
Friends of the Smith College Libraries

September 2025 News



Hillyer Art Library staff members Anna Helgeson and Anna Morrissey, prepare to open a special gift. Read on to find out what was inside! Photo by Samm Smith

Dear Friends,

That perfect New England fall weather you remember has arrived on campus along with 699 students in the class of 2029 – the largest first-year class in the college's history! The Friends are delighted to support library orientation for this group; read on for more about the creative “Library Crawl” event that library staff planned to help students get to know all three campus libraries and Special Collections.

We're also happy to share the [FY 2025 Annual Report of Library Donors](#), and to report on a particularly stunning gift for Hillyer Art Library, and many interesting fall events and exhibits!

Sincerely,
Brandy King '01, Chair
Friends of the Smith College Libraries Executive Committee

A Message from the new Dean of Libraries



Nancy S. Kirkpatrick

I am thrilled to have joined Smith College as the new Dean of Libraries. From my very first days here, it has been clear to me how deeply the Friends of the Libraries care about our mission and our future. Together, we have the opportunity to build on the remarkable legacy of Smith’s libraries—spaces of discovery, creativity, and connection—and to imagine what comes next. I look forward to partnering with you as we continue to nurture these extraordinary collections and ensure the Libraries remain vital to generations of students, scholars, and friends.

Nancy S. Kirkpatrick, Dean of Libraries

Library Orientation



Library crawl: making bookmarks in Neilson, collages in Hillyer, making music in Josten, and picking up swag in Special Collections. Photos by Samm Smith

September is always busy for Xochitl Quiroz. As the first years' engagement & humanities librarian, she has been planning the Libraries' orientation program for months. "My goal," said Quiroz, "is to help students adjust to an academic library, and establish common ground regardless of their backgrounds and experience. It's important that students become familiar with our student-centered spaces, and to understand that our staff is here to support them throughout their time at Smith." To reinforce the program, she enlisted the help of numerous colleagues for a "[Library Crawl](#)" on September 11. This event encouraged students to roam the Libraries and try fun hands-on activities in Hillyer, Josten, Neilson, and Special Collections. Students picked up colorful passports that were packed with useful information, and got them stamped in each location. Those who visited all four locations received a prize.

As we do every year, the Friends underwrite a portion of library orientation expenses, recognizing how important it is for new students to become familiar with the rich library resources that are available to them.



Notebooks provided by the Friends with links to information for first year students.

The Sistine Chapel - An Exquisite Gift



A detail from *The Sistine Chapel*, a collaborative publication of the Vatican Museums, Callaway, and Scripta Manent Editions.

Earlier this month, this three-volume, very limited-edition set of books, titled *The Sistine Chapel*, arrived in Hillyer Art Library in an enormous case. Weighing in at 75 lbs, the publication pairs high-resolution images of the artwork created by Michaelangelo, Botticelli, Perugino and other Renaissance artists with the best of traditional Italian book making craftsmanship. The work of capturing close-up photographs of the entire ceiling and walls of the chapel took 65 nights and over 270,000 images that were then fused together using three-dimensional reconstruction software. It is described [here in](#)

[illustrious detail](#) by AbeBooks. We are deeply grateful to Laura Perry Barton '82 for making it possible for Smith to own this extraordinary work.



A center-fold view of the chapel interior, from *The Sistine Chapel*.

Building a Zine Collection from Scratch

In a world dominated by AI and digital formats, [zines have proved to be a popular and persistent form of self-expression](#): a meditative, do-it-yourself act of creation for sharing information about topics of personal interest. This summer, Smith librarians along with Zine Collection Development Assistant Sierra Silversmith '27, spent time exploring all aspects of zine collecting, as they built a lending collection from scratch. This involved canvassing other libraries on the best way to protect and make available a circulating collection of such fragile ephemera. There has been strong interest from faculty, staff and students in the new collection, and three zine-making events are planned for students in October.



Faculty and staff got a first look at the collection on August 29. Photos by Samm Smith

