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Book lovers are the Luddites of the intellectual world. I can no more imagine their giving up the printed page than I can imagine a picture in the New York Post showing the Pope technoboogieing the night away in a disco. My adventure in cyberspace ("Riding the Bullet", available on any computer near you) has confirmed this idea dramatically. My mail and the comments on my website ([www.stephenking.com](http://www.stephenking.com)) reflect two things: first, readers enjoyed the story; second, most didn't like getting it on a screen, where it appeared and then disappeared like Aladdin's genie.

Books have weight and texture; they make a pleasant presence in the hand. Nothing smells as good as a new book, especially if you get your nose right down in the binding, where you can still catch an acrid tang of the glue. The only thing close is the peppery smell of an old one. The odor of an old book is the odor of history, and for me, the look of a new one is still the look of the future.

I suspect that the growth of the Internet has actually been something of a boon when it comes to reading: people with more Beanie Babies than books on their shelves spend more time reading than they used to as they surf from site to site. But it's not a book, dammit, that perfect object that speaks without speaking, needs no batteries and never crashes unless you throw it in the corner. So, yes, there'll be books. Speaking personally, you can have my gun, but you'll take my book when you pry my cold, dead fingers off the binding.

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