

# Friends of the Smith College Libraries

## October 2022 News

Dear Friends,

This issue of our newsletter highlights a few of Smith's remarkable alumnae. Read on to learn about visits to Neilson by Gloria Steinem '56 and Mona Sinha '88, board chair of the ERA Fund for Women's Equality, and to discover how Judith Raymo '53 was inspired to collect work from her classmate Sylvia Plath and then donate it to Smith's Special Collections. We highlight a new exhibitions program, new equipment funded by the Friends, and the way first year students begin their Smith journeys with a warm and content-rich orientation to the college's world-class libraries. And to accompany the fall foliage, we introduce FOLIO, the new open-source library services platform now supporting all of the Five Colleges' collections.

Gloria Steinem received an enthusiastic welcome when she returned to campus to participate in "Democracy and the Equal Rights Amendment," with Carol Jenkins, president emerita of the ERA Coalition; and Mona Sinha '88, board chair of the ERA Fund for Women's Equality, in a conversation moderated by Becca Damante '17. While visiting Special Collections, the group viewed primary source documents about the history of the ERA as well as highlights of women's history in the Sophia Smith Collection.

---

### Fall Events

#### **Sylvia Plath: An Iconic Life**

**Tuesday, November 1, 4:30 p.m. ET, Campus Center Carroll Room**

Join Heather Clark (above left) in conversation with Judith Raymo '53 (above right) on November 1st at 4:30 p.m. in the Campus Center Carroll Room. This event celebrates Clark's award-winning biography, *Red Comet: The Short Life and Blazing Art of Sylvia Plath*, and the recent gift of Judith Raymo's Sylvia Plath Collection. It also coincides with Plath's 90th birthday year (her birthday is October 27.) A book signing and reception will follow. This event is co-sponsored by the Friends of the Libraries and Special Collections. A related pop-up exhibition, "Selections from the Judith G. Raymo Collection of Sylvia Plath at Smith College" can be seen in Neilson Library, 3rd floor, October 31 - November 25. [Register here](#) to join virtually.

## **Data Cartels: Sarah Lamdan with Yasmeen Shorish**

**Friday, November 18, 4:30 p.m. EST, Neilson Library Browsing Room**

Sarah Lamdan's new book, [Data Cartels: The Companies that Monopolize and Control our Information](#), explores the unregulated power of data analytics companies, and makes a case for building digital infrastructure that reflects our collective information values. Lamdan is a law professor at the City University of New York. She will be interviewed by Yasmeen Shorish, an Associate Professor at James Madison University Libraries whose research focuses on data and the relationship between information access, power, and privilege. Sponsored by the Smith College Lecture Committee, the Statistical and Data Sciences Program, and the American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom. Photo courtesy of Sarah Lamdan. [Register here](#) to join virtually.

---

Following a year of preparation, Smith's libraries, along with the other libraries in the Five College consortium, rolled out a new platform for library services in July. [FOLIO](#) underlies the online Five Colleges Libraries Catalog search interface, now called [Discover and Discover Advanced Search](#), and all discovery and access functions. Additional tools to enable users to request items and manage their accounts were implemented with the new system. Five Colleges is the first library consortium to fully adopt FOLIO and staff are excited about the enhanced service that it provides to library users.

## Rites of Orientation

One September ritual that routinely gets high marks from students is the library orientation for new students. This year's virtual orientation was supplemented by in-person sessions for Adas and Bridge students with small group tours of Neilson, Josten and Hillyer libraries. Student Academic Advisors received their own tours and they, in turn, led first years and transfer students in their houses on tours. "*The support and participation of staff for the Libraries Orientation program is essential,*" said Cat Hannula, the First Years' Experience & Engagement Librarian. "*Students can feel how much we all want to be there to support them, and they respond to it.*" But there is more to the program than a warm, welcoming introduction. In collaboration with the First Year Class Dean, first years must complete a Research Skills Quiz (RSQ) to test their research knowledge and teach them about the honor code. This summer, the online quiz received a digital refresh from Instructional Technologist Abril Navarro and Educational Media Producer Meridith Richter. After attending the Institute for Research Design in Librarianship, Cat Hannula is working with student focus groups and librarians to assess all aspects of the Orientation program.

