

Results of a Search on Voluntary Slow Reading

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Draft

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Even with the accelerating quantity of information available today, some people are choosing to read more slowly. Slow reading is often approached as a problem, and there is an accessible body of literature on the subject, especially with regard to children. Less is known about the voluntary practice of slow reading. There are many interesting questions about this practice. What is slow reading? Who practices it and for what purposes? Are there preferred techniques? Is slow reading suited to digital content? What are the personal and social benefits of slow reading?

A literature search was undertaken to identify theoretical and empirical material on the subject of Voluntary Slow Reading (VSR). The results of this search are listed in this document, along with a brief discussion of how they contribute to the understanding of VSR. A first section, “The Concept of Slow Reading”, examines some of the theoretical material that helps define the concept of VSR. A second section, “Research and Methods for Voluntary Slow Reading”, examines more empirical and practical material.

The Concept of Voluntary Slow Reading

The concept of slow reading has been of interest in the humanities, especially in Philosophy, Religious Studies and English. More recently, it has received attention as part of the Slow Movement; this second sense is especially helpful in defining the voluntary aspect.

Origins in Philosophy

Reference	Nietzsche, Friedrich (1887). <i>Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality</i> . 2nd Edition.
Summary	The earliest reference to slow reading appears to be in Nietzsche's preface to <i>Daybreak</i> : "It is not for nothing that one has been a philologist, perhaps one is a philologist still, that is to say, a teacher of slow reading."
Comment	Lance Fletcher has maintained several lists for slow reading of philosophy since 1994 at http://www.freelance-academy.org/ . Slow reading in this context is a professional technique. If the technique is highly prescribed, it must be distinguished from “voluntary free reading” as in Krashen (see Library Sciences).

Reference	Hartman, Geoffrey (1980). The work of reading. Chapter in <i>Criticism in the Wilderness</i> .
Summary	“if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter – that is to say, with real accuracy – you are forevermore in some measure an educated person” (quoting Ruskin)(173)
Comment	Like in English, philosophers refer to the practice of close reading. Hartman discusses it with reference to Heidegger’s <i>Being and Time</i> . This search turned up little else in philosophy.

Religious Studies and Spiritual Reading

Reference	Pike, Mark A. 'Well-being' through reading: Drawing upon literature and literacy in spiritual education. <i>International Journal of Children's Spirituality</i> ; Aug 2004, Vol. 9 Issue 2, p155-162, 8p
Summary	In this paper reading is conceived as a spiritual gift that can help readers towards an understanding of being. The image of the well and the act of drawing water is employed to illustrate the relation of the spiritual and the aesthetic. The term 'well-being' in relation to reading is used here to draw attention to the importance of ontology in both reading and spiritual education. How readers can practice reading as a spiritual gift is explored with reference to the philosophy of Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), reader-response theory and selected biblical passages.
Comment	There is some overlap between slow reading in Philosophy and Religious Studies, especially with regard to existential philosophers.

Reference	Smith, David I. The poet, the child and the blackbird: Aesthetic reading and spiritual development. <i>International Journal of Children's Spirituality</i> ; Aug 2004, Vol. 9 Issue 2, p143-154, 12p
Summary	This article explores the potential and limitations of Louise Rosenblatt's account of aesthetic reading as a basis for understanding the relationship between literary experience and spiritual development. It does so by examining a particular act of reading involving a poem by Ernst Jandl in the light of Rosenblatt's account of 'aesthetic reading' and Kierkegaard's categories of the poet and the child. It is argued that an account of the relationship of spirituality to the reading of literature needs to go beyond the immediate experience of the act of reading and take into account the way that literary meanings are responded to in later living and the way in which attentiveness to textual detail can be rooted in spiritual attitudes.
Comment	Another existential philosopher.

Reference	Sullivan, John. Understanding and Overstanding: Religious Reading in Historical Perspective. <i>Journal of Education & Christian Belief</i> , Autumn 2007, Vol. 11 Issue 2, p25-38, 14p
Summary	I suggest that, in universities, we often use the word "understanding" when we mean "overstanding". This is connected to relying on limited approaches to reading ones that are forgetful of religious ways of reading. I offer a critical retrieval of religious ways of reading practised in the past, and suggest how they might be included in the university today, thereby providing a richer form of educational experience for students. “reading as a journey that changes us”
Comment	An important slow reading theme in Religious Studies is how the practice alters the reader.

Reference	Sire, James (1978). <i>How to Read Slowly</i> . Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
Summary	I recently chanced on James W. Sire’s book, <i>How to Read Slowly: A Christian Guide to Reading with the Mind</i> (InterVarsity). That the intended audience of this book is Christians raised an eyebrow: certainly slow reading is good for theists of all stripes, as well as atheists and agnostics. Much of the book is indeed useful for anyone wishing to know tips about how to read slowly. It advises the reader to take the time to read a book’s preface and introduction, have a dictionary handy, and read with a pen in hand for notes. But the deeper purpose of the book is to teach the reader how to pick up on the world view of the author to see if it squares with the Christianity. This raised my other eyebrow; should Christians be wary of writers with divergent belief systems? But the advice is quite practical and useful for anyone. When analyzing non-fiction, the reader can apply philosophical questions, e.g., what is the author’s view on reality. When analyzing fiction, the reader can examine how the plot, theme and characters add up to the author’s vision of life. Biographical, historical and other information can provide context to a reading. The reader is wisely advised to bring a clear self-understanding to the reading.
Comment	<p>Three items caught my interest.</p> <p>One, it is recommended to “read at your normal rate—or more slowly” (pg. 49). Speed readers are taught how to read as fast as possible, but slow readers should not necessarily try to read as slow as possible. The essence of slow reading is to make a choice about reading rate, perhaps reading quickly over light material, and slowing down for the richer parts. The sense of choice with slow reading is contrasted with the forced quality of much business and educational reading. A feeling of freedom is one of the reasons slow reading appeals to many; it helps recapture the joy of reading.</p> <p>Two, Sire distinguishes reading for entertainment or information from reading for perspective, the slow reading approach that allows one to pick up on subtleties in the text and the writer’s world view. Extending his idea, the face content drops into the background, creating a figure-ground reversal that is sometimes associated in the psychological literature with altered states of consciousness — fascinating.</p> <p>Three, the author’s purpose is to make readers aware of the assumptions of the writer, as if it could injure their faith. Above and under English, other readers talk about how slow reading can change the reader, possibly even introducing ethical issues in the practice.</p>

Reference	Peterson, Eugene H. (2006). <i>Eat this book: A conversation in the art of spiritual reading</i> . Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans.
Summary	There are two instances of bibliophagy in the Bible. The first comes in

