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# SHARP NEWS

Volume 17, Number 4

Autumn 2008

## SHARP OXFORD BROOKES

### Teaching and Text

Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK  
23 – 27 June 2008

As a small atom, comprising approximately 0.1% of the complex body that is SHARP, I approached my first conference at Oxford with a tinge of apprehension and a strong measure of curiosity. I wondered whether this pressure cooker of bibliophiles would result in a tasty soup, or would too many ingredients spoil the broth? Like a demented variant of minestrone, what strange ingredients would appear in each spoonful, with their differing flavours, nutritional values and digestibility?

For appetisers, the workshop – *Exploring British Publishers' Archives* – was held at Oxford University Press and offered some fun and games for those of us who had been travelling since the early hours of the morning. Guided by Bill Bell, Robert Fraser and Amy Flanders, we played sardines in the archives; identified mystery objects such as Robert Peel's 'improvements' on his speeches for publication; sleuthed our way with some hilarity through reports from commercial travellers and the codes and passwords of setting up branches in India; and ended with a mixture of pass the parcel and consequences using the OUP letter books, where distracted publishers mollified anxious authors and disgruntled sellers. It proved to be a gentle introduction to the 'ordeal by word' of a full-blown SHARP conference.

Juliet Gardiner's plenary lecture provided a rich and textured insight into the plight of the author, simultaneously revered as romantic solitary artist and castigated for mercantile 'pursuit of the last possible ninepence.' In a crowded and quixotic market authors subsidise their writing by riding the merry-go-round of reviews, creative writing courses and literary festivals. Perhaps, as Juliet Gardiner considered, their perilous finances should be boosted by discounts, tax-exemptions or gra-

tuities from grateful readers. In the crowded and quixotic reception at Blackwell's that followed, where Oxford's leading bookshop played host to a 'library' of SHARPists, it was perhaps the lack of air-conditioning rather than subsidies that most affected authors' income from book sales.

Scotland, according to Avril Gray, Linda Fleming and David Finkelstein in "Reading Communities in Scotland," is home to a motley crew of readers. Despite inducements, some teenagers remain resistant to the idea, refusing to use 'the \*\*\* book tokens,' while Shetland Islanders – the embodiment of the noble savage – prove highly literate, voracious and sophisticated readers. Meanwhile in the well-heeled Edinburgh suburb of Morningside, the older members of the library have, like spies, infiltrated and subverted library practices by developing a sophisticated code of subtle readers' marks to record and communicate their literary judgements.

Transgressors more hardcore than genteel Morningside pensioners were the theme of Rosalind Crone's presentation in "Teaching and Text: Evidence from *The Reading Experience Database, 1450 – 1945* (RED)." Prisons in the mid-nineteenth century were regarded as nurseries of crime and their inmates in need of religious education to reform their criminal natures, if only the prisoners would stop destroying their bibles long enough to read them. Using entries from RED, Katie Halsey showed a hunger for escapist reading during World War II which was sharpened by the difficulties of censorship, lack of paper and the destruction of libraries and book repositories during the Blitz.

Other sessions spanned the globe, from Sweden, India, Canada and America to Australian typographical journals, German scientific textbooks and Italian translations. Subjects ranged from book prizes to Wayzgooses [printer's outings], from Darnton's communication circuit to Malaysian filing cabinets. Time shifted from the mediæval to the futuristic; between Peg Katritzky's presentation of 350 years of illustrated teaching in Johann Amos Comenius's *Visible World* (1658) com-

plete with anatomically bizarre illustrations of monstrous births and conjoined twins – to consideration of "Is there A History of the Future of the Book?" where Miha Kovac, Angus Phillips and Rüdiger Wischenbart came to bury Kindle and celebrate the birth of the redefined digital package for the exchange of a complex body of knowledge – a.k.a. 'Book.' Outside the sessions discussions wandered widely on the difficulties of producing haggis on a stick; the decreasing size of airline seats; who has the most supervisors [four, acting as two tag-wrestling teams] and which actors would star in *Book History: The Movie* [Bill Nighy is a shoo-in].

Having started with the soup, I now move to a different imagery of nourishment. Attending the SHARP conference was like being introduced to a new family, made up of wise women of the tribe and patrician elders, racy aunts and notorious uncles, raucous siblings and competitive cousins. In this multitudinous *mêlée*, the only surety is that we all share the same imprinted DNA, the same inky blood. A gathering of such a clan is exhausting but exhilarating. Like Christmas, it is perhaps just as well it only happens on this scale once a year.

Shane Malhotra  
Open University, UK  
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## SHARP NEWS

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## SHARP AWARDS

### SHARP DeLong Book Prize 2008

With each passing year, SHARP's George A. and Jeanne S. DeLong Prize for the best monograph in the history of the book has added another name to its increasingly illustrious roll-call of landmark scholarship in the field. Past winners include Ellen Gruber Garvey, Adrian Johns, Scott Caspar, Kevin Sharpe, Jonathan Rose, Elizabeth McHenry, Janine Barchas, Simone Murray, Heather Andrea Williams, and Rimi Chatterjee. Now in its eleventh year, winning the DeLong Book Prize marks an important point in the achievement of an individual scholar, as well as in the develop of book history as a discipline.

Today, and on behalf of my fellow jurors, standing here in the offices of the largest university press in world – one whose official history is currently being written – it gives me great pleasure to report that scholarship in the history of the book is indeed in rude health. This year, we received no fewer than 48 titles, and the standard of research, originality of argument, breadth of coverage, and quality of writing was exceptionally high. Subjects covered by this year's books ranged from contemporary European comic books, to the book trade in Qing dynasty China, from publishing nineteenth-century popular science, to consuming postcolonial fiction, and from editing music in Germany, to marketing literature in Britain. I am particularly pleased to see how scholarship in book history is becoming increasingly international (and transnational), and also increasingly interdisciplinary, in its approach.

Together with my fellow jurors Prof. Yannick Portebois (University of Toronto), and Prof. Marija Dalbello (Rutgers University), we diligently read our way through this embarrassment of riches; we sifted, considered and deliberated; we re-read the titles on the final shortlist, and eventually, we came to a decision. Thank you Yannick and Marija, for your selfless dedication to the task at hand.

The winning title is a remarkable work, and the result of many years of research and accumulated knowledge in the field from one of the most distinguished scholars in the history of the book. It comprehensively covers the exponential rise in reading matter in the four centuries in England from the 'arrival of

the printing press to the coming of steam' from one particular angle – that of commerce. Consummately researched and clearly written, this is a book that the scholarly community will surely value for many years to come. Without further ado: I can announce that the winner of the 2007 George A. and Jeanne S. DeLong Book Prize is James Raven for *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450-1850*.

Shafquat Towheed  
*English Department, The Open University*  
25 June 2008, Oxford University Press, UK



### SHARP Graduate Student Essay Prize 2008

The winner of this year's Graduate Student Essay Prize is Joanne Filippone Overtly for her article "The Cost of Doing Scribal Business: Prices of Manuscript Books in England 1300-1483." Overtly focuses on a period when manuscript production shifted from monasteries and other church institutions to urban capitalistic stationers, and she addresses three key questions that have bedeviled historians of the early book. Firstly, what was the relative cost of labor and materials, and how much did each contribute to determining a manuscript's price? Secondly, how did fluctuations in the availability of professional scribes affect production costs, and thus prices of manuscript books, especially after the Black Death? And thirdly, did increased demand and subsequent specialization in manuscript production bring about economies of scale, and thus lower the price of manuscript books?

Overtly succeeds in extracting economic data from several late mediaeval library inventories that provide manuscript valuations. And the conclusions she draws cast light on the economic factors and production bottlenecks that made printing by moveable type such a promising new technology.

Joanne Filippone Overtly is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at Fordham University, currently writing a dissertation on fifteenth-century monastic choir book production in Northern Italy. She and her husband Darren own Clouds Hill Books, a rare book and manuscript company in Manhattan's West Village.

Jonathan Rose & Ezra Greenspan  
*Editors, Book History*

## THE SHARP EDGE

### Literature, Book History & the Anxiety of Disciplinarity

An Israel Science Foundation Research Workshop entitled *The Anxiety of Disciplinarity* took place on 1-3 July 2008 at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel. Organized by Barbara Hochman (Ben Gurion University) the conference brought literary scholars and historians together to discuss the problems manifested in cross-disciplinary research and scholarship in the field of book history. The three-day program featured twenty-one papers, organized into nine panels, which revolved around central questions in book history. Leading scholars such as Peter McDonald (St Hugh's College, Oxford), Robert Orsi (Northwestern University), Leah Price (Harvard University), Jonathan Rose (Drew University), Peter Stallybrass (University of Pennsylvania) and others presented their recent work. The informal roundtable setting of the workshop contributed to the lively and at times heated discussion that followed each panel, where the methods and objectives of book history were often at stake.

Using a wide range of evidence, panelists from the Israel, the U.S., the U.K. and Taiwan variously addressed the material book, reading communities, reception history, the idea of the author, and the place of textual analysis in book history. The diversity of aims and methods at the workshop cannot be neatly categorized along disciplinary lines; indeed those lines themselves were closely interrogated. Assumptions about literary and historical scholarship were examined alongside texts and contexts. A recurrent focus was the tendency in book history to prioritize the contexts of reading, and reading as a social practice, over the contents of books themselves. What kind of methodological merger or collaboration makes 'book history,' and how will the mixture affect the future of the field?

A central point of emphasis in the workshop was the contexts and conditions that frame and shape reading, on the one hand, and the role of texts as both instrumental to and constitutive of reading practices on the other. The ways of reading are inextricably related to the phenomenology of the book as a material object that structures the reader's time, space, and practices. Peter Stallybrass addressed a recent debate about the 'demise of the book'

as a consecutively read, linearly unfolding body of text. Stallybrass argued that the book or the codex, as opposed to the scroll, encouraged precisely *discontinuous* reading from the start. On the basis of Renaissance visual representations of the act of reading, Stallybrass maintained that the bookmark and the index (in all its senses: forefinger, pointer, list or summary of a book's contents), have been inseparable paraphernalia of the book since ancient times; they are also material signs of a new way of reading – the 'cut up' scroll, turned into a codex, made browsing possible. Matthew Brown (University of Iowa) explored a specific case of discontinuous reading recounted in a very different context: in Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, the randomly opened Bible effectively becomes a consoler and advisor in distress, the single most important object for the prisoner. In Leah Price's talk, the printed book emerged as an uncanny almost-animate object, as represented in 'it-narratives,' eighteenth- and nineteenth-century 'life stories,' narrated by the books themselves. While these scholars focused mainly on visual or narrative representations of the book as a material 'thing,' with all its idiosyncrasies, Ellen Garvey (New Jersey City University) examined the physical artifact itself. In her analysis, the nineteenth-century scrapbook, in particular *The Mark Twain Scrapbook*, highlights the fluid boundaries between reading, cutting, pasting and writing, and problematizes the notion of authorship.

If the act of reading can be structured and shaped by its object of attention, it can also shape communities of readers to a considerable extent. In a panel on "Religion and Reading" two papers, one by Iris Parush (Ben Gurion University) and one by Erin Smith (University of Texas), showed how attention to reading as an activity – in fact a group activity – can provide insight into sweeping historical change on the one hand, spiritual community and individual subjectivity on the other. Concerned with how, when, where and for what purposes books are read, the main object of inquiry here was less the books read than the intersection between the act of reading and the reader's shifting personal and collective cultural identification. Iris Parush examined the transition of nineteenth-century Eastern-European Yeshiva students from oral communal reading to silent solitary reading in the library. This transition was a strong factor in the secularization of traditional Jewish communities. Parush's account of the ways in which Yeshiva students read new secular literature in Hebrew showed how the unap-

proved status of this literature in religious circles was reflected in the specific contexts of reading: marginal spaces (outdoors, on rooftops, in basements, in toilets) and liminal times (twilight, neither night nor day). Erin A. Smith analyzed a contemporary case of a religious reading group in which she participated, where participants forged new spiritual, communal and personal bonds by reading and discussing books together. Robert Orsi explored rising anxiety among mid-twentieth century Catholics responding to children's reading of comic books.

