

# THE IRREGULAR LITTONIAN

Fall 2010, Number 42

*Greetings from the Pine Barrens! This Fall 2010 issue of the newsletter includes faculty and alumni updates, as well as some reflections on how technology has impacted the way we read and experience texts, for better and for worse.*

*Check out the new Literature Program website:*

<http://wp.stockton.edu/literature/>

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## FACULTY UPDATES

**Deborah Gussman** spent a lot of her summer reading, writing and thinking about Catharine Maria Sedgwick, marriage, and spinsterhood in the mid-19th century. She also co-organized and attended a symposium sponsored by the Sedgwick Society on “The Irrational, the Spiritual, the Romantic: Contested Discourses in 19th-Century American Women’s Writing” at Salem State College in June. Three very recent LITT alumna, Roni Bier, Lauren Surprenant and Gretchen Van Duyne, attended the symposium as well, and presented original research they had completed on recovering 19th-century women writers in Deb’s Senior Seminar.

Over the summer, **Adalaine Holton** spent her time revising an article on Jesús Colón and working on her book project on experimental archival projects in the black Atlantic. She just recently presented her new research on Zora Neale Hurston as a black Atlantic “archivist” at the American Literature Symposium on American Fiction. This month, her article “To ‘tell again in many ways’: Iteration and Translation in *The Souls of Black Folk*” was published in *The Arizona Quarterly*. As some of you may know, Adalaine is also an avid knitter. A sample of her knitting was photographed for the Commemorative Edition of the bestselling classic *Knitters’ Almanac* by Elizabeth Zimmerman published in September (her sample is the red “February Baby Sweater” on page 16: <http://www.doverpublications.com/zb/samples/479129/sample55e.htm>).

This summer, after finishing up two online courses and a field trip to Yellowstone National Park with Patrick Hossay, Tait Chirenje and students from their spring semester classes on the environment, **Lisa Honaker** began a yearlong sabbatical from teaching. She is working on a study of contemporary British Commonwealth fiction through the lens of the Man Booker Prize. This means, for now, that she is happily reading novels from the Man Booker shortlists. As you read this, she's probably reading Iris Murdoch—or someone equally talented. Jealous?

After a fall 2009 sabbatical semester in Austria, **Marion Hussong** completed her new digital book *Franz Kain: Short Stories and Essays. A Critical Digital Edition* [www.franzkain.net](http://www.franzkain.net) in the summer. Since then, she has been busy coordinating the LITT Program and serving as Acting Director of the Master of Arts in Holocaust and Genocides Studies Program. She recently developed a new graduate course for MAHG, "Nazi Art as Propaganda" and plans a trip to Europe next summer to continue her research on literary representations of resistance in Austria.

After an enjoyable and busy Spring 2010 term teaching "Literary Methodologies" (LITT 1101), "Domestic Dramas" (LITT 2145), the "Seminar in Feminist Theory" (GIS 3614), and a pilot course, "The Literature Engagement Seminar" (LITT 2001), **Kristin Jacobson** spent the summer traveling to and presenting at two conferences (the American Literature Conference in San Francisco, CA, and the American Democracy Project National Meeting in Providence, RI) and completing the final editing and indexing of her book, *Neodomestic American Fiction* (forthcoming December 2010, The Ohio State University Press). If you would like to learn more about Dr. J's forthcoming book, visit:

<http://www.ohiostatepress.org/books/book%20pages/jacobson%20neodomestic.html>. This fall Dr. J is teaching another exciting slate of courses: a first-year seminar, a general studies course called "Perspectives on Women," and the second half of the American literature survey (one of her favorite 2000-level LITT courses). This fall she is also starting a new research project, will travel to conferences in Denver and Detroit, and continues to work with other faculty members and students to encourage more academic and civic engagement among Stockton students. She invites you to 'like' the TakeAction at RSCNJ Facebook page if you would like to learn more about what present and past Stockton students may do to become more engaged in their local and global communities. And, as the new coordinator for the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies minor, Dr. J invites you to 'like' the WGSS Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pomona-NJ/Womens-Gender-and-Sexuality-Studies-at-RSCNJ/106565016033315> and visit the WGSS website

<http://wp.stockton.edu/wgss/>. In closing, Dr. J must admit that the summer did nothing to improve her cooking skills. However, the summer brought her many good books, time with family, and another year (16 and counting) with her trusty rusty car.