	<p>Ezekiel, when a heavenly hand offers the prophet a scroll covered on both sides with "lamentations, and moaning and woe." God commands Ezekiel to eat the scroll, and he reports that "it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness." Revelation, Chapter 10, has a variation on this theme: an angel hands John a scroll to eat, telling him it will taste like honey but also "turn your stomach sour." According to the theologian Eugene H. Peterson, the author of yet another "Eat This Book" (2006), the scroll became the source of John's apocalyptic vision: "The book he ate was metabolized into the book he wrote." For Peterson, this episode illustrates lectio divina, a spiritual mode of reading "that enters our souls as food enters our stomachs, spreads through our blood, and becomes holiness and love and wisdom."¹</p> <p>He uses the metaphor eating the book as the only way of reading scripture. ... "ruminative and leisurely ... enormous respect for the revelatory power of words" (3). Examines practices such as lectio divina, sacred reading as prayer.</p>
Comments	Not exactly voluntary

Close Reading and Slow Reading in English

Reference	Prose, Francine (2006). <i>Reading like a writer</i> . NY: HarperCollins
Summary	<p>"I read closely, word by word, sentence by sentence, pondering each deceptively minor decision the writer had made."</p> <p>"It was fun to trace those patterns and to make those connections. It was like cracking a code that the playwright had embedded in the text, a riddle that existed just for me to decipher."</p> <p>"We all begin as close readers. Even before we learn to read, the process of being read aloud to, and of listening, is one in which we are taking in one word after another, one phrase at a time, in which we are paying attention to whatever word or phrase is transmitting. Word by word is how we learn to hear and then read, which seems fitting, because it is how the books we are reading were written in the first place." (5)</p>
Comment	Prose is an advocate of close reading, and it is a pleasure. She suggests that close reading is not just the skill of an advanced, but how we learned to read in the beginning. She associates slow reading with the way we learned to read, by hearing, and this resembles Carver's position on reading, that reading and auding are the same process.

¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/26/books/review/26eskin.html?pagewanted=print>

Reference	Sutherland, John (2006). <i>How to read a novel: A user's guide</i> . NY: St. Martin's.
Summary	How to handle the deluge of novels? Better technology or better reading? It is as difficult to read a novel well as to write one well. (12) Codex lasts because it is "lean-back" not "lean-forward" (34).
Comment	Comparison of strategies for handling deluge of information – speed up or slow down. Comments on the persistence of the book as a vehicle for slow readers.

Reference	Grimes, William. September 22, 2006 Friday. You're a Slow Reader? Congratulations. The New York Times Section E; PT2; Column 4; Leisure/Weekend Desk; Books; Pg. 25
Summary	<p>The demise of print looks as if it will be a long, drawn-out affair. John Sutherland, the chairman of last year's Man Booker Prize Committee, offers an arresting statistic: Today more novels are published in one week than Samuel John-son had to deal with in a decade.</p> <p>So what to read? That's the question. But as Mr. Sutherland's title suggests, there's a second question entangled with the first, addressed in several new books devoted to the lost art of reading. It's a Malthusian problem. The amount of printed material increases exponentially, but the time available for reading remains static or, in many cases, decreases arithmetically. So once we have decided what to read, the question then becomes, How to read? And the paradoxical answer is, Much more slowly.</p> <p>Mr. Sutherland, in "How to Read a Novel," tackles this problem from another angle. How much does a reader need to know about the world that a writer describes to appreciate a novel? A fair amount, he argues.</p> <p>In "Reading Like a Writer" the novelist Francine Prose shows how to do it. She forces the act of slow reading by singling out excerpts from her favorite writers and zeroing in on single words, then sentences, then paragraphs, teasing out the specifics that transmute raw language into style and an artistically meaningful form. She has a notion, quite correct in my experience, that all readers start out slow, savoring individual syllables and words. Gradually, under pressure, they speed up, consuming more but enjoying and absorbing less.</p> <p>Reading becomes information processing. The sheer bliss of the childhood reading experience comes to seem like a lost Eden, recaptured only in thrilling fits and starts or when time, mercifully, stands still. Prison and vacation make good readers.</p>
Comment	Related to Prose and Sutherland citations above.

Reference	Levin, Martin. September 16, 2006 Saturday. Slow reading. The Globe and Mail (Canada). Book review. Shelf Life, pg. D25.
Summary	<p>Using copious examples of the sort of writing she loves, or even just admires, Prose delivers a non-fiction meta-<i>bildungsroman</i>, which takes the reader through all the aspects of the novel: words, sentences, paragraphs, narration, character, dialogue, details and gesture, all of this aimed at promoting the joys of close reading.</p> <p>I learned to write by learning how to read and wanted to impart some sense of how I did that. My hope was that the book would be adopted in universities, but it seems to have gone far beyond that. Plus there was my messianic desire to promote close reading. Readers and writers both need to focus on what's in front of them on the page, especially how language is used.</p> <p>Here's what <i>Reading Like a Writer</i> had done for me. Since an impossible number of books enter my world, my tendency is to rush. Prose has convinced me to adapt the Slow Food movement to reading, to return to the close reading of my university days. How much one has read matters less than how well one has read.</p>
Comment	Related to Prose above. Many people respond to her work. Connection with the Slow movement – see that section.

Reference	Cain, William E. A literary approach to literature: Why English departments should focus on close reading, not cultural studies. <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i> . Dec 13, 1996. Vol. 43; p. B4
Summary	Contends that university literary studies should focus on studying, responding, and articulating how a writer uses words. Separating cultural studies from literary studies; Teaching undergraduates how to become attentive readers; Mastering skills of textual interpretation
Comment	Close reading has a long tradition in English departments. Observe the distinction between cultural and literary studies.

Reference	Miller, J. Hillis (2002). <i>On literature</i> . London: Routledge.
Summary	<p>Good reading demands slow reading. 122. Being suspicious at every turn, interrogating every detail of the work, trying to figure out by just what means the magic is wrought. Seeing the wizard behind the curtain.</p> <p>Distinguishes two forms. Rhetorical reading – examining the language. Other form involves interrogation of the way work inculcates beliefs about class, race, or gender relations. These days called cultural studies or postcolonial studies.</p> <p>Deprives the literary works of their power, versus reading <i>allegro</i>. 122-123.</p>
Comment	Similar distinction of cultural studies from literary. Very serious approach – hardly free voluntary.

Reference	Oz, Amos. Nation; 6/14/1999. Excerpt from the book <i>The story begins: Essays on literature</i> . Vol. 268 Issue 22, p13-14, 2p.
Summary	Humourous call to the pleasures of slow reading, parallel with sex education.
Cooment	See, slow reading doesn't have to be so serious!

Reference	Close Reading, Closed Writing Murray, Heather College English; Feb 1991; 53, 2; Wilson Education Abstracts pg. 195
Summary	Close reading has come under fire. Yet it persists as a teaching method. Comparison of Canadian, UK, and US values around close reading.
Comment	Interesting link to close reading as part of British heritage in Canada.

