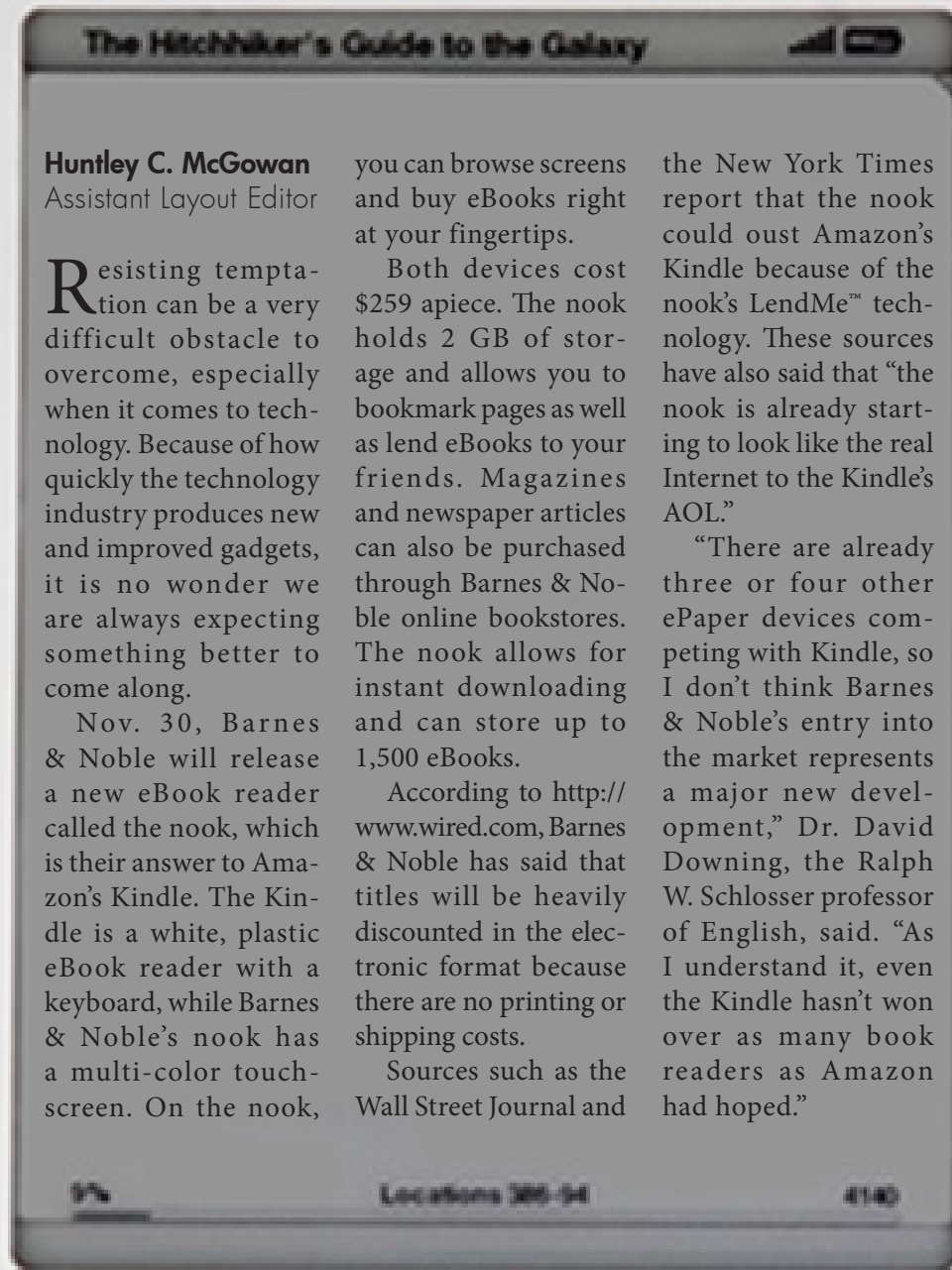


# eBook Readers

amazonkindle



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Resisting temptation can be a very difficult obstacle to overcome, especially when it comes to technology. Because of how quickly the technology industry produces new and improved gadgets, it is no wonder we are always expecting something better to come along.

Nov. 30, Barnes & Noble will release a new eBook reader called the nook, which is their answer to Amazon's Kindle. The Kindle is a white, plastic eBook reader with a keyboard, while Barnes & Noble's nook has a multi-color touchscreen. On the nook,

you can browse screens and buy eBooks right at your fingertips.

