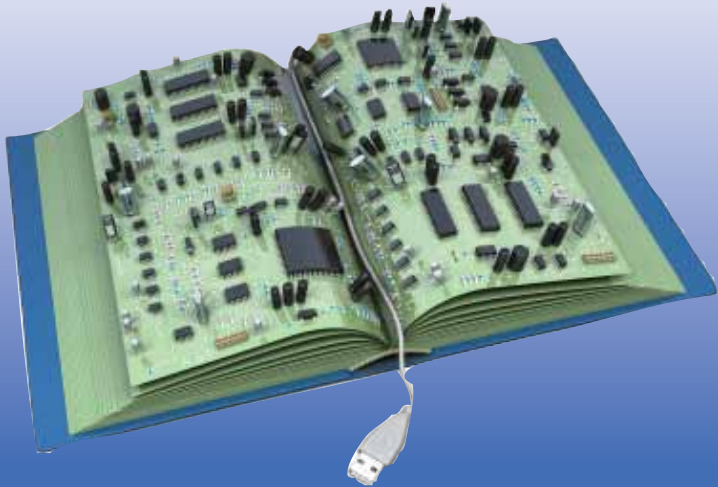


Author's BAZAAR ONLINE

April 2011 ■ No.5



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DOWNLOAD A BOOK

By Dean Rea, editor

This month we take a look of how the electronic book influences the world in which we live, including reading habits, libraries and bookstores.

Helen Hollyer, who owns several thousand volumes in her personal library, explains why she acquired and uses an iPad.

Susan Petrone, a published author, describes how Kindle changed her reading habits.

Sheryl Nelms, a published poet, reminds us of the traditional role of a librarian who may prefer working in the stacks rather than loaning e-books.

Amazon says its Kindle bookstore now offers more than 630,000 books plus 1.8 million free, out-of-copyright titles.

Currently, we hear reports that e-books are outselling their pulp-and-ink brethren. However, the American Publishing Association estimated that e-books represented only 8.5 percent of sales as of mid-2010.

Meanwhile, Borders is closing nearly 200 of its 647 stores and has cut thousands of jobs after reportedly failing to anticipate the impact of the

e-book market on sales and profits.

If you are an author, let us know how this new technology is influencing your world.



SUCCUMBING
TO THE
DARK SIDE

By Helen Hollyer

Settling into my butterscotch-brown leather recliner and propping up my feet on its matching hassock, I survey the bookshelves lining my library room's walls as my Doberman companion Loki circles before curling up on the rug with a deep sigh of pleasure.

While listening to the ravishingly melancholy notes of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 21's andante movement playing softly in the background, I consider the choices available to me among the thousands of volumes I've accumulated over the years.

Do I want to page through books illustrating Chinese and Japanese art for images to inspire me in designing a gate to deter plant-devouring deer from decimating my recently planted landscaping?

No, that sounds like too much effort, and I'm in the mood to relax after a busy day editing *The Creswell Chronicle*, a weekly community newspaper.

I open my iPad's black leather cover, press the power switch, select the iBook application, touch the "store" key, type in "Dana Stabenow" and hit "search."

A few seconds later the title of the just published book



in Stabenow’s “Kate Shugak” mystery series comes up. I hit the “buy” key. In less than a minute, “Though Not Dead” has downloaded, and I’m eagerly perusing the opening paragraph. Talk about instant gratification!

An hour later, I retire to my bedroom. I clamber into my bed, which has been pre-warmed by the electric mattress pad, still clutching my electronic reader, turn off the lights and continue perusing the iPad’s backlit screen.

I still feel guilty about my defection, incomplete as it is, to an electronic device. I’m a confirmed bibliophile and treasure printed books for their aesthetic and sensory

qualities that are so conspicuously lacking in such instruments. How did I arrive at this point?

A conflicted woman, I eagerly adopt some technological advances even as I refuse adamantly to employ others that have been in common use for decades.

An example of internal inconsistency is that I don't own a television but have owned so many computers that I've lost count of the generations of hardware and software I've utilized.

I can cite several reasons for choosing not to possess a television, but prominent among them is my love of books.

My tastes include fiction and nonfiction, and I generally have at least half a dozen volumes stashed on my bedside table, in my car, at my office and anywhere else where I might be able to seize a few enjoyable moments for their perusal. I can be found absorbed in learning about Chinese archaeology, forestry for the small woodland owner and Art Nouveau glass.