Reference	David S. Miall, Don Kuiken. August 2002. A feeling for fiction: becoming what we behold. <i>Poetics</i> 30 (2002) 221–241. Issue 4,
Summary	We propose that aesthetic and narrative feelings interact to produce metaphors of personal identification that modify self-understanding. We also argue that the concept of catharsis (the conflict of tragic feelings identified by Aristotle) identifies one particular form of a more general pattern in which aesthetic and narrative feelings evoked during reading interact to modify the reader.
Comment	Introduces the theme that slow reading changes the reader.

Reference	Rye, Gill. July 2000. The (im)possible ethics of reading: Identity, difference, violence and responsibility (Paule Constant's <i>White spirit</i>). <i>French Studies</i> , vol. 54, no. 3, pp. 327-37,
Summary	Focusing on Paule Constant's novel <i>White Spirit</i> , the writer explores the ethics of reading in relation to issues of sexual and ethnic identity. She argues that the novel encourages readers toward self-reflexivity and in itself broaches the issues of the responsibility of reading. Focusing on two episodes from the novel, she finds that (at least some) readers are required to interrogate their own reading positions and their own attitudes to difference(s). She notes that accepting such serious reading responsibilities calls into question the commonplace idea of reading as escapism but also maintains that a self-interrogative, self-aware approach to reading differences enriches, rather than diminishes, the pleasure of reading.
Comment	An ethical question around slow reading if the reading changes the reader.

Reference	Second Thoughts: A Focus on Rereading, By David Galef ²
Summary	How does our perspective change after the first reading? What distortions emerge through repetition? How do we determine what's worth rereading,

2

<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&id=Q6o4FyTAkoUC&dq=second+thoughts+focus+on+rereading&printsec=frontcover&source=web&ots=FLjZEjvSmf&sig=2x2y8VdXR7StdB4z01eeRPWUOLc#PPA334,M1>

	<p>and what is the role of such repetition in our lives? What are the gains and losses? <i>Second Thoughts</i> answers these questions and investigates the phenomenon of rereading narrative texts from various genres. Contributors of this volume explore rereading children's literature, rereading Proust, how rereading functions in the oral tradition, and why so many people reread romances. Essays range from rereading Shakespeare and Spenser to rereading on a desert island and the rereading of hypertext. Divided into five parts, "Overviews", "Origins", "Past", "Present", and "Musings and Beyond", this collection enriches the topic of rereading through its anthropological, psychological, and cultural approaches and offers a comprehensive survey of the subject of rereading. <i>Second Thoughts</i> is for anyone who's ever read a book twice.</p> <p>Rereading has many joys but suspense is not one of them. Anticipation has replaced it.</p> <p>Reader-response criticism.</p>
Comment	Connection with re-reading, including children's literature.

Reference	Hartman, Geoffrey H. (1996). The Fate of Reading Once More. <i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i> . May 1996. Vol. 111, Iss. 3, p. 383-389.
Summary	<p>Hartman assesses the changes in literary studies over forty-five years, from a personal development perspective.</p> <p>The work of reading, even of close reading, survives today as a human-size technology.” (384)</p> <p>“By ‘reading’ I mean the methodical willingness to scrutinize texts again and again, for their open as well as resistant character, and the transfer of that habit to communications technology, its daily surfeit of words and images. That surfeit, an inevitable part of the environment, both provokes and erodes our ability to think, to stabilize the endless flow. Reading is often destabilizing, but now it becomes – all the more – a form of thinking in the face of pressure.” (385)</p> <p>Mass literacy is not over. Teaching slow reading is still important. Without it, “democracy does not long prevail but succumbs to propaganda and demagoguery.” (386)</p>
Comment	<p>Hartman once again, as in the previous article in philosophy. Hartman, like other senior voices in the humanities, makes a call for the value of slow reading.</p> <p>As with philosophy, if the technique is highly prescribed it should be distinguished from “voluntary free reading”.</p>

	Relevant comments on importance of slow reading with respect to information technology and democracy. The democratic angle is tied to the concept of voluntary.
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Reference	Waters, Lindsay (2007). Time for Reading. <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i> , 53(23), B6-B8.
Summary	Lindsay Waters, Executive Editor for the Humanities at Harvard University Press, declared a worldwide reading crisis resulting from our global push toward productivity. She asserts that young children are learning to read faster, skipping phonetics and diagramming sentences, and concludes that these children will not grow up to read Milton. She foresees the end of graduate English literature programs. "There is something similar between a reading method that focuses primarily on the bottom-line meaning of a story in a novel and the economic emphasis on the bottom line that makes automobile manufacturers speed up assembly lines." She advised re-introducing time into reading, "The mighty imperative is to speed everything up, but there might be some advantage in slowing things down. People are trying slow eating. Why not slow reading?"
Comment	Waters is a powerful voice for slow reading. She points out the value for children – slow reading is not just for adults. She makes a connection with modern economics. Also a connection with the Slow movement – see that section.

The Slow Movement and Slow Reading

Reference	Honoré, Carl (2004). <i>In Praise of Slow: How a Worldwide Movement is Changing the Cult of Speed</i> . Vintage Canada.
Summary	Carl Honoré wrote the best-selling book about the slow movement, <i>In Praise of Slow</i> . Honoré's interest in the slow movement began one day in an airport when he saw a book called <i>The One-Minute Bedtime Story</i> . At first it struck him as brilliant — the cure to his nightly tug-of-war with his son's demands for more stories — then the absurdity of his fast lifestyle called him to his senses. The slow movement acknowledges that "speed has helped to remake our world in ways that are wonderful and liberating" (2004) but our obsession with speed has turned into an addiction. "When you accelerate things that should not be accelerated, when you forget how to slow down, there is a price to pay." Slow reading is recommended as one of several practices to decelerate from the fast pace of modern life.
Comment	A more recent sense of the concept of slow reading comes from the Slow Movement, document in Honoré's (2004) <i>In praise of slow</i> . His book begins with his realization that he needs to slow down when reading with his children.

Reference	Christine Fenno (2005, July). You work fast. You eat fast. You fall in love fast. But to find real happiness, all you have to do is... SLOW DOWN. <i>Marie Claire</i> , 12(7), 100-104,106.
Summary	Interview with Carl Honore re: slowing down. Talks about experience with reading with kids.

Reference	Piddington, Sydney (1973). The Special Joys of Super-Slow Reading. <i>Reader's Digest</i> , June.
Summary	<p>As I sat down on that hot and humid evening, there seemed to be no solutions to the problems thrashing around in my brain. So I picked up a book, settled into a comfortable chair and applied my own special therapy—super-slow reading.</p> <p>I spent three hours on two short chapters of <i>Personal History</i> by Vincent Sheean—savouring each paragraph, lingering over a sentence, a phrase, or even a single word, building a detailed mental picture of the scene.</p> <p>Odd that an article on Super-Slow Reading would appear in <i>Reader's Digest</i>, a magazine that condenses books. On the back of the issue was this advertisement: “To every Miss, Mrs. and Ms. who has no time to read — READ THIS!” followed by a introductory offer on their condensed books.</p>
Comment	Slow reading as a pleasure, a completely voluntary choice. These materials really drawn out the voluntary aspect of slow reading, rather like the voluntary simplicity movement.

