Again a Cottage Industry

Ivan Gaetz
Collaborative Librarianship, igaetz@regis.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship
Part of the Entrepreneurial and Small Business Operations Commons, and the Technology and Innovation Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol3/iss3/1

This Editorial is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Collaborative Librarianship by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu.
If I interpret correctly the views of Jason Epstein, elder statesman of the publishing world, Collaborative Librarianship in fact takes its place in the re-birth of a cottage industry. The Random House College Dictionary defines “cottage industry” as, “an industry in which the product is made in a self-employed worker’s home (in contrast with a factory).” Beginning in the 1450s in homes and shops, printing and publishing progressed through the centuries to become enormous, multinational corporate empires. Now, all that is changing. With the emergence of the internet, social networking and mobile technologies of one kind or another, a new paradigm comes into play, a new model described by Epstein as a cottage industry long forgotten in the big business of publishing—and you are invited to be a part of it!

I had the privilege of participating in a small seminar in April, 2010, at Fordham University with Jason Epstein. At 82 years of age he was about to leave for Asia to market in China and elsewhere the new print-on-demand Espresso Book Machines his company has just perfected, but he took the time to catch a cab up to the Bronx from his Greenwich Village apartment to meet with 25 library deans from Jesuit universities in the United States. In Epstein’s prescient little tome, Book Business: Publishing Past, Present, and Future (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001) he predicted that given developments of the World Wide Web, book publishing will become “once more a cottage industry of diverse, creative autonomous units” divested of “such vestigial publishing work as marketing, sales, shipping, and warehousing together with their bureaucracies and inefficiencies…” (p. 175). He envisioned a much more direct connection of authors and readers, working both ways. With the explosion of online open access publishing, mobile connectivity to the internet and elevated interactivity, what Epstein expected has become reality—in spades.

Collaborative Librarianship invites you to become directly involved in this new cottage industry as authors, editors, reviewers, readers, responders—working where you are, anywhere in the world, creatively, autonomously, and exhibiting much diversity—interacting with information and knowledge. You have an opportunity to participate in meaningful ways in this new world of publishing anticipated by Jason Epstein. For more information about how you can become involved, contact one of the editors of the journal or explore further this website.