

OCLC Distinguished Seminar Series

July 30, 2002

Reading: The Digital Future By Jason Epstein and Michael Smolens

9:00-9:30 am
Coffee and Doughnuts

9:30-11:00 am
Presentation

OCLC Auditorium
6565 Frantz Road
Dublin, OH 43017-3395

You are welcome to attend this presentation.

Registering in advance allows us to plan sufficient refreshments and to alert you if for any reason the lecture needs to be rescheduled.

To RSVP, please email bakerk@oclc.org or call the OCLC Office of Research at (614) 764-6073 indicating your name, affiliation, and telephone number by July 26, 2002.

Advance registration is encouraged, but not required.

On July 30, Jason Epstein and Michael Smolens will address the publishing industry's prospects in the digital era, in their lecture entitled, "Reading: The Digital Future."

There has been much publicity about the publishing industry's current crisis. The aggregation of businesses within the book publishing industry has increased the cost of production, impacted the economics of bookmanship, and deteriorated the quality and availability of monographic content. Epstein has adeptly chronicled this crisis in his recent book, *Book Business*.

Epstein believes the cure to publishing's ills lies in a "uniform, universal book catalog" connected to a network of low-overhead print on demand machines. These machines will produce books in minutes at point of need around the globe. This service will bypass the present book manufacturing and distribution chain, thereby allowing publishers to focus on their core competencies of talent identification and editing. Availability of quality books to the literate reading public will expand. Epstein and his business partner, Michael Smolens, have been working to achieve this goal through their business, 3BillionBooks.

Epstein is renowned as a publishing innovator. In the 1950s he created Anchor Books, the first American series of quality paperbacks. In the 1960s he helped found *The New York Review of Books*. In the 1980s he created the *Library of America* and the *Reader's Catalog*, the precursor to on-line retailing. He is the first recipient of the National Book Award for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters and also received the Curtis Benjamin Award of the American Association of Publishers for inventing new kinds of editing and publishing.

Jason Epstein's lecture will focus on the publishing industry, the need for and characteristics of the universal book catalog, and the remaining challenges to be addressed.

Background information:

New York Review of Books article:
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/14318>

Jason Epstein's bibliography:
<http://www.nybooks.com/authors/86>

Amazon.com listing for *Book Business*:
http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0393322343/qid=1025179066/sr=2-1/ref=sr_2_1/002-4431609-8628863