**Cynthia King** spent another term working with her students on their creative writing and critiquing skills. The fall 2010 Advanced Creative Writing class is writing a poem a day for the month of October, and the Senior Seminar is pulling together critical papers on epic poetry or else writing their own epic poems. The seniors particularly impressed each other in their discussions about what a modern day epic hero or heroine might face, what his or her metus might be, and what would take the place of the Greek gods as aids in daily life.

In her own work, Cynthia continues to publish poetry on-line, and her book, *People are Tiny in Paintings of China*, has been released and is available for sale on-line through Octopus Books. She'll spend a few days around Thanksgiving touring in California and after winter break begins will tour in the Northeast, Denver and Portland. Her first reading will be at St. Mark's Poetry Project on November 5th: this is really an honor as St. Mark's has been a venue to many great poets including Ginsberg, Notley, and Carson and others. Her review of the great Slovenian poet Srečko Kosovel is forthcoming in the *Denver Quarterly*, someone that her former students in the Avant-Garde poetry workshop might enjoy. Her poem "My Lucky Streak" will be in the forthcoming film by Zachary Schomburg for Rabbit Light Movies.

**Tom Kinsella** was on sabbatical for the Spring of 2010. He spent his time tracking down references to colonial Philadelphia bookbinders of German extraction and attempting to identify their work. It's fairly easy to identify a German-American colonial bookbinding, but it is more difficult to put a binder's name to a particular book. Tom found quite a bit of background information on a group of Lutheran binders working in Philadelphia between 1753 and 1800 and managed to identify some of their work. He found a treasure trove of bindings by Christoph Hoffman, a Schwenkfelder minister and bookbinder during the eighteenth century, and identified well over 100 of his bindings. Tom spent most of his time at the Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. On a sad note, Tom's research partner of nearly 25 years, Willman Spawn, died over the spring. Willman had a glorious life, dying a few weeks short of 90, and Tom celebrates his memory by continuing the work they started together.

**Adeline Koh** is happy to be back at Stockton. She is teaching two new classes: Introduction to Cultural Studies, and British Literature II. Her students are both engaging and energetic, which makes being in the classroom a delight.

On the research front, Adeline had a busy summer. She had two articles accepted. The first, "Comparative Racializations: Reading Joseph Conrad across Africa, Asia and Poland," will be published by *Third Text* in November 2010. The second, "Local Color and English Values," is on English-language education in colonial Malaya, and will be published in the edited collection titled *(Re)Constructing Memory: School Textbooks and the Pedagogies and Politics of Imagining Community*. Adeline also published a book review on Evan Maina Mwangi's *Africa Writes Back to Self* on the online academic listserv H-Africa in September 2010. Alongside of all of this, Adeline worked on her book manuscript over the summer. Titled *Dangerous Women: Revisiting the Social Contract in Postcolonial Literature*, this book explores the resurgence of social contract political theory in a number of postcolonial cultures, and examines the role of women in relation to these new adaptations. *Dangerous Women* provides a comparative analysis of the social contract in works by Zimbabwean, Nigerian, Malaysian, Singaporean, British and French writers.

Adeline will be attending a number of conferences this semester. She has been invited to speak at "Comparisons across Borders," a conference on African literature and cinema that will be jointly hosted by Michigan State University and the University of Michigan. While at the University of Michigan, she will also be giving a guest lecture on Chinua Achebe to graduate students. In November, Adeline will be attending the annual National Women's Studies Association meeting in Denver. There, she will be both chairing a roundtable on "Women's Education and the Nation," and giving a presentation called "Training Students in Digital Scholarship: Zotero and Online Research Communities" for Kristin Jacobson's panel "Technologies of Feminist Pedagogy."

In addition, Adeline will be bringing Stockton student Raina DeFonza to attend a conference on undergraduate research at the College of William and Mary. Adeline will be speaking on undergraduate humanities research, and will be showcasing the development of the Stockton Postcolonial Studies website (<http://wp.stockton.edu/postcolonialstudies>). This website is aimed to provide a resource on postcolonial studies that Stockton students produce under Adeline's guidance. Raina DeFonza has been working on a project comparing kitchens and notions of domesticity in contemporary American and postcolonial cultures, and will be speaking about her research experience.