I also savor Ojibwa lore and the mystique of the Minnesota woods as depicted by the latest William Kent Kreuger novel and medical practices and living conditions 2,000 years ago in Britain on the fringes of the Roman Empire in one of Ruth Downie's historical mysteries.

However, after decades of pleasurable reading, I've

begun donating hundreds of the approximately 7,000 volumes in my personal library to the Creswell Library because I've been forced to modify the form of material I peruse.

My aging eyesight caused me to cease reading mass paperbacks, whose small, densely packed type eventually made it impossible to decipher their words, and the reflective glare of the glossy paper on which many periodicals are printed has had a similar result.

About ten years ago I began replacing my favorite paperbacks with their trade edition or hardcover versions, which are not only much easier to read but also infinitely more aesthetically pleasing, visually and tactilely.

Even so, many volumes are increasingly difficult for me to read. Perhaps it's the cost of paper and ink that inspires publishers to cram more and more, smaller and smaller and fainter and fainter, words on each page.

Whatever the reason for books' decreasing legibility, there are few that I can enjoy in reduced lighting conditions, i.e., while reading in bed, which I consider to be one of the essential pleasures of life.

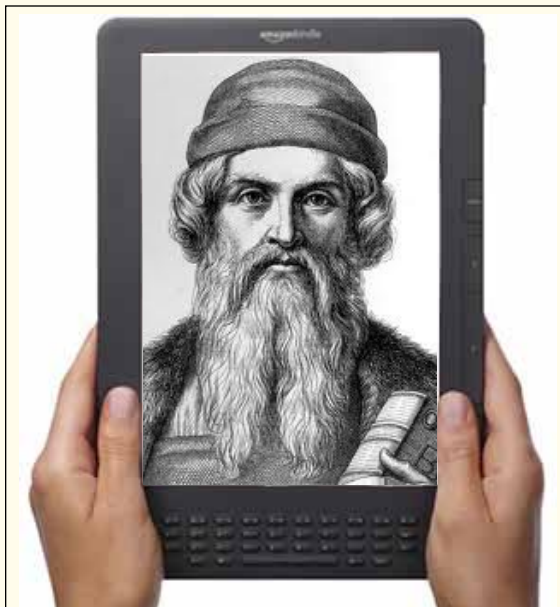
Recently, while accompanying Loki to his well-dog checkup, I was chatting with his veterinarian, a longtime friend who shares my book obsession, when he revealed

his dark secret: He had begun reading newspapers and books on a Kindle.

“I’ve gone over to the Dark Side,” he confessed.

My reaction was immediate and negative.

“How could you?” I blurted. “Electronic readers are perversions of the written word. Guttenberg would be



turning over in his grave.”

“Helen,” he said, “just think of all the trees I’m saving, and I can see what I’m reading clearly by increasing the font size and contrast.”

“You can make print more legible on an electronic

reader?” I queried incredulously.

“Yes,” he said, and there’s more material available all the time.” Hmmm, this was something I needed to investigate further.

If I did acquire an electronic reader, what version

would I choose? I would want one that had access to all the reading material offered online, not just that from a single provider, and I prefer Apple products to those using Microsoft software.

Although I had been skeptical about the iPad when it was introduced – after all, I already own a state-of-the-art desktop iMac and the latest and greatest Mac PowerBook laptop, so why would I need a tablet computer?

My new iPad came with a free book – a facsimile edition of Winnie the Pooh with E. H. Shepard’s charming original illustrations – and, get this, as I dragged my finger over the screen, the pages appeared to turn, just as they would in a print edition.

I was hooked.

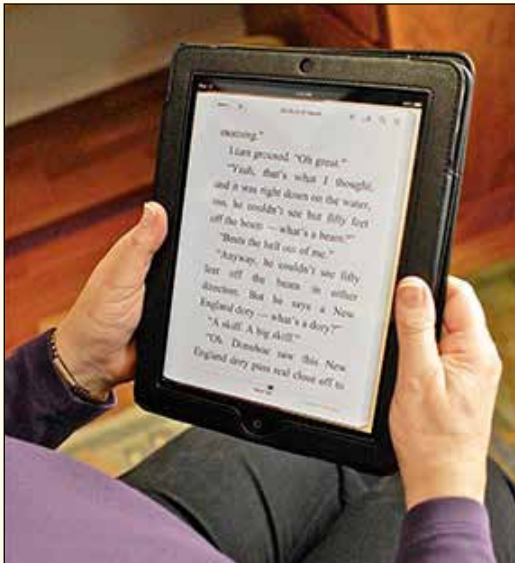
My iPad is about the size as a typical trade edition or hardcover book. I can read with any size type I choose while reclining in bed and without turning on a lamp. I can download books from Apple’s iBook store, Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble.com and the new Google store.

