The most important book never written: a media history of Saul Kripke's scholarly *szamizdat*

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Abstract:

This paper considers the significance of the informal publication and circulation in the work of one of the most important analytic philosophers of the late 20th Century, Saul Kripke. I argue that everyday copying technologies such as tape recording and photocopying enabled academic philosophers in the 1970s and 1980s to create and reproduce living documents whose private preservation and circulation offered a way to make and maintain a community of interest, carve out a space for oral discourse and, most significantly for histories of alternative print technologies, that these technologies and techniques of reproduction were essential to the composition of Kripke's ground-breaking and revolutionary published work. The recording, transcripts and photocopies archived Kripke's ideas and offered access to them outside of institutional publishing channels. Kripke lectured a great deal, usually without notes, and was known to be reluctant to commit his ideas to print; this '*szamizdat*' (as he refers to it) also preserved a space for the oral as the preferred mode of communication for philosophical discourse, connecting the modern tradition with the ancients, an oral tradition held together with magnetic tape, typescript, photocopies, and digital text files. This archival study draws attention to the intermediality of Kripke's work through close examination of his acknowledgments, prefaces, and footnotes to work up a history of the everyday media inscriptions (the recordings, typescript transcriptions, photocopies etc.) and practices (the lectures, seminars, and international social networks of distribution) that underpin the production of both his published and unpublished work. This essay brings a media archaeological approach into contact with scholarship on the history of the book and intellectual history. It foregrounds the role of the oral and aural in the history of print and contributes to our understanding of circulation and reproduction as a cultural practices.

Lecture Capture

Socrates was a talker not a writer. All he claimed to know was that he knew nothing. We are still talking about this insight—the value of epistemic humility—primarily because his pupil Plato, wrote down the words of his teacher. Plato's dialogues documented (and no doubt embellished and restructured) actual conversations with Socrates and his interlocutors using the latest technology: reed quills and papyrus. Today when undergraduates encounter the *Phaedrus*, whether in print or on screen, they are reading words about writing and speaking that have been preserved and passed down through many mediations and reproductions of this dialogue and because we keep talking about them. The dialogue in the *Phaedrus*, draws our attention not only to the question of what knowledge is but to how it is attained. Books, as we know them, are literally not a thing in Socrates' world but today when contemporary readers encounter Socrates' scepticism about writing, this is often interpreted as an anxiety about books, an anxiety that puts the technological in opposition to the human and the inscription in opposition to the oral; but an alternate reading is that Socrates (or perhaps Plato) draws our attention to why a focus on the technological in and of itself is never enough—knowledge is not a thing, it is a meeting of minds. Knowledge is profoundly social.

And yet, so is media.

The question of how the social animates the technological and how the technological shapes cultural life continues to grip scholars of culture in the 21st Century. Media archaeological approaches to cultural history focus on the conditions of knowledge, how they shape our experiences, sensations, and conclusions. Anomalies and accidents often take centre stage in media archaeology and this essay turns the spotlight on a well-known but unusual chapter in the history of 20th Century philosophy: the peer production and social circulation of lectures given by the late Saul Kripke, one of analytic philosophy's most important philosophers. His book *Naming and Necessity*, is considered revolutionary in analytic philosophy, radically altering the study of metaphysics. But this great work was first a great lecture, recorded to tape before it was composed, making it one of the most important books never

written (so to speak). Comprised of three lectures given to the Princeton University Philosophy Colloquium on January 20, 22 and 29, 1970, transcripts of the recordings were made and Kripke was persuaded to publish these transcripts in *Semantics of Natural Language*, a collection of papers edited by fellow Princeton philosophers Donald Davidson and Gilbert Harman in 1972. In 1980 Harvard University Press republished the lectures with a preface written by Kripke as a scholarly monograph.[1]

