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## You've Gotta Read This! Connecting with Readers at an Academic Library

Kerri Odess-Harnish  
*Gettysburg College*

Clinton K. Baugess  
*Gettysburg College*

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## You've Gotta Read This! Connecting with Readers at an Academic Library

### Abstract

At our small, liberal arts college, the library has developed a vibrant browsing collection of popular fiction and nonfiction titles in both print and ebook formats. Additionally, we have developed extensive outreach and programming initiatives to support the recreational reading habits and intellectual engagement of our students and faculty outside of the classroom. Some of these efforts include an annual summer reading booklet, an online featured reader column, and first year and other thematic reading and discussion groups. Learn how librarians on our campus continue to successfully promote recreational reading in support of lifelong learning.

### Keywords

recreational reading, leisure reading, summer reading, reading programs, reading promotion, book discussions, outreach services, academic libraries, recreational materials, popular reading collection, academic libraries, college libraries

### Disciplines

Information Literacy | Library and Information Science

### Comments

Poster presented at Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) Annual Conference on September 29, 2014.

“ Musselman Library empowers our community of learners to discover and engage with the world’s collected knowledge, to **explore creative and intellectual pursuits**, and to actively participate in research and scholarship. We are dedicated to encouraging critical and imaginative thinking, **promoting lifelong learning**, and supporting teaching and learning through partnerships and collaboration. ”

## Musselman Library Mission Statement

### You’ve Gotta Read This! Annual Summer Reading Booklet

Started in spring 2003, the summer reading booklet features recommendations for books (fiction and nonfiction) and DVDs by faculty, staff, and administrators of Gettysburg College.

Published each May, the summer reading booklet inspires students and the rest of our campus community to take time in the summer to sit back, relax, and read.



#### Quick Facts for Summer Reading 2003-2014

**12 Booklets completed**  
**1,246 total submissions** since 2003  
189 Films/TV Shows  
1,057 Books

**12 Featured Columns** (Udden’s Outtakes, Great Reads from Guelzo, Films from Down Under, Missing Downton Abbey?, Nordic Noir, Isherwood’s Insights into World War I)

**A new life! 6,375 total Cupola downloads** (since Nov. 2012)  
2013 is the most popular summer reading booklet downloaded from The Cupola

Approx. **3-5 Library Staff** Involved Annually

#### Highlights from the 2014 Issue

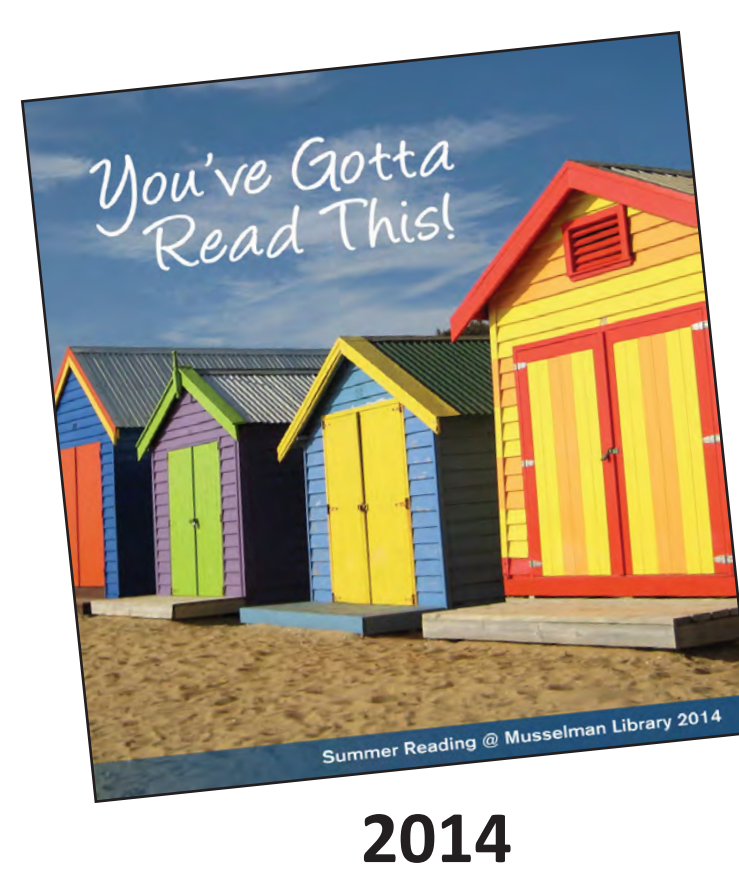
**263 total submissions**  
(229 books and 34 films)