Reference	Lane Jennings (2005). Slow Is Beautiful: Living as If Life Really Mattered. <i>The Futurist</i> , 39(2), 12-13. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from ABI/INFORM Global database. (Document ID: 791358781).
Summary	To counteract the swiftness of twenty-first-century existence, new, less-accelerated products and activities are making inroads on our careening daily lives. Examples include the following: 1. slow housing, 2. slow exercise, 3. slow reading, 4. slow professions, and 5. slow sex.

Reference	The Irish Times, March 26, 2004
Summary	Another call to slow down, including slow reading

Reference	Walt Crawford. Contemplation and Content: Getting Under Their Skins. <i>EContent</i> . Wilton: Mar 2005. Vol. 28, Iss. 3; pg. 43, 1 pgs
Summary	Memorable, thought-provoking, resonant: while not synonyms, these words describe content that sticks with people—content that gets under users' skins. And consider the word contemplation. That may be the ultimate goal for the best content on your site: to show up in the contemplative thoughts of some readers. People still do contemplate, you know—or at least some of us left coast aging hippies do. A whole group of "slow" movements around the world (such as the slow food movement) testify to a desire to get back in touch with ourselves, with our natural rhythms, with what's under the

	surface. We're trying to regain our humanity and, at least once in a while, to move away from a frenetic state of content overload
Comments	Connection between slow movement, reading, and the web. Compare with Media items below.

Reference	Smith & MacKinnon (2007). <i>The 100-Mile Diet</i> .
Summary	The first trees had been planted perhaps eighty years ago; in fact, the whole orchard was a living library of old-fashioned fruits. Ed, an apple enthusiast, took a couple of cuttings home to California to graft onto his own trees. He prized the resulting fruit so much that he took one to an apple institute, which declared it a Shenandoah Strawberry. I once punched the name into Google: nothing. These old varieties are not the kind of information that is of interest to the Information Age; they only make themselves known when you stand in front of them. (pg. 112)
Comment	<p>The Slow Movement also brings to attention the theme of locality. The movement began with Slow Food, an effort to resist fast food. A primary theme in the Slow Food movement is that of locality: eating local foods and encouraging local food systems. This idea can be applied to VSR. Reading materials that are close to home – both geographical or psychologically – are bound to engage internal processes, adding dimension and slowing down the reading.</p> <p>But it is a newer idea that has not received much attention. This reference provides one lead ...</p> <p>The 100-Mile-Diet has inspired many thoughts about locality and reading. What does food have to do with reading? Both have an expiry date; no one wants to read old news. Unlike food, it is easy to push information around the planet via the web, no carbon required. Or are other costs involved?³</p> <p>Smith & MacKinnon talked about the traceability of their food. “They know exactly where their food comes from, and under what circumstances it was produced” (pg. 54-55). This autochthonous knowledge is often missing from our web-based information. Schools teach students to properly cite their sources, including those from the web. But web-based material can change or vanish, and the sources can be quite obscure. How about the last book you read? What do you know about the author who wrote it? Or the context in which the author wrote the book? Is that kind of knowledge important?</p> <p>Local writing is not necessarily better than global writing; it can often be worse. Writing is a talent that may not be present in your neighbourhood, and the global publishing industry serves a distillation function that filters out a lot of junk. It also filters out a lot of good and divergent voices that do</p>

³ <http://www.slate.com/id/2185143/>

	not have sufficient mass appeal. How many capable writers aren't frustrated by trying to scale the walls of the publishing industry? How many publishers aren't equally discouraged, wishing the returns would allow them to risk more often on a new writer? The end result is the smothering of diversity. When we tire of our global fare, where do we turn for new stories?
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Reference	Readers Advisor On-line Litblogs With Regional Flair ⁴
Summary	<p>But one of the nicest things about Litblogs isn't often discussed: how some of them bring a refreshing air of regional pride to the business. Take a blog like BookNinja, for instance: Anything I want to know about the state of Canadian publishing, which is emphatically not a hot topic here in the States, I can pick up at BookNinja.</p> <p>The Bookslut blog gives off a whiff of Chicago; the Elegant Variation is absolutely steeped in Los Angeles. MaggieReads gives me a feeling for the South; Maud Newton, of course, makes me feel like I could step outside of my door directly onto the sidewalks of New York City. And that's without even considering the more obviously rooted in place blogs, such as the Ann Arbor District Library blog, touting Michigan library programs and news.</p>
Comment	<p>Blogs may be the only way to get good local book information because mainstream publishing has to focus on bestsellers.</p> <p>In this case, the web helps slow reading.</p>

Research and Methods for Voluntary Slow Reading

Literary Reading

Reference	To Read or Not to Read ⁵
Summary	<p>National Endowment for the Arts Announces New Reading Study⁶</p> <p>November 19, 2007, Washington, DC -- Today, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) announces the release of To Read or Not To Read: A Question of National Consequence, a new and comprehensive analysis of reading patterns in the United States. To Read or Not To Read gathers statistics from more than 40 studies on the reading habits and skills of children, teenagers, and adults. The compendium reveals recent declines in voluntary reading and test scores alike, exposing trends that have severe consequences for American society.</p> <p>Reading scores for American adults of almost all education levels have</p>

⁴ <http://www.readersadvisoronline.com/blog/index.php/2007/10/15/litblogs-with-regional-flair/>

⁵ <http://www.nea.gov/research/ToRead.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.nea.gov/news/news07/TRNR.html>

	<p>deteriorated, notably among the best-educated groups. From 1992 to 2003, the percentage of adults with graduate school experience who were rated proficient in prose reading dropped by 10 points, a 20 percent rate of decline.</p> <p>Literary readers are more likely than non-readers to engage in positive civic and individual activities – such as volunteering, attending sports or cultural events, and exercising.</p>
Comment	<p>“Literary Reading” is related to voluntary slow reading. Literary reading is given to close reading. It is different than reading for entertainment or information. It is also voluntary.</p>

Reference	<p>Matthew Kirschenbaum (2007, December). How Reading Is Being Reimagined. <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, 54(15).</p>
Summary	<p>Summary:⁷</p> <p>The basic argument is that reading, or what they rather awkwardly refer to as "voluntary reading" (that is, reading done purely for pleasure or self-improvement) is in a precipitous state of decline, especially among the young — a situation which poses a grave threat to our culture, democracy and civic fabric.</p> <p>Though clearly offered with the best of intentions, the report demonstrates an astonishingly simplistic view of what reading is and where it is and isn't occurring. Overflowing with bar graphs and and charts measuring hours and minutes spent reading within various age brackets, the study tries to let statistics do the persuading, but fails at almost every turn to put these numbers in their proper social or historical context, or to measure them adequately against other widespread forms of reading taking place on computers and the net.</p>
Comment	<p>The contrast with reading on-line is raised here. See further discussion below and under “Media”.</p>