Kripke was already a respected figure in his field when he delivered these lectures—a child prodigy, Kripke had developed a completeness theorem in modal logic before completing high school, was giving postgraduate lectures at before graduating from Harvard in 1962 with a BA in Mathematics; he was so sought after he was offered academic positions (first at Rockefeller, later Princeton, today CUNY) despite not holding an advanced degree. By the end of the 1970s, Kripke's work was so widely discussed and cited and his influence in the field was so great that the New York Times put him on the cover of the Sunday magazine[2]. Kripke was also known for his reluctance to commit ideas to print or to write at all. In 2001 the writer Charles McGrath described his process:

> "Except on very rare occasions, Mr. Kripke does not actually set words down on paper. He broods, gathers a few texts, makes a loose mental outline, and then at some public occasion, a lecture or a seminar, he just wings it, talks off the top of his head, the way Socrates used to, come to think of it. These talks are later transcribed and Mr. Kripke, now a distinguished professor at CUNY, edits and revises them, draft after draft, before approving them for publication." [3]

The time between hatching ideas and publishing was considerable. In the preface for the 1980 publication of *Naming and Necessity* he admits that most of the "ideas in *Naming and Necessity* evolved in the early sixties—most of the views were formulated in about 1963-64."[4] Throughout this period, Kripke kept on talking and his peers and students continued to listen but they also began to record, transcribe and circulate his work, a remarkable achievement of scholarly cooperation that stretched around the globe. This is an unusual chapter in the history of philosophy but it is not a secret one—Kripke always

acknowledged the efforts of the group he dubbed his *szamizdat*—a name he borrows from the dissidents of the Soviet Union who in the face of censorship of mass media and printing presses, turned to low-tech means of reproduction to circulate their work. In notes to his published work he makes explicit references to tapes and transcribers. Using everyday reproduction technologies and social circulation Kripke's *szamizdat* circulated Kripke's talks and ideas to analytic philosophers around the world and though these were informal documents, were widely discussed by key thinkers in prestigious journals and scholarly books.

This essay considers the materiality of this *szamizdat*, this practice of documentation and social circulation enabled by reproduction, pondering the chains of mediation that turned his lectures into living documents. It may seem counterintuitive but the archival starting point for this essay is Kripke's published work, in his acknowledgements and footnotes where Kripke's documents and discusses the genealogies of his publications, names and acknowledges his *szamizdat*, references transcribers and recordings, and documents when and where lectures took place. I offer a reading of Kripke's *szamizdat* by focusing on techniques, breaking down the steps that enabled the private preservation and circulation of texts and offering an inventory of the media technologies and formats that underpinned his scholarly *szamizdat* and the various meanings produced through their use in the context of philosophy as a field of inquiry. I do not examine particular texts or the genealogy of his ideas and I assiduously avoid discussions of the intention of participants and instead consider the affordances of the media formats, their material and rhetorical possibilities. My focus is on reproduction as scholarly technique, considering how technologies of reproduction and new genres of document contributed to the production of knowledge.

The 1970s and 1980s are a formative for anyone interested in how analog technologies and distribution techniques shaped digital network practices—these decades mark the transition from mass media to the personalisation of media, the dawn of digital technologies and global networks. As is common in media archaeology my interest in this uncommon media history is to consider connection between fields of study and, as Jussi Parikka instructs, to "look to the past as an archive of future directions."[5] I study Kripke's Szamizdat in the

context of the everyday use of media technologies in the 1970s and 80s to glean insights about reproduction as a knowledge practice and circulation as a cultural practice by focusing on the material and social dimension of both. I'm interested in the mechanics (and electronics) of transmission as well as how these practices and artifacts were imagined by participants, and as such I draw both on new materialist approaches that take interest in the media over its content and in social constructionist approaches that consider how people use and imagine media. How did academics use everyday office technologies—tape recorders, typewriters and word processors, and photocopiers — and reproducible media as part of their knowledge practices? How did Kripke account for this in his acknowledgements and notes? In his study of Harold Innis' scholarly practices, Liam Cole Young probed the relationship between techniques of scholarly production and the ideas they produce, offering an approach for considering scholarly practice as an object of study.

