Does the Brain Like E-Books? - Room for Debate Blog - NYTimes.com

Reading online is thus not just about reading text in isolation. When you read news, or blogs or fiction, you are reading one book, unless of course it is bookmarked or the page corner is bent. The act of reading is tied to the entire experience.

When PC's first entered the home in the 1980s, a number of studies comparing the effects of reading on an electronic display versus paper found that people read faster and more extensively when they were reading computer text — but at least, if the circuitry breaks or the battery runs out, I've still got a book.

One reason that I prefer paper is that the book is not there to remind you of all the other books you could be reading at the same time. A reader's brain is limited, as is the number of books each of us can hold in it. And the book is something more than a place to store information. It's a way of organizing and retrieving it. It also makes the reader feel that he is an important part of the process, that he is using it, rather than just being read to.

A more important reason that I prefer paper is that the book is a unique and personal object. Electronic book readers can be held in a comfortable position, but their contrast is closer to that of a newspaper than to black-on-white. I don't mean to imply that e-readers are in any way inferior to the books that I love. I am just trying to explain why I love them.

When I read a book, I'm so immersed in the text that I don't notice the time flying by. When I read on a computer, I notice the time and end up"]
Electronic book readers like the Amazon Kindle share characteristics with both paper and computers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that people may read as quickly on electronic readers as they do on paper. The screen technology, electronic ink, avoids some disadvantages of monitors, such as backlighting and flicker, but it remains awkward to scan through multiple pages. We do know a great deal, however, about the formation of what we know as the expert reading brain that most of us possess to this point in history. In brief, this brain learns to access and integrate within 300 milliseconds a vast array of visual, semantic, sound (or phonological), and conceptual processes, which allows us to decode and begin to comprehend a word. This book is written in the vein of books by E.O. Wilson (Moffettâ€™s mentor) and stands alongside other recent epics like Robert Sapolskyâ€™s â€œBehaveâ€, which made this annual list in 2017. If you have an appetite for longer reads that pay off, this one is highly recommended. Artificial You: AI and the Future of Your Mind. By Susan Schneider (Princeton University Press). David DiSalvo is the author of the best-selling book "What Makes Your Brain Happy and Why You Should Do the Opposite", which has been published in 15 languages, and the books "Brain Changer: How Harnessing Your Brainâ€™s Power to Adapt Can Change Your Life" and "The Brain in Your Kitchen".