Interpretive communities gained additional attention in a number of papers that considered the reception of specific works or bodies of work with particular emphasis on the audience-author relationship. These papers can be seen as case studies that treat reception history as a process in which the text's cultural significance is worked out via a kind of negotiation between the public and the author, or between the broader readership and professional critics. James L. Machor (Kansas State University) discussed the 1830s American reception of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories and gave a socio-historical explanation for the dramatic shift in the widely-shared perception of these stories first as comic then as gothic. One factor in this shift, Machor suggested, was the relationship of Poe's American audience with the idea of Poe the author, whose image changed profoundly over the course of his career from a satirical to a dark and brooding writer.

Olga Kuminova (Ben Gurion University) explored Faulkner's role in shaping the interpretive community which revised the initial assessment of *The Sound and the Fury* as 'incomprehensible.' By publicizing his novel in interviews and university lectures and by collaborating with editors, Faulkner attempted to make his novel more accessible to the common reader and thus promoted his groundbreaking yet largely unfamiliar (at that time) modernist vision. Shlomi Deloia (Ben Gurion University) explored the initial reception of Anzia Yezierska's immigrant novel *Bread Givers* (1925) in relation to its re-publication in 1975 after more than forty years of neglect. Focusing on the discursive triangle of author-work-audience, Deloia showed how *Bread Givers* was used and misused in critical discussions, reviews and advertisements to negotiate identity claims and group boundaries in two key historical periods, each of which was characterized by widespread contention regarding the racial and ethnic positioning of Jews in the U.S.

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Both the panel on “Book History and Reception History” and the panel on “Religion and Reading” raised sharp questions about the professional ‘objectivity’ or ‘subjectivity’ of the critic in relation to his/her own work. What is the role of the critic as a reader and interpreter of a literary text when analyzing its historical reception? What are the methodological implications of the critic’s subjective intervention into the process of interpreting and generating historical evidence?

The informal panel discussions that followed each session provided some of the most compelling and stimulating moments of the workshop. In those instances, methodological and disciplinary differences between the historians and the literary critics around the table became most apparent. Some of the salient points of divergence in methods and theoretical assumptions between these two groups of book historians were anticipated in Barbara Hochman’s general introduction to the workshop. In her opening remarks Hochman raised a number of questions that the field of book history still needs to address: how to evaluate textual evidence; what is the shaping force of interpretive conventions in particular disciplines; and what is the place of ‘close reading’ within the field of book history?

Both literary critics and historians in the field are preoccupied with historicizing the material, institutional, and social contexts within which texts, readers, and acts of reading come into contact with one another. In the current stage of its rapid development, Hochman noted, book history is not only more historical than literary in its focus; it also, and as a result, often prioritizes context and paratext over and above text. This situation is paradoxical, because, on the whole, literary scholars outnumber historians within SHARP and elsewhere in the field – which was also the case in this forum. However, this paradox reflects changes that have occurred in literary studies more broadly since the emergence of ‘new historicism’ in the 1980s. The field of literary studies has become increasingly historicist in orientation, while, at the same time, close textual analysis, one of its most valuable assets, became suspect as a source of reliable ‘evidence.’

It is at the ‘seam’ between text and context that cross-disciplinary anxiety between literary critics and historians emerges: what socio-historical factors control reading, for professional as opposed to common readers? To

what extent can one rely on a diary entry to provide an accurate reflection of the reader’s social world, and his/her reading experience? How many texts are necessary to make a valid historical argument for historians, and for literary critics? Finally, who are the historians and who are the literary scholars in the room?

The distinction between the two groups became at times thoroughly blurred around the table, as for instance in the representative discussion around a controversial passage used by David Stewart (National Central University, Taiwan). Exploring the emotional education of nineteenth-century men into guilt and shame by sentimental-moralistic novels, Stewart quoted a passage from a diary by a Boston workingman in which the reference to a pronoun became the subject of diverse interpretations that cut across theoretical and methodological orientations. Stewart, a literature scholar, offered a psychoanalytic interpretation that resolved textual ambiguity as a subliminally motivated ‘slip’ made by the diarist. The historian Joan Rubin (University of Rochester) objected to this reading and insisted on a more New Critical respect for ambiguity – but for a reason more typical of historical methodology – because there is no hard evidence for resolving this ambiguity one way or another. Peter McDonald, a literary theorist, remarked that the textual anomaly might be a mere innocent mistake made in a hurry, and that one should avoid overreading – “sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.” McDonald implied that one can even read *too* closely, an attitude more likely to be associated with the more empirically-minded.

*The Anxiety of Disciplinarity* workshop provided many moments of cross-disciplinary dialogue between the historians and the literary critics who joined up to clarify the scope and methods of book history. A host of questions emerge in light of the ongoing dialogue. Will book history eliminate the divide between literary studies and history? Or is it important to preserve that divide in the interests of both disciplines? Will close reading reestablish itself as literary studies’ distinctive tool? Or will it become a legitimate methodology for historians? Will this dialogue have an impact on the participants’ future work? The future of book history will tell.

For more details of the workshop including abstracts of all papers see <http://www.bgu.ac.il/~bhochman/workshop/>

Shlomi Deloia, Olga Kuminova  
*Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel*

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

SHARP’s new constitution is designed in part to broaden the field of candidates for the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. The nominating committee strongly encourages members to nominate themselves or others for the Board and for Executive Committee offices. Details about the duties of each office may be found in the SHARP constitution: [http://sharpweb.org/SHARP\\_constitution.rtf](http://sharpweb.org/SHARP_constitution.rtf)

There are four vacancies on the **Board of Directors** for the term 2009-2017 and nominations are welcome.

There are five vacancies on the **Executive Committee**. Leslie Howsam, the Vice-President, will stand for the post of President – a post that must be filled by a current member of the Board or the Executive Council. The post of **Vice-President** therefore needs to be filled, and nominations are welcome. Patrick Leary is stepping down as **Director of Electronic Resources**, and nominations for that post are eagerly sought. Alexis Weedon is stepping down as **Director of Publications and Awards**, and nominations are welcome. David Finkelstein is stepping down as **Member at Large**, and nominations are welcome. Ian Gadd is stepping down as **Recording Secretary**, and nominations are welcome.

The other current members of the Executive Committee are: Treasurer: James Wald; Membership Secretary: Eleanor Shevlin; Director of External Affairs: Claire Parfait. All have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election.

Please note that there is no need to gather signatures for a nomination, although nominators may wish to do so as a demonstration of broad support for a candidate.

Nominations should be sent to the Chair, Beth Luey, at the e-mail address below or at 31 Middle Street, Fairhaven, MA 02719 USA.

The deadline for nominations is **1 March 2009**. Questions may be directed to any member of the nominating committee:

Beth Luey <[beth.luey@gmail.com](mailto:beth.luey@gmail.com)>

Mary Lu MacDonald

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Ian Willison <[Ian.Willison@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Ian.Willison@sas.ac.uk)>

## EXHIBITION REVIEWS

« Trains du mystère  
[Mystery Trains] »

9 November 2007 – 30 April 2008

*La Bibliothèque des littératures policières (Bilipo)*  
[Library of Detective and Crime Literature]  
Paris, France

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the new genre of modern detective fiction and the new industrial technology of the train came together as separate but well-matched products of a new modernity, a modernity that greatly altered human relations with space and time, and with one another. Detective fiction based many of its plots on real-life *faits divers* reported in the popular press. When the press started to report crimes on the railways, detective fiction made use of them. In the papers and in the literature, murder victims were found in train cars, bloody trunks were discovered on train tracks and in station luggage offices, timetables and telegraphs were used to catch criminals riding trains, passengers shared closed compartments with potentially suspicious strangers. Both media infused the new adventure of train travel with a nervous anticipation of danger. Suspense and sensation dominated both. Well into the twentieth century similar scenes, themes, and plots were used to create similar effects. Trains travelled farther and faster, and they continued to inspire crime and detective genres, in text and visual print as well as in motion pictures, and infuse them all with heightened suspense and fear.

This well-curated exhibition gives a tangible sense of trains and train travel by incorporating objects lent by French historical societies of train history. Exhibit cases in the first room are framed as train car windows. Visitors look into the cars and see, as if on a table, a full place setting of historic dinnerware and silverware embossed with French railway names and historic flat cardboard models of late nineteenth-century trains against the facing wall. In the second room visitors are in the compartments with historic train seats, luggage racks (with luggage), framed tourist photographs of France, railway keys (most effective in inspiring danger), railway ashtrays, and eventually tickets and timetables printed for the French national railway company, the SNCF (*Société Nationale des Chemins de fer*

*Français*). There are even two stuffed dummies representing the discovery by a lantern-carrying railroad employee of the body of Jules Barrême, prefect of the department of Eure, lying on the rails of the Paris–Rouen line, between Paris and Mantes. The 1886 murder of this public figure with many enemies was never solved but generated much sensational material, a selection of which is exhibited.

The exhibition's chronological focus from the later nineteenth to the end of the twentieth century [ending with material inspired by France's high-speed train, the TGV (*Train à Grande Vitesse*)], and its geographical focus, mainly France but also Britain and the United States, reflect the collections of this special library dedicated to detective and crime fiction. The comprehensive and multiformat collections of the Bibliothèque des littératures policières, or *Bilipo* as it is often called, are based on the 1985 transfer of the the depository library collection of the genre held at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal (a department of the Bibliothèque nationale de France) to the Paris public library system. Legal deposit for the genre (one copy) was part of the transfer agreement. The importance of British and American publications in the genre, and in mystery trains, is reflected in the collections, both in the many French translations of individual titles as well as in original material in many formats.

Fittingly, the exhibition begins with British mystery trains, quickly focusing on Sherlock Holmes's extensive use of trains and knowledge of train schedules to move his urgent investigations along. As early as 1866, Emile Gaboriau's detective Father Tabaret uses train schedules to reconstitute a suspect's movement in the legal thriller (*roman judiciaire*) *L'Affaire Lerouge*. As railways develop, so too does their presence in the genre. By the time the monthly Fantômas novels appear (1911–1913), this arch-criminal anti-hero spreads terror on board French, European, and international trains, and especially the Paris metro. The exhibition highlights the years 1920 – 1940 as the golden age of British mysteries and includes Miles Burton's *Where is Barbara Prentice?* [1936], J.J. Connington's *Le Crime du rail / The Two tickets puzzle* [1933], Dorothy Sayers's *Five Red Herrings* and, above all, the works of Agatha Christie. American mystery writers of this final period before they turn to cars and airplanes are represented by writers like Ellery Queen, James Cain, Alice Tilton and Raymond Chandler. French production is represented primarily by translations of the

much-loved British titles. No French exhibition could omit the Belgian writer and ardent train traveler Georges Simenon, whose plots and characters are often on trains. Modern high-speed trains have inspired less murder and intrigue on board, perhaps in part because of their higher security and less ominous cars. They appear to inspire more sabotage and terrorism than suspense.

As thrilling as the plots and settings may be, it is the visual aspect of the genre that impresses most. Cover art, print or photographic, is sensational and often graphic. Posters for books and many films are equally so. Formats from cheap illustrated quartos, to cheaper paperbacks are represented in all sizes. Gallimard's *Série noire*, bringing American and British 'pulp' to French readers are outstanding examples of international circulation of the genre. It is literally a thrilling exhibit.

*Bilipo* consistently installs imaginative exhibits that bring to life the materials of their collection and the genre itself. It is located at 48/50, rue du Cardinal-Lemoine, Paris, 5e. (Métro: Cardinal Lemoine, Jussieu), just behind the life-saving *sapeurs-pompiers*.