**152 submitters**  
(faculty, administrators, and staff)

**675 booklets printed**

**63 print titles ordered**

**128 OverDrive titles, 9 DVDs ordered**  
(76 titles already in main collection, 138 already in Browsing Collection)



2014

Available at <http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/summerreads/>

# You’ve Gotta Read This! Connecting with Readers at an Academic Library

**Kerri Odess-Harnish**  
Reference & Instruction Librarian  
Gettysburg College

**Clinton Baugess**  
Reference & Instruction Librarian  
Gettysburg College

## Browsing Room

Opened in spring 2003 and housed in a glass and brick enclosed space on the main floor of Musselman Library, the Browsing Room contains contemporary and award-winning works of fiction and popular nonfiction, poetry, and short stories from the library’s collection.

The Browsing Room encourages recreational reading for personal discovery and lifelong learning.



An enclosed quiet space on a noisy main floor, the Browsing Room features comfortable seating, study space, and exhibits.

## One Room, Three Collections

**McNaughton Rental Collection - 384 Titles**  
A rental collection of approximately 500 titles. Includes popular and genre fiction, multiple copies of popular titles, and *New York Times* bestsellers.

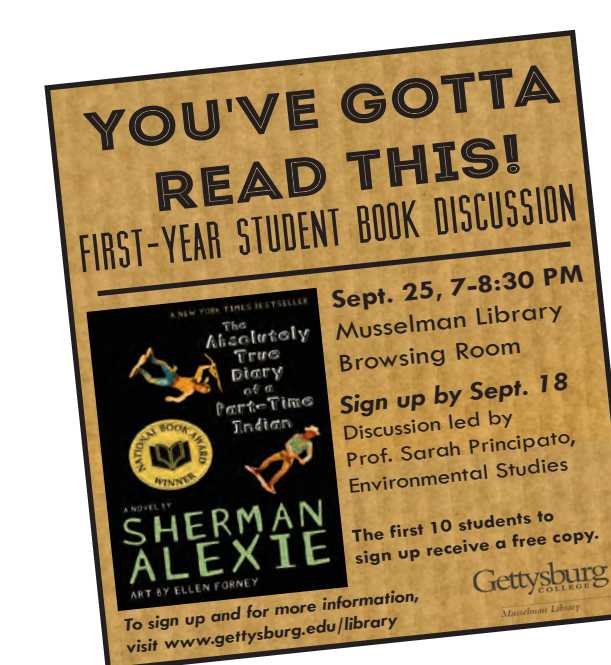
**Browsing Collection - 1,057 titles**  
Purchased titles that are part of our permanent book collection. Includes fiction, poetry, young adult literature, graphic novels, and nonfiction judged to be of enduring value to the collection.

**Overdrive (as of 2013) - 301 Titles (as of 9/18/2014)**  
Supplementing our academic ebook collections, OverDrive now includes popular fiction, nonfiction, and a small number of audiobooks.

## First-Year Student Reading Discussions

Using titles recommended in *You’ve Gotta Read This!*, in fall 2013 the library launched a student reading discussion series as a way to provide intellectually engaging opportunities for students.

All participants receive a free copy of the book (funded by Friends of Musselman Library) and attend the book discussion, which is led by a faculty member and/or librarian.



**2013-2014**  
3 discussions with 21 participants

**2014-2015**  
2 planned discussions (Fall/Spring)

#### 2013-2014 Selections

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*  
by Sherman Alexie

*Moonwalking with Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything*  
by Joshua Foer

*Alif the Unseen* by G. Willow Wilson

#### 2014-2015 Selections

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak (Fall) / To Be Determined (Spring)