Reference	<p>Culture and Policy: An Interview with Mark Bauerlein Jeffrey J Williams. <i>Minnesota Review</i>. Columbia:Spring 2005. Iss. 63/64, p. 159-177 (19 pp.)</p>
Summary	<p>First Reading at Risk study found reading of literature declining. Looks at types of reading.</p> <p>Asked if they read any fiction, any poetry, any drama, any book. (159-160)</p>

7

http://www.futureofthebook.org/blog/archives/2007/11/the_neas_misreading_of_reading.html

	<p>Most young people do not go on-line for information (11%).</p> <p>In 1997, Sun Microsystems did a study to see how people use the Internet and how we should design web pages to maximize their use. This study had the title “How Users Read on the Web,” and the first sentence was “They don’t.” Instead users scan the page; 16% of the subjects read word by word, linearly, which is what they meant by reading. Scanning the page, the other 84% look for visual clues and keywords.</p> <p>These skills are useful but not for comprehension. (162)</p>
Comment	On-line reading is not the same as literary reading.

Reference	The Nation’s Report Card 2003
Summary	<p>Reading for literary experience. Involves the reader in exploring themes, events, characters, settings, plots, actions, and the language of literary works. Various types of texts are associated with reading for literary experience, including novels, short stories, poems, plays, legends, biographies, myths, and folktales.</p> <p>Versus reading for information or to perform a task.</p> <p>More alarming are indications that Americans are losing not just the will to read but even the ability. According to the Department of Education, between 1992 and 2003 the average adult’s skill in reading prose slipped one point on a five-hundred-point scale, and the proportion who were proficient—capable of such tasks as “comparing viewpoints in two editorials”—declined from fifteen per cent to thirteen. The Department of Education found that reading skills have improved moderately among fourth and eighth graders in the past decade and a half, with the largest jump occurring just before the No Child Left Behind Act took effect, but twelfth graders seem to be taking after their elders. Their reading scores fell an average of six points between 1992 and 2005, and the share of proficient twelfth-grade readers dropped from forty per cent to thirty-five per cent. The steepest declines were in “reading for literary experience”—the kind that involves “exploring themes, events, characters, settings, and the language of literary works,” in the words of the department’s test-makers. In 1992, fifty-four per cent of twelfth graders told the Department of Education that they talked about their reading with friends at least once a week. By 2005, only thirty-seven per cent said they did.⁸</p>
Comment	Literary reading is associated with close reading, and distinguished from other kinds of reading.

⁸ http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2007/12/24/071224crat_atlarge_crain

Reference	Canadian Heritage ^{9 10}
Summary	<p>Contrary to certain alarmist claims that there is a trend towards a lower reading rate in our society or that the Internet has had harmful effects on reading habits, this national survey has shown that reading for pleasure remains a solidly established and widespread habit with little or no change over the last 15 years.</p> <p>Contrary to a widely held fear or belief, there is nothing to indicate that the incredible popularity of the Internet, video games, chatting over the Internet and downloaded music has impinged on the rate of, and time devoted to, reading.</p> <p>In addition, there seems to be no significant generation gap or factor that would indicate that young people (aged 16 to 24) in Canada are avoiding reading for pleasure.</p> <p>Fifty-six per cent of respondents own “a book they enjoy rereading”.</p> <p>Forty-nine per cent of respondents “often discuss books they have read with their friends”.</p> <p>Seventy per cent of parents with children aged 6 months and older stated they read or have read to their children “virtually every day”.</p> <p>Accordingly, slightly less than half (44 per cent) of Canadians read “literature” most often whenever they read for pleasure. They represent half (51 per cent) of all readers. Their average number of books read annually amounts to 23.3 books, which is nearly 2 books per month.</p>
Comment	Is the trend different in Canada? This study includes literature and re-reading.

Reference	Statistics Canada Survey of Household Spending http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/080226/d080226a.htm
Summary	Spending on reading materials decreased 5% to \$260 per household. Spending on newspapers declined 7%, while expenditures for periodicals and magazines dropped 10%. Alberta households bucked this trend, spending 8% more on reading materials than in 2005.
Comment	Mixed results here.

Close Reading Methods in Education, Reading Rate

⁹ http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/pc-ch/pubs/lalpd-rbbp/exec/cont_e.cfm

¹⁰ <http://r1.chass.utoronto.ca/sdaweb/html/leisure.htm>

Reference	Duke, Charles R. (1982). <i>Literature and the Making of Meaning</i> .
Summary	Another teacher supports the idea that ... slow reading will help them learn and interpret the language of the text. Such a process of making meaning takes time, but to enable students to uncover the possibility for enjoyment of reading and the importance of making meaning for themselves from their reading, is worth the risk and effort.
Comment	Slow reading is beneficial for teaching students too.

Reference	Kenneth Lindblom (2005). <i>Close Reading on Your Feet: Performance in the English Language Arts Classroom</i> . <i>English Journal</i> , 95(1), 116-119.
Summary	“Performance happens when students look closely at a piece of text and use their voices and bodies to explore the subtleties of the author’s words” (116).
Comment	Introduces the idea of performance reading. One could say that anything that adds time and depth to reading is slow reading. The performance angle adds a dimension of entertainment that fits with the voluntary aspect.

Reference	Joan L Knickerbocker, James Rycik. (2002). <i>Growing into literature: Adolescents' literary interpretation and appreciation</i> . <i>Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy</i> , 46(3), 196-208.
Summary	“The Mature Reading stage includes critical reading – the reader argues back at the book ... elements could be introduced as early as the second grade”. (188)
Comment	The “mature reading stage” sounds similar to slow reading, and it can be taught at young ages in some cases.

Reference	Margaret Metzger (1998). <i>Teaching reading</i> . <i>Phi Delta Kappan</i> , 80(3), 240-246+. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from Wilson Education Abstracts database. (Document ID: 35612496).
Summary	<p>Students (and some adults) believe that they are poor readers because they read fiction slowly, even if they read nonfiction very well. They do not understand that good reading has little to do with speed or material. Students (and some adults) start with an assumption of inferiority: "I never get the hidden meaning" or "I have always hated reading." When students search for hidden meanings, they assume that there is one single answer that teachers or authors are withholding from them. They do not understand that anyone can learn how to read on multiple levels, just as anyone can learn, with effort, increasingly complex skills in sports or computers or music.</p> <p>Five years ago I solved the problem. Now I am confident that I have a technique to teach high school students to read well. I can't make them love reading, but I can give them the skills to comprehend any difficult piece of text. Even freshmen in a public school can become confident, independent readers.</p>

	I began my experiment with 48 students in two freshman classes.
Comment	Author demonstrates that slow reading is not just a professional technique.