My biggest objection is that much of what is available is current bestsellers, few of which are of interest to me. However, every day there are more volumes available, and Google is making available hundreds of thousands of previously published works although their software applica-

tion lacks elegance.

Another benefit is that I can hold the iPad far enough from my face that, should I fall asleep, it doesn't fall against my face as my fingers relax. I know from experience that a heavy book can smash my nose in such a circumstance.

I still love my printed books and continue to purchase signed first editions of my favorite authors, but I'm a delighted electronic book convert.



IT'S THE story STUPID

By Susan Petrone



My husband gave me a Kindle for Christmas in the (some might say “foolish”) hope that I will eventually leave fewer piles of books lying about the house. Take a second to giggle, oh ye lovers of bound paper and paste. I laughed too. I’m far too addicted to physical books to ever give them up completely.

That being said, the idea of giving up what e-book acolytes call DTBs (Dead Tree Books) and keeping my entire library in my Kindle is intriguing. I like the idea of being a literary turtle

who can carry her biblio-home with her wherever she goes. (And think of the space I'd save. We could buy a smaller house.)

Reading on a Kindle or other electronic reader is a lot like reading a regular book. One still sits and decodes letters and allows oneself to be drawn into a story. That essential experience remains the same and that, at least for me, is the reason one reads in the first place. Just as you may have a preference for paperback over hardcover or trade paper over mass market paperback, an e-reader gives the avid reader another option, a different something to hold in one's hands.

One amusing aspect of the Kindle is that there are no page numbers.* There are location numbers on each screen, but they are essentially meaningless. The number to the extreme right is the electronic location total of the book (i.e., the end), and the number on the left gives the electronic location of where you are in the book. When four-digit numbers start appearing in books that I know have only 300 pages, I start to ignore them.

More useful is the tiny slider on the bottom of the

* I've read where Amazon is going to start including page numbers in Kindle books, but I don't know when that will happen. None of mine have page numbers at this point.

screen that tells you what percentage of the text you've read, essentially how far you've journeyed through the story.

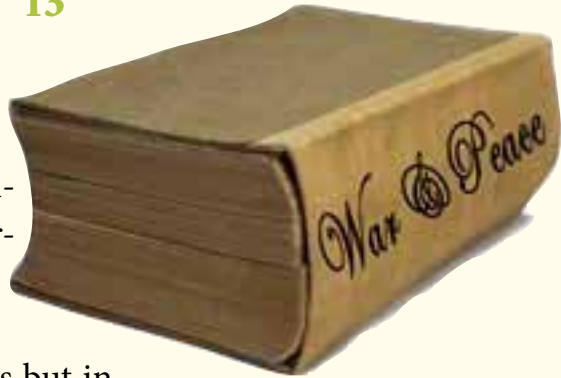
(Think of the novel as a

trip measured not in miles but in

moments and experiences.) However, I just started rereading "War and Peace" (no seriously, I am.) And if you asked where I was in my reading, I'd tell you that I'm in the quiet scene between Pierre and Prince Andrei that immediately follows the opening party scene where many of the main characters are introduced. I wouldn't say I'm on page such and such, and I wouldn't say I'm 5 percent through it (although I am).

There's an enjoyable sense of flying by the seat of your pants when you read without page numbers. You don't get the physical sense of looking at the rest of the book and saying, "I have this much more to go." Instead, you just read, immersing yourself in the story without thinking about how much you've read or how much more you have to read.

After a while, it begins to dawn on you that page numbers are an arbitrary means of marking one's place in a



book. Any printer knows that if you set a book in 10-point Garamond, it will end up using fewer pages than something set in 14-point Century Schoolbook. The Kindle (and I would assume any e-reader) allows you to reset the point size as large or small as you wish. This feature is not only a big help if you've misplaced your reading glasses, but it really does make the idea of page numbers obsolete. You are reminded that you're no longer reading a book, you're reading a story.