## Browsing Room Users

**Staff/administrators** were the number one user of the Browsing and McNaughton Collections.

**Faculty** checked out more items from the McNaughton Collection than the Browsing Collection.

**Students** checked out more items from the Browsing Collection than the McNaughton Collection.

## Rate of Circulation for Browsing Collections

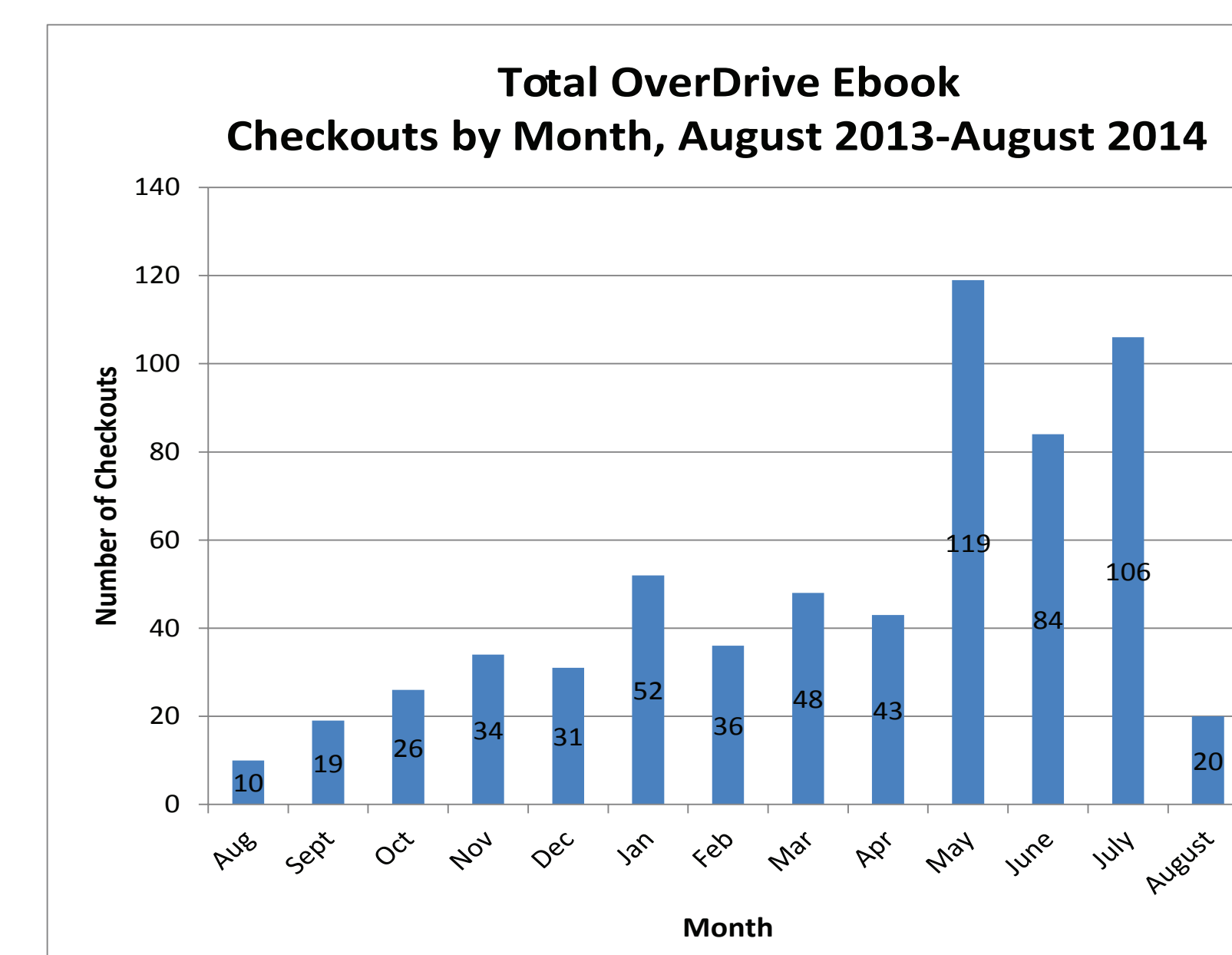
Collection	Total # of Titles	Total # of Checkouts	Circulation Rate
McNaughton Rental	384	1,015	2.6
Browsing Collection	1,057	1,063	1
Book Collection	312,778	36,074	0.1
DVD Collection	11,291	11,934	1.1

Note: Collection size and checkouts cover the period August 2013 to September 2014. Rate of circulation is determined by total number of checkouts divided by collection size.

## OverDrive

Launched in 2013, OverDrive has grown to include 301 titles. For the 2014 *You’ve Gotta Read This!* issue, we purchased 97 (of the 208 recommended books) on OverDrive. Of those 97 titles, they circulated 182 times from May to September 2014.

Overall, OverDrive use has grown over the course of Summer 2014, in part to a *You’ve Gotta Read This!* issue launch and “Bring Your Own Device” OverDrive training party.



## Events and Programming

Sponsoring lectures, exhibits, film screenings and book discussions, provide opportunities for the library to connect with the College and greater-Gettysburg community. Faculty partnerships have contributed to the success of these programs. Securing co-sponsors and grant funding has been key to making these learning opportunities affordable and sustainable.

