identified by Hobbs professor of cognition and education Howard Gardner, whose classes Parker took at the Harvard School of Graduate Education. “Linguistic intelligence, of course, focuses on the text while the visual and auditory learners may engage better with the video,” Parker asserts. A third group, the multitasking video game-playing generation, seem to watch, listen, and read simultaneously, while students with learning disabilities can pause, rewind, fast-forward, or isolate the audio and video portions.

Parker is also eager to reach lifelong learners and those who “didn’t quite get on the Shakespeare merry-go-round the first time. Every adult who has seen these e-books, including myself, has expressed a wistful wish that they’d had them when they were young,” he adds. “You begin to realize that there is this troubled relationship with Shakespeare, that very few of us got it immediately, and there is this distance between what we think we should like and what we actually enjoy.”

Parker, who was raised by a Venezuelan mother and Boston-born father, moved to America to attend Yale. He then studied technology in education at Harvard and worked for the Instructional Computing Group in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, developing some of the first large-course websites with such early adopters as Knaefel professor of music Thomas Forrest Kelly and Jones professor of classical Greek literature Gregory Nagy. He left for other jobs in New York City, but returned to Harvard in 2008 as the director of research computing in the humanities, a field, he reports, that “has been largely about a relationship with books: that’s how knowledge until recently has been stored and transmitted and it’s very powerful.”

Paper books are “here to stay,” he adds. But an increasing fascination with their other potential incarnations led Parker to find investors and, in 2011, move back to New York City to develop his ideas.

The first to launch was *Eroica*, in 2013, featuring the works of Harvard poet Kevin McGrath, an associate of the South Asian studies department and special program instructor in the Division of Continuing Education: on the left-hand “page” are the texts and on the right are videos of the eloquent McGrath reading and discussing the poems. “Even the shape of the book as we know it—a series of paper sheets bound at one edge that gives you access to text,” was once an innovation, Parker points out. “So then you begin to ask yourself, When do things like sound and movement get incorporated? I think we are at the dawn of a new era.” Readers and viewers of his Shakespeare e-plays may think we’re already there.

—Nell Porter Brown

**Centennial Medalists**

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Centennial Medal, first awarded in 1989 on the occasion of the school’s hundredth anniversary, honors alumni who have made contributions to society that emerged from their graduate study at Harvard. It is the highest honor the Graduate School bestows, and awardees include some of Harvard’s most accomplished alumni. The 2014 recipients, announced at a ceremony on May 28, are: Bruce Alberts, Ph.D. ’66, Chancellor’s Leadership Chair in biochemistry and biophysics for science and education at the University of California, San Francisco; Keith Christiansen, Ph.D. ’77, Pope-Hennessy chairman of the department of European paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Judith Lasker, Ph.D. ’76, the N.E.H. Distinguished Professor of sociology at Lehigh University; and Leo Marx ’41, Ph.D. ’50, Kenan professor of American cultural history emeritus in MIT’s Program in Science, Technology, and Society. For more about the honorands, see http://harvardmag.com/medalists-14.

Clockwise from far left: Judith Lasker, Bruce Alberts, Leo Marx, and Keith Christiansen.

Photograph by Bethany Versoy/courtesy of Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Science

Reprinted from Harvard Magazine. For more information, contact Harvard Magazine, Inc. at 617-495-5746