



STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

425 Broadway, Redwood City, CA 94063 (650) 723-9434

www.sup.org

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Contact: Mary Kate Maco
Publicity Manager
(650) 736-1782
mmaco@stanford.edu

Stanford University Press debuts its new digital publishing initiative

(Redwood City, CA) — *Enchanting the Desert* by geographer Nicholas Bauch is a virtual journey that explores a cherished American landmark—the Grand Canyon—through myriad lenses and media, pulling historic photography, interactive cartography, and critical essays together to convey novel insights into the canyon’s storied history, sublime aesthetic and enduring cultural iconicity. Published online by Stanford University Press, *Enchanting the Desert* marks the first release for the Press’s Digital Humanities and Social Sciences Publishing Program.

With funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Press’s new initiative aims to serve the expanding field of the digital humanities and social sciences.

“Journal and monograph publishing have established ecosystems of peer review and accreditation—making them key benchmarks in the careers of scholars—but there were not analogous standards or channels for the dissemination of digital projects,” said Dr. Alan Harvey, Director at Stanford University Press.

To fill this void, Stanford University Press, in partnership with the Stanford Libraries and the University of Richmond’s Digital Scholarship Lab, developed a groundbreaking publishing program that elevates digital-born projects to the same level of academic credibility as the traditional monograph.

According to Harvey, Stanford University Press seeks projects across the humanities and social sciences in which the marriage of content and form creates a compelling overall argument that advances scholarly conversations. “We are not looking for tools, reference works, or encyclopedic compendia but rather projects that present arguments that engage with existing issues in their respective fields,” said Harvey.

Stanford University Press selected Bauch’s *Enchanting the Desert* as the inaugural project because of its skillful interplay of scholarly argument, subject matter, and technical

features—selection criteria that will be the hallmark of all future digital acquisitions by the Press.

Bauch's project, which pivots around a turn-of-the-20th-century traveling slideshow by noted photographer Henry G. Peabody, shows how Peabody's images of the Grand Canyon were used to stir the American imagination with visions of the majestic West. Bauch employs Peabody's images to meditate on a wide array of tangential phenomena—the tourist's gaze, the genre of adventure photography, the mechanics of colonization on the Western frontier—which he explores in a series of critical essays (80 in total), all of which converge and intersect in the Grand Canyon's stark and sweeping landscape.

"*Enchanting the Desert's* diverse set of interactive storytelling tools creatively interprets the space of the Grand Canyon in a medium that allows for technical leaps not possible in a print publication," said Friederike Sundaram, Acquisitions Editor for Digital Projects at Stanford University Press.

Harvey believes once digital scholarly works are published with the same rigor as monographs, scholars will accumulate a digital publishing pedigree that provides the same consideration for hiring and tenure that traditional book publishing offers.

"Stanford University Press's digital publishing initiative will revolutionize how humanities scholars work in web-based media," said Bauch, who will be joining the University of Oklahoma in fall as Assistant Professor of Geohumanities and Director of the Experimental Geography Studio.

The funding from Mellon will continue through until 2018 with 10 other interactive scholarly works currently in various stages of preparation for publication by Stanford University Press. Bauch will be demonstrating the features and functionality of *Enchanting the Desert* at a digital release event scheduled for May 16 at Stanford Libraries' David Rumsey Map Center. The event will be streamed live online via the Press's Facebook page.

Additional Information available at:

[Enchanting the Desert Launch](#)

[Digital Publishing Program: FAQs](#)

Frequently asked questions about the Press's digital publishing initiative

[Digital Scholarship at Stanford University Press](#)

[Stanford University Press Awarded \\$1.2 Million for the Publishing of Interactive Scholarly Works](#)

A press release announcing the Andrew W. Mellon grant for the Press's digital publishing initiative