"The core of my argument is that techniques of doing generate concepts and even objects of inquiry rather than the other way around. Thus before we think about disciplines, formations, traditions or schools, we should start with the techniques themselves. By carefully re-tracing their operations and the many persons, objects and spaces by which they are enacted, we de-mystify narratives about genius and guru figures and we re-inscribe place and practice into our understandings of how ideas are produced and circulated. It allows us to understand something like "media theory" as a complex and contingent formation rather than a canonized set of figures or texts."[6]

Kripke's revolutionary impact on metaphysics and the philosophy of language owes as much to the Xerox machine as much as it does to the lecture hall. His *szamizdat* offers insights about reproduction and circulation as significant scholarly practices and cultural techniques.

The field of book history has long aimed to understand books as media in motion. Writes Adrian Johns:

> "Any printed book is…both the product of one complex set of social and technological forces and also the starting point for another. In the first place, a large number of people, machines, and materials must converge and act together for it to come into existence at all. . . . But the story of a

> book evidently does not end with its creation. How it is then put to use, by whom, in what circumstances, and to what effect are all equally complex issues."[7]

We tend to see books as an endpoint, the product of writing, but my approach in this essay is to shift attention away from writing and toward to the listening, recording, transcribing, documenting, reproduction and circulation events that contributed to production of informal documents that constitute Kripke's work. Following D.F. McKenzie[8], I see these books and photocopies as a collection of texts, produced not only by the author, but also by numerous intermediaries—some known, others anonymous—who harnessed different reproductive technologies to capture and reproduce Kripke's lectures. I take special interest in the copying technologies that enabled philosophers to turn lectures into typescript and photocopies, format shifting events that could bolster an oral culture of discourse as well as archive ideas and enable access to scholars from around the worlds.

Books on tape: Preserving speech and a space for the oral

Today, the Kripke Center at the City University of New York is in the process of collecting and digitizing artifacts related to Kripke's work including recordings that date back to 1970s, transcripts, photocopies, notes and letters.[9] Kripke may have been reluctant to commit ideas to print, but he was surprisingly comfortable with his unscripted talks being captured to tape. These tapes are not bootlegs—Princeton employed a research assistant to make recordings most external recordings appear to have been made with Kripke's knowledge and consent—his acknowledgments and footnotes refer to hosts making recordings and some transcripts include references to the tape recorder in the room and the tape itself. It was recordings of the 1970 Princeton Philosophy Colloquium (and their verbatim transcripts) that provided the source material for Kripke's ground-breaking *Naming and Necessity*—it is in this sense that the most important work of analytic philosophy in the 2Oth Century was spoken rather than written, captured not composed.

Kripke's direct and plain-spoken style was as appealing as his new ideas about metaphysics and the philosophy of language. According to the philosopher Steven Neale, "Kripke's lectures rocked philosophy. They're chatty, easy to follow and contained little that was technical."[10] The book's origin in speech and discussion is important to Kripke who in his notes to *Naming and Necessity* explains that these "informal" lectures were given without the aid of a script or notes (as was his reputation) and that readers should view them as a kind of document of the oral event. "The present text is lightly edited from the verbatim transcript; an occasional passage has been added to expand the thought, an occasional sentence has been rewritten, but no attempt has been made to change the informal style of the original. Many of the footnotes have been added to the original, but a few were originally spoken asides in the talks themselves."[11]

Kripke also advised readers to imagine the text as speech to help them understand the ideas presented: "I hope the reader will bear these facts in mind as he reads the texts. Imagining it spoken, with proper pauses and emphases, may occasionally facilitate comprehension. "[12] Highlighting the work's oral character also offers context and a defence of any quirks they may encounter. "To repeat, I hope the reader will bear in mind that he is largely reading informal lectures, not only when he encounters repetitions or infelicities, but also when he encounters irreverence or corn."[13]