### Read Green: A Gettysburg Environmental Series Spring 2009



**528 total participants**

**3 Book discussions**  
Including *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*;  
*Field Notes from a Catastrophe*;  
*Deep Economy*

**2 Film Viewings**  
Including *King Corn* (2007)  
*End of Suburbia...* (2004)

**1 Author Visit**  
Bill McKibben

### Conflict and Resistance in the Middle East Fall 2011 - Spring 2012

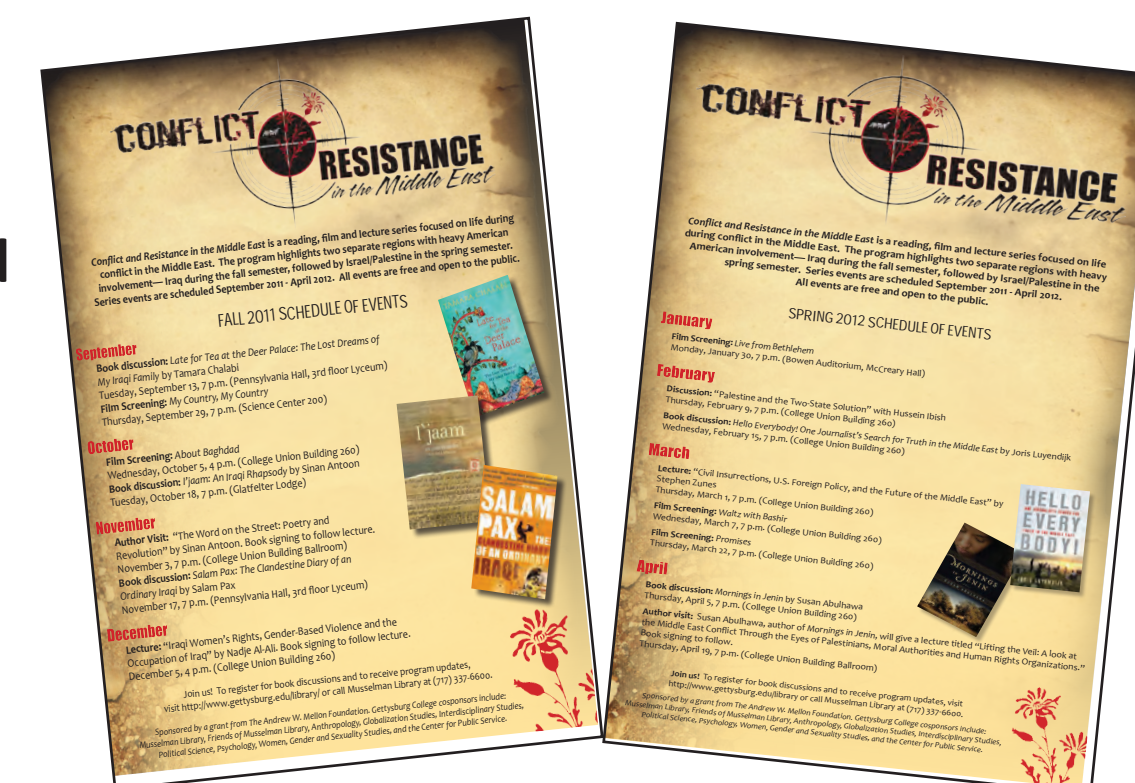
**804 total participants**

**15 events related to life during conflict in regions with heavy American involvement, Iraq and Palestine.**

**5 Book Discussions**  
Including *Mornings in Jenin*,  
*Late for Tea at the Deer Palace*

**5 Film Screenings**  
Including *About Baghdad* (2004)

**5 Lectures**



### Iran: Beyond the Headlines Fall 2014 - Spring 2015

**11 scheduled events to explore the history, art, culture, and everyday life of Iranians.**

**4 Book Discussions**  
Including *Rooftops of Tehran*, *Persepolis*,  
and *The Septembers of Shiraz*

**3 Film Screenings**  
Including *Persepolis* (2007) and  
*Offside* (2006)

**3 Lectures**  
**1 Author Visit**  
Dalia Sofer



## Next Page

In September 2013, the library launched *Next Page*, a new online column featuring guest readers from the Gettysburg College community.

Available at  
<http://nextpagegettysburg.blogspot.com/>

The column provides a way to highlight different perspectives and disciplines on campus, to stimulate ideas and inspire conversation, and to model intellectual engagement in a liberal arts setting.

Since *Next Page*'s launch...

**14 individual reader profiles**

**4,053 page views** (as of 9/17/2014)