## New Library Research Mentors

Smith's [Library Research Mentor Program](#) benefits students and library staff alike. We have shared its success, and are pleased to see the program expand to five mentors who provide peer to peer support for students. Pictured above are: Nyla Conaway '23, Vera Mancini '24, Matilda Boal '25, Madalyn Rehrman '25 and Jessica Pardim Araujo '23. Funding is provided the Dean of Libraries Innovation Fund and the Nancy Laben '83 & Jonathan Feiger Endowed Libraries Innovation Fund.

# Expanding Digital Capabilities for Special Collections

Research Services Archivist Kate Long using the Zeutschel book scanner.

Artists, writers, news organizations and movie producers are among those who clamor to get copies of materials in Smith's extensive Special Collections. It's the nature of housing a world class archive. New Epson 1200 flatbed scanners allow staff to create high quality scans of photographs, documents, and even transparencies such as slides and negatives. By digitizing the slides and negatives, they are often making visible the previously unseen.

The newest addition to the Digitization Lab is the Zeutschel OS 12000 A1 book scanner. According to Research Services Archivist, Kate Long, *"this fantastic machine is able to take high quality images of books and other delicately bound materials in a way we haven't been able to do before. The Zeutschel has the ability to properly cradle a book so it is supported and damage isn't done during the scanning process. It also increases the speed at which we can capture images. We are incredibly excited about its arrival and about the more extensive and complex projects we can complete with all of its capabilities."* Both the Epson flatbed scanners and the Zeutschel were funded by the Friends of the Libraries.

## Digital Pedagogy Fellowship Institute

Ten faculty members from a variety of disciplines are the 2022-23 recipients of the [Digital Pedagogy Fellowship](#). They gathered in Neilson Library in August for the first annual Digital Pedagogy Institute. The Institute provided opportunities to consult with staff on a range of topics, including how to design video and podcast projects, web development, mapping and GIS, and visualization tools for digital scholarship.

The Fellows have continued to meet individually with ITS and library staff to develop digital scholarship projects for their courses--for example, Luce Ward's Geology class is working with the Imaging Center and Spatial Analysis Lab to create a virtual field trip at the Dinosaur Footprints site in Holyoke, MA. Another involves Maria Succi-Hempstead's Italian language class working with Special Collections to study the history of Smith's study abroad programs.

class working with Special Collections to study the history of Smith's study abroad programs and create short conversation videos about their research in Italian.

Faculty will be sharing their experiences about teaching and learning with technology at the conclusion of the program in early 2023. The Digital Pedagogy Fellowship is funded by ITS and the Committee on Educational Technology. Additional support is provided by the Smith College Libraries.

---

## **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS NEWS**

### **Judith G. Raymo Sylvia Plath Collection**

Judith Raymo '53 collected Sylvia Plath's work for three decades before donating the collection to the Mortimer Rare Book Collection. Raymo and Plath started out as classmates and several years later, after reading Plath's posthumous publications, Raymo developed an interest in collecting Plath's writings. She identified with Plath's struggles in balancing a professional career alongside the expectations associated with marriage and motherhood in the mid-twentieth century and bought Plath's unpublished manuscripts as well as books and periodicals that featured her work.

The June 2022 gift of Plath materials includes original manuscripts and letters by Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes, as well as rare editions of published works by Plath, and dramatic adaptations of her work. From typescripts to broadsides, the Judith Raymo Collection of Sylvia Plath significantly and substantively adds to the wealth of Plath materials held by Smith College. The [finding aid and book lists](#) for this gift are available and accessible for use in Special Collections.