Kripke frequently highlight the conversational nature of his work and offers context for how widely transcripts travelled prior to publication—though unpublished, his talk had had already been talked about. For example, the recent publication of the 1972 lecture "On Two Paradoxes of Knowledge" includes this context and explanation:

"The present paper is based on a transcript of a recorded lecture given at Cambridge University to the Moral Sciences Club in 1972. The transcript appears to be known to at least B. Phil students at Oxford, where it has been listed as part of their syllabus. The Conversational tone of the paper, as in some other publications of mine, may sometimes reflect its origins."[14]

In her book *On Writers and Writing* (itself an edited version of the Empson lectures she delivered in 2000), Margaret Atwood draws attention to the reader's ear. "As Northrop Frye has implied, the reader does not hear, he overhears," writes Atwood, reworking Frye's original provocation that "The poet is not heard, he is overheard", (a distinction we only know because Atwood heard in one of Frye's lectures and presumably made a note of it.)[15] The focus is mediation; overhearing places all of us readers and listeners at a distance once removed from the writer but also transforms every writer's readers into potential collaborators , a collection of eves-droppers and messengers. In Atwood's formulation the printed page mediates between the writer and the reader—this is the space where the minds meet, this is the space for overhearing—but overhearing in the context of recorded sound is literal. When one considers the role of recordings in the production and circulation of Kripke's work, creating multiple mediations between the event and its documents. Preserving the oral as the aural, enabled the preservation of ephemeral speech as inscription —the mouth gives way to the ear and then the eye; Speech becomes recorded sound becomes words on a page. The ephemeral event becomes a reproducible thing first as recorded sound on tape and later as words on the page.

These chains of mediation and shifts in format have repercussions. As a cultural technique, this series of everyday mediations and reproductions enables preservation and access to Kripke's work but it is also an archival process that promoted and preserved the oral as the preferred space for philosophical discourse. It is clear from Kripke's actions and his own writing that he prefers to talk about ideas rather than write about them; speech is his preferred mode of philosophical discourse. In the introduction to his recent volume Philosophical Troubles: Collected Papers, Volume 1 he states:

"In general, thinking about philosophy and logic has always been for me the fun part of my work. I can get gripped by certain problems. Writing them up is, unfortunately, neither as much fun nor as gripping, though I do find that sometimes one does not really know one's own thought precisely until they have been either properly presented in lectures or even written down."[16]

This preference for the oral as the preferred place for philosophical discourse connects Kripke and the community of Anglo-Analytic philosophers in the 1970s and 80s with ancient philosophical traditions and knowledge practices. (Kripke is siding with Socrates on this one.) Yet what is notable is that this space for oral discourse as the preferred meeting of minds is protected by marshalling everyday media technologies into the service of overhearing, inscribing, duplicating, and transmitting. Oral discourse is an intermedial practice. Any meeting of minds is mediated. As I will argue in the next section the shifting of formats and the intermedial nature of informal and formal publications has consequences for both archiving and access. When we think about a book like *Naming and Necessity* as an artefact, the concept of intermediality helps us to bring the mediations that contributed to the production of the book into view. They remind us how each served as an index to the oral event while also protecting this space for the production of philosophical knowledge. Kripke, himself, states a preference for preserving these events "warts and all"[17]; this defence of imperfections can also be read as a defence of the oral as a mode of philosophical discovery and debate while also relying on what Gitelman calls the know/show function of documents[18] (how documents contain knowledge by making knowledge evidential). The aural recording is a space for overhearing, a documentary space where minds might meet even if they are not in the room. Let us now turn to the transcriptions that might transport us there.