Reference	<p>Critical thinking... and the art of close reading (Part I) Richard Paul; Linda Elder Journal of Developmental Education; Winter 2003; 27, 2; Wilson Education Abstracts</p> <p>Linda Elder, Richard Paul. (2004). Critical Thinking...and the Art of Close Reading, Part IV. Journal of Developmental Education, 28(2), 36-37. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from Wilson Education Abstracts database. (Document ID: 752008801).</p>
Summary	<p>“to learn a new subject: requires close reading skills in internalizing and taking ownership of an organized system of meanings.</p> <p>How you read should be determined in part by what you read. Reflective readers read a textbook, for example, using a different mindset than they use when reading an article in a newspaper. Furthermore, reflective readers read a textbook in biology differently from the way they read a textbook in history. Having recognized this variability, we should also recognize that there are core reading tools and skills for reading any substantive text; some of these will be the focus of this and our next few columns.”</p> <p>Elder and Paul focus on some of the skills required to read at different levels. They highlight five levels, beginning with the most basic and moving to the more complex. They also introduce the five levels of close reading in the form of directions for students. Part of a good series on the technique of close reading.</p>
Comment	This one is very detailed. But perhaps too instructive? Loses the sense of voluntary.

Reference	"I could read those parts over and over": Eighth graders rereading to enhance enjoyment and learning with literature. Author: Faust, Mark A; Glenzer, Nancy Source: Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy 44, no. 3 (Nov 2000): p. 234-239
Summary	<p>We are indeed conscious that a call for more rereading of literature in school contexts is likely to be greeted with skepticism if not outright suspicion by many teachers and parents, who will fail to see any point in covering the same material more than once. To those who may desire to explore rereading in their classrooms anyway, we suggest that the testimony of children may be their most powerful source of support. The students we interviewed easily grasped the notion that rereading literature is analogous to watching movies and listening to musical selections more than once. As we have attempted to illustrate in this essay, children also identify various ways in which rereading enhances their understanding and enjoyment of literature. This testimony, combined</p>

	with the availability of sound alternative conceptions of reading process (e.g., Luke, 1995) may not make it easy to build experiences with rereading into school curricula, but it certainly helps to make such a move possible as well as desirable.
Comment	Re-reading as slow reading, and children love it.

Reference	Ronald P. Carver (1990). <i>Reading Rate: A Review of Research and Theory</i> . San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
Summary	<p>“Good readers generally do not change their rate with the difficulty level of material”. But there are five “gears” of “rauding”. Lower gears are more powerful but slower. (437)</p> <p>Silent speech (subvocalization) helps the rauding process operate at its top speed.</p> <p>It is a mistake to talk about reading as if there were only one process. Think of five gears.</p> <p>Most individuals typically read at the fastest rate at which they can comprehend complete thoughts in the successive sentences of relatively easy material. This rate is their rauding rate. A fertile ground for future research. 441</p> <p>Are good readers also flexible readers, adjusting their rate to the difficulty of material? No. They do not adjust their rate, they adjust their process if necessary.</p> <p>Rapid Reading Training is skimming training in disguise. A lack of comprehension occurs.</p>
Comment	Substantive work on reading rate. Different gear for comprehension. Subvocalization helps reading in top gear.

Reference	Reading Rate and Prose Retrieval. By: Meyer, Bonnie J.F.; Talbot, Andrew P.; Florencio, Dayze. <i>Scientific Studies of Reading</i> , 1999, Vol. 3 Issue 4, p303, 27, p, 4 charts; (AN 3192994)
Summary	Some past research (e.g., Smith 1994) suggests that reading slowly can deter comprehension. Speed is required for coherency. This study showed that reading comprehension improved when slowing down, as per Carver. “Carver (1990) stated that reading rate is an inseparable aspect of reading comprehension and that “the accuracy of comprehension can be increased by decreasing rate, and rate can be increased by decreasing the accuracy of comprehension” (p. 4). It is this relation between reading rate and comprehension that is central to this research.”
Comments	Directly challenges the material that says slow reading interferes with comprehension.

Free Voluntary Reading and Avid Reading in Library Sciences

Reference	Krashen, Stephen (2004). <i>The power of reading</i> . 2 nd edition. Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited.
Summary	<p>“Literacy, defined simply as the ability to read and write on a basic level, has been steadily rising in the US for the last hundred years (see, e.g., Stedman and Kaestle 1987).” “The demands for literacy have been rising faster”. The cure is reading, free voluntary reading. Book examines the research on FVR. The possibilities FVR offers individuals and society are great.” ix-xi.</p> <p>FVR = because you want to. No questions at the end. You don’t have to finish the book. The kind most of us do obsessively all the time.</p> <p>Research based on in-school. Results in better comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, spelling, grammar. 17</p> <p>Versus direct instruction (18).</p> <p>Is light reading enough? No. Comprehension and vocabulary development are related to what is read. 114.</p>
Comment	A survey of research on FVR. FVR has the voluntary aspect, and this is useful for defining voluntary in VSR. Close reading? Not really, he defines skill-building as learning a rule and error-correction. Some close-reading is like this. He does indicate that light reading is not enough.

Reference	Ross, Catherine Sheldrick, McKechnie, Lynne (E.F.) & Rothbauer, Paulette M. (2006). <i>Reading matters: What the research reveals about reading, libraries, and community</i> . Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.
Summary	<p>“the number of words we use to refer to the act of reading – browsing, scanning ... immersed or lost in a book ... librarians need to be aware of this variety” (5)</p> <p>“we put special emphasis on the phenomenon of reading for pleasure ... downplayed ... in comparison with reading for information, literacy, life skill ...” (6)</p> <p>Avid reading. “Avid readers say that reading gives them something that can’t be experienced any other way” (160).</p> <p>Toyne & Usherwood: Contribution of imaginative literature: instruction, self-development (162).</p> <p>For avid readers, there is authority in the printed word. The book captures</p>

	<p>knowledge and holds it still like a photograph. 164</p> <p>“depends ... on their own situation ... coded to tap into my experiences” (165)</p> <p>“gives you a much greater internal world” (166) [interiority]</p> <p>“a reader ... assimilates it into his own psychological experiences” 166</p> <p>discovery of identity, models and blueprints, connections with others, reassurance</p>
Comment	Voluntary, but slow in the sense of avid or personal, not necessarily temporal. Still, I very much like the several references to “psychological locality”. This is important in slow reading.