## **Beth Myers, Fellow of the Society of American Archivists**

Director of Special Collections Beth Myers was inducted as a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) at the society's annual meeting in August. The distinction of Fellow is the highest honor bestowed on individuals by the SAA and is awarded for outstanding contributions to the archives profession. Myers joined the Smith College Libraries in 2014 and oversaw the merger of the College Archives, Mortimer Rare Book Collection and the Sophia Smith Collection for Women's History into one Special Collections unit. She has helped raise more than \$4 million to support operations including Access to Collections I & II projects.

---

## **An Exhibitions Program for Neilson Library**

Exhibitions Coordinator Sydney Nguyen

Sydney Nguyen joined the staff in August, and has initiated a program that will feature student-designed and student-installed exhibitions. Guided by Nguyen, these may derive from classwork, student organizations, or capstone and thesis projects, and will connect the wider Smith community with the Libraries' vast and impressive Special Collections. Before coming to Smith, Nguyen served as the Post-Bacc Assistant for Indigenous American Collections for the Five College Consortium.

## Fall Exhibits

### **Neilson Library: An Evolution**

**Neilson Library Exhibition Gallery, 2nd Floor, through 2023.**

Neilson's inaugural exhibit focuses on the history of the building through the people and materials that defined it. Riffing off a space in the old Neilson where students added graffiti, the exhibition gallery includes a wall for students and visitors to get creative and leave comments. Here are some of the current comments.

## **Special Selections**

### **New Borders of American Literature: Student Acquisitions for Special Collections** Neilson Library 3rd Floor, October & November 2022.

Students in Professor Melissa Parrish's ENG 239 class, Multi-Ethnic American Literature, investigated the theme of borders and border-crossings; specifically on what terrain American writers inhabit when they write about borders and how thinking about borders complicate the way race, class, and gender inform matters of belonging and citizenship. At the end of the semester, students researched and proposed acquisitions for the Mortimer Rare Book Collection that would expand the collection's holdings in ways that were in keeping with the course theme. After the students' collective review and selection process, Curator of Rare Books Shannon K. Supple purchased 20 items which include first editions, artists' books, and informational pamphlets.

---

## Notable Gifts

The Libraries were delighted to receive two substantial bequests recently: the Susan Rothenburg Stark '62 Library Fund will provide support for library operations while Natalie Brown Denton '45's gift will establish a fund for book acquisitions. *"Receiving these gifts, this year, has been of special assistance as we work to provide access to the latest advances in scholarship,"* said Dean Fliss. *"I am grateful to Susan and Natalie for these contributions that help sustain library operations and build our collections."*

## Thank YOU

We hope you will join us virtually or in person for our fall events. We are grateful to everyone who supported the Libraries throughout the past fiscal year, and especially those who provided gifts in honor of the Oculus Society and the Friends 80th anniversary. The Libraries' 2022 Annual Report of Donors is available for viewing [here](#).

Your annual support makes innovation, engagement and enrichment for Smith's libraries possible. Fall membership renewal and pledge payment notices will be sent out shortly. You may make a gift anytime via the [Online Giving Form](#) or with a check using [this form](#). Thank you for being a Friend!

Best fall wishes,

Ann Alpers '84  
Chair, Executive Committee  
Friends of the Smith College Libraries

---

[SMITH COLLEGE](#)

[FRIENDS OF THE  
LIBRARIES](#)

[ALUMNAE RELATIONS](#)

[ONLINE GIVING FORM](#)



*Copyright © 2022, All rights reserved.*

**Our mailing address is:**

Friends of the Smith College Libraries  
c/o Alumnae Gymnasium, 83 Green Street  
Northampton, MA 01063

You are receiving this email because of your support of the Smith College Libraries including the new Neilson Library. *To unsubscribe from all emails or to update your preferences, click on this link:*

**[Update Subscription Preferences](#)**