

THE FIRST eBook...

was NOT a Kindle. In fact, the Xerox Sigma V was nothing close to the small eReaders we are familiar with today. On July 4, 1971, Michael Stern Hart used this giant mainframe to type the Declaration of Independence then shared this text file with other users of the computer network.

Hart also founded Project Gutenberg with the goal of creating an electronic library of 10,000 books, freely available to the public and with simple text that was easy to download. It still exists today as www.gutenberg.org and claims over 49,000 ebooks.



Xerox Sigma V on display at the Computer History Museum (Mountain View, CA)

EARLY eBOOK

Before the first Kindle ever appeared, a Spanish school teacher named Ángela Ruiz Robles invented a “mechanical encyclopedia.” Patented in 1949, Robles’ device used an early version of hypertexts and even allowed the user to zoom in for a closer look. She believed this mechanical book could replace student textbooks because of its ability to pre-load reels of text. This concept never evolved because Robles could not find anyone to finance the project.

"We are embarking on a revolution that will change the world at least as much as Gutenberg did."

-- Dick Brass (Microsoft) speaking at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in America’s first ebook conference in 1999. At this conference he also predicted that by 2018, 90% of all books sold would be ebooks.





Robles' "mechanical encyclopedia"

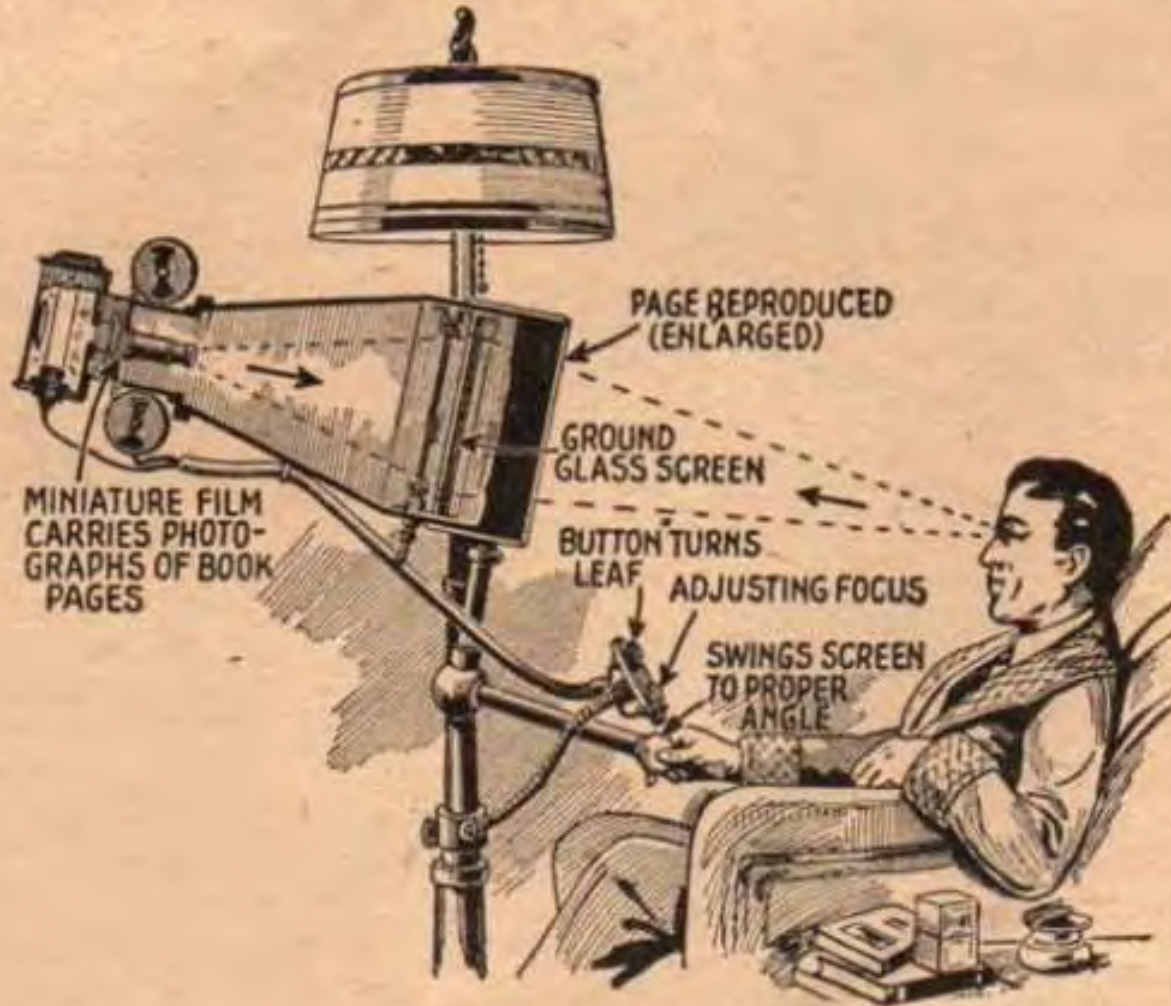


FUN FACT:

Some of the features found in current e-readers were invented by creative thinkers way before the internet even existed!

Italian engineer Agostino Ramelli invented a book wheel in 1588 that allowed readers to have 20 books open at one time, similar to modern devices that allow readers to download multiple books and quickly rotate between them.

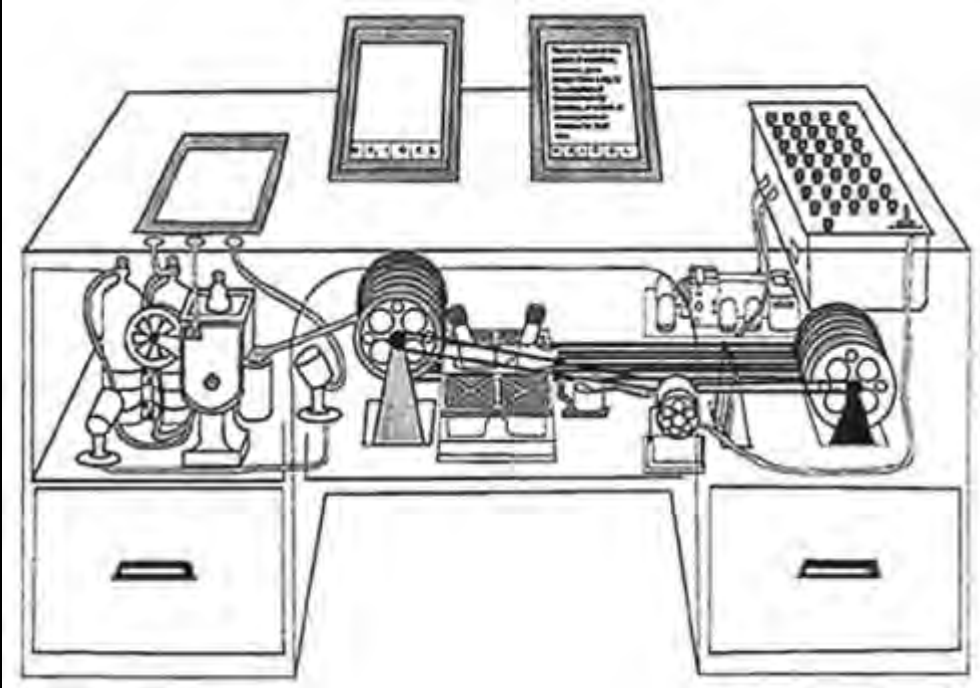
BOOK READER OF "THE FUTURE"



Everyday Science and Mechanics journal in April, 1935, presented an idea for the book of the future, which at that time was believed to be microfilm. Their concept included a stand to hold a screen which displayed the photographic book pages. The stand allowed for height adjustment, brightness control, page turning, and focus adjusting (all features available in current eReaders and tablet stands).

THE MEMEX

In 1945, computer pioneer Vannevar Bush introduced a hypothetical machine called the **Memex**, which was built into a desk and could be used to store a person's entire collection of knowledge. This device was never developed, but some of the features show up years later in early computers and eReaders, including page turning and the ability to annotate and embed links.