In the last *Irregular Littonian*, we were asked to list five books we'd take with us if stuck on a deserted island; the first on **Nathan Long's** list was *Moby Dick*,

because “if you’re stuck on an island surrounded by water, and contemplating doing some serious fishing, what better companion to remind you not to go overboard--figuratively and literally.”

That exercise inspired Nathan to actually read the leviathan this summer—a lovely Modern Library Classics edition with dozens of evocative woodblock prints.

Nathan started the summer, however, reading *One for Sorrow, Two for Joy*, by Elise Juska, whom he had the fortune of studying with just as the spring semester ended. Juska led a workshop that critiqued drafts of two stories he had written over the school year as part of his short story cycle, *The Sleep of Reason*, a series of thematically linked stories about sleep and sleep like states. Juska’s novel is narrated by a linguistically-acute crossword puzzle maker, who is estranged from her husband, and ends up in Galway, Ireland, a region Nathan had spent time in just two summers before. Nathan enjoyed the book for its puns and for taking him back to the old country.

While up in Vermont, Nathan hiked a segment of the Long Trail (no relation to him), biked on a tour of organic farms, and—to balance things out--ate lots of great ice cream and homemade donuts. He also stumbled across a great privately-owned, used bookstore—which are still common in New England, but seem to be a dying breed elsewhere in the U.S. There, he picked up a slightly tattered copy of *The Tracker*, by Tom Brown, which he had been meaning to read, as it is perhaps the quintessential book about the Pine Barrens. He was particularly moved reading this book about wilderness survivalist skills, when he followed it by *Mole People*, another non-fiction book about the homeless of New York City who live underground, in abandoned subway and sewer tunnels.

Those were the most memorable books of the summer. As far as writing goes, Nathan worked on revising stories in *The Sleep of Reason*, which he plans to complete over the next year or two; he’s currently applying for a sabbatical to have uninterrupted time to write.

**Adam Miyashiro** was busy this summer, having attended a National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty Institute in Barcelona, Spain in July 2010. The Institute, entitled “Cultural Hybridities in the Medieval Mediterranean: Christians, Muslims, and Jews,” explored the myriad of cultural interactions between groups of distinct religious, linguistic, and political backgrounds, how they interacted both peacefully and in times of conflict. Adam used this NEH Institute to continue researching his book project, and to formulate an ambitious Senior Seminar in Spring semester 2011 called “Literatures of the Medieval Mediterranean.”

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## ALUMNI NEWS

*We would love to include updates from you in future newsletters. Please contact the current LITT Program Coordinator, Marion Hussong, with your updates: [Marion.Hussong@stockton.edu](mailto:Marion.Hussong@stockton.edu).*

Roni Bier is in the M.A. Program at Rutgers-University-Camden.

Michael Duke is working with 9<sup>th</sup> graders in Philadelphia as part of the City Year Program.

Andrew Mathas is in the M.A. Program in English at Clemson University.

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## Reflections on New Reading Technologies

*The LITT faculty have noticed that many of us seem do much of our reading on the computer or other electronic reading devices these days. How do these new reading technologies change the way that we experience literature and other kinds of texts? And how do we use digital media to share information with others? Is the paper book becoming obsolete?*

### Deborah Gussman: “On New and Improving Electronic Reading Devices”

I have been doing a lot of reading on the Kindle this summer and have discovered, to my great delight, that I can get as lost in it as I can with a traditional book. I had high hopes for being able to work with (i.e. annotate) out of print texts on the Kindle; alas, I’m finding the mechanics of migrating information from the Kindle to the computer to be something of a stumbling block. I am now pinning my hopes on my brand new iPad and thinking that applications such as iAnnotate may give me some of the flexibility I have been looking for.