In some ways, it makes me look at the story I'm reading from the same angle as I do when I'm writing. When I'm writing a novel or even a short story, I don't think about what page I'm on. I think about what's happening to my characters and how they'll react. Reading an e-book seems to put me much more in the moment. I like that.

So while I know I'll never completely give up my DTBs, I love my Kindle. I love that it makes me step back and rethink my relationship to reading and writing. Without illustrations, without a cover to look at every time I pick up the book, without the familiar sensory aspects that typically connect me to a particular physical book, the only thing left is the writing, the story.

College Librarian

pale
paper skin

opaque
white hair

whisper voice

translucent blue
eyes

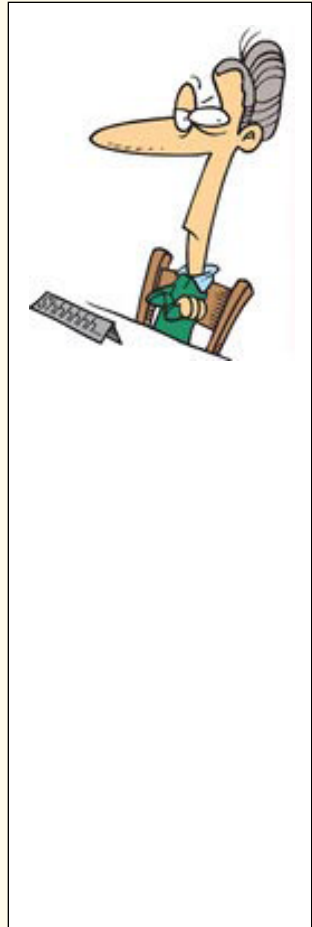
she's been back in the stacks
for years

holding a space
open

with thumb and
forefinger

ready to
slide
in

another
book





On the SNOW TRAIL

By Stephanie Trowbridge

Observing trees while snowshoeing in Rocky Mountain National Park is beautiful because of the different ways in which snow becomes a part of the tree. Whether it is blown on, falls on or simply surrounds a tree, it brings character to often leafless winter branches. The textures and the colors of the bark take a back seat to the softness and beauty of the white snow. Snow without tracks is called “virgin snow,” which is my favorite. I prefer to stay on a trail while snowshoeing as to not break the spell of the snow’s innocence, unless there is a picture to be taken. These photographs were taken with a Canon EOS 50D equipped with a 50 mm 1.8 fixed lens. **MORE →**



Authors



Helen Hollyer

She wrote about her experience with a puff adder snake during a study in Liberia, West Africa, for an earlier issue of *Author's Bazaar*. She now works as the publisher, editor, reporter, photographer and editorial writer for *The Creswell Chronicle*, a weekly newspaper in western Oregon. She enjoys taking walks on her 87-acre property with Loki, a Doberman. [Email Helen.](#)



Susan Petrone

Her short fiction has been published by Glimmer Train, Featherproof Books, Conclave and Muse. Her novel, "A Body at Rest," won a bronze medal for Best Regional Fiction in the 2010 Independent Publishers (IPPY) Book Awards. Susan lives in Cleveland, Ohio, with her husband, daughter and far too

many dogs. [Email Susan.](#)



Sheryl Nelms

This Marysville, Kan., native resides in Clyde, Texas. She graduated from South Dakota State University in Family Relations and Child Development. More than 5,000 of her articles, stories and poems have been published, including 14 individual collections of her poems. She is the fiction/nonfiction editor of *The Pen Woman* magazine, The National League of American Pen Women publication.

[Email Sheryl.](#)



Stephanie Trowbridge

She grew-up in Eugene, Ore., where she began her love for photography in middle school. After high school, at the age of 18, she lived and worked in Spain for seven months where she traded in her “heavy” camera for her first Canon EOS film. She now works in Denver as a nurse at The Children’s Hospital in the pediatric intensive care unit. In 2010 Stephanie

began shooting with her Canon EOS 50D SLR and started a photography business, Stephanie Trowbridge Photography, LLC. You can see Stephanie’s work on her [web site](#) or on Facebook (Stephanie Trowbridge Photography). [Email Stephanie](#).

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American Amateur Press Association, a nationwide non-profit hobby organization founded in 1936. A number of members print and publish hobby journals that are circulated monthly to more than 200 other members. You need not be a member to submit

manuscripts to *Author’s Bazaar*, but if you are interested in learning more about this hobby group of writers, printers and publishers, check [this website](#).