Media Studies and Slow Reading: Form Matters

Reference	Julie Coiro, Elizabeth Dobler. (2007). Exploring the online reading comprehension strategies used by sixth-grade skilled readers to search for and locate information on the Internet. <i>Reading Research Quarterly</i> , 42(2), 214-257.
Summary	While considering the difficulties that closed hypertext systems may present to readers, many have recently argued that Internet texts present additional challenges beyond those in hypertext systems that may affect reading comprehension in online environments (e.g., Coiro, 2003a; Eagleton & Dobler, 2007; Leu et al., 2004; RRSQ, 2002; Spires & Estes, 2002). 42/2
Comment	Reading comprehension more difficult on-line.

Reference	Allen Webb. Digital Texts and the New Literacies. <i>English Journal</i> ; Sep 2007; 97, 1.
Summary	When the literature anthologies did not arrive, Allen Webb turned to the Internet, where he found a wealth of classic and contemporary e-texts. Using these online resources opened up possibilities for new ways of teaching and learning traditional skills of close reading and critical analysis. Students created blogs of poems and commentary, compared versions of "The Odyssey" and a controversial news story, and manipulated the language and structure of texts to question the cultural and historical contexts of the work.
Comment	Use of web and blogs for close reading.

Reference	M Cecil Smith Reading Research Quarterly Vol. 31, No. 2 April/May/June 1995 (pp. 196–219) Differences in adults’ reading practices and literacy proficiencies.
Summary	Anderson et al. (1988) found, for example, that time spent reading books was the best predictor of reading achievement, assessed by standardized tests, among intermediate grades students. Reading newspapers, magazines,

	and comics were unrelated to achievement. Older adults who read multiple print contents performed comparably to younger adults who read only a single content.
Comments	Books preferable for reading achievement among youth.

Reference	Terje Hillesund (September 2007). Reading Books in the Digital Age subsequent to Amazon, Google and the long tail. <i>First Monday</i> , volume 12, number 9. ¹¹
Summary	Poor readability (today's equipment does not provide for good enough reading of long texts). Culture (the paper book is highly valued and interwoven in a number of cultural practices).

Reference	Dupuy, B., & McQuillan, J. (1997, June). Handcrafted Books: Check this out!. <i>Canadian Modern Language Review</i> , 53(4), 743.
Summary	<p>There is strong evidence that reading, particularly self-selected or 'free voluntary' reading (FVR) is a major contributor to both first and second/foreign language development and literacy (Krashen, 1993; Elley, 1991; Elley & Manghubai, 1983).</p> <p>However, despite these advantages, FVR is seldom a significant part of beginning and intermediate second/foreign language curricula (Huber, 1993), and many second/foreign language students report doing little reading for pleasure in the language they study (McQuillan, 1995; Dupuy, in preparation). One reason for the lack of FVR in second/foreign language programs is the difficulty of finding texts that beginning and intermediate adult students find both interesting and comprehensible. (i.e., not children's books).</p> <p>About four hundred handcrafted books, ranging from handwritten, stapled texts with no illustrations, to word-processed, desk-top publishing quality documents with computer graphics, have been produced in the course of a semester A home-made library, where handcrafted books will be kept for other classes and future students, has also been opened.</p> <p>Value of niche publishing.</p>
Comment	Makes a number of important points. Connection with FVR. Pleasure. Comprehension. Also, locality and format: relevant materials, in known language, available by micropublishing.

Reference	Carusi, Annamaria (2006). Textual Practitioners: A comparison of hypertext theory and phenomenology of reading. <i>Arts and Humanities in Higher Education</i> . Volume 5, Issue 2, Pages: 163-180
Summary	The article is an exploration of online reading from the perspective of

¹¹ http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue12_9/hillesund/index.html

	<p>theories of reading and interpretation based on literary theory and the phenomenology of reading literary text. One of its aims is to show that such theories can make a contribution to our understanding of reading and to our design of online reading spaces. The precursor of this stance is the form of hypertext theory originally proposed by George Landow, which predicted radical changes in reading practices with an impact not only on literature but on education in general. The prediction has been slow to be verified and has been criticized by empirical and psychological studies. In this article, hypertext theory is compared to the phenomenology of reading linear literary text, with particular attention paid to the role played by the notion of a text, work or ‘whole’ which is constructed or produced during the course of reading. I show that the active and engaged reading predicted by hypertext theory is available in reading linear literary text, and to a higher degree than in reading hypertext, and consider ways in which the kinds of reading process which occur in reading literature can be generalized to reading for other higher education purposes. Finally, I speculate as to the range of online technologies that could be used to encourage these reading processes, and propose an alternative online reading space.</p>
Comment	<p>Introduces the idea of linearity achieved by format. Hypertext is not linear. Connection with thought.</p>

Reference	<p>Postman, Neil (1985). <i>Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business</i>. NY: Penguin.</p>
Summary	<p>Postman is widely regarded as an important critical voice regarding America’s shift toward a television culture. In his often cited book, Postman laments “the decline of the Age of Typography and the ascendancy of the Age of Television” (pg. 8). The Age of Typography had its zenith in the 19th century, and Postman links it with the Age of Reason. He notes the character of mind of the ordinary citizen of the day, who could listen for hours on end to political orations clearly shaped by a culture favouring text. Speeches would be followed by equally literate and equally lengthy rebuttals. The citizens who took time for this process were the same ones working dawn to dusk farming the lands, yet squeezing in a little time to read after hours. These people read with purpose, and were well equipped to shape their nation. The Age of Television, on the other hand, is characterized by entertainment designed to please the eye. It requires no literacy and no reflective mental processing. We evaluate ourselves through the eye of television, and judge our politicians through their showmanship. As Postman warns, reading books is important for developing rational thinking, character of mind and political astuteness. From this view, what is good in modern politics is sustained by the citizenry with the patience for serious reading.</p>
Comment	<p>Slow reading is not of the elite. These farmers were slow readers. It created their political mind.</p>

Reference	Levy, David M. 2001. Reading and attention. Chapter 6 in <i>Scrolling forward: Making sense of documents in the digital age</i> (110 – 117). NY: Arcade.
Summary	Levy’s article begins with the observation that technology is a mixed blessing, making it possible to do several things at once, but at the same time making so many competing demands for attention that human lives become fragmented. The modern glut of information has people reading all day long, from menus to credit card bills, but this kind of reading is shallow and of brief duration, alternating quickly between competing stimuli. Levy contrasts that style of reading with the more contemplative style of deep reading. That this latter style has sacred and reverential qualities is no surprise, for books have their roots in the codex, first adopted by early Christian communities as a vehicle for the Bible. Levy wonders if we experience resonances of the ancestral sacred uses of books. Levy advises that even in business culture, it is important to develop the capacity for sustained attention rather than just successive attention. By making choices about the stimuli to which we attend, we can draw greater meaning from our experience.
Comment	Deep reading. Connection with religion. Connection with sustained thought. Context of technology.

