

## **Quick Poll on Ebooks Comments December 2006**

### **Why you have not used ebooks**

- Never had reason to so far
- Haven't had to research anything yet
- System complicated and gives mixed results
- Didn't know they were available
- Have found the site, but no relevant material
- Software doesn't work with my new Mac
- Software doesn't work with Intel Macs
- First time I've heard of them
- Not aware of it
- Don't know what they are
- Didn't know how
- Complicated to find what I am looking for

### **Which would you use, depends on:**

- Ability to print
- Whether or not the book is available in our library
- Ease of access and ability to find what I am looking for
- What time I would get the urge to do work
- Length (shorter ebook, longer print)
- How big the articles are
- Quality of the electronic format – searchability for example
- Length
- Collection accessed and the purpose of the research
- The nature of the book. A text in the humanities with a lengthy and sustained
- Read whole thing vs. search for specific piece of information
- If I can get a pdf
- Length of text
- Where I am; how much I need to read
- Where I am, what I am looking for, ebooks are great for quick reference
- Mood
- Content, I take the best information, no matter what format
- What I need it for
- Why I'm reading
- How easy it is to find electronic sources
- How many pages I need to use
- Subject

## **Additional comments**

I have used the online journals and these have been very helpful (qei undergrad)

Ebooks are difficult to use (particularly from ebrary) because it is impossible to print over 5 pages at a time (qei faculty)

Electronic sources usually get downloaded to a paper format, so format preferences are manageable (swgc, faculty)

I know, I know...I'm a dinosaur. But even Capt. Jean Luc Picard prefers to have his replicator manufacture a "real" book with real pages and leather binding when he chooses to read for relaxation. Seriously, the ejournals are great, but ebooks are more difficult to browse through, more difficult to use the index for quick searches, more difficult to jump back and forth, between chapters and pages for comparisons, more difficult to check material in the appendices, more frustrating to use when the books uses chapters endnotes instead of footnotes (very important to see the notes in my discipline), and so on (swgc faculty)

A great system, two of my textbooks are already online. A great savings for students. (swgc faculty)

The glaze over factor is considerable, however Gutenberg and Jstor searches, give a greater breadth of research options. I can always change the parts I need to a better font and print what I need. (swgc faculty)

You can only print 5 pages at a time. I understand the limit, but it needs to be set higher. (swgc staff)

What's an ebook? (swgc undergrad)

Although I prefer using real books, the ebooks provide many sources that I may not have access to otherwise. (swgc undergrad)

Good to have easy access when it works, but hard on the eyes. (swgc faculty)

The electronic books are ok but I find they are hard to search for and hard to find exactly what you are looking for. (swgc undergrad)

I am delighted at how many books we can access. I still like the feel of paper, it's also easier to work with. But I do like being able to search e-books too. A trade off. (swgc faculty)

The electronic articles are fantastic, however it is very hard to access a lot of them. It makes research very difficult. (swgc undergrad)

Yay! (swgc undergrad)

Electronic means that the information is available at all sites of Memorial and not just available at St. John's campus. (swgc undergrad)

I like them because of the convenience of finding them, but I do find that I read less due to lighting issues. (swgc faculty)

The system for electronic material for the most part is way too confusing and convoluted. For goodness sake, could I just search for something, only get a result if it is in the library's collection, and have a one click to the resource, not a "one click" get it at Memorial that brings you to another page that tells you what you want and then you go somewhere else and maybe it is there or something like that, way too many loop holes to jump through. Hello ppl just a one click to get exactly what I search for. (and a better/easier way to save results of searches that you found useful, so you can go into your past searches, see what you clicked and filter to the ones that you marked as useful) (swgc undergrad)

Computer screens hurt my eyes when I am reading from them for extended periods. I don't mind with shorter articles which I can download and print. The only time ebooks would make sense would be for someone who is not able to access the library regularly. The idea of ebooks playing a large role in the library worries me. Also, it assumes that people will want/have computer access. It is harder to conceptualize where the pages are in an ebook if you are doing research. Much much nicer to flip through a book. Don't get me wrong, I love computers but I don't think the library should be redirecting funds from regular book purchasing into ebooks. (swgc undergrad)

Am sold on electronic journals, and electronic versions of classic texts (particularly the online Quartos and Folio of Shakespeare), wish there were more actual monographs available electronically. In short, love Literature Online and the like, haven't found anything useful on eLibrary. (swgc faculty)

Nothing replaces the feel, texture, smell of a book. You can cuddle up with a good book but you can't do that with a laptop - definitely not the same experience. (qeii undergrad)