### Adalaine Holton: “Audiobooks are Back in Style”

As her eyesight began to fail, my grandmother started listening to books on tape, which she was able to order for free through the federal government. She always had a big basket of them by the side of the bed. In the past, I tended to

associate audiobooks with older technologies like my grandmother's cassette tape player. Recently, with the proliferation of relatively inexpensive digital recording devices and mp3 players, the audiobook has received a technological makeover. New companies that I won't name here seem to be making a lot of money selling mp3 downloads of recent bestsellers. The sound quality is excellent, and customers can listen to their purchases on all of their listening devices: computer, cell phone, mp3 player, CD player, etc. What is most exciting for those of us who read and teach literature published before 1900 is that amateur voice actors have been recording literary works in the public domain and posting them on the Internet for public use. You can download *Huckleberry Finn*, *Jane Eyre*, or *Middlemarch* for free, as well as many works written in languages other than English. These free audiobooks do vary in quality, however, since they are created by regular folks in offices and homes, rather than in professional studios. You do hear an occasional cough or squeaky chair when listening to these recordings. I have been listening to free and purchased audiobooks quite often lately, especially the audio versions of books I teach, and to my surprise, I have noticed a few things here and there with my ears that I had never picked up before with my eyes.

The largest selection of free audiobooks is available on *Librivox*. *Lit2go* also has a wide selection of children's literature, as well as other works. Check out the links below and enjoy.

*Librivox*

<http://librivox.org/>

*Lit2go*

<http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>

### **Lisa Honaker: "On the Virtues of the Kindle"**

Last spring I was relaxing on a sailboat off the coast of St. John, having just finished Sue Grafton's *T Is for Trespass*, when I decided to try one of Charlaine Harris's vampire mysteries. I got out my Kindle, typed in her name, and less than a minute later was reading *Dead After Dark*, the first book in her series. This is why I love my Kindle: no matter where I am, I can instantly access nearly anything I want to read. I know that this is precisely how Amazon sells it, but I can't get over this particular bit of truth in advertising. Each download is a thrill for me, a source of immediate gratification--and comfort. In the past, I would never go anywhere without a book or a magazine; now my Kindle guarantees me an endless selection of something to read. And so far I've had enough impulse control not to bankrupt myself satisfying my appetite for fiction. In fact, because Kindle books are cheaper than the trade paperbacks I favor, I get to

congratulate myself on my thrift. My Kindle offers decadence and virtue at once. How often does that happen?

I thought when I got the Kindle, the disembodied text would bother me. I love buying and owning books. I love them as physical objects. I love the smooth, shiny feel, the heft, the pristine smell of new books. Initially, I didn't think I could do without them. I felt like I was being cheated somehow, that I wasn't getting a real book but some sort of generic knock-off. I missed page numbers, and I did have to get a folding cover for my Kindle to mimic the feel of a book in my hands. But over time the Kindle has helped me to divorce myself from this need for the physical text, which, in my mind, constitutes yet another virtue. Like my online syllabi and paper assignments and collection in my classes, the Kindle has allowed me to forego paper, in my own small way to consume less. I'm no less acquisitive, I know, but I'm accumulating fewer *things*.

I don't mean to be too pious here. My opening sentence, after all, does not suggest life of self-denial. I am alert to the fact that I can *afford* to purchase a gadget like the Kindle in the first place. Still, the economies and indulgences this gadget has allowed me have changed my relationship to books in exciting ways.

### **Marion Hussong: "Creating the Digital Book"**

Last summer, I completed my digital book *Franz Kain. Short Stories and Essays. A Critical Digital Edition*: [www.franzkain.net](http://www.franzkain.net).

The book is the first translation of short stories, essays, and journalistic work by the Austrian resister and writer Franz Kain. It contains extensive critical commentary along with scholarly essays and will interest scholars and students of German and Austrian literature as well as historians involved in the discourse on Austria during and after the era of National Socialism. The book will be valuable in the classroom: It includes extensive, easily accessible cultural and historical background information through embedded links that open annotations, audiovisual support, and connections to scholarly websites. Franz Kain's writings are a contribution to an area that is rarely touched upon in literature and scholarship: the motivations and fates of political resisters under Hitler.