Reference	Birkets, Sven. (1994). <i>The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age</i> . Boston: Faber and Faber.
Summary	<p>“serious reading is above all an agency of self-making” (87)</p> <p>with adolescence comes a sense of futurity, highly conducive to reading, the novel becomes a site for testing transformations (89)</p> <p>there is a very special transformation that takes place when we read fiction (91)</p> <p>the novel smelts its reader, extracting emotions and apprehensions and showing them in an aesthetic frame Distanced from these parts of ourselves, we (especially as adolescents) ... begin to understand how they matter in the larger human ecology ... (93)</p> <p>Birkets (1994) stated "Reading, because we control it, is adaptable to our needs and rhythms. We are free to indulge our subjective associative impulse; the term I coin for this is deep reading: the slow and meditative possession of a book." His statement speaks to the idea that slow reading is not merely about slowing down, but about controlling the pace of reading. Slow readers may speed up at times, and then slow down for the more difficult or pleasurable portions of a text.</p> <p>Also see: Deep Thinking and Deep Reading in an Age of Info-Glut, Info-Garbage, Info-Glitz and Info-Glimmer. From Now On: The Educational</p>

	Technology Journal. ¹²
Comment	Deep or vertical reading versus horizontal reading. Many important points including value of fiction, variability of pace (vs. Carver).

Psychological and Physiological Research on Slow Reading

Reference	Proust and the Squid
Summary	<p>“Taking the long view, it’s not the neglect of reading that has to be explained but the fact that we read at all. “The act of reading is not natural,” Maryanne Wolf writes in “Proust and the Squid” (Harper; \$25.95), an account of the history and biology of reading. Humans started reading far too recently for any of our genes to code for it specifically. We can do it only because the brain’s plasticity enables the repurposing of circuitry that originally evolved for other tasks—distinguishing at a glance a garter snake from a haricot vert, say.”¹³</p> <p>“I differ from Kurzweil that ... acceleration ... is always positive. ... in our brains there are “delay neurons” whose sole function is to slow neuronal transmission ... enable us to plan and synchronize” (213-214)</p>
Comment	Brain basis for slow reading – delay neurons.

Reference	Johnson, Debra L., Wiebe, John S., Gold, Sherri M., Andreasen, Nancy C., et al. (1999). Cerebral blood flow and personality: A positron emission tomography study. <i>The American Journal of Psychiatry</i> , 156(2), 252-257. ¹⁴
Summary	<p>This study provides a solid empirical explanation for the persistence of books. Johnson’s team mapped differences in brain activity for the personality dimension of introversion and extraversion. At the one end of the dimension are extraverts, described as “gregarious, socially active, cheerful, assertive, and easily excitable”. At the other end are introverts, tending toward reclusion and “preferring books” to other people. The brain activity of introverts was found to be associated with increased blood flow in the frontal lobes and the anterior thalamus. Extrovert activity was correlated with regions in the anterior cingulate gyrus, the temporal lobes, and the posterior thalamus. Johnson suggested that the greater activity in the anterior thalamic nuclei and frontal lobe regions in introverts “likely reflects the introspective nature of these individuals”. This study provides an empirical basis for differences in preference for the quieter act of reading books versus the higher intensity experience of digital media. Multimedia may dominate our culture only because extraverts outnumber introverts by four to one. There will continue to be a quarter of the population that</p>

¹² <http://fno.org/mar97/deep.html>.

¹³

http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2007/12/24/071224crat_atlarge_crain?printable=true

¹⁴ <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=45506288&Fmt=4&clientId=11263&RQT=309&VName=PQD>.

	favour books.
Comment	Introverts engage long-term memory when reading. Is there a relationship between slow reading and personality type?

Reference	O'Donnell, Colleen Ryan (2007). Personality as a predictor of independent reading behavior. Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences. Vol 67(8-A), 2007, pp. 2883
Summary	Introversion (i.e., Low Extraversion) explained an additional 9% of the variance in reading for pleasure, indicating that this aspect of personality provides a unique and independent contribution to self-initiated reading behavior.
Comment	Independent reading predicted by introversion. Any connection with VSR?

Reference	Jukka Hyönä, Anna-Mari Nurminen. (2006). Do adult readers know how they read? Evidence from eye movement patterns and verbal reports. <i>British Journal of Psychology</i> , 1 97, 31-50.
Summary	The correlations showed that adult readers are well aware of their general reading speed and reasonably aware of their lookback and rereading behaviour. The amount of time spent looking back in text also correlated positively with the relative success in recalling the main points expressed in the text. It is concluded that systematic and extensive looking back in text is indicative of strategic behaviour.
Comment	Re-reading as a deliberate (voluntary) strategy.

Reference	Raney, Gary E, Rayner, Keith. (1995). Word frequency effects and eye movements during two readings of a text. <i>Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology</i> , 49(2), 151-153. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from Research Library database. (Document ID: 6832967).
Summary	Our findings show that by examining changes in performance during rereading we can gain insight about the cognitive processes involved in reading. We feel that rereading can be used to investigate reading at many levels. In our study, we manipulated low level features of words, namely word frequency and orthographic form. Rereading may also be used to investigate higher level functions. For example, rereading time might represent a natural measure of comprehension (parts of the text which are better understood should show the largest decrease in reading time). Furthering our understanding of how performance changes during rereading will provide us with a better understanding of the processes involved in reading.
Comment	Re-reading as a experimental tool.

Reference	The role of subvocalization in auditory imagery Smith, J. David; Wilson, Margaret; Reisberg, Daniel pp. 1433-1454 Neuropsychologia Volume: 33, Issue: 11 November, 1995
Summary	Auditory imagery may serve some aspects of text comprehension.

Reference	Nell, V. (1988). The Psychology of Reading for Pleasure: Needs and Gratifications. <i>Reading Research Quarterly</i> , Vol. 23, No. 1 (Winter, 1988), pp. 6-50.
Summary	Nell (1988) showed that there is substantial rate variability during natural reading, with most-liked pages being read significantly slower.
Comment	Rate variability is considered an aspect of voluntary, like Birkets and others. Contrast with Carver who does not find variability.

Reference	Describing Inner Experience? Proponent Meets Skeptic. Russell T. Hurlburt and Eric Schwitzgebel MIT Press, 2007 ¹⁵
Summary	Some people say they speak silently to themselves when they read; others say they don't do that, but do entertain visual imagery. Others claim to do neither but rather only to see the page and take it in. Melanie, whom Russ Hurlburt and I interviewed at length in our recent book about conscious experience, reports no visual experience of the written page at all; rather, she experiences only the images, thoughts, and emotions that the text creates in her. (No visual experience of the page whatsoever? Wow, that's hard for me to imagine!)
Comment	Phenomenology when reading. Should a slow reader experience more? Less? Interesting question.

¹⁵ <http://schwitzsplinters.blogspot.com/2008/01/consciousness-while-reading-is-it.html>