E-Books: Poison, Medicine, or Nutrition

When Are E-Books the Books?
Kimberly Parker
ALA 2004 Annual Meeting
28 June 2004

Its varied scenes, its many hopes and fears ...
Thomas Cole. Thomas Cole's poetry. "Voyage of Life" 1972

An Ebook Is ...

- Individual
- Package
- Historical/Textual
- Reference Work
- Textbook

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Heav'n grant we be not poison to each other …

*John Dryden, Sir William Davenant, Thomas Shadwell, The Tempest. Act II Scene 2. 1674*

**The Metaphor**

- Poison
- Medicine
- Nutrition

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The swelling tide of time ...


**Timeline**

- 1991 Patrologia Latina
- 1994 PastMasters
- 1996 Oxford English Dictionary (1)
- 1997 English Prose Drama
- 1999 Early English Books Online (>100,000), Eighteenth Century Fiction, ENGnetBASE, STAT!Ref (9)
And cause and sequence, and the course of time ...

Sir Edwin Arnold. *The Light of Asia or The Great Renunciation* (Mahâbhânîshãhramana). Book the Eighth. 1879

**Timeline (cont.)**

- 2000 Early English Prose Fiction, etc.
- 2001 Books@Ovid (growing to 167), Classic Protestant Texts
- 2002 ACLS History E-book Project (500), Gutenberg-e, Knovel (174), Wright American Fiction

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What's to be done? Nor time nor tide will wait.

*Alfred Austin. The Golden Age. 1871*

**Timeline (cont.)**

- 2004 BioMedProtocols (373), CinemaGoing, Dekker Ebooks (55), Eighteenth Century Collections Online (>130,000), Safari Tech Books (125)

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It was the crave for intellectual food ...

**Digestible Characteristics**

- Reference works
- Major historical collections
- Textbooks (particularly in specific disciplines)
- Reports

Soliciting the sweet nutrition thence ...

**Digestible Characteristics (2)**

- Searchability
- Small Chunks
- Tables of Contents (don’t force complete downloads)
- Not too much authentication interruptions

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Meal Presentation

2004 Medical Campus Survey

Have you used in last 6 months?

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Staff Impacts

- Personal
- Job related
- Professional

Indigestions (Going Away)

- MARC records
- Intellectual property nerves
- Purchase and re-purchase
Medical Library Policy on Acquiring E-Books

- Experimental mode.
- E-versions of basic textbooks, reference works, and reserve materials should be purchased instead of or in addition to print.
- Liaisons are encouraged to experiment with e-books which do not fit these categories in their subject areas.
- Title-level usage statistics will be needed for these experiments to provide the basis for future decisions.

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… and 'twere seemlier now To stop, and yield …


Thank you

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