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Friends of the Connecticut College Library  
Newsletter

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## Summer 2009 Newsletter

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2009

# Friends of the Connecticut College Library *Summer Newsletter*

## BOOKS AND BYTES

Following on the successful renovation of the Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives, the Center's home on the internet is also getting a facelift. A comprehensive effort is underway to develop an extensive website describing policies, facilities, and exhibitions. The centerpiece of the new website will be detailed descriptions of each of the over fifty collections held in the Center. Wherever possible, existing finding aids will be put online to give students and researchers a more precise idea of the kinds of research possible in the center.

An effective website is a critical resource for a department of special collections. The Lear Center holds a rich range of resources, many of them very rare, that exemplifies some of the unique opportunities for teaching and learning at Connecticut College. The website makes a public case for what is unique and special about the College and will be a centerpiece of the Shain Library's efforts to publicize itself on the web. Many of the collections in the Center, such as manuscripts and archives, art and artists' books, cannot be adequately described in Caravan, the library's online catalog. The most effective way that users can get to know what we have will be through the website.

As part of this new web effort, there will be a significant expansion of digital collections and exhibits. Currently, there are online components of some of our collections, including the San Diego Choir Book and our collection of historic New London postcards. With the recent addition of two flat bed scanners and the anticipated future acquisition of a professional quality digital camera, the Lear Center will be able to dramatically enhance our online offerings. This includes making highlights of our ongoing campus architecture scanning project available, as well as allowing for many of our exhibits in the library to go virtual.



The Lear Center website will be used to highlight events and lectures sponsored by the Friends of the Library and other events that bring attention to library collections. You will also be able to find news about significant new acquisitions there.

The new Lear Center website will be ready to go live by the beginning of Fall Term. Development will be ongoing for the next year.



CHARLES E SHAIN LIBRARY

GREER MUSIC LIBRARY

# FALL EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

There are two exhibitions planned for the Fall semester. Beginning in late August, *Literal Evolution* will chart the growth and development of letterforms from the Middle Ages to the modern day from manuscripts to printing. The exhibition will trace how Blackletter, Roman, and Italic printed fonts originated in medieval handwriting and were adapted to the printed page. For the following five hundred years, typographers explored different ways of crafting these letterforms, occasionally looking back in the past to try to recreate the beauty of the ancient book. The exhibition culminates in a sampling of the use of contemporary fine printing. This exhibition will chart the use of tradition and innovation and the elevation of type as an art form and not merely a means of communication.



The Friends of the  
Connecticut College Library

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<http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/fol/>

September 2009



Arthur Rackham was one of the most prolific illustrators of books, especially children's books. The Gildersleeve Collection of Children's Literature, which is particularly rich in illustrated literature, holds over half of the extensive catalog of all of the works Rackham published. In October, Ashley Hanson, research and instruction librarian at Connecticut College, will be mounting an exhibition of the illustrated books of Arthur Rackham, displaying the range of works he adapted to his peculiar artistic style. Given Rackham's fondness for otherworldly creatures, this exhibition will be particularly appropriate for the Halloween season.

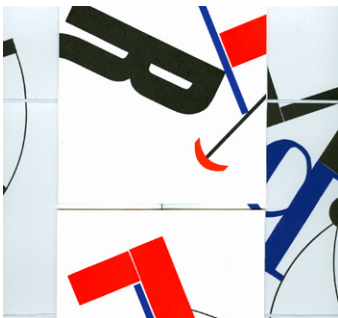
The Chu Room will also be hosting three exhibitions during the Fall semester. An exhibition of landscape paintings featuring boats will be on display from the end of the summer through October. In October and November, we will be hosting a showing of the works of the contemporary Korean artist Syui Yung. The artist will be speaking at the opening of this exhibition. This will be followed in November by an exhibition featuring selections from the extensive holdings of Japanese prints in the Chu-Griffis collection.



## NEW ACQUISITIONS

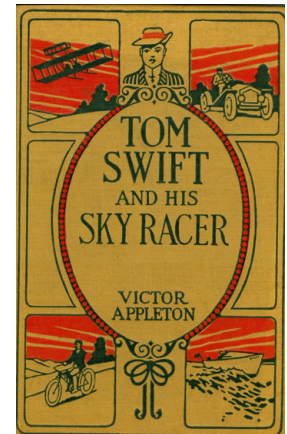
The Lear Center is pleased to add to its growing collection of artists' books with a new project by Laura Russell. *Hit the Road!* is a three part work documenting the disappearing roadside attractions of Highway 99, which connects many major cities of the Pacific Coast. Thanks to funds donated to the Friends of the Library account in honor of Laurie Deredita's retirement as director of Special Collections, the Lear Center has purchased volume 1 covering Washington. We are eagerly awaiting the publication of volumes 2 and 3 highlighting the attractions of Oregon and California. This purchase contributes to an area of strength formed by Laurie during her tenure: artists' books focusing on travel.

