browsing sessions on the Web involving news articles, video clips from a Keith Richards interview, and a 1917 photo posted on Facebook of a full-size battleship being built in New York's Union Square, Goldsmith (Uncreative Writing), a poet and conceptual artist who teaches at the University of Pennsylvania, asks: "Am I really wasting time on the Internet? This is important stuff that I've stumbled on to." His question launches this enter­taining, vividly written investigation of the ways people interact with the web. Focusing in particular on the "smoldering wreckage of modernism," Goldsmith works to "extract clues on how to proceed in the digital age" from such disparate subjects as Marcel Duchamp, zombies, the Peanuts character Pig-Pen, Jorge Luis Borges's short story "The Library of Babel," and surrealist poets' fascination with public sleeping, along with an array of current theorists and artists. "Our devices might be changing us, but to say that they're dehumanizing us is simply wrong," he writes. Acute observations of how people actually use technology ground Goldsmith's far-flung explora­tion and it makes for a read-in-one-sitting story. Goldsmith maintains a sharp focus as he takes college classes on the sub­ject, reading local police blotters, and techniques. While home cooks might find sourcing chrysanthemum leaves, lotus roots, or lily bulbs a challenge, the majority of dishes translate simply for the home cook. Her dishes will certainly impress: Tofu Ribbons, a comforting mushroom, pork, and wheat noodle dish; stir-fried sweet potato noodles; and the extravagant leaf and mud-wrapped Beggar's Chicken entree. Jiangnan flavors, tamer than other regions', are achieved with a limited range of seasonings yet are perfectly balanced and attractive to modern adherents of clean eating, Dunlop argues. The Jiangnan is an exquisite "crucible of Chinese gastronomy," and Dunlop's scholarly homage to the region will captivate the culinary imagination. (Oct.)

Buxton Hall Barbecue's Book of Smoke
Moss, the chef at Asheville, N.C.'s...