ETERNAL RETURN

Donald Crafton – My name is Donald Crafton, I'm a professor at the University of Notre Dame, and my pitch is concerning the art of animation cinema, and I thought I would just mention that like so many of the people interviewed in *Histoires courtes*, my beginning was at a very early age, somewhat accidental, and it actually began with my rather poor study of the French language, when I was in school I had a big thick French text to work, and instead of paying attention in class and doing my exercises, I discovered that one could use an eraser and erase a part of the image in the photographs, and then redraw them and so I had King Kong climbing the Eiffel Tower for example, and then I moved on to better things, I realized that you could draw a stick figure in the margin of the book and flip it. And my French text was the biggest book I had, so that was the best one for making these films and so, I easily filled every page of the book on the edge and, but, there were still a few more days of school left, so, I made the drawings that I had finished more elaborate, I started to give them three-dimensionality and having them move in space and that sort of thing, and so, this was the beginning of my career in animation.

Now, flash forward, fifty years, and I'm teaching students, the history and aesthetics and the critical concepts of animation cinema, and a special course, a cool talk by someone who actually does animation films, so they learn the critical ideas of animation as well as making their own animated film project and computer graphics, so at the end of the semester, they have a one minute animated film for their project, but for the first week of class, we had flipbooks, so each of the students had a book, a Postit book, and the assignment was to make an animated drawing in these Postit notes, and so that they could flip through, and bring in to class, so I feel as though my career has come full circle from flipbook in the French book to teaching students how to make flipbooks. Voilà!

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