

September 2007

## Lost in Austin -- My School Books

Thomas W. Leonhardt

*St. Edwards University*, [thomasl@stedwards.edu](mailto:thomasl@stedwards.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Leonhardt, Thomas W. (2007) "Lost in Austin -- My School Books," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 19: Iss. 4, Article 32.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5122>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

**Case Studies in Collection ...**  
from page 70

During the meeting **Meghan** will need to call on her facilitation skills to keep the group moving through the agenda, while also allowing for everyone to have reasonable input and response time. If there seems to be heated discussion over any particular subject **Meghan** can suggest that a deeper discussion needs to happen when there is more time, and that she will include in the minutes that this needs to happen, and then, firmly move on to the next topic. Keeping your wristwatch on the table in front of you, or sitting directly across from a clock can be a good way to keep an eye on the time. Good meeting facilitation skills will help those uncertain of **Meghan** as a leader gain respect for her abilities. If she keeps the meeting productive and on-going, they will more than likely not heckle her or impede the meeting's progress.

**Meghan** will want to end the meeting on-time, or better yet, a bit early if at all possible. Last steps are to review any action items, making it clear who is responsible for follow-up, and then by thanking everyone for their input and help in making the meeting go so smoothly.

After the meeting, **Meghan** will want to get with the minute-taker, and agree upon a deadline for when the minutes will be complete, preferably before **Lila's** return. If needs be, **Meghan** may want to offer to take the person to lunch, or do them a favor, in return for timely turn-around on the minutes. As well, **Meghan** will want to write a follow-up email just to **Lila**, letting her know how the meeting went, alerting her to any areas for concern, and reporting on any action items that **Lila** will need to know about on her return.

Whew! Now, finally, **Meghan** needs to congratulate herself on a job well done. If she follows our advice, she will most likely be hitting the closest ice cream parlor and having a banana split to celebrate her successful first meeting! 🍌

**Rumors**  
from page 56

Well, more friends from the past! Here's the latest on **Eamon Fennessy** <efennessy@att.net> and what he's been up to. **Eamon** has retired as **Founder and CEO of The Copyright Group, Inc.** of Beverly Farms, MA after seventeen years. He says he recalls the early days of the **Charleston Conference**. Do you remember his column, "On the Street" in early issues of **ATG**? **Eamon** says he's now dabbling in politics in Massachusetts.

[www.TheCopyrightGroup.net](http://www.TheCopyrightGroup.net)

continued on page 80



**ALPSP**  
North America

**Two exciting programs for scholarly publishing professionals**

**When:** October 22, 2007 (immediately preceding the HighWire Press Publishers' Meeting)

**Where:** Cafritz Conference Centre, George Washington University, Washington DC

Sponsored by HighWire Press and the ALPSP North American Chapter

**Seminar 1: Best Practices in Online Journal Publishing**

Ten experienced speakers survey current and best practices for developing and managing an online journal website.

**Seminar 2: Evolving Business Models**

Publishers from a range of disciplines focus on the practicalities rather than philosophies of new business models.

**And two new training courses**

Introduction to Journals Finance

Effective Journals Marketing,

both being held on October 25th, 2007 at FASEB, Bethesda, MD.

Full details at [www.alpssp.org](http://www.alpssp.org)

The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers

Lost in Austin — My School Books

by **Thomas W. Leonhardt** (St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas; Phone: 512-448-8470; Fax: 512-448-8737) <thomasl@stedwards.edu>

For many years, I have owned a small book called *My School Books* by **Hendrik Willem van Loon**, a Dutchman born in 1882. He migrated to the United States in 1903 and became a best-selling author and illustrator of children's books, the most famous of which is *The Story of Mankind* for which he was awarded the very first **Newbery Award** in 1922.

*My School Books* is only 24 pages long, from frontispiece to the final page and was printed by the **T.W. and C.B. Sheridan Company** for the **E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Co., Inc.**, "Fabrikoid" (\*"Fabrikoid" is **DuPont's** Registered Trademark designating its pyroxylin coated and impregnated fabrics) Division for distribution as a memento at the **DuPont** "Wonder World of Chemistry" Exhibit at the New York World's Fair, 1939. The book is bound in PX Cloth — a pyroxylin impregnated cloth which is distinguished for its cleanability, its durability and its functional beauty."

My copy, in very good condition (no wonder, being bound in pyroxylin), once belonged to **Edward deWitt Taylor** (1871-1962), a San Francisco printer of fine books. He would have had more than a passing interest in the design, typography, and binding of the book. As for the subject matter, if **Taylor** bothered to read the book, as I have just recently done after owning the book for more than thirty years, he must have been as disappointed as I was.

**van Loon** tells of three illustrated volumes, in Dutch, that he inherited from his grandmother and how dull his school books were by comparison. I had been expecting a bibliography of sorts, a list of his favorite childhood books at the very least.

If I were writing about my school books, it would be an even shorter book unless I included those books that accompanied me throughout my school days spent in eleven different schools as we moved from place to place, wherever the Department of the Army saw fit to send my father. And when I say accompanied me, I don't mean that I possessed many books, even in high school when I began reading at a higher level and an increased pace. What I mean is that books other than textbooks were my companions whom I visited in the post libraries wherever we went.

continued on page 72

van Loon speculates that he was five or six when he started school. I was 5 ½ when I began kindergarten in 1948 at the **Benjamin Franklin** School in Junction City, Kansas. **Miss Bradbury** was our teacher. In those days, we weren't supposed to learn to read in kindergarten, we were supposed to learn to play with others, obey rules, lie quietly on our mats, swallow our football-shaped cod liver oil pills without tasting them, and finishing our graham cracker and half pint of milk. We learned children's songs and played the usual games of the time but I recall nothing academic at all from that school year.