Carol Armbruster

*Library of Congress, Washington, DC*

## Book/Shelf

26 March 2008 – 7 July 2008

*The Museum of Modern Art*  
New York City, USA

Many of us see books as two entities: the exterior vessel (the cover, the paper, the decoration) and the inside information (the words, the ideas, the illustration). For modern visual artists, however, there are many more permutations. In the twentieth century, the book created by the artist is less likely to be just a beautiful object than a reinvention of the notion of the book itself. The conceptual artists whose book-related works were on display at the Museum of Modern Art this past summer may make you rethink the idea of the book.

In *Book/Shelf*, some seventy works from MOMA's permanent collection deconstruct, reimagine, repurpose, and reconstruct books and their furnishings (let's not forget the shelf and the desk). This collection is rich in works by artists who tackle the idea of books by stretching the conventions of the medium.

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Books are a natural subject for contemporary artists: everyday objects that become more than the sum of their parts. The works presented in *Book/Shelf* use a variety of techniques – photography, film, printing, assemblage, drawing, and sound recording – reflecting a wide diversity of approaches taken by an international field of artists. Modern artworks in the shape or guise of books are not always easy to categorize, but they generally fall into the conceptual art genre. After all, the book is the original food for thought, but is that too clever by half? (Warning: If you don't like conceptual art or whimsical art, don't read any further. And if repurposing books seems sacrilegious, then this exhibit is not for you.)

The exhibition begins with a documentation of Marcel Duchamp's *Unhappy Readymade* (1919), a work created when the artist, while traveling, asked his sister back home to hang a geometry book on his balcony in order to let the wind flip and tear the pages. Another work by Duchamp shown here is *Box in a Valise*, the artist's famous 'portable museum.' Many of the other works in the exhibit are projects initiated in the 1960s that share Duchamp's irreverent attitude toward the art object. These include works by, among others, Dieter Roth, John Latham, and Lucas Samaras, whose book covered in dressmaker's pins with protruding cutlery looked particularly sharp to this museum visitor.

Objects by artists who appropriate books by others and who played a pivotal role in the art world of 1970s and 1980s are also on show. These include Richard Artschwager, Allen Ruppersberg, Martin Kippenberger (represented by a sculpture made partly of books), and Barbara Kruger, whose oversize tome of a short story by Stephen King has a digital clock built into its stainless-steel cover. Finally, it introduces a younger generation of artists, including Josh Smith, Liam Gillick, and Brian Belott who repurposes children's board books into sculptural items.

Sound works (On Kawara), prints (Edward Ruscha), and drawings (Steve Wolfe) join other pieces which toy with the book's physicality. Allan Kaprow's *Cocktail Table* is a large volume about Kaprow's own artwork, with attached wooden legs turning it into a useful piece of furniture. Milan Knizek's *Globe Shelf* is a large spherical wooden structure with cubbyholes for book storage; this colorful object would look quite at home in an especially well-endowed children's library.

One popular artist who tackles the idea of books is William Wegman. (You may be fa-

miliar with the iconic images of his beloved Weimariners that can be found on many calendars.) In *Book/Shelf* he is represented by the short video *Copyright*, produced in 1974. This 1:43s black-and-white film features a static shot of the copyright page of an old Merriam-Webster's dictionary. Wegman's voice can be heard commenting on the elaborate arrangement of dates. He assumes the personas of two characters named Bob and Mary, who seem to be having a mock-serious conversation about the extensive copyright statements. Wegman manages to make the subject of copyright at once ridiculous and mysterious, as it often seems to students of the subject.

Perhaps it is appropriate that the exhibit is bookended by another work that references the great surrealist Duchamp. David Hammons' *Holy Bible* is a volume bound on the outside so that it appears to be a large version of *The New Testament*. Inside it's a *catalogue raisonné* of works by Duchamp. Depending on your tolerance for irony, this trick may provoke either a nervous smile or a gentle groan.

C. J. Dickerson  
Weston, Connecticut, USA



## The Paper Bag Players: 50 Years of Theater Art

2 May – 2 August 2008

The New York Public Library  
for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center  
New York City, USA

In a recent description of the beloved children's theater troupe, The Paper Bag Players, the *New York Times* observed that 'like so many great artists, the players begin with plain papers and end with poetry.' Fifty years' worth of that poetry recently found a home at the The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts when the Paper Bag Players donated their archives to the library's Billy Rose Theatre Division's collections. To celebrate the occasion, the library mounted a lively exhibition of scripts, original scores, props, programs, posters, photographs, calendars, contracts, and letters from the archive.

The Paper Bag Players began in 1958 at the Living Theater in New York City, and though they travelled the world over (they estimate that they have played for over five million youngsters), the NYPL Performing Arts Library is probably the most appropriate place

for their archives. It was also appropriate that the main part of the exhibit encircled the circulation and reference desks on the Library's first floor. Everyday life is what the Paper Bag Players are all about, with shows and songs about not taking a bath, finding Christmas 'all over the place,' sleeping over with cousins, and finding reasons to be cheerful.

Posters in the exhibit reflected the spiraling cost of theater tickets over the last fifty years, and changes in technology were evidenced by the 33-1/3 rpm records, videocassettes, and CD-ROMs of the group's delightfully wacky musical shows. (For a taste of the Paper Bag Players at work, go to <http://www.paperbagplayers.org/otos-preview.html>). Thank you notes from children may (or may not) suggest changes in literacy over the last half-century, but the sentiment was invariably the same: 'It was so funny I could stay for all my life,' wrote one appreciative child.

The feeling, apparently, has been mutual. Founder and artistic director Judith Martin describes 'the appetites of our audience' as having a 'strong, liberating' influence that has nurtured 'surprise, adventure, and excitement' in the Players' shows. Photographs of the five Players and their entourage at work are a testament to their engagement with their art. Donald Ashwander, the Paperbag Players' 'musical personality,' is described at one point as being 'so in tune with his harpsichord that he seemed plugged into it.'

Over the years The Paper Bag Players amassed a bunch of awards. They were only children's theater to receive an OBIE (off-Broadway theater award), along with a *New York State Artists Award*, the *American Theater Association Award*, and the *Alliance for Theater and Education Award* for 'sustained and exceptional achievement in the field of theater for young audiences.' Ms. Martin received *Parents* magazine's first *As They Grow Award* and Nick Jr. honored her with a *Playful People Award* in 2005. Many of these awards were also on view.

It is good to be able to report that more sophisticated technology has not changed The Paper Bag Players basic M.O. They're still making monster jaws, mummy's tombs, bottles of wizard oil, ballet tutus, armor (complete with medals), automobiles, and super-gigantic shoes out of cardboard boxes, and creating wistfully expressive faces on brown paper with the merest suggestion of eyes, a nose, and a mouth.

Ellen Gilbert  
Princeton, NJ, USA

## SHARP OXFORD BROOKES

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I already knew about SHARP thanks to my tutor who enthusiastically told me about the annual SHARP conference. When I decided to respond to the call for papers and present my doctoral research, I had no idea that my proposal would be accepted. The positive result was an encouragement and an incentive for my continued study.

The theme of the conference *Teaching and Text* was deliberately wide in order to include multiple approaches to and points of view on the history of the book. In my opinion, the variety of participants, each with his/her own personal experience of studying the diverse branches of book history, is the force and power of this conference.

When I arrived at Oxford I was a little bit worried about my English, thinking I would be unable to understand many of the sessions and discussions; on the contrary, from the clever opening plenary lecture by Professor Juliet Gardiner, I felt at ease. Even if my spoken English is not so great, my comprehension is good. Luckily my paper was in the first session of the first day, so I had the pleasure of enjoying the rest of the conference without anxiety. The night before my departure to Oxford I read very carefully the whole programme choosing and marking many sessions which I would like to attend. To my great disappointment, I realized that I could hardly be everywhere. I decided to alternate practical sessions, such as presentations of research projects and case studies, with other sessions more theoretical in orientation, particularly on the methodology of our discipline and their interactions with others. Obviously I can't mention or describe all the panels that I attended so I will only focus on some of them.

I found enormous interest in, for example, the *Reading Experience Database* [RED], a user-friendly, online database of individual reading experiences of British subjects at home and abroad from the period 1450-1945 which I can now consult very easily at home. In addition to a presentation of the database, there were two papers, 'Teaching "bad men" to read good books: reading in the nineteenth-century prison' by Rosalind Crone and "'Something light to take my mind off the war': British attitudes towards reading matter during the Second World War' by Katie Halsey. These two reports clearly demonstrated how RED offers an opportunity for examining not

only individual reading habits but also common reading, for estimating trends and changes in the audiences, and in the skills of reading of specific texts.

As a counterbalance, I attended a purely theoretical panel, "Book History and Theory" chaired by Simon Murray, which examined a group of 'keywords' associated with a range of theoretical traditions, such as political economy, tactics and reading. Shafquat Towheed, who talked about reading, posed some good questions for the audience, such as "How do the interventions of political, legislative, economic, and moral forces shape not only what we read, but how we read? In an increasingly visual crossmedia and multimedia world, where do we look for evidences of individual or collective reading, and how do we interpret this data?" These and the other panellists' remarks as well as the subsequent discussion fit well with the data and reflections coming out of the panel on the Reading Experience Database.

The final plenary panel "Fifty years since Febvre and Martin" chaired by Professor John Barnard and featuring Professor Ian Maclean, Professor David McKitterick, Dr. Peter McDonald, Dr. Sydney Shep and Professor Kathryn Sutherland, was a good conclusion to the four, intense days of the conference. It connected many of the subjects previously discussed and threw into the future interesting issues for our discipline.

I learned a lot from attending my first SHARP conference, received useful advice for my research, collected much information and, above all, opened my mind. It was disappointing that there were few Italians present. This kind of international forum is a very useful opportunity to share and compare our visions of the discipline and I hope to encourage my colleagues to attend future conferences.

Sara Mori  
University of Pisa, Italia



*16958.56 km and 21 hours in the air from home (not to mention endless perambulations of Changi International Airport during a six-hour stopover), assisted by a postgraduate student grant from SHARP and additional financial support from The University of Tasmania, I am in the Oxford Town Hall for the formal conference opening of SHARP 2008 Teaching and Text. There are some 250 other people gathered here for the same conference, and I have the very strong impression that they all know a*

*lot more about book history than I do, or ever will. (I hope I am wrong about this). I am inclined to be deeply intimidated, but rise to the occasion with some conversational sallies from which I emerge unscathed. I resolve to listen, learn, and infiltrate as many intellectual and academic coteries as possible. (Those late nights watching Spooks might just pay off). SHARP 2008 is set to be the highlight of my academic year...*

Over the four days of the conference proper (which began for me with an outstanding full-day post-graduate workshop at Oxford University Press on researching in booksellers' archives) certain themes emerged from the papers and panels. Themes that I found most engrossing included what Sydney Shep described as the contestation (or indeed proliferation) of national bias in book history; readers as active participants in book culture; and theoretical positioning within book history (from inductive and deductive, to abductive methods of approach). Some manifestation of the exploration of the dialogic relationship between the form, content and materiality of the book appeared in many papers and panels. These strands recurred across sessions, and frequently appeared together within individual papers.

The theme of nationalism – of keen interest to me in my own research on the development of the Australian public library – arose in a number of contexts through the conference. In the session "Bookselling and the nation," I found Jyrki Hakapää's discussion of the ways in which the whole communication circuit of the book was put to work in the task of nationalism in nineteenth-century Finland of particular interest. The dialectic between local and national issues and identities was clearly seen in this case: local knowledge of booksellers was crucial in facilitating the development of a national consciousness. Hakapää concluded that book history in small linguistic cultures evolved within a different set of paradigms to that of big linguistic centres (such as France, England, and Germany). Hakapää's paper prompted me to consider parallels of linguistic periphery with geographical (or colonial/post-colonial) periphery in the development of book culture. Nationalism in the context of the dialectic between local/regional and national cultures was raised in relation to the history of the public library across some sessions. Nicola Smith addressed the extent to which local collections were local or national cultural capital for public libraries in Britain in the early twentieth

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century; identity defined by race rather than region was the topic of papers on the American public library by Christine Pawley and Cheryl Knott Malone. In the session on book theory, Trysh Travis discussed how the inscription of nation through book culture could be critiqued through the lens of political economy, taking the lead from media studies. Such a critique could examine state involvement in the production and distribution of new national literatures in wake of post-colonialism, or the ways imperial powers that look to export books outside the West attempt to influence developing countries.

