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Compliant Mechanisms Database
Documentation
The Compliant Mechanisms Database is intended to be an online database for users to search and discover compliant mechanisms, their properties, and real-world applications. I chose the Doe Library because it provides a similar function – a place for people to search and discover information. It also is similar in that the books in the library are indexed and categorized like this database will need to be.

"Compliant mechanisms" can be defined as “flexible mechanisms that transfer an input force or displacement to another point through elastic body deformation” (Wikipedia). A simple example of a compliant mechanism is a folded or bent sheet of paper. Since the Compliant Mechanisms Database will be not just a database, but a database about these types of mechanisms, I felt it was appropriate to also include a study of a compliant mechanism.

A book is a combination of the database nature of the library and the flexible material nature of the bent paper. It also focuses more closely on the human interaction aspect of the database, as it is an object with which users must interact to gain the information contained inside.
Users

Users in the Doe library, rather than searching or discovering information from the books, are mostly studying on their laptops or using the materials they brought in. I observed this behavior in the hallways, stacks, and reading rooms. Users were quiet and appeared concentrated on their work. Their proxemics (introverted body language, distributed seating, placement of personal items etc.) suggested a territoriality about their space and a desire for isolation.

Bent Paper

Manipulating the paper to create the bent paper object involved rapid experimentation and reversible prototyping. Edges were lifted and pressed against the paper’s surface, and then the object was rotated and inspected from a variety of angles to observe the effect.

Book

Interactions took place at multiple scales. Browsing the book involved flipping pages rapidly with the thumb. Moving through pages individually required flipping pages with the fingertips, and finding more detailed information at the page level used the eyes to scan, read, and study the text, images, and layout.
Senses

Sight

Cluttered

Colorful

Repetitious

Linear

Muted
Senses

Sight

Clean

Simple

White

Graceful
Senses

Smell
Dusty
Old
Paper
Smell
Model Making
Papery
Dusty
Ink
Senses
Scraping Papery Sound Senses
The 17th century appeared as a time bound within a long reign, from century to century; this dogmatic age was not going to be swept away by a new age of revolution.

The French Revolution, with its ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity, brought about profound changes in society and politics. The revolutionaries sought to eliminate feudalism, the rule of the monarchy, and to establish a new order based on the principles of the Enlightenment. The French Revolution had a profound impact on Europe and the world, leading to wars, political upheavals, and social transformations.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the scientific revolution and the Industrial Revolution were taking place, changing the world in ways that were hard to predict. The 19th century was a time of great progress and change, with advancements in technology, science, and culture.

The 20th century was marked by two world wars, the Great Depression, and the rise of the United States as a world power. The 21st century is characterized by globalization, information technology, and climate change, bringing with it both opportunities and challenges.

The Tocqueville Lecture 1995, delivered by Elisabeth Prescott & Kimiko Ryokai, explores the themes of taste and dry, discussing the role of aesthetics and sensibility in shaping our perceptions and experiences. The lecturers delve into the history of aesthetics, examining how different cultures and periods have understood and interpreted beauty, and how these ideas have evolved over time.

The lecture also examines the relationship between aesthetics and dryness, exploring how these concepts have been understood in different contexts and how they have influenced artistic and cultural practices. The lecturers consider the implications of these ideas for contemporary art and society, offering insights into how we might engage with these concepts in the present day.
Senses

Taste

Dry
Dry Chemicals Paper
Senses

Touch

Dry

Textured

Smooth

Cold

Flipping

Heavy
Senses

Touch

Dry

Textured

Smooth

Bendable

Springy
Senses

Touch
Smooth
Pliable
Bending
Flexible
Edges
Adjectives

Reverential
Labyrinthine
Solemn

Playful
Pure
Subtle

Inquisitive
Delight
Tactile

Doe Library
Bent Paper
Book
The library’s architecture is dominated materially by stone, metal, marble, and wood (in some cases, the floor is a linoleum wood imitation). Although the materials changed from room to room, these basic colors remained in the color palette. I chose not to include the colors of the books, since the books are more artifacts of the objects that contain information, and in the case of the Compliant Machines Database, the books would be replaced by a representation of the compliant mechanism itself (i.e. bent or folded paper-like model). The paper, however, I did choose to include because of its similarity the bent paper object.
The bent paper's colors were all the same (a single sheet of white paper), but the shape of it is evident only through the play of light and shadow on its surface and the surface its rests on. The colors here, then represent the tones of the paper responding to different lighting conditions – the shadow of the paper on the surface it rests on, the shaded part of the paper facing away from the light, the neutral tone of the paper, and the light part of the paper lit more directly by the light.
The essence of the book is the paper and the text. Images may change from book to book, but for this palette, I chose the wood color that is used prevalently in this book on architectural model making because it enhances the tactile quality of the book. I also chose the shadows of the objects depicted in the book because that 3D quality of the images gives the book a life beyond its 2D pages.