Another strength of the artists' books collection has been works featuring inventive typography. To enhance this, the Lear Center has added a new volume by the New York artist Werner Pfeiffer. *Abracadabra* is an homage to the Dutch printer and artist Hendrik Nicolaas Werkman. Werkman was immersed in the various avant-garde currents dominating European arts in the 1920s and 1930s. He also printed for the Dutch resistance during the Nazi occupation. He was captured by the Gestapo and executed just days before Holland was liberated in April 1945. Pfeiffer's tribute magically transforms letters into art, playing off Werkman's love of typography and invention. *Abracadabra* will be on display in the Lear Center reading room in the second half of the semester.



Laura Russell's *Hit the road: Highway 99's roadside art-ifacts*. Portland, Or: Simply Books, 2008.

The Gildersleeve Collection is one of the jewels of the Connecticut College library. It features some of the best illustrative work created for children's literature. The Gildersleeve also has a growing collection of popular serial novels for adolescents from the early 20th century. Among these are a handful of the famous Tom Swift books, which chronicled the adventures of the inventive boy genius. With the addition of nearly a dozen of the novels over the past few years, the Lear Center now has almost half of original editions of the popular books. We look forward to completing that collection in the coming years.



There are many other examples of serial fiction for adolescents in the Gildersleeve collection, such as the Log Cabin series of Edward Ellis or the controversial Uncle Remus stories of Joel Chandler Harris. The most famous of these are the Oz novels. These books provided children with a gateway to literature for generations. Building complete or nearly complete collections of these important series will be an invaluable addition to an already very strong collection.

## CHU ROOM REFURBISHING

The Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room will be undergoing a two stage refurbishing in Academic Year 2009-2010. Work is scheduled for early 2010 to repair the chipped wood finish of the chairs and table tops. Reupholstering of some of the leather furniture may also be necessary. In early summer 2010 the floors will be sanded and refinished. This represents the first significant touching up of the space since the renovated gallery and reference area was first opened in 2001 and will restore the treasured reading room to its original glory.

## CHU-GRIFFIS COLLECTIONS ACQUIRES NEW PAINTING

The Chu-Griffis Asian Art collection received a significant gift from Rob and Heidi Simmons following the memorial service for Professor Emeritus Charles Chu. The painting by Wu Zou Ren features two pandas munching on bamboo. Wu was a noted traditional Chinese painter who excelled in depictions of wildlife in its natural environment.

Born in Suzhou in 1908 and educated at Shanghai Art University, Wu became a leader of the Chinese Artists' Association and a permanent member of the National People's Congress. Selected to design three postage stamps in 1963, Wu chose ink paintings of pandas as his subject. This act is credited by some for establishing the panda as China's national symbol. This is the first Wu painting in our collection and we are deeply grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Simmons for the gift.



## MARION NESTLE WILL BE THE 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SOUNDLAB FOUNDATION SPEAKER



The Soundlab Foundation is pleased to host Marion Nestle as speaker for the twelfth annual Foundation lecture. Dr. Nestle is Paulette Goddard Professor in the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health at New York University.

Dr. Nestle is the author of three prize-winning books on the food industry: *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*; *Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology, and Bioterrorism*; and *What to Eat*. Her most recent work *Pet Food Politics: The Chihuahua in the Coal Mine* examined the safety of imported food products through the lens of the pet food scare of 2007. She is a frequently cited authority on food safety and the intersection of the food industry and politics in venues ranging from the *New York Times* to National Public Radio to CBS News. In addition to her academic publications, Dr. Nestle's work may be read on her blog [foodpolitics.com](http://foodpolitics.com) and the *Atlantic Monthly's* online food channel at [food.theatlantic.com](http://food.theatlantic.com).

Marion Nestle's lecture will combine the subjects of health and politics. It is entitled "What to Eat: Personal Responsibility vs. Social Responsibility." The lecture will take place on **September 17 at 7:30 pm in the Ernst Common Room in Blaustein Hall on the Connecticut College campus.** The lecture is free and open to the public.

## FRIENDS OF THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Friends of the Connecticut College Library runs from January 1 to December 31 but it is never too late to join or to renew your membership. The dues from the Friends are used to support the preservation of the collections, to purchase books, to sponsor lectures, exhibitions and receptions, to print the newsletter and to pay for mailings, and to fund the library scholarship.

If you wish to join at this time, or know of someone who is interested, a check payable to "Connecticut College" may be mailed to the Friends of the Library, Charles E. Shain Library, 270 Mohegan Avenue, New London, CT 06320.

Membership has the following categories: contributing (\$30), associate (\$50), patron (\$100), and benefactor (\$300 or more). All members receive the newsletter and invitations to lectures and other events but dues in the associate, patron and benefactor categories include library-borrowing privileges at both the Shain and the Greer Music Libraries.