“THINKING ABOUT THE BOOK” CAS COLLOQUIUM ABSTRACTS

The following are abstracts from papers presented at the 2013 CAS Colloquium “Thinking about the Book,” held on April 15-16 at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

WHEN THERE ARE NO BOOKS: HOW UNIVERSITIES IN PALESTINE TEACH IN THE ABSENCE OF TEXTBOOKS
Denise DeGarmo, Department of Political Science

Textbooks are a mainstay of university education around the world. However, not all universities have the luxury of ordering their textbooks directly. In the occupied state of Palestine, the Israeli Ministry of Education must first approve all textbooks that are requested by universities. Textbooks, according to the Ministry, may not be directly mailed to locations within the occupied state. Since the Ministry may disqualify textbooks containing “perceived prejudices and stereotypes,” universities across the West Bank and Gaza Strip find themselves with no textbooks, journals, databases or unfettered access to wi-fi to use in their classrooms. This paper explores the ways in which university professors have developed ways to meet the curricular need of their students in the forced absence of books.

ALDO LEOPOLD AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AS A TOOL TO MELD THE PRACTICAL AND AESTHETIC ASPECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP
Rick Essner, Department of Biological Sciences

Early 20th Century resource conservation efforts were frustrated by the dichotomous perspectives of Gifford Pinchot, who viewed natural resource conservation in active commodity-oriented terms, and preservationist John Muir who saw the destruction of the landscape as an aesthetic and moral catastrophe. During 1930-1947 Aldo Leopold introduced ecological restoration as a unifying path for economic and aesthetic sustainability. Leopold’s masterworks A Sand County Almanac and Round River brought analytic rigor and evocative prose together to address the larger issue of man’s long-term relationship with land. Yet today modern scientists are still largely unable to restore ecosystems. We address whether Leopold truly understood the challenges restoration would hold, and where he might find solutions for our current predicament.

SELF-PUBLISHING IS THE NEW “TRADITIONAL” PUBLISHING METHOD
Charlotte Johnson, Lovejoy Library

In 2008, for the first time in history, more books were self-published than those published traditionally. In 2009, 76% of all books released were self-published. This presentation discusses what is involved in self-publishing and discuss how print-on-demand, online retailing and advances in e-readers and tablets have influenced this growth. It also reviews the many self-publishing systems that are currently available.

THE EVOLUTION AND FUTURE OF THE BOOK
Charlotte Johnson and William Harroff, Lovejoy Library

This presentation is an overview of the book, from its earliest formats to the most recent e-books in interactive multimedia formats. It focuses on the evolution from print to visual, interactive and digital formats, including augmented/virtual reality book examples. The influence of children's books, pop-up books, artists' books, comics, video and interactive simulations, and mobile devices will be discussed. Presenters, Brother Bill and Sister Char, e-book evangelists since the 1970s and owners of the (r)Evolutionary (e)Books Press, also presents insights gained from their many presentations worldwide to project what the future holds for book content creators and users.
SIUE faculty have produced books of significance in numerous disciplines. Although his relationship with SIUE is largely unknown today, famed sociologist Elliott Rudwick, a faculty member from 1960 until 1968, is one of these scholars. Rudwick joined SIUE faculty as an associate professor in the Social Studies Division. Rudwick taught primarily at the East St. Louis Residence Center before shifting to Edwardsville in the fall of 1965. His experience teaching at East St. Louis dovetailed with his interest in race relations, leading him produce the landmark Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917, which was published in 1964.

THE WATERMAN SAGA: JACQUES POULIN’S BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS
Debbie Mann, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Jacques Poulain has been described as the most North American of the contemporary francophone writers from Québec. In his 1984 classic Volkswagen Blues and three more recent works all featuring novelist Jack Waterman, La Traduction est une histoire d’amour (2006), L’Anglais n’est pas une langue magique (2009) and L’Homme de la Saskatchewan (2011), protagonists adopt and collaborate in a multitude of roles in relation to books. Whether ghost writer, reader, listener or translator, all of Poulain’s main characters gravitate around Waterman and join him in his pursuit of the novelist’s craft and his exploration of the survival of the French presence in North America. Beginning with a consideration of the mise-en-abyme of the birth of a book within the novel L’Homme de la Saskatchewan, this presentation will trace Poulain’s continuing reflection on the act of writing. Centered around the intersection of the themes of quest, writing and healing, this paper examines the way the characters’ relationships to the text (as writer, translator, reader or listener) and to each other (as parent/child surrogate, brother or friend) evolve and converge to bring about healing of the other and the self.

YOUR INTUITION (AND YOUR STATISTICS TEXTBOOK) MAY BE WRONG
Andrew Neath, Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Our minds rely on heuristic thinking and intuition, often with much success. However, a major bias in our heuristic thinking stems from an inability to properly account for the role that randomness plays in the world. It should be expected that formal statistical training would provide a scientific approach free of such bias. I show that statistics textbooks are, in fact, promoting methods based on the same illusions that corrupt our heuristic thinking. A consequence of this teaching is an issue currently faced in science where an unacceptably large proportion of “statistically” established findings fail upon attempts at replication.

ROLL ON! THE RIVERS OF AMERICA SERIES AND THE RESURGENCE OF LITERARY REGIONALISM
Matthew Paris, Lovejoy Library

*The Rivers of America* series was one of the 20th century’s most successful ventures in publishing literary regionalism. The series ran from 1937 to 1974 and profiled 65 rivers emphasizing regional history, natural history, and local folklore. *The Rivers of America* series incorporated progressive ideals into an American literary tradition and created a national market for literary regional non-fiction. My presentation argues for the continued relevance of the series, outline the publishing history, and look at a few selected volumes.
FROM ARISTOTLE TO LINNAEUS: THE BOOKS THAT TRANSFORMED WHALES INTO MAMMALS
Aldemaro Romero, College of Arts and Sciences

The recognition of cetaceans (whales and dolphins) as mammals by the scientific community took a long time. It was not until the 10th edition of Linnaeus’ *Systema Naturae* that they were recognized as a natural group and totally separate from fishes. This is puzzling given that for about 2,000 years before Linnaeus’s work many naturalists had identified a number of characteristics of these animals that clearly placed them closer to land mammals (or “viviparous quadrupeds”) than to fish. In this presentation I survey pre-Linnean literature with descriptions and classifications of cetaceans and explore several explanations for this case of intellectual inertia. Since Linnaeus was not an evolutionist we cannot support the idea that lack of evolutionary thinking prevented the understanding of the proper place of cetaceans in animal classification. I believe that a combination of environmental classification and scholasticism led to their misclassification for centuries. Linnaeus great contribution (although heavily influenced in this case by others) was to clearly differentiate between analogy and homology.

THE FUTURE OF THE BOOK
Chad Verbais, SIUE Writing Center, Instructional Services

The regime of the book lasted 1500 years; however, the proliferation of enhanced and electronic books is forcing practitioners to look closely at the type of writing authors produce. Traditionally, static documents were produced that could stand alone, but today there are opportunities for texts to include embedded multimedia and hyperlinks. This new form of textual book production begs the question of who controls the meaning of such a work – the writer or reader? It also questions if ekphrasis (the description of a visual scene with words) will survive and how alphabetic writing might disappear. Ultimately, how will representations of traditional books continue to be challenged? What forms will fall into disuse, and what new forms may take their place? Will collaborative writing and the tracking and storing of easily-updated versions end the codex as a “content container”? How might universities prepare student writers for this new world of self-expression?