The short stories are arranged to lead the reader through a chronology of the tumultuous and tragic years of Austrian annexation to Germany. The opening text of the book is the brief short prose piece "Under the Fever Tree," which anticipates the coming political catastrophe by means of a lyrical snapshot of a deceptively peaceful late summer day in the high mountains before the

metaphorical arrival of an early, devastating frost. Next, the reader moves on to the novella “Before the Storm.” This short story takes place on the very day in March 1938 when German troops arrived on Austrian soil and annexed the country. Through subsequent stories, a tableau of Austrian resistance unfolds and contrasts with the stark daily reality of Austrian collaboration with the Nazi regime: We meet resisters awaiting deportation to jails and concentration camps, Dutch Jews on the way to the Mauthausen death factory, and armed partisan resistance fighters who must steal cattle to survive the regime by waiting out the war in a makeshift lean-to in a remote Alpine valley. In one novella, we follow Hitler’s security chief Ernst Kaltenbrunner on the eve of the German capitulation as he flees into the mountains to evade capture by the rapidly advancing allied troops. The final story of the book is set in 1946 against the backdrop of Russian and American occupation and projects a conflicted, prophetic image of post-war Austria as a nation not likely to take responsibility for its role in the National Socialist catastrophe.

All the characters in Franz Kain’s stories are historical. While Kain’s narratives name prominent Nazi war criminals such as Kaltenbrunner or the Austrian *Gauleiter* Eigruber, most of the resisters in his stories remain unnamed. I spent years reconstructing their identities through archival work and eyewitness interviews. Embedded in the texts I provided extensive annotations on all historical events and people, along with links to primary documents, web sources, and bibliographies of scholarly publications. The compendium of critical sources will help the reader to further study the historical and cultural context of Kain’s literary work and personal story, which is emblematic of the story of political resistance in Austria under National Socialism.

I wanted a book that was truly original; one that opened up the historical and cultural context of Kain’s literary texts through multimedia support, and I wanted it to be of the best possible pedagogical value for our students. This would not have been possible in a print edition. Let me give some examples:

One of the characters in the Kaltenbrunner story “The Path to Bleak Lake” is a Mauthausen inmate who is charged with the gruesome job of working the furnaces and moving dead bodies to and from the ovens in the Mauthausen crematorium. I had always assumed him to be a fictional character, until I found out from Kain’s family that the man was actually a historical person and a good friend of their family. This man, Hans Kanduth, survived nearly five unimaginable years in the hellish basement of the Mauthausen crematorium.

During the Nuremberg Trials, he provided damning testimony about Kaltenbrunner’s visit to Mauthausen, where Hitler’s security chief had witnessed a mass execution.

While “The Path to Bleak Lake” is Kain’s most famous story and has garnered the most scholarly attention, nobody had ever studied this aspect of the text. I was able to find transcripts of Kanduth’s testimony at Nuremberg which I directly linked to the text passages revolving around the trial, along with a photograph of Kanduth taken after the war (see above.) Suddenly, a character in a literary text has a face and a name, and as we read the novella, we can also study historical documents about his ordeal and eventual triumph at court, as he helps to bring one of Hitler’s mightiest advisors to his knees.

There is another dimension to this digital book project, which I would not have been able to realize in a print version. I wanted the book to be beautiful. I envisioned it framed by original art that complements and enhances the content. This visual dimension was very important to me: The art had to be an integral part of a layout that engages and challenges the reader intellectually and aesthetically. To achieve this, I worked with an internationally renowned artist, Manfred Bockelmann, who provided original photography and charcoal drawings for the stories in the book.

I organized the book’s layout so that each short story is preceded by an image and by a short quote that represents a central idea in that particular narrative. To read the story, you have to click on the image, which acts as a passkey. I selected the art very carefully, so that each image would just hint at a possible interpretation of the text. At the same time, the pictures are abstract, cryptic and somewhat dark, drawing the reader into the rather serious subject matter of Franz Kain’s stories. By viewing the images along with the quotes, the reader is invited to think analytically before beginning to read the literary texts. Clearly, it would not have been possible to include this aesthetic dimension to the project in a paper book. The cost of printing on the type of paper that is necessary to do the images justice would be prohibitive. Likewise, the interactive possibilities that a digital book offers are unthinkable in a traditional paper edition.

I hope you will take the time to take a look at my book and actually read some of the stories, and I hope you will enjoy them. Franz Kain is a wonderful author, whose texts are well worth reading.