I hate reading large amounts of text on a monitor. I much prefer paper in my hands! (qeii staff)

I do not mind using electronic items for quick reference, however if I am to read several pages of text I would 9 times out of 10 choose to have the item in print as I find it physically easier to read over an extended period of time. In an effort to show that I am not saying this out of an 'age bias' I am in fact in my early twenties. (qeii staff)

It was very convenient to have access to E-Books while I was doing Distance Education courses, but I prefer print. (qeii faculty)

Electronic JOURNAL articles are great! The more the better! (qeii faculty)

I found that the plug-in used for the ebooks are not compatible with all browsers (ie. Firefox)... But overall, its so much easier to skim the book and just pressing ctrl+f helps alot to find stuff... Thanks for updating technology, but please please please do not ever phase out books! there's nothing better then the smell of an old book. :) (qeii undergrad)

I have found that the ebrary software is slow to use, and often creates a very annoying "flicker" on my screen. Scrolling through pages is incredibly slow, and I find it impossible to do any quality reading using e-books. (qeii faculty)

Articles on the web are fine, but no one wants an entire book; you can't use it like a paper copy. (qeii staff)

Ebooks make research easily accesible from any location. This is especially useful on days when you just can't make it into the library, ie if you are sick or something due to weather. (mi graduate)

I dislike that I need to go online and log into the library website in order to view an ebook. It would be much more convenient to be able to save the ebook as a PDF file, so I could access it from my hard drive whenever I need to, even if I don't have an internet connection (just like I'd do with a journal article). As well, it's much easier to navigate through a file in Acrobat than in that awful ebook viewer. (I do realize that making the PDF of an entire book available would present copyright issues, so I guess a restricted online ebook is better than nothing...) (qeii graduate)

Ebooks are a wonderful space saver, and I understand that's a concern for an academic library. As well, issues of more than one student accessing the materials are better solved with ebooks. However, as a student these materials can be hard to engage with, and reading on the pc difficult. (qeii graduate)

Printing restrictions imposed on some ebooks do not seem to recognize fair use. The inability to print even a single page, when photocopying of bound volumes is possible, is absurd. In the end though, I appreciate and ultimately agree that more, newer ebooks are preferable to fewer, older bound ones. (qeii staff)

ebooks is fantastic idea. (swgc undergrad)

hundreds of full text ebooks available for free on WWW - but not in catalogue or print only in catalogue. Why do I have search twice? (branch not specified, faculty)

easier, do not have to print so you can conserve paper!! (swgc undergrad)

It's great having ebooks especially because of the limitations of the SWGC library and because the ebooks seem to be catalogued faster. The drawbacks relate to problems with my home computer. As well, it is easier to print relevant pages or chapters from a hard copy. (swgc faculty)

I'm sure I will find ebooks useful once I get time to set up access at my house. (swgc undergrad)

Ebooks are great! (swgc undergrad)

I would like to be able to search the text and identify pertinent passages before I invest a great deal of time reading the entire argument the author is putting forward. I'd also like to be able to mark up the text electronically. (qeii faculty)

ebooks have advantages with being able to store lots of valuable information (oftentimes information that would otherwise not be available) in a small amount of physical space, but I like being able to take things wherever I want to read them...I don't like feeling chained to my computer. (qeii undergrad)

I prefer paper now but once become more familiar with e-books, I will probably prefer them in the future. (qeii undergrad)

E-journals are great - when you're dealing with a short to moderate article you can easily skim and print as needed. However, the E-books, particularly those on the E-brary reader, are cumbersome to load, especially off-campus. Plus, they are just too long. E-books are a great option to have as long as there is a paper copy in the library to back them up. The E-books are great for \*browsing\* during research, as one can quickly ascertain whether or not the book would be useful for one's project, but they should not be the only way we have access to needed/wanted texts. Online books simply can't compare to those in print, when it comes to reading in depth and doing meaningful research. (qeii undergrad)

In the end tangible books are best. They are often more convenient for those who do not own a laptop computer. For many people they are easier to read as well. However, in the context of a library where one is not able to highlight or write notes in the book, the ebook program is ideal. It also alleviates the problems of overdue books, loss or theft, and several people needing the same book at the same time. It also alleviates inconvenience and anxiety over working within the operating hours of the library. In terms of long term issues, we must consider the implications of the future advancement of technology where the current ebooks may become obsolete and inaccessible. It is crucial to have publications in a reliably preservable format. Furthermore, we must consider the various other possibilities of loss and inaccessibility brought on by the nature of the internet and electronic devices. I think that wherever possible texts should be available in both formats. (qeii undergrad)

