11-7-2013

Megan Adamson Sijapati, Associate Professor of Religious Studies

Musselman Library
Megan Adamson Sijapati, Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/nextpage

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons, and the Library and Information Science Commons

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/nextpage/5

This is the publisher's version of the work. This publication appears in Gettysburg College's institutional repository by permission of the copyright owner for personal use, not for redistribution. Cupola permanent link: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/nextpage/5

This open access blog post is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.
Megan Adamson Sijapati, Associate Professor of Religious Studies

Authors
Musselman Library

Megan Adamson Sijapati, Gettysburg College

Keywords
Musselman Library, Gettysburg College, reading, books, interview

Abstract
In this new Next Page offering, Associate Professor of Religious Studies Megan Adamson Sijapati divulges her old school methods of keeping track of what to read next, as well as which book recently replaced Steinbeck's East of Eden as her go-to book for giving as a gift.

This blog post is available at The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/nextpage/5
Megan Adamson Sijapati, Associate Professor of Religious Studies
November 7, 2013

In this new Next Page offering, Associate Professor of Religious Studies Megan Adamson Sijapati divulges her old school methods of keeping track of what to read next, as well as which book recently replaced Steinbeck's East of Eden as her go-to book for giving as a gift.

**********

What are you reading now (or have read recently) that you would recommend? Why?

Tillie Olsen's *Tell Me a Riddle*, which is a collection of four short stories. I recommend it because Olsen's writing is spellbinding. It is hard to even describe. In the words of one reviewer: "prose that lashes like a whip, that cracks and stings. And then the judgment coming down like a terrible swift sword. And then a forgiving grace note, like haiku or pascal. memory, history, poetry, and prophecy converge." The stories deal, in part, with the experience of living in grinding poverty. My favorite so far is 'I Stand Here Ironing', which is about labor, the individual versus institutions, the love and pain of a parent for a child, and the limits to understanding another person and even oneself.

What book/article/blog have you recently recommended for a student to read? Why?

I recently recommended that a student re-read Edward Said's *Orientalism*. She is studying the ways that people form perceptions of the 'other', particularly people of religious communities outside one's own. *Orientalism* is a key text for understanding the dynamics of colonial and post-colonial othering and exoticizing, which still directly influence contemporary discourses on the Middle East and Asia by 'the West.'

How do you keep track of what you have already read, are reading currently, or want to read in the future?

I am not very good at keeping track of what I've already read. But for what I'd like to read in the future, I have two (very old school) methods: for fiction and poetry I have a stack on a table at home, and for academic works - journal articles, books, etc. - I jot titles down in my now ragged Moleskine notebook, which contains many years' worth of references, field notes, and research ideas.

What is your favorite book to give as a gift?

It used to be *East of Eden* by Steinbeck, more recently it is *Sweetness in the Belly* by Camilla Gibb.
Who is your favorite writer of all time?

I don't have one, though I love Dostoevsky, Marilynne Robinson, and the poet Mary Oliver. And now Tillie Olsen.

What are you planning to read next?

I've just begun reading *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* by Thomas Tweed. Believe it or not, scholars continue to debate over the very definition of religion: what is it we're studying, and what is it we're doing, when we study religion? How are we best to approach it? Tweed's book was deemed a theoretical classic in the field of religious studies when it came out a few years ago, and it is particularly appealing to me for its theorization of religion through frames of movement and geography.

Posted 7th November 2013 by Musselman Library, Gettysburg College