Readers: a rich field of interest, drawing many papers. I was fascinated by the session on "Reading communities in Scotland." Here, Linda Fleming spoke about books as 'windows on the world' for Shetland Islanders in a small but diverse community. David Finkelstein offered a paper on work in progress on the physical evidence readers purposefully leave in public library books, postulating on the reasons why readers subvert the prohibitions that public libraries place on such practices. For me, Finkelstein's observations illustrated clearly Heather Jackson's point that the "physical nature of the book and the history of the circulation of books ensure that there is always a third party tacitly present at the writing of marginalia" (*Marginalia: readers writing in books*, 2001, 95). Reading within the public library can be very social, as readers not only 'record themselves,' but also leave coded messages for others, in 'community conversations.'

In other sessions the 'strategic reader' was identified as a concept that needed further investigation. Readers were described as 'poachers' (from Michel de Certeau's conception of tactics, where texts are ideological tools), which raised the question from Shafquat Towheed that "If readers are poachers, who are the gamekeepers?" Peter McDonald suggested in the final panel that readers could be the gamekeepers themselves, reading against the grain within institutional structures. Towheed offered a number of avenues for future investigations of reading: what patterns emerge when we examine reading; how do theorists theorize reading; how might we assess reading beyond circuits of communication; do readers undermine the globalised economy in which they participate? The stretching of disciplinary ambits that characterises the SHARP project was felt when Towheed suggested somewhat provocatively that "reading is possibly bigger than the history of the book."

Theory: emerging in many papers in many guises, mixing it with the material. Panelists at the session dedicated to book theory questioned why book history (especially in the British/ Canadian/ Australasian/ American context) privileges theories from bibliography, history and literary theory (the 'triangular model'), and the suggestion was made that opportunities could arise from a closer disciplinary association with media studies. The challenges of addressing those parallel and sometimes dialectical qualities of the book as metaphor and metonymic structure, materiality and textual content, ('turning inward to content and outward to production' in Sydney Shep's words) arose frequently. Questions fundamental to the practice of book history were asked: how do we conceptualise how we use the evidence that comes from book history; how does the evidence shape our study; how is absence of evidence written into book history? The spectre of digitisation and digital texts increasingly looms over investigations into the nature of the book, and how to go about studying and preserving it in the future.

The closing panel was modelled as "Fifty years since Febvre and Martin," with panelists discussing how scholarly interest in print culture has developed since the publication of Martin's *L'Apparition du livre*. Ian Willison informed the session of the recent release (yet to be translated into English) of Henri-Jean Martin's final, posthumously published book, a volume of synthesis on the "history of communication from the appearance of *homo sapiens* to the invention of alphabetical writing systems" (Kirsop, 'Henry-Jean Martin 1924-2007', *Script & Print*, 30.1: 48-53). Eminent book historian Wallace Kirsop has described the evolution across Martin's writing life from "social and economic approaches to an exploration in depth of matters more properly belonging to [Lucien] Febvre's interest in *l'histoire des mentalités* and of difficult interdisciplinary problems. Reading and writing lead naturally into consideration of human communication from the very earliest discoverable evidence on to historical periods nearer to us. There is a certain amount of tightrope walking in all this, especially since Martin does not want to let go of the physical record enshrined in manuscripts and in printed texts" (52).

It seems to me that what Kirsop has identified as Martin's evolution as a book historian has many resonances with the concerns of SHARP in 2008. What Stephen Ferguson described to me as some 'hand-wringing' by

eminent SHARPists at the final panel over the present position of book history as a discipline (or rather pluri-discipline, inter-discipline, or pseudo-discipline as postulated by Ian Maclean) is a product of an almost dizzying sense of possibility arising in the field, with some tightrope walking needed to negotiate the multiple approaches and histories. While some view the undeniable impact of book history on other disciplines such as literary studies as potentially negative (Kathryn Sutherland, for example, observed that "English studies lost out when it took in social history" by losing touch with its capacity for aesthetic judgement on texts), most SHARPists appear to be revelling in the dynamism of a growing discipline and are justifiably proud of a hard-won institutional presence. Stephen Ferguson – with whom I discovered a mutual interest in nationalism in the public library in our respective countries – finds that in its efforts to chart new directions, the discipline should not lose sight of the good work it has done already. Ferguson spoke from the point of view of a working librarian, applying the findings of book historians to the problem of getting students and others to appreciate books. In this context, Stephen considers, modern book historians have provided him 'with means far superior to those provided by earlier generations' to reach his public.

*I have not been disappointed. SHARP has fulfilled all expectations, and given further fuel to my passion for the field. Importantly, I have secreted a small stash of business cards from the great, the powerful, and the highly intelligent, to maintain that gossamer link of electronic communication across the hemispheres and the seas. I am determined to nurture my little strand in the fabric that is the SHARP community. Over a Peroni on the last evening of the conference, Dennis Landis described a key benefit of attending SHARP conferences: the reward of sharing knowledge and ideas and making connections. "Even if only a handful of people attend your talk," he said, "there are always at least two people who connect what you are saying somehow with their own work (whether from subject or methodology), and therefore come up with good questions." This was exactly my experience at my own panel. Thanks, SHARP.*

Heather Gaunt,  
The University of Tasmania, Hobart, AUS

## FIFTY YEARS AFTER ...

### Final Plenary Session SHARP Oxford Brookes 2008

When the announcement of the final session of the SHARP conference in Oxford Brookes entitled “Fifty Years since Febvre and Martin” appeared in the Spring 2008 issue of *SHARP News*, I was busy preparing my paper for a conference entitled « Cinquante ans d’histoire du livre. De *L’Apparition du livre* (1958) à 2008. Bilan et projets » to take place in the National Library of Budapest 21-24 May. Definitely no plagiarism on the part of the SHARP conference organisers! A coincidence? Rather, a shared desire to commemorate Henri-Jean Martin’s recent death in January 2007, together with a work which is definitely a landmark in book history, a classic as Martin himself suggests in one of his interviews with Jean-Marc Chatelain and Christian Jacob (a volume published in 2004 under the title *Les métamorphoses du livre*), remarking that the book became relatively famous some ten years only after its publication and adding, ‘Books become classics only progressively.’

Martin is here referring to the international reputation of *L’Apparition du livre* which partly depended on its translation into other languages. Spanish seems to be the first language into which it was rapidly translated, and later Japanese, Italian, and many other, but never German because of opposition by some of the Gutenberg specialists. The English translation, due to David Elwyn Gerard, who taught in the College of Librarianship in Aberystwyth, Wales and was also a poet and a novelist, was published by New Left Books in 1976 under the title *The Coming of the Book. The Impact of Printing 1450-1800*. The best-known review appearing at the time – possibly the only one – was written by Professor Elizabeth Eisenstein, and published in the *Journal of Modern History* in September 1978. Though critical of the translation (somewhat excessively, from what I can judge) as well as of the editing, she presented Febvre and Martin’s book as ‘still unsurpassed as a work of synthesis’ and described the latter as ‘a formidably energetic and industrious scholar who presides over a branch of the French knowledge industry devoted to the history of the book.’ A new edition of the same translation was published in 1997 by Verso (the present name of New Left Books) but it seems from the catalogue that it is now out of print.

But according to Martin himself, if the English translation came late, the book had become known rather quickly in its French version, which several SHARPists kindly answering my query have confirmed, and this thanks in particular to Ian Willison who did much to promote *L’Apparition du livre* in English-speaking countries. Consequently, a laudatory review of the book appeared in *The Library Quarterly. A Journal of Investigation and Discussion in the Field of Library Science*, in Chicago, in July 1959. Its author was James E. Wells who described it as ‘a crucial volume’ and concluded in these terms: ‘All in all, *L’Apparition du livre* is a first rate work in an area all too often dominated by the second rate.’

No wonder that book historians of various countries considered that the fiftieth anniversary of Febvre and Martin’s book had to be celebrated, but not necessarily in the same way. In Budapest, the focus was on the reception and diffusion of *L’Apparition du livre* in several European countries and the consequent impetus it gave to research in book history, the influence it had as regards the creation of research centres and websites, the publication of national histories of the book, the development of academic courses in that field, the role of libraries and print museums for the preservation of book archives, etc.

The final session in Oxford Brookes was a somewhat different thing. Five panellists were asked to discuss the development of scholarly interest in print culture and of research in the history of the book since 1958. More specifically, each of them had to select either an individual, or a publication, or a theme, or an event which had significant influence on his or her own work and whose impact could also be felt more widely on some of the approaches to book history. To allow everyone to take part in the discussion, a short presentation of their chosen subjects was included in the conference programme. The session was chaired by Professor John Barnard (University of Leeds), following a set pattern: each of the panellists in turn was asked an opening question allowing him or her to present his theme, and this was followed by a discussion with the other panellists. The general discussion with the audience took place in the end, but unfortunately with little time left.

The first speaker was Professor David McKitterick (Trinity College, Cambridge) who first reminded us of the role played by *L’apparition du livre* in stressing the division between book and manuscript, and then focused on the book he had chosen to intro-

duce: Harold Love’s *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* published by Oxford University Press in 1993. According to him, this was a major work because it tackled the circulation of manuscripts which continued in the seventeenth century side-by-side with printed works and helped draw more attention to the circulation of manuscripts in other countries. Why was it so? A question which was taken up in the following discussion, in particular by Peter MacDonald who wondered about what we mean by ‘a book?’ What is a book? What is the actual meaning of the word for us?

Professor Ian Maclean (All Souls College, Oxford) who spoke next had selected an event, that of the 1985 conference on the history of the book in Renaissance Europe, organized in Tours by Henri-Jean Martin and others at the Centre d’Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance. What struck Ian Maclean then was the variety of approaches to the problems of book history, for example regarding the relationships author/reader, or publisher/purchaser, or purchaser/reader. According to Maclean, the Tours conference papers (published in 1988 as *Le livre dans l’Europe de la Renaissance*) raised all the questions that could be asked of the book as a material object and as regards its cultural contents and also evoked the professionalization of the history of the book as a discipline. This point led David McKitterick to question the adequacy or inadequacy of the various histories of the book, limited geographically, and to suggest the necessity to look beyond, a point of view shared by Sydney Shep who said that the national bias in such histories was being increasingly contested.

Dr Sydney Shep (Victoria University of Wellington) was the next panellist to intervene and her chosen topic was material culture. She asked several questions on that subject: in what ways does technology shape history; how do we conceptualize what we call book history; as regards material culture, what kinds of material do we have; how does the evidence shape our studies; we have objects but how do we deal with them? According to her, how problematic book history is is a question which was not raised by Febvre and Martin. In her conclusion, Sydney Shep insisted on the material condition which is always ‘in assistance of the text’ and on the ways materiality shapes culture. In the ensuing discussion, two interesting points were made, one by Professor Kathryn Sutherland who remarked that digitalization, which she con-

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siders physical but not material, will be a huge challenge for SHARP; the other by David McKitterick who pointed out that there is the same problem of materiality as regards music manuscripts.