Lecture Capture: Transcription and the significance of format shifting

The oral may have been the preferred mode of philosophical discourse and recording may have protected that space by turning the oral event into an aural artefact, repeatable for as long as the tape holds out, but other technologies and techniques for reproduction were crucial to the work of this informal publication network. Namely, verbatim transcriptions made by other philosophers and students. The act of listening to an aural recording and producing a typescript transcript was an essential knowledge practice, a material shift from that was crucial to insuring the preservation and circulation of Kripke's ideas. "As has become usual with my work, most of the selected unpublished papers are based on transcriptions of lectures," writes Kripke in the introduction to a recent volume of collected papers.[19] *Naming and*

Necessity, his most important work, was similarly based on transcriptions. Kripke's publications are picked out rather than written.

Throughout Kripke's published work are acknowledgments and references to the transcriptions that seeded his formal publications and gratitude for the the known and unknown transcribers are abundant and frequent. These acknowledgments allow us to glimpse the community around Kripke and his ideas—the people who listened, discussed, recorded, typed, photocopied and circulated. For example, in the notes to "Presupposition and Anaphora: Remarks on the Formulation of the Projection Problem" Kripke writes, "This paper is an edited transcript of a talk delivered at the conference…I would like to thank Richard Holton, Michaelis Michaels, and Scott Soames for transcribing the original lecture and for helpful comments…"[20] Even when the provenance of the transcripts is lost the labour is acknowledged. "My thanks to the transcriber, whose identity I don't know."[21]

Reproduction has a long and varied history as a scholarly technique and transcription and note taking is an important part of that history. Pre-print scribal practices reproduced written texts so that they could be preserved but also so they could be read out loud to students who could turn the speech back into text. Even after the printing press revolutionised the reproduction of texts, the scholarly practice of the lecture continues to be a mode of address that invites (and often expects) transcription and note taking —the professor of the 18th and 19th Century lectured and the students transcribed as a way to preserve knowledge (and enable study at another time). Notetaking in the lecture hall continues to be a significant scholarly practice and in rare occasions—such as Kripke and before him the philosopher Wittgenstein, these transcripts and notes would make an important contribution to the discipline by making ideas accessible to their peers and generations that would follow them.

Transcribing a recording of Kripke's unscripted lectures would produce a text that did not previously exist—it is a mode of reproduction that is akin to translation. Transcription enabled academics to shift the content from one format to another—in this case speech on tape becomes words on paper—copy in two senses of the word. If a tape is a kind of witnessing, then a

typescript transcript might carry with it the idea of co-presence and immediacy, thereby lending some characteristics of tape to typescript, a form that like print is easily reproducible, lightweight. Every media format has affordances and functional properties that are related to their materiality, design, and history of use, so every shift in format gives rise to the possibility of change. A shift in format alters how one might access and use the media content and each shift in format brings with it possibilities for new meaning to accumulate around the new instantiation and its circulation. As I have argued elsewhere[22] while the material dimensions of a media artefact may stay the same, the rhetorical dimensions of the format—what it means to be a typescript or a photocopy or a printed text—is contextual and subject to shifts and change. Understanding how circulation affects the meanings of formats, is why Kripke's history holds lessons outside of philosophy and scholarly history. It offers us a glimpse into the poetics of circulation.

In 1970s and 1980s a typed document and a printed one were not interchangeable. Type was a professional norm, but print was the format of academic respectability and a matter of scholarly record. That said, academics do highly specialised work and throughout the 20th Century made use of new technologies for the production and dissemination of research materials. In practice print was not the only acceptable way to circulate information and ideas. In Lisa Gitelman's study of documents she examines *Manual on Methods of Reproducing Research Materials*, a typescript book from 1931, and offers observations about how academics in the early 20th Century viewed the typescript documents and small editions they created. Unsurprisingly, access to research materials was a primary motivation. "The methods of media and mechanical reproduction—printing, microfilm, photo-offset, mimeograph, ditto, blueprinting, and so on—might vary, but the work of research requires reproducing because scholars everywhere need access to materials. Reproducing means access. Access enables the scholarly production of knowledge."[23] Near-print technologies enabled access to specialised or internal documents within specialised communities to meet their specialised needs and norms. Content trumped format. Copies and originals would be considered interchangeable and the content was seen as wholly separable from its container (a view Gitelman argues will be again altered by the photocopy). Mechanical reproduction was "typically framed as techniques of

distribution, of circulation," Gitleman writes. "Photocopying shared this same logic, but it was also used as a technique of preservation, an embrace of plenitude and redundancy."[24]

