

KSBN 2014 Workshop | April 24, 2014

*The Ghost Map* by Steven Johnson

*The purpose of this workshop was to provide information on the 2014 common book, including planning programs, events, and ways to integrate the book into classrooms.*

### **The Ghost Map Book Summary**

*The Ghost Map* is a historical account of the terrifying cholera outbreak in the summer of 1854 in London and how a pair of interdisciplinary thinkers worked to find a solution to the deadly problem.

By the mid-nineteenth century, London had emerged as one of the first truly modern cities, but it severely lacked necessary sanitation services, including garbage removal, clean water, and sewers. The city thus became a breeding ground for an outbreak of a rapidly-spreading disease, whose cause and cure were unknown to these Londoners.

As the cholera outbreak spreads across the densely-populated city, it is up to Dr. John Snow and Reverend Henry Whitehead to use their knowledge of the disease and the city to map the pandemic and its cause, find its widespread implications and, ultimately, discover the intervention that stopped the devastating spread of the disease.

### **Events**

In the fall, KSBN will host several book-related events to enrich the reading experience. The highlight of the series will be an author visit by Steven Johnson on Sept. 11, 2014. The event is free, but a ticket will be required for entry.

Other events, such as Movies on the Grass, that correlate with the themes in the book will be announced at a later time. Information about the events will be located on the [website](#), through social media, and announced at summer Orientation and Enrollment. KSBN will host three main events based on the book and recommend others for students. Ideas for related events that students should know about can be sent to [ksbn@k-state.edu](mailto:ksbn@k-state.edu).

### **Common Book Resources**

Librarians are available to provide assistance to instructors who have questions or wish to implement aspects of *The Ghost Map* in their classroom. Many of *The Ghost Map* activities stress information literacy and the ability for students to effectively search for, gather, and utilize information.

*The Ghost Map* guide will provide information and additional resources about the book and will include a list of community events surrounding the book, information on the K-State Book Network, sample assignments for different disciplines, suggested read-a-like books and movies, and more. *The Ghost Map* guide is currently being made and will be similar to [last year's guide](#).



**Questions? Contact:**

Dan Ireton, Undergraduate/Community Services Librarian  
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**Mapping *The Ghost Map* Game**

During the first eight weeks of the fall 2014 semester, there will be a community-wide game based on *The Ghost Map*. Students, faculty, and community members will have the opportunity to work together and on their own to solve puzzles, reach goals, and attend events.

The game will focus on themes from the book, including classism, social drama, urban planning, and epidemiology. It will also include a map of campus and the community that mimics the map used by Snow in the book. One of the game designers will be available to visit your class and lead an activity or discussion based on the game.

**Questions? Contact:**

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**Community Tie-ins**

The element of community is important in *The Ghost Map*. The School of Leadership Studies believes this book can help bring to life the concept of socially responsible leadership - specifically that the purpose of leadership is to impact change on behalf of others and for the benefit of society as a whole.

Approximately 900 first year students take the Introduction of Leadership Concepts class each fall. Leadership Studies plans to use the book as a case study to help diagnose the complexities of civic challenges and to encourage students to identify and take action on issues in their own communities. The characteristics and practices of the “everyday heroes” in the book can help illustrate leadership values, skills, and personal strengths. The themes of the book also connect with the “Hunger Project,” a service-learning partnership with the Flint Hills Breadbasket that addresses the social issue of hunger in the Manhattan community.

**Questions? Contact:**

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### **Science Tie-ins**

*The Ghost Map* deals with issues in the fields of biology, public health, statistics, civil engineering, sociology, and history, which allow for book-related discussions and assignments across many disciplines. The book looks into diseases, changes in medicine, issues of public health and advances that have been made, how statistics can be used to map events and make innovative discoveries, how cities are built, how people think and move within a certain area, and what we can learn from past experiences.

Elements of the KSBN experience will tie in to these aspects. Instructors are encouraged to contact a librarian for in-class presentations or activities on these elements of the books.

### **Innovation Tie-ins**

*The Ghost Map* tells the story of a very innovative time. Snow and Whitehead worked to identify a disease and its source without any modern tools and against the most popular theory of epidemiology at the time. Their use of statistics and mapping to identify the source and recognize the actions of entire neighborhoods was ahead of its time and can be studied today. Investigation into their innovative use of medical investigation, use of statistics, and creation of one of the first examples of an infographic can be integrated into the classroom to help enrich the reading experience.

### **Q&A**

#### **What if I don't have time in my curriculum to dedicate to the book?**

KSBN encourage instructors to explore ways to integrate concepts and themes from the book into already-planned lessons instead of planning entirely new activities.

#### **What if my class has a mixture of freshmen and sophomores - seniors who haven't read the book?**

*The Ghost Map* is available for purchase (approximately \$10), and there are also a limited number at [K-State Libraries](#) for check out. Copies of the book are also available through Sigma Tau Delta's [Lending Library](#).

Instructors can scan a small portion of the book to share with their class or choose to show a related video to help familiarize students with the book. Contact KSBN for help selecting an excerpt appropriate for your lesson.



**How do first year students find out about the book?**

At summer Orientation and Enrollment, each student will receive a copy of the book with a bookmark insert explaining the program. The program is also explained to parents during their segment of orientation. During his address, Dr. Pat Bosco encourages students to read the book each day of enrollment. K-State orientation leaders also read the book and encourage students to participate while they are enrolling in classes.

**Do non-freshmen students participate? How can we get more to participate?**

A goal of KSBN is to continue to bring in more non-freshmen students to the program. Students who connect with their KSBN book are more likely to follow and be engaged in the books after their first year; as the program continues to grow and expand, hopefully more students will remain connected after their first year. Campus and community events also play a part in bringing in and retaining non-first year students. KSBN welcomes any ideas on how to increase this, as well.