### **Kristin Jacobson: “Specialized Devices Not Required”**

At first glance it may appear that if you don't have an eBook reader (e.g., Kindle, Sony Reader, iPad, etc.), then you are out of the electronic reading revolution. Not so: there are many ways to be a part of and use new reading technologies. Here are two that I particularly like because they help me manage the overwhelming amount of information, especially new information, that is available on the Internet every hour:

GoogleReader <http://www.google.com/reader>: there are many web-based aggregators, but I like GoogleReader because I can add it to my personalized Google page (iGoogle) and immediately see what is waiting for me to read any time I conduct a Google search or go to my iGoogle page. (Aggregators, by the way, are tools that allow you to subscribe to sites that have Atom and/or RSS feeds. So, instead of checking individual sites for an update, all the updates come to you in one place.)

GoogleScholar Alerts: details at <http://googlescholar.blogspot.com/2010/06/google-scholar-alerts.html>: Alerts work much the same as an aggregator. When you create an alert in GoogleScholar, any new material on a particular subject (e.g., an author or some other topic that you are researching) will come to your email account as a link with a brief description. The research comes to you!

### **Cynthia King “The Boundlessness of Poetry”**

As far as electronic reading habits go, Cindy is constantly listening to poetry online at the *Poetry Foundation*, *Penn Sound*, *The Poetry Archive*, etc. as that is what most directly inspires her to write poems. The uses of the Internet for getting to know poetry and poets are rich and boundless. She has linked to many websites useful to those interested in poetry or what goes into making poetry such as slang, visual art, video poems, etc. on her teaching blog <http://wp.stockton.edu/king>.

### **Tom Kinsella “The Future of the Book”**

Over the summer I bought an iPad. I wanted one because I thought it would be an effective way to store and read pdfs of out-of-print books scanned by Google, Microsoft, and others. Increasingly, the books that I use for my studies can be found on the Internet Archive (I guess it pays to study in a small and out-of-fashion area). The iPad did indeed allow me to manage these book-length pdfs effectively. No more sitting in front of a large computer or even a middling-sized laptop or printing out hundreds of pages of hard copy. Several e-reader apps on the iPad are excellent. I began purchasing numerous books using the Kindle app on the iPad (Amazon’s Kindle store has way more e-books than the iTunes store). After spending hundreds of hours reading with my tablet, I have the following to report. First the negative: I have trouble focusing. In the middle of reading I think thoughts such as “I should look up the definition of that hard word I just read,” or “I should look for a Youtube video of the singer just mentioned by Stieg Larsson,” or “I should check my e-mail for some new message from Tompkins,” or “I should play another round with my cool new golf app.” In short, I have attention span issues on the iPad. But, on to the positive, I

also find that I really like the ability to change font size (bigger for my aging eyes). The last time I picked up a paperback I found myself thinking: “darn, can’t change the font,” and also, “hey, what’s this curve near the gutter of the page – that makes reading unpleasant.” In short (and to paraphrase Jon Landau), I have seen the future of the book, and it ain’t on paper.

### **Adeline Koh: “Reading Facebook and the Self”**

One of the most interesting developments in contemporary culture has been questioning how conceptions of society and the self are changing due to new social networking technologies. Earlier this year, Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, argued that "the age of privacy was over," and that if he were to recreate Facebook again today, user information would by default be public. Zuckerberg infamously claimed that the new generation of media consumers were more "open" than their predecessors, and that contemporary society was heading towards the merging of both public and private identities--in other words, that one would be the same person at play as one was at work. Zuckerberg was lambasted both for his comments, and for Facebook's fuzzy privacy policies, which are at once confusing and which have been repeatedly changed.

The Facebook privacy controversy, however, highlights some of the most interesting developments about the notion of the self and the question of self-presentation in our era. Some critics have called this the age of "oversharing," leading both to a narcissistic and voyeuristic culture. There is no doubt though, that these forms of new media are rapidly changing the ways in which we relate to one another. In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson argued that the newspaper created the idea of a national subject. How do technologies like Facebook and Twitter lead to the creation of new rules and forms of social identity, and how far will these changes go?

