We were honored to have Melanie Kiper in attendance at our March 2, 2016 meeting for the first time ever. Melanie is an attorney, a prolific website builder, and a luminary Community Service Specialist in the Center for Public Affairs Research at UNO.

The Bibliophiles started in 2010 as a quirky offshoot of a Lifelong Learning Program in UNO’s Gerontology Dept. I joined Melanie as a team member in that creative aging effort. In time, she kindly volunteered to develop a website to help linkup mature readers with great books. She has been our key back office, Bibliophiles supporter from almost the very beginning. I am delighted to finally acknowledge Melanie’s stellar performance over the ensuing years of stimulating book discussions. Thank you, Melanie.

We enjoyed an animated discussion of **THE GREAT DEBATE**: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of the Right and Left, by Yuval Levi. There was high praise from most of our fifteen members present for the depth and clarity of a book that started life as Levi’s PhD dissertation at the University of Chicago. With deft organization and writing skills, he related the complex history of events, freedom issues, and political turmoil that animated the American and French revolutions. He provided biographical and behavioral background for Burke and Paine as protagonists in a war of ideas that changed the world in eighteenth century Europe and America. The ethos of the historic Enlightenment era became a fertile breeding ground for fresh ideas about the nature of human knowledge and government.

It was pointed out that there was significant redundancy in Levin’s narrative. But there was also great depth and insight in his narrative of the protracted conflict between these two powerful spokesmen of the liberal and conservative persuasions. It was a fitting framework for our understanding of the tumult we are now engaged in during the primaries of a presidential election year.

Thanks to David Clemence, who recommended and advocated for this tile on behalf of the Selection Committee.

As change of pace, we had a free for all selection process for our next great book selection. Sue Matson did not shirk from the opportunity to recommend a notable Mark Twain title that ties in closely with the current “GO WEST” exhibition at the Joslyn Museum. Twain published **ROUGING IT** in 1872. But like many, if not all his works, it has a vibrancy and currency, which belie its age. The Book Worm and Joslyn Museum have paperback copies available.

I look forward to seeing you again at **Spezia (11:30) on May 4** to consider the life of the cowboys and much more besides.

A final kudo goes to Terry Haney. Following just the briefest of suggestions, he sal-lied forth to reserve Spezia’s big room for the Bibliophiles on alternate months for next year. Thank you, Terry.

Bob Runyon