New documentary techniques that developed around these not-quite-print technologies of reproduction altered ideas about access and archiving among scholars. Although scholars of the 1970s and 1980s continued to distinguish between print and type, the typescript document could also indicate significance and value to the group. Informal publications be they typescript transcript or mimeographed newsletters are sometimes referred to as in-house, a name that highlights the nature of these documents as local or inside. To create a typescript could indicate that something was a work in progress but it could also indicate value to the group and potentially take it beyond the group. To create an internal document like a transcript rather than a public one like a published paper creates boundaries around a group but also enables access. Such documents 'feel' in progress, less stable and subject to change—The transcript brings one into the discussion even if one was not in the room.

The transcription of Kripke's lectures by fellow scholars and students marked these lectures as important to their group and their discipline and offer an example of peer production and scholarly cooperation prior to the advent of practices we associate with digital technologies. While recording and transcribing bolstered and celebrated the place of the oral, limited access was a problem to be solved and format shifting offered a solution. The creation of these transcripts would provide Kripke with space to continue to work on ideas (by thinking and talking) as well as an archive to write from; this archive of transcripts also enabled his ideas to circulate outside the lecture hall prior to or instead of formal publication. The citation of these unpublished lectures prior to publication suggests that the scholarly community valued and viewed oral discourse as an accepted mode of scholarly activity and an important knowledge technique. The status of these documents as transcript also had a social meaning—it created porous boundaries between inside and outside the community. Ideas about what counted as the scholarly record was changing too. Transcripts were inside the world of ideas but outside institutional publishing; access to such transcripts suggested one was a part of the debate

and part of the community. It also enabled scholars to broaden that community with a push of a button on the photocopier.

Photocopies as living documents

The private circulation of Kripke's work was dependent on his *szamizdat*, that is the community of scholars, and their use of everyday media reproduction technologies and techniques. Since at least the 1970s, photocopied transcripts (as well as photocopies of out-of-print work) circulated Kripke's ideas around the globe through self-organising networks of philosophers. These photocopies were 'living' documents, in the sense that they were kept in play by the scholars who produced them and passed them. Photocopy was at once practice, product, and communicative technique. The photocopier was also a key technology and technique in the production and reproduction of the *szamizdat* itself—we might consider Kripke's *szamizdat* as a kind of proto-recursive public akin to the cooperative efforts of the free software movement and creative commons[25] in so far as the same reproduction techniques that produced copies of documents, reinforced, and perpetuated the community of interest around these texts. Photocopied transcripts of Kripke's talks and lectures, were common and an accepted vernacular format for the circulation of Kripke's ideas and considered worthy of collection in a scholar's personal archives and reproductions to pass on to peers. Photocopies of Kripke's unpublished work continue to be significant artifacts in the history of Kripke's thought, but the status of these documents as *photocopies* is usually overlooked. In this section I consider what we learn by focusing on the photocopy as a format and technique and consider possible social meanings of the photocopy in the context of the circulation of Kripke's work in the 1970s and 1980s.

The history of the photocopy and xerography as a technology for documentary reproduction is strongly associated with the history of the mid-century corporate office but the needs and desires of academics also played an important role in shaping our understanding the photocopy as a genre of document and as a cultural technique.[26] Staring in the 1960s universities

began installing copiers in their libraries; Following their popularity with students and scholars, copy shops popped up at the edge of university campuses ready to meet the growing demand. Cheap photocopies would become a ubiquitous part of academic life in the late 20th C: scholars incorporated them into their research process, saved them in their personal archives, made and shared them with colleagues and students and compiled and assigned them to their classes as teaching material.