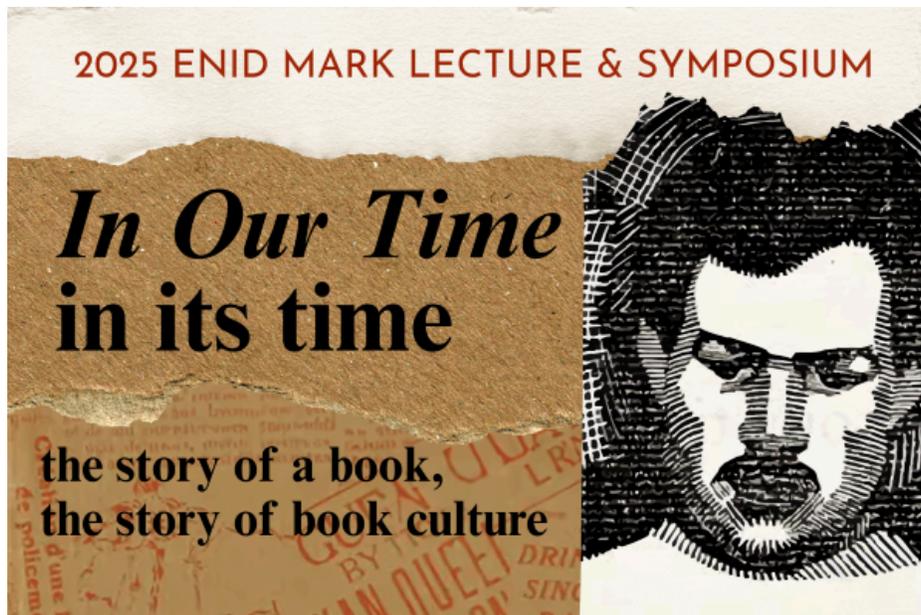


Fall Events

A Conversation about Banned Books

October 8th, 4:30p.m. in Neilson 102

Join Dean of Libraries, Nancy Kirkpatrick, JD, MS, in conversation with Kathleen McEvoy, Senior Policy Fellow of The EveryLibrary Institute and Julia Garnett '28 to discuss the current status of book banning and the recent legal case of Little vs. Llano County.



In Our Time Symposium & Enid Mark '54 Memorial Lecture

Friday, October 17, Seelye 201 and Neilson Library

All are welcome to attend [“In Our Time in its Time Symposium and Enid Mark Lecture](#). The occasion celebrates the 100th anniversary of Ernest Hemingway's powerful story of its time's violence and moral uncertainty, while touching on the ephemera and power of the daily news, poetry, and

scripture. The schedule is as follows:

4:00 p.m., Seelye 201: Symposium, moderated by Michael Thurston, chair of World Literatures and Helen Means Professor of English.

5:45 p.m. Reception, Neilson Library 3rd Floor

7:00 p.m., Seelye 201, Enid Mark Memorial Lecture by Michael Thurston.

Thurston has published numerous essays on modern poetry and modernist writing, including three on Ernest Hemingway. He is the editor of the Norton Critical Edition of *The Sun Also Rises* and is writing the Cambridge Introduction to Ernest Hemingway. Attend one or both events, as well as the reception! Free and open to the public.

***Meridians* 25th Anniversary Symposium**

October 24 and 25

The keynote discussion will feature Presidents Sarah Willie LeBreton and Ruth Simmons in conversation with Provost Daphne Lamothe and editors Kum-Kum Bhavnani and Paula J. Giddings. [See the full schedule, and register here.](#) An exhibit of all 25 issues of *Meridians* is on view in the Periodicals section of Neilson's Compass Café.

Come Home to Smith

Saturday, November 1

[Enjoy a day filled with community and events](#), celebrating Smith's 150th anniversary.

Neilson, Josten, and Hillyer libraries will be open to all. The Special Collections reading room on the third floor of Neilson will be open from 1-4:45pm for "**Home, House, History (& Halloween)**" featuring materials about Smith house histories from the College Archives. Stop by and learn about the women for whom Granville, Haynes, King, Lee, and Rothman Houses are named, and then pick up some complimentary postcards of Smithies in action through the years.

Library Exhibits



First years settle into their rooms, late 1970s & 1980's, photos courtesy of the College Archives

"Classes, Clubs, and Crushes: The First Year Experience at Smith, 1875-2025," curated by Chloé Arciero '26, a Special Collections student assistant, presents material new Smithies received before and during their first year from officious rules to teasing from Sophomores, all drawn from the College Archives. Neilson 3rd Floor on display through November 3.

Smithies! Celebrating 150 Years of Student Life: A compilation of photos provides glimpses of students at work and at play from 1880 to 2018, selected from the College Archives. Neilson Library, Ground Floor Gallery, through December 2025.

The new **Zine collection** is on display in Hillyer Art Library.

Books about Taiwan. Two Taiwan-themed book exhibits are on display in Neilson's Ground Floor Central Hall through September. They can also be seen virtually: "[Taiwan Food, Fiction, History, and Identity](#)" and, "[Lost in the Music of Taiwan: Exploring the Sub-text and Timelines of Related Fiction and Graphic Novels](#)."



Students enjoy the Open Mic in Josten Library during the Library Crawl. Photo by Samm Smith.

Thank you for reading the newsletter, and for your past and current support. Do check out our [2025 Annual Report of Library Donors](#). Your contributions provide direct support for the resources and services that underpin student and faculty scholarship.

If you wish to renew your support, please [follow this link](#) to our online giving form. You may also send a check to: Smith College Gift Accounting, 33 Elm Street, Northampton MA 01063, adding the fund name on the memo line. *Note: if you use the online giving form on the main Smith website, and would like to direct your donation to the Friends, Special Collections of another library fund, be sure to enter the fund name in the "designation" box on the donation form.* Thank you!

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