Professor Kathryn Sutherland (St Anne's College, Oxford) presented herself as a specialist of English Literature but also a textual critic and a bibliographer. This is the reason why the personality she selected was W.W. Greg (who died in 1959) who, in his major work on bibliography had shown that "to a bibliographer the text is irrelevant," but also that "books are of importance only as the vehicle by which ... its contents reach us." According to her, this great representative of the New Bibliography recognized the essential link between bibliography, textual criticism and literary criticism. Following this, David McKitterick noted that Greg had to make decisions on how to edit manuscripts. And we were reminded that when Febvre and Martin's book was published, the analysis of texts had changed, had been displaced, leading to genetic studies among other things.

The final speaker was Dr Peter McDonald (St Hugh's College, Oxford) who began by declaring that he became a book historian because he was a reader, a reader who was restless about literary criticism. He also expressed his regret of being now unable to read a book without taking into account the way it is presented. He somewhat rendered Maurice Blanchot – his chosen author – responsible for this because it was the French writer who made him aware of literature's dependence on a range of institutions for its existence. He illustrated his remark with the blurb from Coetzee's novel *Foe*, written by the writer except for one sentence added by the publisher without telling Coetzee about it. His conclusion was that "the book is an idea as well as a material object."

As already said, the general discussion was very short. However, Ian Willison could narrate to the audience how in 1958 he took *L'Apparition du livre* to his colleague in the University of Chicago. He also presented Henri-Jean Martin's latest – last – book, published posthumously in January 2008 and entitled *Aux sources de la civilisation européenne*. Other problems discussed were the place to be given to translation and the transnational circulation of books to end with the fundamental well-known question: "Why shouldn't book history be a discipline of its own," showing that this final session had reached its aim in making SHARPists aware of the more gen-

eral problems of book history whereas the session papers were necessarily more limited in scope. Besides, the diversity of approaches of the five panellists and the very different 'objects' they selected for their own intervention worked as reflectors on one another and as such proved the formula chosen by the organizers was an interesting one. What comes out of it all is the multiplicity of the problems raised by the history of the book, an object which is both material and cultural, which encloses a specific text in a given way and at a given time, making it a historical item. These are some of the points discussed in *L'Apparition du livre*, which will continue to be discussed for many years to come.

Marie-Françoise Cachin  
Université Paris Diderot, France

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### Séance du clôturé colloque SHARP Oxford Brookes 2008

Quand est parue dans le numéro de printemps 2008 de *SHARP News* l'annonce de la séance de clôturé du colloque SHARP 2008 à Oxford Brookes, intitulée « Fifty Years since Febvre and Martin, » j'étais en train de rédiger une communication pour un autre colloque organisé à la Bibliothèque nationale de Budapest du 21 au 24 mai et intitulé « Cinquante ans d'histoire du livre. De *L'Apparition du livre* (1958) à 2008. Bilan et projets. » On ne saurait accuser les organisateurs d'Oxford d'un quelconque plagiat ! Il s'agit plutôt d'une coïncidence, d'un désir partagé de commémorer la mort en janvier 2007 d'Henri-Jean Martin et de son œuvre de référence en histoire du livre, un classique comme le suggère l'auteur lui-même lors d'un de ses entretiens avec Jean-Marc Chatelain et Christian Jacob (volume publié en 2004 sous le titre *Les Métamorphoses du livre*): « Au total, *L'Apparition du livre* n'a commencé à bénéficier d'une certaine réputation qu'une dizaine d'années après sa publication (...) Les livres ne deviennent des classiques que petit à petit. »

Martin fait ici référence à la renommée internationale d'un ouvrage qui reposait en partie sur sa traduction en d'autres langues. La première de ces traductions s'est faite, semble-t-il rapidement, en espagnol, puis plus tard en japonais, en italien et en bien d'autres langues encore, mais jamais en allemand en

raison de l'opposition de certains spécialistes de Gutenberg. La traduction anglaise, due à David Elwyn Gerard, poète, romancier et enseignant au collège de bibliothécaires d'Aberystwyth au Pays de Galles, n'a été publiée qu'en 1976 par la maison d'édition New Left Books sous le titre *The Coming of the Book. The Impact of Printing 1450-1800*. Le compte rendu le plus connu – peut-être le seul – qui en est paru à l'époque a été rédigé par la Professeure Elizabeth Eisenstein et publié dans le *Journal of Modern History* en septembre 1978. Bien que critiquant sévèrement la traduction (selon moi, de manière un peu excessive, autant que j'ai pu en juger) ainsi que certains défauts de présentation, elle décrit le livre comme « une synthèse jusqu'ici jamais surpassée » et voit en Martin « un chercheur d'une énergie et d'une capacité de travail impressionnantes, à la tête du domaine de connaissances consacré en France à l'histoire du livre. » Une nouvelle édition de la même traduction est parue en 1997 chez Verso (le nom actuel de New Left Books) mais elle semble aujourd'hui épuisée.

Selon Martin lui-même, si la traduction anglaise a été réalisée tardivement, le livre s'est fait connaître rapidement dans sa version française, ce que m'ont confirmé plusieurs membres de SHARP en répondant aimablement à ma demande d'information sur la liste, et ceci grâce en particulier à Ian Willison qui s'est beaucoup démené pour la promotion de *L'Apparition du livre* dans les pays anglophones. En conséquence de quoi est paru à Chicago dès juillet 1959 un compte rendu du livre dans *The Library Quarterly. A Journal of Investigation and Discussion in the Field of Library Science*, signé par James E. Wells. Celui-ci décrivait le livre comme « un volume crucial » et concluait en ces termes: « Tout bien considéré, *L'Apparition du livre* est un ouvrage de toute première qualité dans un domaine trop souvent dominé par des travaux de qualité médiocre. »

Il n'y a donc rien d'étonnant à ce que des historiens du livre de divers pays aient considéré que le 50<sup>ème</sup> anniversaire du livre de Febvre et Martin devait être célébré, mais pas nécessairement de la même manière. A Budapest, l'accent portait sur la réception et la diffusion de *L'Apparition du livre* dans plusieurs pays européens et l'impulsion donnée de ce fait à la recherche en histoire du livre, sur son influence en matière de création de centres de recherche et de sites électroniques, de rédaction d'histoires du livre nationales, de développement de formations universitaires

dans ce domaine, sans oublier le rôle joué par les bibliothèques et les musées de l'imprimerie pour la conservation des archives, etc.

La session de clôture à Oxford Brookes a choisi une approche assez différente en organisant une table ronde avec cinq intervenants invités à discuter du développement de l'intérêt pour la culture de l'imprimé et de la recherche en histoire du livre depuis 1958. Plus précisément, chacun d'eux devait choisir une personnalité, ou une publication, ou un thème, ou un événement, qui avait influé de manière significative leurs propres travaux et dont l'impact restait perceptible sur un plan plus général dans les diverses façons d'aborder l'histoire du livre. Pour faciliter la discussion, un court texte de présentation du sujet choisi par eux figurait dans le programme du colloque. La séance elle-même, présidée par le Professeur John Barnard (université de Leeds), a suivi un plan précis: une question était d'abord posée à chacun des intervenants pour lui permettre de présenter son choix, puis suivait une discussion avec les autres membres de la table ronde. La discussion générale avec le public n'a eu malheureusement lieu qu'à la fin, alors qu'il restait très peu de temps.

Après avoir rappelé le rôle joué par *L'Apparition du livre* en mettant l'accent sur la différence entre manuscrit et livre, le premier intervenant, le Professeur David McKitterick (Trinity College, Cambridge) s'est concentré sur l'ouvrage choisi par lui: *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* d'Harold Love, publié aux presses universitaires d'Oxford en 1993. A son avis, il s'agit là d'une œuvre majeure parce que l'auteur y traite de la circulation des manuscrits qui s'est poursuivie au cours du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle parallèlement à celle des ouvrages imprimés et parce qu'il a contribué à attirer l'attention sur la circulation des manuscrits dans d'autres pays. Pourquoi? Question reprise lors de la discussion, en particulier par le Dr Peter MacDonald (St Hugh's College, Oxford) qui s'est interrogé sur la signification du terme 'livre.' Qu'est-ce qu'un livre? Que signifie ce mot pour nous aujourd'hui?

L'orateur suivant, le Professeur Ian Maclean (All Souls College, Oxford) avait sélectionné un événement, le colloque sur l'histoire du livre dans l'Europe de la Renaissance organisé en 1985 par Henri-Jean Martin entre autres, au Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance à Tours. Ian Maclean avait été frappé alors par la variété des approches en histoire du livre, par exemple les relations

auteur/lecteur, éditeur/acheteur, ou acheteur/lecteur. Selon lui, les communications faites lors de ce colloque, publiées en 1988 sous le titre *Le livre dans l'Europe de la Renaissance*, soulevaient toutes les questions possibles à propos du livre en tant qu'objet matériel et de son contenu culturel, et abordaient aussi la professionnalisation de l'histoire du livre comme discipline de recherche. A ce sujet, David McKitterick s'est interrogé sur le bien-fondé ou non des diverses histoires du livre, limitées géographiquement, et a suggéré qu'on regarde au-delà, point de vue partagé par la Dr Sydney Shep (Victoria University of Wellington) qui a souligné que l'approche nationale de ces histoires était de plus en plus contestée.

C'était à présent à celle-ci de présenter son point de vue et son intervention s'est articulée autour de la notion de culture matérielle, à travers plusieurs questions: de quelle manière la technologie façonne-t-elle l'histoire; comment conceptualisons-nous ce que nous appelons 'histoire du livre'; en ce qui concerne la culture matérielle, quelles sortes de matériau avons-nous; comment nos recherches prennent-elles en compte les preuves; nous disposons d'objets mais qu'en faisons-nous? A son avis, la question problématique de ce qu'est l'histoire du livre n'a pas été soulevée par Febvre et Martin. Sydney Shep a beaucoup insisté sur les conditions matérielles à l'appui du texte et sur la façon dont la matérialité informe la culture. Ces remarques ont suscité entre autres deux commentaires intéressants: d'une part, la Professeure Kathryn Sutherland (St. Anne's College, Oxford), a évoqué la question de la numérisation, pour elle plus 'physique' que 'matérielle,' et qui à son avis va être un véritable défi pour SHARP; d'autre part, David McKitterick, a rappelé que le problème de la matérialité se pose de la même manière pour les textes de musique manuscrits.

Quatrième intervenante, Kathryn Sutherland s'est tout d'abord présentée comme spécialiste de littérature anglaise mais aussi de critique textuelle et de bibliographie. Pour cette raison, son choix s'est porté sur W.W. Greg (mort en 1959) dont l'œuvre magistrale en bibliographie a montré que « pour un bibliographe le texte n'a pas de pertinence » mais également que « les livres n'ont d'importance que comme véhicule grâce auquel les textes nous parviennent. » Selon elle, ce représentant de la Nouvelle Bibliographie a reconnu le lien essentiel entre la bibliographie, la critique textuelle et la critique littéraire. David McKitterick est intervenu sur ce point pour souligner que Greg avait dû faire des choix

quant à la façon de publier les manuscrits. Et on a rappelé que lors de la publication du livre de Febvre et Martin, les méthodes d'analyse des textes avaient déjà évolué, en particulier vers les études génétiques.