EVOLUTION OF THE eBook



1987: Eastgate Systems published **first hypertext fiction** work "Afternoon" by Michael Joyce on floppy disk.

1990: John Galuskza (Serendipity Systems) created the ebook display program **PC-Book**, featuring numbered pages & bookmarks.

1993: [BiblioBytes](#) launched a **website to sell ebooks**, the first company to create a financial exchange system for the net.

1998: NetLibrary began offering **ebooks to libraries**. NuroMedia released the first handheld eReader, the **Rocket**. SoftBook launched the **SoftBook** reader, featuring a leather cover & telephone-based catalogue ordering system.

1999: Simon & Schuster created **ibooks** and became the first trade publisher simultaneously to publish titles in ebook and print format. Nearly every other major publishing house had introduced ebooks by 2001.

2000: Stephen King's short story "Riding the Bullet" was published exclusively online, for use with the **Glassbook** ebook reader -- he sold 500,000 copies in 48 hours. Gemstar launched its new handheld ebook readers, **RCA** and **RED 1100**.

2004: **Sony Librié** released in Japan; known for being the first eInk reader.

2007: Amazon released the first **Kindle** -- it sold out in less than five hours. Apple released the first **iPod Touch/iPhone**.

2009: Barnes & Noble released the first **Nook**.

2010: Apple released the first **iPad**

Newsweek



PHOTOGRAPH BY BRUCE THOMAS

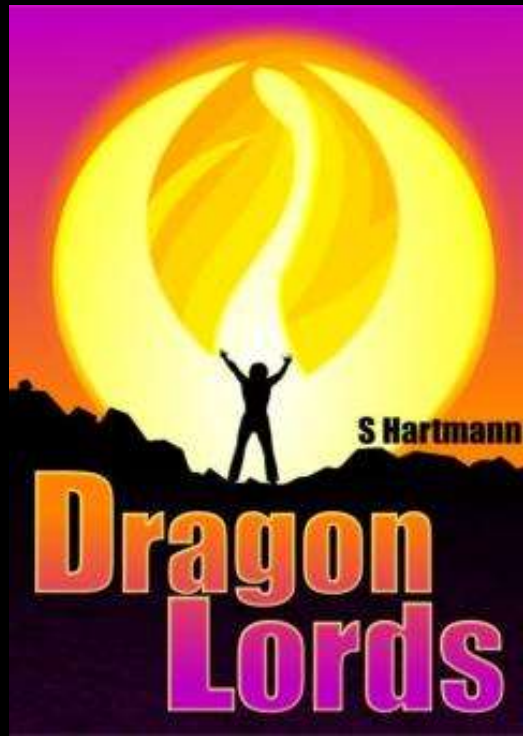
NOV. 26, 2007

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos

November 2007

CROWD WRITING

In 2012, author Silvia Hartmann's book *Dragon Lords* was co-authored by over 13,000 people! Hartman's experiment in **crowdsourcing** a book was successful and she went on to publish this book first as an eBook and later followed with a print edition.



BOOKLESS LIBRARIES ?!?!?!?

Bexar County Texas introduced the first completely bookless library in 2013. The driving force behind this library was County Judge Nelson Wolff, who happens to be an avid collector of 1st print editions.



FUN FACTS:

50% of Americans now own a dedicated handheld device such as Kindle, iPad or tablet that they use for reading.

28% of American adults read an e-book in 2013, up from 23% in 2012.

4% of American readers are shunning paper books entirely.

Pew Research Center's Internet Project Omnibus Survey, Jan 2014

We hope you enjoyed this brief glimpse through history.

If you want to learn more about how humans have communicated through time, visit this website and give yourself plenty of time to enjoy: www.historyofinformation.com/index.php

We relied heavily on these books for our research and HIGHLY recommend reading them:

Books: A Living History by Martyn Lyons (2011)

The History of the Book in 100 Books: The Complete Story, from Egypt to e-book by Roderick Cave & Sara Ayad (2014)

The Book: A Global History edited by Michael F. Suarez & H.R. Woudhuysen (2013)