*Links to the Facebook Privacy Controversy and the Culture of "Oversharing"*

The New Yorker on Zuckerberg:

[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/09/20/100920fa\\_fact\\_vargas](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/09/20/100920fa_fact_vargas)

Zuckerberg interview with TechCrunch Founder Michael Arrington:

<http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/3848950>

Influential Responses to Facebook and the "Death of Privacy"

Danah Boyd: "Facebook and 'Radical Transparency'":

<http://www.zephorias.org/thoughts/archives/2010/05/14/facebook-and-radical-transparency-a-rant.html>

## Nathan Long “The Device Known as the BOOK”

As the neo-curmudgeon of the program, I'll confess that I still like to read actual, paper books, holding a clump of their pages in each hand, feeling the weight and give of their bodies. I spend enough time on the computer—a plastic box that hums and gives off an unnatural heat—to want to avoid such things as Kindles or other electronic reading devices. I don't even like carrying a cell phone in my pocket, and whenever I do, my leg twitches afterwards.

That said, I doubt that I would write and revise as much as I do if it weren't for a computer, which allows me to correct typos instantly, but I still think it's healthy to resist our dependence on machines as much as possible. If, as Marshall McLuhan argued in the 60's, “the medium is the message,” I would rather my medium be processed from a tree than from an oil well.

Along these lines, I include here, for those who haven't seen it, the review of the device known as "BOOK," short for "Built-in Orderly Organized Knowledge”:

The BOOK is a revolutionary breakthrough in technology: No wires, no electric circuits, no batteries, nothing to be connected or switched on. It's so easy to use even a child can operate it. Just lift its cover! Compact and portable, it can be used anywhere - even sitting in an armchair by the fire - yet it is powerful enough to hold as much information as a CD-ROM disc. Here's how it works...

Each BOOK is constructed of sequentially numbered sheets of paper (recyclable), each capable of holding thousands of bits of information. These pages are locked together with a custom-fit device called a binder, which keeps the sheets in their correct sequence. Opaque Paper Technology (OPT) allows manufacturers to use both sides of the sheet, doubling the information density and cutting costs in half.

Experts are divided on the prospects for further increases in information density; for now BOOKs with more information simply use more pages. This makes them thicker and harder to carry, and has drawn some criticism from the mobile computing crowd.

...The BOOK never crashes and never needs rebooting, though like other display devices it can become unusable if dropped overboard. The "browse" feature allows you to move instantly to any sheet, and move forward or backward as you wish.

... An optional "BOOKmark" accessory allows you to open the BOOK to the exact place you left it in a previous session - even if the BOOK has

been closed. BOOKmarks fit universal design standards; thus, a single BOOKmark can be used in BOOKs by various manufacturers. ...

You can also make personal notes next to BOOK text entries with an optional programming tool, the Portable Erasable Nib Cryptic Intercommunication Language Stylus (PENCILS).

<http://www.jardmail.co.uk/misc/book.shtml>

### **Adam Miyashiro “Reading Medieval Texts in the Digital Age”**

In the course of his summer abroad and in thinking about ways that reading technologies bring students closer to the material culture of the medieval world, Adam has encouraged the use of digital manuscript study. In the past, students and scholars alike were confined to thinking about medieval literary texts purely in editions published by organizations such as the Early English Text Society or Anglo-Norman Text Society, having to either view medieval manuscripts in facsimile, microfilm, or traveling to European or U.S.-based research libraries to conduct research. With the advent of high-resolution digital cameras and the Internet, today’s study of medieval manuscripts can allow students in southern New Jersey to access most of the collections of the British Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Access to even the rarest, most fragile manuscripts, such as the *Beowulf* manuscript, is now available on CD-ROM, and has revolutionized our understandings of medieval scribes, books, and material cultures of the Middle Ages. This is just one example of how technology can impact the study of books written a thousand years ago, and how these new reading technologies can illuminate what once seemed to be a “dark” past.

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## **LITT Announcements**

The Ravenswood Reading will be held on November 18th at 8:00 p.m. in Alton Auditorium. The poet Alicia Ostriker will read and Stephen Dunn will introduce her.

The annual LITT Bash will be held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the TRLC.

Find the LITT Program on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pomona-NJ/The-LITT-Program-at-RSCNJ/245341072249>