

Wednesday, 2 April 2014

Irucka Embry will lead a Book Discussion at Martha Stamps' A Place at the Table (<http://www.marthastampscatering.com/>) based off of his book – *Balancing the Rift: ReCONNECTualizing the Pasenture* – published by his publishing company – Questioning the Universe Publishing (QUP).

Book Discussion Introduction

I would like to start out by reading 2 influential quotes from my business, EcoC²S, Home page (<http://www.ecoccs.com>):

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.”

–John Muir in *My First Summer in the Sierra* (1911); **Source:** [Wikiquote page on John Muir](#);
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“When you turn on your computer, you're making a political statement. If, like most people, your computer boots Microsoft Windows, the statement you're making is that transnational corporations should control access to the most powerful public media that ever existed. You're passively accepting, too, that non–industrial nations should be kept from developing, and helping to preserve a monoculture that threatens the existence of minority languages. At a personal level, you're accepting that these same corporations should control your access to educational and government services and have a right to install lock–down technologies on your computer without your permission — to say nothing of controlling what other software you can use and how you use it. Most people, of course, never think of these implications. When confronted, some will claim that none of this matters. Most, even social activists, accept the situation because they don't know of any alternative. Yet an alternative does exist, and it's becoming more viable by the day. It's called Free Software. It has already built and still runs most of the internet. Now, increasingly, Free Software is finding its way on to the desktops of those who want their ethics to extend to their computers.”

–**Source:** [“Free software!”](#): You can't usually do the right thing without inconveniencing yourself. Bruce Byfield reckons free software is a rare opportunity. Featured in Issue 395 of the [New Internationalist](#) magazine; **License:** [Attribution–NonCommercial–NoDerivs 3.0 Unported](#) (CC BY–NC–ND 3.0)

For me, those 2 quotes play an important role in my Life and thus also in my book.

Technology and *Balancing the Rift: ReCONNECTualizing the Pasenture*

In 2002 or 2003, I bought a copy of *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* by William McDonough & Michael Braungart [New York: North Point Press, 2002]. It is a Waterproof DuraBook™ (<http://melcher.com/series.php?id=36>) and I wanted to publish my book, *Balancing the Rift: ReCONNECTualizing the Pasenture*, as a DuraBook™ when I was first thinking about publishing my book in 2004. Due to various factors, when I self-published my book in 2014, I was not able to publish my book as a DuraBook™, but I still would like to publish a book(s) using the same or similar technology in the future.

As mentioned in the book's "Afterword," this book was written using Free Software (including fonts). This was an important task, for me, to show that a professional book can be written and designed without resorting to proprietary software.

Also, in the "Afterword," I commented briefly on the downsides of what we call high-technology (or high-tech for short). In brief, the main problem, other than the ecological health problem (including human health), is that we can become robots enslaved to our masters ... technology.

Many years ago, a friend and I had several discussions about the role of technology in our lives. I think the discussions started after she repaired some of the hardware in her desktop computer and she came across "Master" and "Slave" components. How is technology shaping your Life?