

# JOSHUA GLENN

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## SUMMARY

I am an accomplished commercial semiotician, editor, author, and publisher. A key area of research and analysis for me, for over a decade now, has been around the question of what (and how) objects mean what they mean. I am interested in building on my experience as a lecturer to explore teaching.

## EDUCATION

<b>Master of Arts in Teaching</b>	<b>1993</b>
Boston University	
<b>BA in Comparative Religion (Semiotics)</b>	<b>1991</b>
Williams College	

## EXPERIENCE

### Lecturing & Public Presentations

<b>Lecturing (selected)</b>	<b>2012–present</b>
● RISD: Tom Weis’s “Objects and Exhibitions” studio	2023 (March)
● Paier: Andreina Sosa’s “Intro to Visual Semiotics” class	2023 (February)
● Harvard: Stephanie Burt’s “Science Fiction” class	2022 (September)
● MassArt: Laura Woolpert’s “Market Insights” seminar	2020 (November)
● Fashion Institute of Technology: J.P. Kuehlwein’s “Beauty” seminar	2020 (November)
● MIT: Marcelo Coelho’s “Objects and Interaction” studio	2020 (October)
● Harvard: David Edward’s “Creating Things That Matter” studio	2018 (February)
● NuVu: I coached a trimester’s “MBTA Map Redesign” studio	2014 (March–May)
● MIT: Flourish Klink’s “Intro to Comparative Media Studies” class	2012 (September)

<b>Semiofest Sessions (selected)</b>	<b>2021–present</b>
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I co-founded, organize, and moderate these monthly online learning sessions for global semiotics professionals. I’ve presented on the following topics:

● “Reading Culture: New Methods” — on a schema I’ve developed	2023 (July)
● “Thinking with Objects” — on the semiotics of significant objects	2021 (November)
● “Covid Codes” — I led a global study of Covid-era communications	2021 (June)

<b>Conferences, Podcasts, Documentaries (selected)</b>	<b>2010–present</b>
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● ReaderCon: Moderated three panels on science fiction	2023 (July)
● <i>Mickey: The Story of a Mouse</i> documentary — interviewed	2022 (November)
● Slate’s “Working” podcast (about creative collaboration)	2022 (August)

- *Objects* documentary — interviewed 2020 (November)
- Guest host (3x) of Mark Frauenfelder’s “Cool Tools” podcast 2013–2020 (June)
- Association of Writing Programs: Panelist, “Finding Time to Create” 2014 (March)
- SXSW Interactive: Moderated “Secrets of DIY Promotion” panel 2012 (February)
- MITX’s FutureM: “Semiotics of UX Design” panel 2012 (October)
- SXSW Interactive: Co-moderated “Indirect Collaboration” panel 2010 (January)

## **Semiotic Analysis**

### **Semiovox, LLC**

**2014–present**

I’m co-founder and principal of this pioneering commercial semiotics consultancy. Many of our projects are global in scope. Recent clients include: The Coca-Cola Company, Ubisoft, Tabasco, Colgate, Prudential, TIAA-CREF.

### **King Mixer, LLC**

**1998–2014**

Prior to Semiovox, I helped to introduce commercial semiotics to the United States. I conducted 100+ semiotic audits on a freelance basis — for global agencies including Space Doctors, Added Value, Havas, and others.

## **Editor & Staff Writer**

### **Semiovox.com**

**2014–present**

I’m publisher and editor of our semiotic consultancy’s eponymous website, which features contributions from semioticians from around the world.

### **HiLobrow.com**

**2009–present**

I’m publisher and editor of this “high-lowbrow” website featuring daily content from writers and artists such as Lucy Sante, Jonathan Lethem, Douglas Wolk, Erik Davis, James Parker, Carl Wilson, and Annie Nocenti.

### **The Boston Globe**

**2002–2008**

I was part of the editorial start-up team that created the weekly IDEAS section in 2002, and worked for IDEAS until 2006. In 2007, I transferred to the Living Arts section as the New Media Editor, responsible for Web 2.0 initiatives. I wrote a weekly column for IDEAS, “The Examined Life” (2002–2006); from 2006–2008, I wrote “Brainiac,” an IDEAS blog — and also a print column.

### **Hermeneut**

**1992–2001**

I published and edited this much-admired independent “high-lowbrow” periodical, which *Wired* magazine described as follows: “A zine that gives voice to indie intellectual thought, *Hermeneut* is a scholarly journal minus the university, a sounding board for thinking folk who operate outside the ivory tower.” The circulation of the final issue (#16, 208 pp.) was 10,000.