All documents, Lisa Gitelman theorises in *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* are "epistemic objects", defined by the "know-show" function: that is "the kind of knowing that is all wrapped up with showing and showing wrapped up as knowing."[27] The advent of mid-century photocopier, Gitleman argues, expanded the genre of document in ways its inventors never imagined. "An engineer names Chester Carlson invented xerographic reproduction, one might say, and the corporation that helped develop his ideas made the Xerox machines, but the photocopy itself was invented by users and on the fly," writes Gitelman.[28] Academic users would use the photocopier to produce texts that did not yet exist, file them away for future use and circulate them among colleagues and students for discussion and comment.

If recording prompted overhearing, then the photocopier was a technology that could see what was not yet there, turning almost anything into a legible document, be it typescript, image or even (ahem) bodyparts. To become a document was to become readable and reproducible. Legibility and reproducibility seemed to be on equal footing. "One of the things you did with photocopies was photocopy them," explains Gitelman.[29] The photocopy Gitelman argues, altered how copies were understood. No longer a version that was seen as "lessor than" its original, copying could signify value—what was worth paying attention to was worth copying. "A feeling that nothing can be of importance unless it is copied, or is a copy itself."[30] It may seem painfully obvious but Kripke's *szamizdat* photocopied transcripts of Kripke's work because they valued them and deemed worthy of attention, preservation and access. It is also in this context that philosophers would engage with Kripke's unpublished work, in some sense treating the documents produced by the szamizdat as a de facto peer review.

The advent of the photocopy promoted a new culture of archiving, creating a drive for the development of personalised archives, alongside institutional ones. In the context of modern bureaucracy, Gitelman explains, to copy was to file. For scholars, this culture of producing one's own archives in parallel with institutional efforts was a significant change in scholarly practice. Writes Gitelman "Copying—as few scholars have admitted publicly—would become a surrogate for reading, displacing knowledge: you can read something and have it in mind, or you can Xerox something and have it at hand."[31] Rather than return to the library to inspect the original, you could take a copy with you to (potentially) read later. This impulse would become a new bureaucratic norm—to make a copy was to keep a copy, was to build your own personal archive of attention and interest alongside the institutional collections. It is in this context of archives of abundance and redundancy that Kripke's scholarly *samizdat* worked.

I propose we consider photocopied transcripts of Kripke's lectures as "living documents".[32] Although this concept is usually reserved for documents that are collectively written or collaboratively protected and edited, it is also a useful way of thinking about reproduction and the social circulation of these documents. This distributed archive of photocopies is living in the sense that they are kept in circulation through their reproduction and use and that reproduction was wholly the responsibility of the community of scholars that was interested in them. Living documents are both artifacts and practices, at once material and social. Simultaneously, the production and reproduction of these documents, produced and reproduced the *szamizdat* as a proto-recursive public, and promoted and protected to the oral as knowledge technique in philosophy. Copying signified that this material was important, and copying could expand its audiences and welcome interlocutors and future copiers. To be given a copy of a Kripke paper was to be welcomed into the debate. Keeping these documents in circulation was an alternative mode of peer review. The boundary between inside the group and outside was porous and unguarded. Xerography was associated with openness and transparency, explains Gitleman, "a way of making, not always or only owning or taking."[33] Kripke's *szamizdat* was a remarkable achievement of scholarly cooperation and networking but it was in no way perfect one. Social circulation may celebrate participation as a virtue, but private circulation is not open access—there was no guarantee that everyone could access these papers and no doubt the less connected you were the more difficult it was to access this work. Current

efforts to digitise the materials and publish key papers from this era will rectify such issues, and welcome a new generation of scholars into the discussion.