Dernier participant à ce panel, le Dr Peter McDonald a commencé par déclarer qu'il était devenu historien du livre parce qu'il était lecteur, un lecteur que la critique littéraire tracassait. Il a aussi exprimé son regret d'être à présent incapable de lire un livre sans tenir compte de sa présentation. Il en a partiellement rendu responsable Maurice Blanchot – sa personnalité de référence – puisque c'est l'écrivain français qui lui a fait prendre conscience de la manière dont l'existence de la littérature dépendait de toutes sortes d'institutions. Il a illustré cette remarque en évoquant la quatrième de couverture du roman de Coetzee *Foe*, dont le texte a été rédigé par l'auteur à l'exception d'une phrase ajoutée à son insu par son éditeur. Il a conclu en considérant que « le livre est une idée ainsi qu'un objet matériel. »

Comme indiqué dès le début, la discussion générale a été très brève. Toutefois, elle a permis à Ian Willison de raconter comment en 1958 il avait apporté *L'Apparition du livre* à ses collègues de l'université de Chicago. Il a aussi présenté rapidement le dernier livre (posthume) d'Henri-Jean Martin paru en janvier 2008 et intitulé *Aux sources de la civilisation européenne*. Parmi les quelques points soulevés ensuite, relevons la question de la traduction et de la circulation transnationale des livres, tandis que la toute dernière question: « Pourquoi l'histoire du livre ne serait-elle pas une discipline en soi? » prouvait bien que cette séance de clôture avait atteint son but en faisant apparaître des problèmes généraux en histoire du livre, par opposition aux communications du colloque aux sujets nécessairement plus limités. Autre point positif: la diversité d'approche des cinq intervenants de la table ronde et les différents 'objets' sélectionnés par eux se sont avérés complémentaires et se sont éclairés mutuellement. En conclusion, ce qui ressort de cette séance, c'est la multiplicité des questions que pose l'histoire du livre, cet objet à la fois matériel et culturel, réceptacle d'un texte spécifique proposé à une certaine époque sous une certaine forme, objet par conséquent historique. Ce sont des points déjà étudiés par les auteurs de *L'Apparition du livre*, et qui continueront certainement à l'être pendant de nombreuses années à venir.

Marie-Françoise Cachin  
Université Paris Diderot, France

## BOOK REVIEWS

Gregory S. Brown, *Literary Sociability and Literary Property in France, 1775-1793: Beaumarchais, the Société des Auteurs Dramatiques and the Comédie Française*. Aldershot, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006. x, 186p., index. ISBN 0754603865. \$100. £50 (hardback).

Beaumarchais remains an iconic figure in the history of literary property rights in France. Following a dispute with the *Comédie française* over payments for his hugely successful play *Le Barbier de Séville*, he called a meeting at his home on July 3, 1777. Two dozen playwrights formed the *Société des auteurs dramatiques* (SAD) that day, engaging a collective fight for the interests of dramatic authorship in eighteenth-century France. The event would seem to mark the revolt of writers against the aristocratic institutions that had long dominated the cultural sphere, and against the antiquated values which required those writers, in the name of ‘courtly gentility’ and *honnêteté*, to renounce their own legal and economic rights. Gregory Brown’s illuminating new study shows, however, that the situation was not so straightforward. In fact, writers were hardly keen to break the yoke of noble control over literary life. Brown argues instead that their opposition to the *Comédie* arose “from a combination of very personal frustration and a very earnest desire to engage with, rather than destroy, those institutions” (163). They sought recognition within the Old Regime cultural field, not escape from it, and their demands and arguments are reconsidered in this light.

We get as a consequence a far richer and more interesting story, recounted by Brown in five extremely well-researched chapters which, drawing in large part from the archives of the *Comédie française*, follow the development of SAD from its 1777-80 battles with the *Comédie* to the literary property laws of 1793. The latter recognized the rights of authors over their works for the duration of their lives plus ten years and created a public domain. The endpoint is deceptive, though, since Brown’s concern is not to trace the inexorable march towards this legislation, or towards the emancipation of writers from the old authorities. The battle lines are more permeable and the teleology less direct in his account. There was nothing inevitable about literary property law. Rather, the notion takes

shape as a by-product of the fluctuating strategies of *gens de lettres* who sought to establish their legitimacy in a cultural field that was itself in considerable flux, as state control over the theater was transformed by a new bureaucratic ethos prevailing at court in the final years of the Old Regime and ultimately, of course, by the Revolution. Literary property was an effect of the claims of writers to a valorized status as the “repositories of the ‘genius’ of the Nation” (126). Therefore, “[a] discourse for the public good, more than one of individual rights, informed the first direct call for literary property rights legislation” (127), Brown notes, referring to a petition presented by La Harpe to the National Assembly in August 1790.

The crucial point is that the battle for literary property was primarily about establishing authorial *disinterest* – not interest – generally against accusations of unseemly self-promotion. This was the foundation unifying all factions in the debate. Whether defending a courtly or a more ‘modern’ patriotic style, or as in the case of Beaumarchais himself, trying to negotiate a compromise between the two, writers above all endeavored to project their dedication to a cause that was far larger than their own personal benefit. In this respect, there was more continuity with tradition in the crusades of Beaumarchais and his fellow playwrights than normally assumed. Scholars have seen in the campaigns of the SAD a sharp break with the authorial practices of an earlier age. *Literary Sociability* offers an intriguing alternative: to observe in the SAD not a departure from the characteristic dynamics of Old Regime literary life, but an extension of them into a modern cultural sphere in which writers can no more pursue their economic interests as ‘professionals’ today than they could in the ‘first literary field’ of the early modern period.

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Michelle M. Dowd and Julie A. Eckerle, eds., *Genre and Women’s Life Writing in Early Modern England*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007. xii, 212p. ISBN 9780754654261. £50.00.

*Genre and Women’s Life Writing* is comprised of ten essays and an introduction that explore the interplay between women’s textual production and their elaborate and diverse modes of self-representation in the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries in England. The volume at once depicts and argues for the “textual production of women’s selves” (2) – that is, the notion that in “an increasingly textual world” models for selfhood are largely textually mediated as well as expressed, rather than preexisting their inscription (1). This emphasis on the textual nature of the self enables the essays in the volume to move artfully among and across a range of methodologies, from the material history of texts to literary close reading to minority historiography to an almost poststructuralist preoccupation with the linguistic nature of the self. With thoroughness and liveliness, the essays explore the proliferation of genres in which life writing took place in this period, as well as the different sorts of selves able to be presented or represented within and especially between these disparate forms and genres – genres that include romance and history, certainly, but also prefaces, diaries, recipes, marginalia, letters, devotional tracts, mothers’ manuals, lyric poetry, conversion narratives, and scientific treatises. The subjects of these essays range from well-known figures such as Lady Anne Clifford and Margaret Cavendish to less familiar types such as Mary Frith, An Collins, Elizabeth Richardson, and the anonymous hands filling the margins and endpapers of early modern recipe books and family psalters with records of births, deaths, illnesses, and marriages. One comes away from the volume impressed by the sheer range of spaces and places, both formal and informal, material and ideological, that women found for writing, recording, and imagining both their lives and their selves, notwithstanding the well-rehearsed limitations placed on women’s literacy in the early modern period.

The essays attend carefully and productively to material questions and questions of interest to book historians, including differences between manuscript and print, published and archival materials, as well as the effects on the depiction of the self precipitated by writing for a public audience, for an audience of one’s peers, or for no audience at all. Throughout, the essays draw attention to the ambivalent reception of women’s writing and women’s authority, and above all to the strictures on publicity applied to women at the time. Yet they also do a marvelous job of representing what Josephine Donovan calls the many and varied “assertions of literary agency by women” (179) in early modern England, including their ingenious, deliberate, and sometimes quite hilarious negotiations of the cultural proscrip-

tion against women's self-publication. This is no simple narrative of women's literary and cultural victimization, although these essays are not blind to the challenges literate women of all classes faced. The only drawback here is the fact that very little is said about male-authored life writing in this period, and particularly about writing by non-aristocratic men. As a result, a number of the conclusions advanced here are open to a rather predictable query: how can we be sure that the self-authorizing traits, strategies, and stylistic and formal choices identified throughout these writings are characteristic of women's writing in particular? What if writing about the self, which was not really encouraged for anyone in this period outside the admittedly formulaic mode of spiritual autobiography, required materially and "rhetorically sophisticated discourses of the self" (1) regardless of the author's sex or social location?

Jody Greene

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Simon Eliot, Andrew Nash and Ian Willison, eds., *Literary Cultures and the Material Book*. London: The British Library, 2007. xix, 444p. ill. ISBN 9780712306843. £45.

Consider the plight of the scholar who has staked a claim to knowledge of book history, or of *l'histoire du livre* or *Geschichte des Buchwesens*. Mired in the European, or North American, or Australia-New Zealand context, and simultaneously limited to thinking in terms of only a couple of centuries worth of history, many of us have woken up in the last two or three years to the realization that we don't really know what we are talking about. 'The book' has a longer history, and a deeper cultural thrust than most scholars can imagine. And yet our students sense it – at least mine do – and ask disconcerting questions about postcolonial and transnational relationships, and about Asian or African or Native-North American cultures, to which we professors have no ready answers. More distressingly, some of us may wonder why we ourselves never asked those questions during our own intellectual formative years.

Fortunately, a cosmopolitan group of scholars has begun addressing itself to these questions over the past decade. Their founders were Jean-Yves Mollier of the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines in

France and Jacques Michon of the University of Sherbrooke in Québec, Canada. They brought together scholars, from *La Francophonie* as well as from Anglophone and other cultures, to think on a large and systematic scale about the problems of studying the book in world history. Unlike SHARP, these scholars never established themselves as a formal society, but organized a linked series of symposia: Sherbrooke 2000; Prato 2001; London 2004; Sydney 2005. This review concerns the London gathering, whose papers have been skillfully edited by three British adherents of the informal 'Sherbrooke-Prato' group.

The editors' conceptual framework for the book is summed up in the title. 'Literary cultures' refers to the interwoven processes of authorship, reading and publishing – or to their counterparts in other times and different cultures. And 'the material book' anchors these histories firmly to the bibliographical object in which they resulted. There is a preface by Robert Darnton, an introduction by all three editors and an essay by Simon Eliot discussing the material factors in literary culture from 2500 BCE to 1900. David McKitterick provides a critical afterword. In between, the world is divided between east and west, metropole and colony. Five essays on 'non-western traditions of the book' are followed by five on 'the western book in history,' eight on the various European 'language empires,' and a further eight on 'the Anglophone tradition.' As Darnton observes, "book historians have always recognized the arbitrariness of confining their subject within national boundaries" (xvi). Moreover, the conventional western turning-points (the codex, Gutenberg, steam printing, copyright law, the Internet and so forth) are useful, but not exclusive, ways to understand how the written word has traveled within communities and created new communities of its own.

Despite the open spirit of the editors, some readers will be disappointed that the essays are organized around national identities. The global reach notwithstanding, various kinds of transnational relationships are not developed as well as they might be with a structure less oriented to political geography. More successful has been the way in which the conference and the volume have problematized the relationship of books to literatures. In western academic settings, religious, scientific and other works are often categorized as non-literary. But in the non-western world, the literary has different meanings. In the case of modern Africa, Isabel Hofmeyr shows how the secular and religious arms of the book trade can pro-

ductively be conceptualized together, so that they can answer questions about the way in which African readers can shape the choices of European, as well as African, publishers.

In sum, these essays help us to think about what we mean when we talk about 'print culture' and 'literary culture.' The terminology of print culture, often and problematically made synonymous with 'book history,' refers to a society wherein news, knowledge and politics, as well as novels, histories and poems are circulated by print; and where the men and women who make their livings from supplying print wield great cultural power, sometimes unknown to their contemporaries. In discussions of a literary culture, the printedness of the means of communication and the exercise of hegemony is often downplayed. The editors and contributors of *Literary Cultures and the Material Book* have brought together a dazzling range of short essays which help us to understand that materiality and literariness go hand in hand.

Leslie Howsam

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Mirjam Foot. *Bookbinders at Work: Their Roles and Methods*. New Castle DE: Oak Knoll Press and London: The British Library, 2006. v, 163p. ill. ISBN 1584561688 (Oak Knoll); 0712349014 (BL). \$59.95, £30.00.

Mirjam Foot has written a compact, beautifully illustrated, reference work covering European bookbinding primarily between 1500 and 1800. Her audience is book historians and bibliographers, and her goal is clear: to show that "bindings are an essential part of book production, if we consider its full cycle from writer to reader" (1). Bookbinding manuals serve as her primary sources, with supporting evidence from other archival materials. Step by step, she shows how a bookbinder's work can be bibliographically significant for the study of the pre-1800 handpress period. Foot has long articulated the social meanings embedded in bookbindings – here she has persuaded not with bindings themselves (though there are many useful illustrations of bindings) but with historical records.