Both devices cost \$259 apiece. The nook holds 2 GB of storage and allows you to bookmark pages as well as lend eBooks to your friends. Magazines and newspaper articles can also be purchased through Barnes & Noble online bookstores. The nook allows for instant downloading and can store up to 1,500 eBooks.

According to <http://www.wired.com>, Barnes & Noble has said that titles will be heavily discounted in the electronic format because there are no printing or shipping costs.

Sources such as the Wall Street Journal and

the New York Times report that the nook could oust Amazon's Kindle because of the nook's LendMe™ technology. These sources have also said that “the nook is already starting to look like the real Internet to the Kindle's AOL.”

“There are already three or four other ePaper devices competing with Kindle, so I don't think Barnes & Noble's entry into the market represents a major new development,” Dr. David Downing, the Ralph W. Schlosser professor of English, said. “As I understand it, even the Kindle hasn't won over as many book readers as Amazon had hoped.”

Downing said he is more concerned with the decline of book reading in general than which format readers use.

“The number of books Americans read on average per year has been declining steadily since the 1960s. I find that a more disconcerting trend than the emergence of eBooks,” he said. “I haven't tried any ePaper devices yet because I usually like to underline the books I read. However, I've gone from vinyl records to cassette tapes to CDs to iPods in my music listening, so I am always open to new technologies if I feel they can do the job better.”

Downing also believes that younger readers are embracing the new technologies more quickly, but that older readers prefer the formats they have come to know and love.

Dr. Carmine Sarracino, professor of English, says that it is just a matter of time until something better comes along, rendering these devices obsolete.

“It is easy to forget that books were themselves the products of a new technology invented by Gutenberg in

the middle of the 15th century,” Sarracino said. “Books will always have value, if only as collector's items. I don't think that the Kindle, or other such devices, has put much of a dent in book sales. I think its market share will grow and, maybe in the next 10 years, overtake hard copy books. I think, though, that books will fade away slowly, not disappear all at once.”

So, what makes a Kindle or nook worthy of a purchase? To start: the advantages of buying an eBook reader.

1. It is lightweight and easy to hold, so you don't need to worry about keeping the pages open. You can hold it with one hand or prop it on your knees or on the tray of an airplane. All you have to do is press a button once in a while to turn the page.

2. eBook readers facilitate book purchases: a couple of clicks, and, 30 seconds later, the book is on your device. You can even download a sample to read and then buy the whole book if you like the sample.

3. The device can hold more books than anyone could read at one time. When you are

done reading a book, you can remove it from the eBook reader, but if you want to read it again, you can recall it from Amazon or Barnes & Noble.

4. It makes for less clutter. Instead of piles of books on bookshelves, desks and coffee tables, all that is needed is one compact eBook.

5. It has the ability to change font size. Everyone has those moments when words seem to crawl over the page or are too small to even be legible. Both the Kindle and the nook allow users to increase font size.

6. eBook readers are equipped with dictionaries. If you come across a word that you don't know while you are reading, you can put the cursor on the word, and the definition will appear.

However, eBook readers face cons as well:

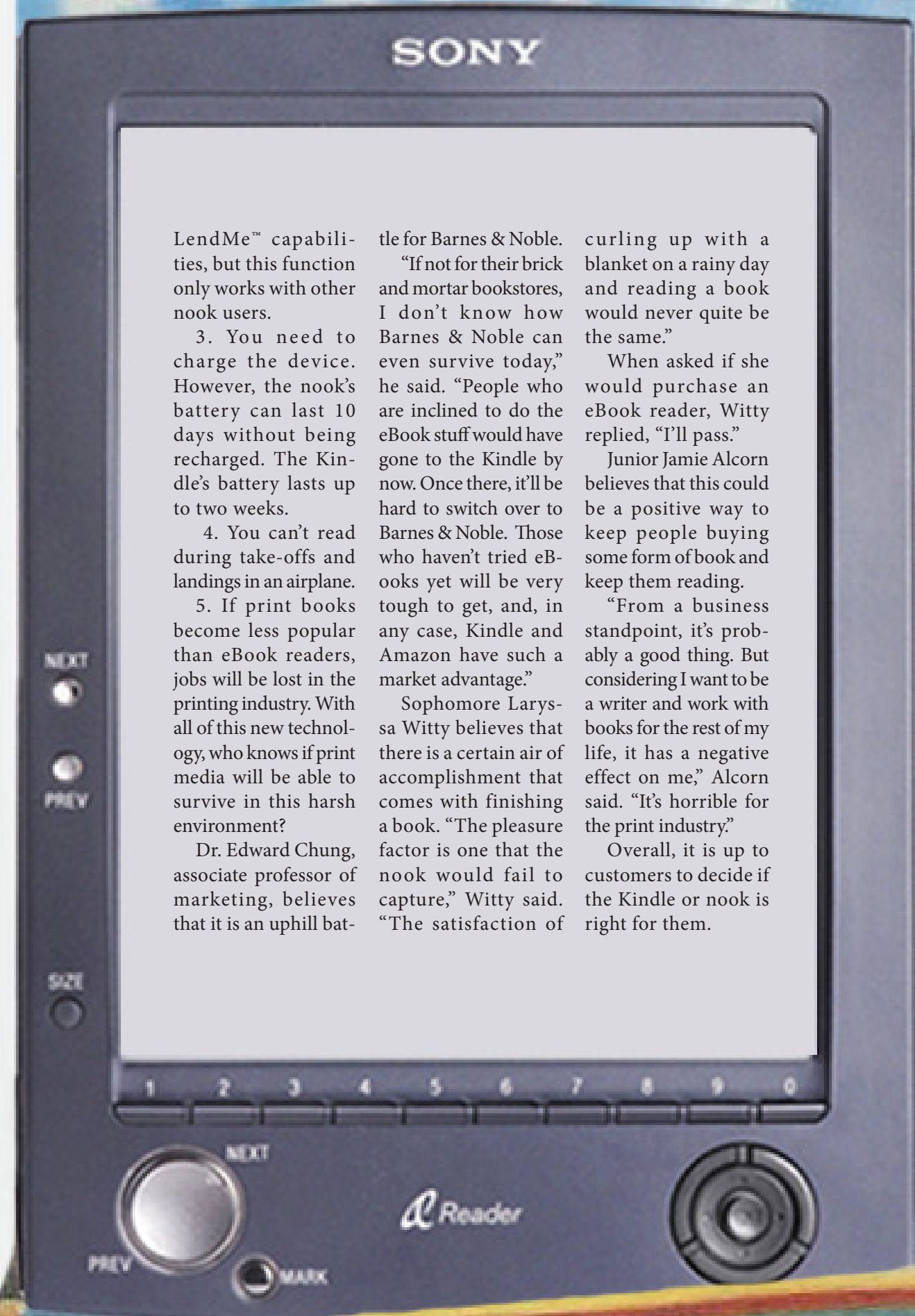
1. Library users who are accustomed to free books would see a significant increase in cost if they switched to these reading media.

2. Part of the pleasure of reading is sharing good books with others. The Kindle does not have that feature. The nook does offer

nook



BARNES & NOBLE



LendMe™ capabilities, but this function only works with other nook users.

3. You need to charge the device. However, the nook's battery can last 10 days without being recharged. The Kindle's battery lasts up to two weeks.

4. You can't read during take-offs and landings in an airplane.

5. If print books become less popular than eBook readers, jobs will be lost in the printing industry. With all of this new technology, who knows if print media will be able to survive in this harsh environment?

Dr. Edward Chung, associate professor of marketing, believes that it is an uphill bat-

tle for Barnes & Noble.

“If not for their brick and mortar bookstores, I don't know how Barnes & Noble can even survive today,” he said. “People who are inclined to do the eBook stuff would have gone to the Kindle by now. Once there, it'll be hard to switch over to Barnes & Noble. Those who haven't tried eBooks yet will be very tough to get, and, in any case, Kindle and Amazon have such a market advantage.”

Sophomore Larissa Witty believes that there is a certain air of accomplishment that comes with finishing a book. “The pleasure factor is one that the nook would fail to capture,” Witty said. “The satisfaction of

curling up with a blanket on a rainy day and reading a book would never quite be the same.”

When asked if she would purchase an eBook reader, Witty replied, “I'll pass.”

Junior Jamie Alcorn believes that this could be a positive way to keep people buying some form of book and keep them reading.

“From a business standpoint, it's probably a good thing. But considering I want to be a writer and work with books for the rest of my life, it has a negative effect on me,” Alcorn said. “It's horrible for the print industry.”

Overall, it is up to customers to decide if the Kindle or nook is right for them.