Conclusion

Saul Kripke's scholarship deserves a special place in the history of the book and the history of ideas—long acknowledged as revolutionary thinker in metaphysics, philosophy of language and modal logic, Kripke ideas have often appeared to have a life force all their own and this chapter in the history of philosophy is often recounted as a story of an individual genius and irrepressible ideas. This may be so but this paper draws attention not to the ideas themselves or the biographical details of this towering figure (as fascinating as both are) but instead focuses on how they came to be known. I have focused on the mediation of Kripke's ideas, looking closely at media artefacts and techniques, to draw attention to the everyday media technologies and formats behind the informal academic publications and publication practices that enabled the private circulation of Kripke's lectures, underpin his published work and produced a mystique that appealed to philosophers. Tape recording, typescript, and photocopies more than pen and paper, underpin the formal publication of Kripke's ground-breaking work *Naming and Necessity* and tape, typescript and photocopies also created an alternative publication strategy and proto-recursive public around Kripke's work, carving out and preserving an ongoing space for oral discourse, an anomaly or even resistance to the publish or perish culture that was dawning.

The de facto "*szamizdat*" that recorded, transcribed, copied, and circulated Kripke's frequent talks, lectures and seminars would also serve as an informal global network connecting scholars in metaphysics from around the world. This network of scholars has an important history to recount but identifying and speaking with participants was beyond the scope of this essay. Instead, I have followed the lead of scholars in earlier edition of Amodern that sought to study the uses of media by extending media archaeology's object-oriented focus to unearth and focus instead on techniques, habits, and forms of thought.[34] I have considered the intermedial nature of Kripke's work in the context of recent discussion on media and book history, using the stories of transmission, informal and formal publication found in Kripke's acknowledgments and footnotes and overheard from scholars in the field to

consider the significance of reproduction as a knowledge technique in the pre-broadband internet era. In doing so I echo Lisa Gitelman's observation that "Documentary reproduction is a labor and a knowledge practice both dynamic and diverse[35]" and glean lessons about the poetics of circulation from Kripke's history and consider what we might learn by thinking about media use from the vantage point of distribution tools and techniques. Format shifting (e.g. live speech to tape, tape to typescript, typescript to photocopy, photocopy to printed publication) has material consequences as well as rhetorical weight—each shift or transformation offers new affordances, new audiences, and new context for the content that it contains. Book historians have long taken interest in understanding of the oral in the history of the book—Kripke's *szamizdat* suggests that the place of the aural in the history of the book is also deserving of attention. Cheap, accessible, and portable sound recording technologies and formats such as cassettes and micro-cassettes made the capture and later transcription of Kripke's lectures and seminars possible. *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke's most important work, was captured not written, a technique worth reconsidering in our own era of ubiquitous documentation and publication metrics. While Kripke is not the first thinker whose published work is largely based on his spoken word and owes a great debt to the students and colleagues who preserved his work, his story is one in which everyday reproduction technologies played a starring role.

The speed and ease of reproduction and circulation in our era of digital technologies and networks can obscure the techniques that our infrastructure borrowed, built upon, and altered; As I have written elsewhere, copying is an essential concept in digital networks but it is not unique to the digital culture—as such, the study of pre-digital and early digital copying practices and discussions of copying is of great interest to media scholars. In Kripke's *szamizdat* we can glimpse another kind of peer-to-peer network at work and we can also see how a documentary impulse can reinforce values, shape actions and create artifacts in a research community. If we want to understand how knowledge (and indeed genius) was produced and reproduced, considering the poetics of circulation, paying attention to the material and social dimensions reproduction, is worthwhile. At this moment, while the work of Kripke's *szamizdat* is being collected and digitised by his official archive, ready for new generations of scholars to encounter and work with, it is worth

considering the techniques and artifacts that were so valued by all who produced and reproduced them.

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-- Saul Kripke died on September 15, 2022 and the manuscript has been revised to reflect his passing

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