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# Nelson Poynter Library Kicks Off Fall Research Colloquia

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The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library's first fall Student Research Colloquium was held this week. To kick off the new semester, Andrew Hart, a graduate student working toward his MLA in Florida Studies, shared his research on stock car racing in Florida.

"There is a lot of interest in racing at the professional level, but I wanted to look at the sport from the roots, where it came from, where it's been, and where it's going," said Hart, who raced a bandolero car in middle school. "This is an area of sports history that touches on themes of southern identity, masculinity, race relations, tourism and politics."

Eventually, Hart says he would like to obtain enough data through interviews and extended research from drivers, pit crews, promoters, and everyone else in the stock car world, to write and publish a book. This is a historic pastime of old Florida and as Hart notes, an interesting part of Florida's history.

“It is really more than a southern phenomenon, with each region adding their own influence to make the sport interesting,” Hart said.

Hart’s research has led him on a journey around the state and up to Appalachian State University to dig through their stock car archives. He says the most interesting part of the research has been, by far, the interviews with drivers.

“There is something for everybody to find interesting in this topic, and I just hope I can talk to as many of the older drivers, fans, promoters, and pit crews before they are gone,” Hart said.

The Library will host two more colloquia this fall, one in October and one in November.

“We sponsor the Student Research Colloquia to underscore our commitment to the University’s emphasis on providing experiential and evidence-based learning opportunities for our students,” said Carol Hixson, dean of the Library. “We seek to provide a supportive and professional venue for them to hone their presentation skills and receive feedback and suggestions from faculty and fellow students.”