I can't remember the name of my first grade teacher in that same school but I remember our reader, a **Dick** and **Jane** book. Make fun if you will, but we learned to read, despite a profligate kindergarten devoted to play. The bright colors and bold illustrations were glorious to me and the prose — so clear and direct and unambiguous — gave me just the confidence that I needed to learn to read and then move on to bigger, longer, and more complex books. I won't say better because I don't want to belittle in any way the book that gave me my reading start.

We moved every couple of years so there were regular and frequent opportunities to get rid of things when it was time to pull up stakes so I didn't really accumulate a lot of books growing up. Those that I remember carrying from place to place were gifts from my **Grandmother Leonhardt** and **Aunt Audrey** and included books given to my younger sister but claimed by me including *Black Beauty*. I never did finish that book, finding it utterly boring, but, using a red, indelible pencil, licked for good measure, I dutifully made X marks by each chapter heading in the table of contents to mark my laborious way.

I had much better luck with *The Lone Indian*, a book that impressed me so much that I added my own illustrations in the flyleaf and inside the back cover. I also had a copy of **Mark Twain's** *Tom Sawyer* and *The Story of a Bad Boy* by **Thomas Bailey Aldrich**, an author looked on with scorn by **Mr. Twain**, something I don't understand because I enjoyed both books. **Aldrich** was a New Englander, as I recall, and **Twain** became one when his royalties allowed him to move into a fine house in Hartford. Perhaps it was some social jealousy that led **Samuel Langhorne Clemens** to look down on the literary efforts of a born New Englander. On the other hand, there is no doubt that **Mark Twain** is the superior writer who would be superior to anyone writing today if he should resurrect himself and resume his career. He is certainly a better writer than **Hendrik Willem van Loon**, too, but I wonder if we would have awarded him a **Newbery** for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. And if we had, I wonder if he would have accepted it. We'll never know. 🐾



## Bet You Missed It

### Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

Column Editor: **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

*Editor's Note:* Hey, are y'all reading this? If you know of an article that should be called to *Against the Grain's* attention ... send an email to <kstrauch@comcast.net>. We're listening! — **KS**

#### THE DEFENSE RESTS by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

"Rumpole" author **John Mortimer** defends his five favorite fictional depictions of the bar. Are you ready?

**Anthony Trollope**, *Orley Farm*; **Charles Dickens**, *Bleak House*; **William Shakespeare**, *Measure for Measure*; **Charles Dickens**, *Great Expectations*; **P.D. James**, *A Certain Justice*.

Yes, **Trollope** caught you off-guard as it did me. I've already ordered it from **Amazon**.  
See — **John Mortimer**, "Five Best," *The Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 24, 2007, p.P10.

#### THE EMBLEM OF A TIMELESS VOLUME by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

An art reviewer's paean to glorious bookplates with laurel leaves wrapping a scroll reading "From the Library of." Hers were produced by the **Antioch Bookplate Co.** (now **Antioch Publishing**) in Yellow Springs, Ohio. Co-founder **Ernest Morgan** was in a work-study program at **Antioch College** when he caught the bookplate bug.

Plates were designed by **Rockwell Kent** and **Robert Whitmore**, and what designs they were. A tree with roots wrapped around an open book; an owl sitting on a book stack; "ex libris" with the man on the library ladder.

And the great homilies: like "I enjoy sharing my books as I do my friends asking only that you treat them well and see them safely home."

**Karen Gardner** now owns the plate business via **Bookplate Ink**. **Karen** is working her niche well with sales up 40% over last year. Authors are now signing plates and sending them off to bookstores for self-adhesive insertion.

See — **Joanne Kaufman**, "Still Stuck in Books After All These Years," *The Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 23, 2007, p.W11.

#### AT LEAST THERE'S NO MORE CARD CATALOGUE by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

**Bing Pan**, a **College of Charleston** business professor discovers that college kids just open the first entry on **Google**. And since the number of hits determines the position, the article stays on top. He is not pleased with this, research-wise.

See — **Diane Knich**, "What Does Google Know?," *The Post and Courier*, Sept. 3, 2007, p. A1.

#### BACKTALK IS ALWAYS MORE INTERESTING by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

**Wikipedia** now has 1.9 million online encyclopedia articles and is the 17th busiest US Website. If you go under the tab "Discussion," you'll find what the author refers to as addictive stuff. Editors get into some "prolix vehemence."

Did **Meucci** or **Bell** invent the telephone? 242,000 words are devoted to this academic brawl. Should the concept of "limit" be explained as "average" in calculus. That one got a lot of heated debate. An author who ventured that most people consider kittens to be cute got attacked as "Eurocentric."

And you'll pick up some rare trivia. Raw potatoes are indeed poisonous due to solanine, but you'd have to eat a sackful. **Marshall McLuhan** thought his ideas on media were inspired by the **Virgin Mary**. And he believed that a global conspiracy of **Freemasons** was seeking to wreck his career. And this last comes authoritatively from his biographer.

See — **Lee Gomes**, "Forget the Articles, Best Wikipedi Read Is Its Discussions," *The Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 15, 2007, p.B1.