Various Anglo-American bibliographic stances toward bookbinding are succinctly summarized in the first chapter. She lauds Strickland Gibson, David McKitterick and D.F. McKenzie among others, who understand

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and articulate that binding decisions can be relevant to textual production. She brings together evidence that long before the nineteenth century there were various ‘retail’ processes in bookbinding. In this, she joins with historians Stuart Bennet and Nicholas Pickwood, who show that binders in the early period both sold bound books and marketed them to specific types of readers.

To investigate the ways by which binders influenced the text during the various forwarding (structural) and finishing (decorative) processes, Foot devotes two chapters to the examination of English, French, German, and Dutch bookbinding manuals. She has supplied excellent translations for the non-English sources, and created an appendix for both German and French binding terms. Archival materials such as guild rules and legal papers corroborate information from the manuals. These technical chapters might require of the readers some background in bookbinding terminology and a basic understanding of bookbinding practices, but will reveal to any researcher, how the many bookbinding steps could alter how texts were experienced.

Finally, Foot examines the economic realities a pre-industrial binder faced, and presents verbal and pictorial descriptions of the binder’s trade. Her currency tables help the calculation of complex price rates, and to more easily render the bookbinder’s daily life, she translates those rates into the price of common foodstuffs. The figures demonstrating increased book production and increased material costs are clear – the economic pressure to work faster is undeniable. Letters of complaint from authors and other binders about each other’s shoddy practices detail how well they all understood a bookbinder’s power to lose, spoil, cut and shuffle the text. Socially, historic guild requirements for reading ability and god-fearing behavior need not be taken as the norm, but attest to an active and proud trade, despite the somewhat low status assigned to bookbinding. Illustrations of binderies show lively men and women busily meeting the needs of the reading public.

A separate bibliography would have brought together the excellent sources Foot uses. Although she does not give the same level of detail for Italian and Spanish bookbinding practices that she gives for the northern European regions, her historical sources support the widespread power of bookbinders over the text. Her sources also provide critical context to the role as retailers that binders played in textual production before 1800.

Foot’s work belongs on the reference shelf of any book historian – it is the result of her long and fruitful attention to bookbinding as a serious bibliographic subject. We can only hope she will keep adding to our body of knowledge.

Chela Metzger

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Clive Griffin. *Journeyman-Printers, Heresy, and the Inquisition in Sixteenth-Century Spain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. xiii, 318p. ISBN 0199280738. \$150.00

With this positively brilliant account of the history of (mostly) French journeyman-printers in sixteenth-century Spain, reconstructed from their surviving inquisitorial trials, Clive Griffin has provided scholars with an outstanding piece of historical investigation. In ten dense but clearly written chapters – that, truth be said, could have benefited from a little more typographical breathing room, either in the form of paragraph breaks or section headings – Griffin follows a handful of these men as they crisscrossed the Iberian Peninsula hoping to practice their craft and earn a living. He meticulously describes how presses were organized and functioned, along with the actual work done by immigrant proofreaders, type-casters, pullers, beaters, and compositors, examining also their places and practices of sociability inside and outside of the print shop. But why did these men (and sometimes women) travel to a land whose language they did not know and whose population was largely hostile to them because of their suspected Protestant beliefs? For many French printers, booksellers and artisans of the book willing to risk their lives, the reason was quite simple. Sixteenth-century Spain was the proverbial land of opportunity. Wages were high, the level of required qualifications or formal training quite low, and industry regulations virtually non-existent.

As he tries to understand why and how some individuals managed to walk away with ‘only’ an imprisonment or galley sentence, while others were doomed and perished at the stake, Griffin delves ever deeper into the social and mental world of these skilled but often uneducated laborers. As it turns out, more often than not, one’s fate hinged upon one’s familiarity – or lack thereof – with the procedures of the Holy Office as a legal institution. Past and present association with avowed or suspected Protestants in France,

the Low Countries or even in Spain made the journeyman-printers an easy target for the Inquisition. It also left them wide open to accusations and denunciations by jealous co-workers, commercial rivals or personal enemies. Fully conscious of their vulnerability, they had to exercise extreme caution in their day-to-day dealings with Spaniards and other foreigners in the printing business. This helps highlight the paramount importance of friendship and kinship ties in this milieu. The company one kept in a country where few people could be trusted, where a misguided friendship or a careless word spoken in public or in private could lead one directly to the jails of the Inquisition, became as crucial to one’s survival as making sure colleagues and neighbors saw one attending mass or fasting.

One of the best things about Clive Griffin’s book – and there are many – is that even the most demanding of historians will find something to stimulate or inform them; religious and social historians as well as micro-historians and historians of the book. Based on primary documents whose fragmentary and methodologically problematic nature has in the past led to excessive speculation, surprisingly little room is left for supposition in this work. Making extensive use of archival records from the major tribunals of the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions, the author proves incredibly thorough in cross-checking information from different trials throughout the Iberian Peninsula, while displaying an impressive command of sixteenth-century Spanish typography. This allows him to reconstruct to a sometimes astounding degree the travels and tribulations of these itinerant print workers, making them literally come alive by giving the reader an amazingly vivid sense of their professional, personal and even spiritual lives. Although centered on Spain and its local printing industry, the wealth of information extracted and collected here regarding the production of sixteenth-century books and the daily life of the men and women who produced them, can easily be transposed and applied to other early modern typographical centers in Europe. Clive Griffin’s probing analysis and imaginative yet cautious and rigorous reading of the printed material and manuscript sources – admittedly, exceptionally rich and detailed in the case of the Spanish Inquisition – stands as a first-rate example for all those who wish to recapture the elusive world of the artisans of Renaissance book culture.

Guy Lazure

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Ann R. Hawkins, ed., *Teaching Bibliography, Textual Criticism, and Book History*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2006. 199p. ISBN 9781851968343. US\$99.

Can book history, as Sean C. Grass suggests in one essay from this collection, prove the “literary galvanism of the post-modern age?” To those of us who suspect so, based on our own classroom experience or interests, *Teaching Bibliography, Textual Criticism, and Book History* provides a welcome gathering of ideas. Contributions by subject-area experts, veteran educators, and assistant professors blend innovation and tradition. The collection of twenty-three articles (plus preface by Terry Belanger, editor’s introduction, and afterword by Daniel Traister) serves not so much as a comprehensive pedagogical guide as an eclectic and thought-provoking conversation.

Such conversation has long been needed in a format more widely accessible than the sessions and supper-tables of SHARP conferences. It’s no secret that book history (as one possible shorthand term) is being integrated into the curriculum in literature, writing, history, library science, and the fine arts even while the focused bibliography courses of yesteryear are harder to come by. But just exactly how instructors are going about it, how they assess results, and how they manage resources might be something of a mystery, especially to newcomers. If book history is to live up to its ambitious promise, it must develop a formalized, or at least articulated, system of teaching practices, no less than composition and rhetoric, traditional criticism, historiography, or emergent literary theory have done. And it must, as Traister reminds readers of this volume, pay its way by more convincing arguments than its own self-perpetuation.

The contributors to *Teaching Bibliography* offer nuts-and-bolts experiences and exercises that can be adapted to situations ranging from undergraduate non-majors to nontraditional students pursuing a professional degree; from the bibliographical riches of New York City to locales that, at first, appear book-deficient. The common denominators are the use of material books (or their components) to empower non-material (historical, social, creative) learning, and the recognition that a historical approach to books and texts yields a deeper understanding of meaning. And they offer, as well, an exciting sampling of student responses: “Word-of-mouth about this particu-

lar project has contributed to student enrolments” (Sydney J. Shep); “The assignment fostered an understanding of the world that [the student] would never have gained from ‘any textbook’” (Jean Lee Cole); “One of these students pronounced editing to be, of all things, ‘addictive’” (Ian Gadd); and, as Maura Ives ties it up, “They now understand why literary scholars might need to know something about books.”

The essays integrate expertise in historical processes, variously in papermaking, typesetting, printing, printmaking, and bookbinding, as well as in research methodologies, in manifestations of ‘the book’ from manuscript to print to electronic, from scroll to codex to e-book, from Shakespearean quarto to nineteenth-century gift book to popular magazine to the Harry Potter phenomenon. In genre and period the articles embrace poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction, ranging from medieval manuscripts through the present (and listing to the Victorian side, perhaps reflecting the editor’s own specialization). In most cases the writers presume the reader’s basic common knowledge and drill right into pedagogy; a few, such as Thomas Kinsella and Willman Spawn’s contribution on colonial Philadelphia bookbindings, Timothy Barrett’s on papermaking, and R. Carter Hailey’s on identification of antique laid paper, summarize a challenging topic or technique and then show how the approach may be instructive in classroom settings. Barrett’s article, for instance, provides a recipe and instructions for papermaking that even novices can follow. The articles are helpfully supplemented with a back-of-book resource list that extends to online aids, and sources for equipment and tools.

As with any collected volume constrained by tight limits of space and time, some important areas get little attention. How, for instance, can bibliography shed light on literary works created in the less distant past, or on current events and social trends? Erik Delfino creatively suggests the “Gutenberg gambit” as a way of helping today’s library students draw analogies from historical print to issues of access, intellectual property, preservation, and more in the digital age. Questions of intentionality, social production, semiotics, publishing economics – to cite a few examples – are equally applicable, if less readily detectable from evidence, in today’s books, and the conversation should be extended further in that direction.

More could be done, as well, in the areas of publishing practice and the booktrade. Effec-

tive teaching approaches should be developed for such vital areas as copyright, author-publisher-patron financial arrangements, bookselling, collecting, or author-editor relationships. (Having been educated in a ‘profession of authorship’ program with a dictum to ‘follow the money,’ I learned a great deal from such useful undertakings as analyzing the *American Book Trade Directory* or participating in student book-collecting competitions.) Students of all periods of literature, history, or the arts can readily apply book-historical learning to interpretation, analysis, and creative production – not to mention that many of them will go on to careers in which understanding of past and present practice inform their own daily endeavors.

One such topic – the practice of editing – is compellingly treated here in contributions by Sean C. Grass, Jennifer Phegley, and Tatjana Taksevka, and most usefully by Erick Kelemen, whose students actually created their own edition of a Renaissance play. An effective pedagogy for current-day editing would teach one of the most valuable lessons in all literary production: that it is not only the writers or processes of the past that were vulnerable to error. In this respect the collection can also serve as exemplar. A laser-printed short-run edition, it displays spelling errors that include “Paul Lawrence Dunbar” and “Edgar Allen Poe” (occurrences readily found through the index), the “Schomberg” Center for Research in Black Culture (115), “partronym” (130), and “a course laid covering” that surely should be “coarse” (146); inconsistencies of capitalization that cannot be wholly ascribed to differences in American and British practice; bibliographical citations that sometimes lack punctuation or are otherwise sloppily styled; and a table of contents in which only the final section bears chapter numbers. Luckily these are easily remedied via twenty-first-century stop-press corrections.

Except where contributors discuss the Eastern origins of paper or guide students in locating non-English-language editions in their bibliographical research, the volume is anglocentric, drawing from American and British university experience and primarily dealing with the works of white canonical writers. D. W. Krummel, writing on “The Hidden Lives of Books,” is only one of the contributors to note the difficulties in expanding bibliographical assignments beyond commonly accessible resources.

It was not, of course, the intent of this short volume to impart the last word on the subject: it serves instead as a useful starting point. Taken together, its scattered and lively approaches reflect the state of the interdiscipline. Instructors should find rich opportunities to extrapolate these approaches to their particular situations, develop their teaching more inventively, and share their ideas more systematically.

