

**Date:** 2/22/12

**To:** Professor Tony Scarlatos

**From:** Caitlin Bartow

**Subject of my paper:** E-readers and E-publishing

**My Major and why writing about this topic will be beneficial to me:**

I am a theatre arts major, with a particular interest in dramaturgy. Dramaturgy is a field that has largely to do with textual analysis and research. E-reader and e-publishing technologies make theatrical texts as well as research documents more easily and quickly accessible. The field of e-publishing also opens up a market for playwrights, critics, and analysts alike to publish their materials more easily. Some may argue that this may lead to a decrease in the quality of materials published, but at the same time it may give truly amazing artists who have had a hard time publishing their work through major companies a chance to have their work read.

**My thesis:**

E-reader technology, though still relatively new and evolving, has a major impact on the way that we view the written word, not only physically but philosophically and financially.

**Approach to the subject of my paper:**

In my research paper, I would like to begin by taking a look at the origins of e-readers and e-books. This history goes back as far as the 1960's and 70's with endeavors like Project Gutenberg, an effort to create electronic copies of public-domain works that is still being curated and added to today. When addressing today's e-readers, I want to focus on three popular models: the e-ink models (the original Nook and Kindle), the tablet (the Kindle Fire, Nook Color, and Nook Tablet), and mobile applications (iOS and Android apps such as iBooks or Aldiko). I will investigate the technical details of each model, their benefits and downsides, and what impact each new incarnation has had on the e-reader industry. The last part of my paper will examine the areas that e-reader technology affects. These include, but are not limited to, personal use, libraries, education, and self-publishing. I will be taking a look at how these areas are currently being affected; I will not go so far as to extrapolate

this data and make any predictions about the future because that will be the subject of a second paper later in the semester.

**Intended audience:**

Audiences that may benefit from reading this paper include a wide variety of ages and occupations. They might be librarians or library board members wondering if they should start providing materials in e-book format, students wanting to lobby their university to provide an e-reader option for all textbooks, or even a freelance writer interested in self-publishing in an electronic format.

**Graphs or charts:**

At this time, I have not found any graphs or charts that I feel need including in this proposal.

**Documentation Style:**

For this paper, I will be using MLA format.

**Kinds of sources I will use and why they will benefit my paper:**

I hope to pull from a wide variety of sources. I will be using databases I have access to through the university to find scholarly journal articles about my topic. In addition, I want to look at popular technology and computing publications to see how e-readers are being portrayed to a more general audience. I want to try to arrange interviews with an author who has used e-reader self-publishing to explore how it has affected his or her reader base, public reception, and income. I would also like to talk to a student from Baylor School, a private school in Chattanooga, TN that has recently made the switch to digital textbooks. I already know this student; I only have to arrange the interview. Lastly, I will be using company websites such as amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com to find technical specifics on these machines.

**Tentative List of References:**

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