



What is the WELL?

Welcome to a gathering that's like no other.

The WELL, launched back in 1985 as the Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link, continues to provide a cherished watering hole for articulate and playful thinkers from all walks of life.



For more about why conversation is so treasured on The WELL, and why members of the community banded together to buy the site in 2012, check out [the story of The WELL](#).

If you like what you see, join us!

[Join The Well!](#)

No advertising? Really?

Yes, really. Our conferences are ad-free. The WELL is entirely user-supported, which means we don't have to serve you ads to make money. It also means that what you talk about on The WELL will stay there—if you post about your new pair of running shoes in the [fitness conference](#), you won't suddenly see ads for other fitness equipment the next time you visit a different social media site. Plus, our posts aren't spider-able so they won't show up in web searches.

Come on, everyone sells data. I'm sure you're doing it too.

Nope. We collect almost no personal data from our users, and what we do collect, we don't sell. A wise person once said "if you're not paying for the product, you're the product." On The WELL, the product is the great content that our members create, not the members themselves. We won't sell you out to some massive aggregator of online data. Here, you don't just [Own Your Own Words](#), you own your identity, too.

What's wrong with anonymous posting?

Nothing, I guess, if you're not interested in building community. Requiring our users to register with their real names means every user knows who every other user is. It cuts down on drive-by posting and helps build real connections between people.

Currently in the Inkwell:

Unlike most conversations on The WELL, you don't need a WELL member account to participate – this one is open to all!

'Seven Secrets of Teaching Online: a Play by Evy Pine'

On May 21, 2021, there's a staged reading of a new play, "7 Secrets of Teaching Online" by long time WELL member Evy Pine. This is part of the [PlayGround Zoom Fest: A New Works Festival](#).

[Join the Conversation](#)

Recently in the Inkwell:

How Has Our Reading Changed During the Covid-19 Period?

[Visit the Conversation](#)

"The State of the World 2021" January 5-22.

[Visit the Conversation](#)

For two decades **Bruce Sterling** and **Jon Lebkowsky** have started the new year by spending two weeks in conversation about "The State of the World." The insightful, often edgy conversation takes place on the WELL, and

incorporates comments and feedback from all comers – including YOU! This year they are joined by **Malka Older**, author of the scifi political thriller “Infomocracy,” the cyberpunk serial “Ninth Step Station,” and the collection “... And Other Disasters.”

Check out the 2020 conversation [here.](#) Visit the rest of the topics: [g](#)
[inkwell.vue](#)

Join The Well!



I was looking into the origins of the [Global Lives Project](#) when I stumbled upon the [Long Now Project](#), and then the name of the long-familiar [Stewart Brand](#), and then mention of the WELL, which I've known about for decades.

I'm feeling adventuresome in my third year of retirement, so I decided to join the WELL at last. I look forward to plumbing its riches!

Joe Meyers

WELL member since 2018

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1195 Park Avenue Suite 206 Emeryville CA 94608 | helpdesk@well.com