**Tripod, Inc.** 1996–1998

I was hired as Editorial Director, and promoted to Co-Producer of this start-up website and web hosting service — part of the first wave of user-generated content. I coordinated the efforts of editors, designers, and programmers.

**Utne Reader** 1994–1996

I was hired as Editorial Assistant, and promoted to Associate Editor of this national magazine — a digest of the alternative press.

## Object Studies

**Project:Object** 2017–present

Rob Walker and I have co-edited multiple “volumes” of nonfiction narratives — contributed by an all-star cast of writers, thinkers, and artists — on such themes as Political Objects and Talismanic Objects. In 2022, Hat & Beard Press published *Lost Objects*, a collection of stories and artwork from this project. I contributed an appendix analyzing the semiotic typology of these objects.

**Significant Objects** 2009–2012

Rob Walker and I conducted an economic-literary-anthropological experiment via which we asked 100 writers to invent stories about discarded objects... which we then auctioned off via eBay. In 2012, Fantagraphics published *Significant Objects*, a collection of stories and photographs from the project.

**Taking Things Seriously** 2006–2007

Carol Hayes and I asked 75 interesting people to tell true stories about an insignificant object they owned whose significance was surprisingly deep. *Princeton Architectural Press* published our eponymous collection of stories and photographs. I wrote the book’s analytical introduction.

## Other Publishing Projects

**Radium Age series (selected)** 2022–present

I’m founding editor of this new MIT Press series of reissued “proto-sf” novels and stories published from 1900–1935, an era that I named the sf genre’s Radium Age. I research and choose titles to publish, recruit scholars to write new introductions, and edit the introductions. All covers illustrated by Seth.

- *More Voices from the Radium Age* — I’m editor of this collection 2023 (August)
- Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Lost World* — I contributed an Afterword 2023 (February)
- H.G. Wells’s *The World Set Free* — I contributed an Afterword 2022 (May)
- *Voices from the Radium Age* — I’m editor of this collection 2022 (March)

## Glossaries

2008–present

I'm the author of a series of glossaries — each of which examines cultural assumptions. I research and write the actual glossaries; the philosopher Mark Kingwell contributes introductions. The books are illustrated by Seth.

- *The Adventurer's Glossary* (McGill-Queen's University Press) 2021 (September)
- *The Wage Slave's Glossary* (Biblioasis) 2011 (September)
- *The Idler's Glossary* (Biblioasis) 2008 (October)

## Unbored books and activity kits (selected)

2012–2020

With coauthor Elizabeth Foy Larsen and designer Tony Leone, I created three “maker” family activity guides; to date, the books have sold over 100,000 copies. (“Fighting the war against techno-passivity, *Unbored* reads like an old-fashioned child's activity book for a modern Gen-X parented family.” — *New York Times*.) We extended the brand into several award-winning family activity kits produced by the “brainy toy and game” company Mindware.

- *Unbored Road Trip* activity kit (MindWare) 2020 (November)
- *Unbored Time Capsule* activity kit (MindWare) 2017 (November)
- *Unbored Disguises* activity kit (MindWare) 2015 (November)
- *Unbored Games* (Bloomsbury) 2015 (October)
- *Unbored Adventure* (Bloomsbury) 2014 (October)
- *Unbored: The Essential Field Guide to Serious Fun* (Bloomsbury) 2012 (October)

## Freelance Writing

### Writing (selected)

1992–present

In addition to my staff writing for the *Boston Globe*, HiLobrow.com, Semiovox.com, *Utne Reader*, etc., I have published in a wide variety of periodicals. Note that my career as a freelance writer reached its acme in the late '90s and early '00s, a period not reflected in the examples given below.

- “The Vision of Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain” — for *MIT Press Reader* 2022 (March)
- “5 Thrilling Adventure Terms” — for *Writer's Digest* 2021 (September)
- “Sincerity” — for the literary journal *Post Road* 2020 (December)
- “To Roam His Dominion” — for *Architecture Boston* 2020 (April)
- “Fairy Tale of New York” — for PrimerStories.com 2016 (January)
- “Personality Crisis!” — for ESOMAR's *Research World Connect* 2014 (October)
- “Clean Hip Hop” and other parenting posts — for Slate.com 2011–2013
- “The Radium Age” — for the science journal *Nature* 2012 (September)
- “War & Peace Games” — for the arts journal *Cabinet* 2012 (September)
- “The Argonaut Folly” — for the intellectual journal *n+1* 2007 (February)