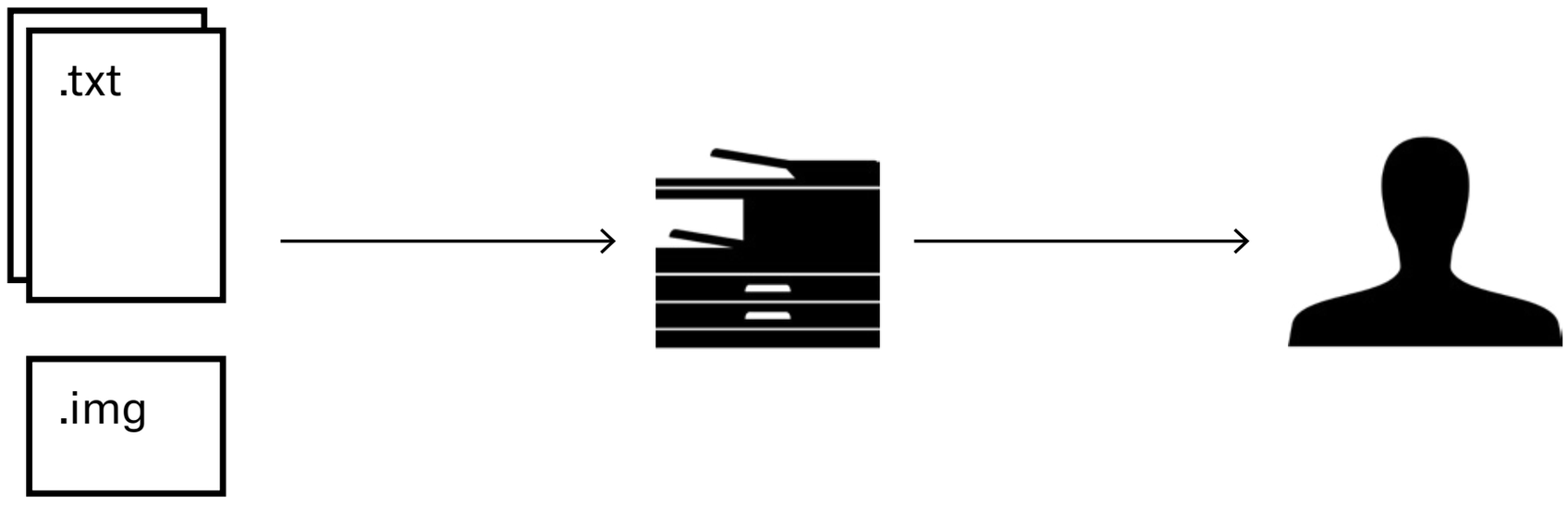
Comment
Share
You, Edwin Jakobs, Robin Smits and Irene Nieuwenhuizen like this.
Write a comment...

Multiple distribution methods



Offline custom narratives



NGO

Research initiator opens Indefensible

As they read the text, annotations and additions are made

Initiator invites a colleague

Together they build towards an annotated and curated version centered around their particular field

They export their creation as a PDF for use in the field

Student Researcher

Student researcher opens Indefensible

They want to use it as a resource for a paper, but are crunched for time. So they open an annotated version created by an arms expert.

Student reads the introduction, and then jumps to the annotated parts using the Mini Map.

Student annotates the text, highlighting and writing reactions as they go. They also share an interesting quote to social media.

Student exports notes and highlights to a file that they can later use in their paper.

Subway Reader

Subway reader opens Indefensible

They read the first few paragraphs, but want to skim the rest.

Reader invokes fast scrolling widget and scrolls past the lesser points.

Reader gets to an important point and stops to read it. They leave focus mode to read the rest of the passage.

Reader jumps to conclusion of book.

5 HOURS 39 MINUTES 21 SECONDS

INDEFENSIBLE

INDEFENSIBLE: SETTING THE SCENE

Just before midday on the 15th of March 2008, an arms dump in the small Albanian village of Gerdec caught alight. The gargantuan explosions that followed were heard nearly 100 miles away and continued for almost 14 hours. The explosions killed 26 people, including a three year-old, a seven year-old who was cycling nearby and a pregnant woman. Over 300 people were injured, 318 houses completely destroyed and 400 others damaged.

It was a tragedy designed by the international arms business and involving the collusion of the US government, Albanian government and a contract with a shady company, AEY Inc.

The story begins in January 2007, when the US Department of Defense awarded a $298m contract to an upstart U.S. company, AEY, to supply ammunition to the Afghan military. The U.S.-backed Afghan National Army uses Soviet-designed small arms such as Kalashnikovs, as they are accustomed to them, they are cheap and serviceable. But (at that time), America didn't