The leading bibliographers, textual critics, historians, and print practitioners of the twentieth century had the good fortune to build their fundamental skills by way of dedicated apprenticeships, and they formulated their classroom approaches in an environment where the primacy of the printed word was seldom challenged. Scholars and librarians going forward must find ways to incorporate book-historical concepts and skills more democratically. *Teaching Bibliography* sets us on that road.

Barbara A. Brannon

University of North Carolina, Wilmington



Jesse M. Lander, *Inventing Polemic: Religion, Print, and Literature Culture in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. x. 324p. ill. ISBN 0521838541. \$85.00.

Possibly the most interesting, and certainly the most productive, development in recent literary criticism has been the creation of a niche that David Kastan and Peter Stallybrass in *Opening the Border: Inclusivity in Early Modern Studies: Essays in Honor of James V. Mirollo* puckishly call “The New Boredom” (212); that is, bringing together the seemingly tedious details of textual studies with the cultural concerns of the New Historicism. There have been many distinguished contributions to this field, such as David Kastan’s *Shakespeare and the Book* and Leah S. Marcus’s *Unediting the Renaissance*, and to this list one can happily add Jesse Lander’s excellent *Inventing Polemic: Religion, Print, and Literature Culture in Early Modern England*.

The first three chapters, however, focus more on the mechanics of the book trade. Chapter one, ‘Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*: Printing and Popularizing the *Actes and Monuments*,’ examines the process by which this huge book, marked by “its adversarial polemic . . . became institutionalized” (57). The second chapter, ‘Martin Marprelate and the Fugi-

tive Text’ looks at how “the tracts display a sophisticated awareness of the many ways in which a book may signify” (82), and furthermore, how “the tracts attempt to forge a collective identity through polemical engagement with both the bishops and the puritans” (83). Chapter 3, “‘Whole Hamlets’: Q1, Q2, and the Work of Distinction,’ probably the best chapter in the book, revisits the question of the “bad quarto” (Q1) and the “good quarto” (Q2). Lander notes that while “Q1 comfortably inhabits the popular tradition of the revenge play, Q2 is pervaded by a sense of uncertainty that coalesces around the problem of the popular itself” (111). The next two chapters, as Lander writes, focus “more attention on the figure of the author” (144), in particular, on John Donne and John Milton. In Chapter 4, ‘Printing Donne: Poetry and Polemic in the Early Seventeenth Century,’ Lander brings together *Pseudo-Martyr* and *An Anatomy of the World* to demonstrate “the cultural affinity between poetry and polemic, to the ways in which both endeavors are animated by similar concerns” (145). Chapter 5, ‘*Areopagitica* and “the true warfaring Christian,”’ analyzes Milton’s polemic not as an example of the “shaping influence of print technology and religious controversy” (145), but of the way Milton’s text figures the *end* of this tradition, coming as it does “at the end of the wars of truth that followed the Reformation” (180). Milton’s pamphlet, Lander cleverly notes, is far more than a polemic: it is a polemic for polemic” (181). The book concludes with a chapter on ‘Institutionalizing Polemic: The Rise and Fall of Chelsea College,’ an institution “dedicated to the pursuit of controversial divinity” (201).

Overall, this is an absolutely wonderful book, original, detailed, and deeply insightful. Lander’s attention to how the material or the ostensibly supplemental details of book production underscore the meaning of a text is nothing less than revelatory. His analysis of the indexes for the various editions of Foxe’s *Actes and Monuments* is a perfect example of this book’s interpretive gems: “The index is designed to guide readers to a proper understanding of the history and, perhaps more importantly, the historical significance of the primitive church. Since a particular index lays a grid over the main text and isolates a specific set of elements as potential important or useful, the index in effect offers a reading of the main text it claims only to reference. An index thus works at cross purposes: it opens the book, providing convenient access to certain

topics, but because it only identifies certain topics, directs the reader, offering a selective epitome of the book” (66).

Yet I also have a few cavils. Lander’s suggestion at the end of his otherwise exemplary chapter on *Hamlet* that – “Q2’s anti-polemic anticipates the establishment of the category of literature – a category in large part constituted through the repudiation of polemic” (144) seems to me unnecessary and unconvincing. And while I can understand the temptation to quote Foucault on authorship in the chapter on the Marprelate tracts, his assertion that “Texts, books, and discourses began to have authors . . . to the extent that discourses could be transgressive” (81) also seems historically inaccurate, which brings me to my most serious criticism: the exclusion of the Henrician era from Lander’s consideration. Against Foucault’s formulation I would put Thomas More’s marvelously ludic construction of the author in *Utopia*, Erasmus’s assiduous attention to his “textual self-presentation,” in Lisa Jardine’s term from her *Erasmus, Man of Letters*, and Henry VIII’s ‘authorship’ of a polemical book defending the seven sacraments.

But these criticisms pale against the larger achievement of this book. Or rather, by omitting these issues, Lander points the way for further scholarship that will be informed by his work. Lander’s *Inventing Polemic* asks us to reconsider issues we thought settled, and demonstrates the unsuspected importance of supposedly minor details. I hope that Cambridge University Press will consider bringing this book out in paperback so that it can reach the wide audience it deserves.

Peter C. Herman

San Diego State University



Eugene D. LeMire, *A Bibliography of William Morris*. New Castle, Delaware and London: Oak Knoll and the British Library, 2006. 448p. ISBN 9781584561736. \$98.00.

From the direct, thoughtful, engaging photograph of William Morris on the dust jacket to the fulsome bibliographical descriptions, Eugene’s LeMire’s magisterial book delivers important information to twenty-first century readers. In his poetry, prose and visual arts, William Morris (1834–1896) asks fundamental questions about how we live our lives. Morris speaks to advocates of mutual respect

and world peace as well as to ecologists concerned with reducing environmental degradation.

Other twentieth-century scholars, notably William Peterson, Gary Aho, and David and Sheila Latham, have published specialized bibliographies of aspects of Morris's writings, but LeMire began research for this bibliography in 1989 with the intention of updating, expanding, and correcting the two previously unsurpassed nineteenth-century primary bibliographies, by Forman and Scott (1897). Although his home university is in Australia, LeMire traveled worldwide to study the William Morris holdings in fifty-two libraries and seven private collections. In his introduction LeMire defines his chronological boundaries as 1856 to 1915, except that later publications of first editions are also included. Listing only works created for the public, LeMire refers readers to others bibliographies of Morris manuscript sources, and secondary literature at the end of the introduction.

New information brought forward in LeMire's introduction sets the historical context of Morris's writings and unravels the complex web of Morris's relationships with his publishers, while elucidating the impact of English and American copyright regulations on the works. LeMire describes ways the interest of later publishers and printers in Morris's Kelmscott Press books contributed to the twentieth-century revolution in type and book design, resulting in books that "have a clarity and beauty that enhances their use" (xlvii). The introduction is followed by five chapters and two appendices: A) Original Editions with Posthumous Editions to 1915 and First Editions to the Present; B) Morris's Contributions to Books; C) Morris Collections and Selections; D) Morris in Periodical Publications; E) Forgeries, Piracies and Sophistications; Appendix I: Interviews; Appendix II: Ephemera. A useful index concludes the volume. My only correction concerns the Acknowledgements where "Mark Francis Lasner" should be listed as Mark Samuels Lasner.

The main matter of the bibliography, enriched by illustrations, includes references to Norman Kelvin's editions of Morris's letters, when such elaboration clarifies understanding. For example, LeMire's entry A-48.01 (133-134) concerning the 1889 publication of *The Roots of the Mountains*, pictures the title page of the first 'Superior' edition showing Morris's lyric epigraph suggesting his intention to immerse hurried urban readers in rustic peace.

On the next page LeMire illustrates Morris's use of his 1876 Honeysuckle chintz for the 'Superior' binding of *The Roots of the Mountains*. Morris's letters further enhance this entry. On 17 October 1889, Morris told his daughter Jenny "I have a dummy book bound up in our chintz. It looks so nice and such fun" (*Letters*, iii.81). LeMire continues tracing Morris's pleasure with the *Roots of the Mountains*, quoting a letter to Georgiana Burne-Jones dated 16 November 1889: "I am so pleased with my book – typography, binding, and I must say literary matter – that I am any day to be seen hugging it up, and am become a spectacle to Gods and men because of it" (*Letters*, iii. 120). Thus LeMire's citations concerning this book bring Morris to life and serve as prescient notice of Morris's interest in printing and the book arts fulfilled at his Kelmscott Press in the eighteen-nineties. General readers, scholars, and artists will all benefit from Eugene LeMire's decades of rigorous research shared in *A Bibliography of William Morris*.

Alice Beckwith  
Providence College



Donald J. Newman and Lynn Marie Wright, eds., *Fair Philosopher: Eliza Haywood and 'The Female Spectator'*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006. 252p. ill. ISBN 0838756360. \$48.50.

Eliza Haywood, possibly the most prolific author in the eighteenth century, is known for her amorous fiction rather than her journalism, but, as this volume attests, her periodical *The Female Spectator* is now attracting considerable critical attention. To some extent, this results from the recent Pickering and Chatto edition of the work, co-edited by Alexander Pettit and Kathryn King, both contributors to this collection, and part of the publication of Haywood's entire opus. The editors of *Fair Philosopher*, Donald J. Newman and Lynn Marie Knight, outline in their comprehensive introduction the central critical and bibliographical issues of this work: sections survey the modern critical debates about Haywood's formal originality, marketing strategies, and social attitudes; the contemporary context of periodical publication; questions of Haywood's feminism; and the relationship of the work to Haywood's more clearly political fiction. Overall, the Haywood who emerges is a professional, committed, complex, and savvy writer

with a political agenda and considerable experience and expertise in positioning her work for sale.

This collection includes eleven essays, ranging from bibliographical to literary interpretations. Amongst the most interesting are the four that approach the text from a bibliographical angle. Alexander Pettit warns against misinterpreting Haywood's periodical simply because it has been recontextualized in a reverential, scholarly edition. In counterpoint, Janine Barchas argues in her examination of the original illustrations of the work that their very banality yields significant meanings, twinning 'sibyls and sybarites' in a visual and verbal play. Her essay suggests intriguingly that the apparently 'hackneyed' frontispieces of eighteenth-century works reward careful scrutiny, and thus that contemporary audiences were far more attuned to reading images than we have realized (70). Patrick Spedding and Donald J. Newman conclude the volume with essays respectively estimating the success of *The Female Spectator* – substantial in her own terms, less impressive compared with that of her model – and supplying a thorough, if not entirely complete, bibliographical history of the work. These four essays frame and set the context for the remainder of the volume, which largely concerns Haywood's ideology.

One of the most contentious issues in criticism of Haywood concerns her political intentions and the effects of her aesthetic choices, and the essays here represent a diversity of opinions. Although *The Female Spectator* alludes to Addison and Steele's periodical by its title, the work actually consists of a series of mini-novelistic essays illustrating moral points for women. In exploring this generic ambiguity in the context of the work's explicit appeal to a female audience, Ricardo Miguel-Alfonso finds the periodical similar to *The Spectator* in using aesthetic principles of taste to enforce a highly conservative moral agenda in which women should "repress their individuality and behave as they are expected to" (80). Eve Tavor Bannet, in contrast, interprets Haywood's work as a "cocktail of patriotic, conservative, and radical elements" in which Haywood endorses distinctions of rank while both commending women's "virtue" and yet insisting on their "masculine learning" (101). In a particularly powerful essay, Kathryn King refutes the view first articulated by John Richetti that Haywood neglects politics for sensationalism, and instead argues for a political reading of Haywood's work as an

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 assertion of her patriotism in the politically fraught period of the 'broad bottom' ministry. In a thoughtful essay combining deconstructionist and feminist theory with political contextualization and close reading, Earla A. Wilputte goes still further to argue that Haywood exposes the "paranoia of the government" by an ironic uses of silences and absences, including her announcements that she will not publish certain correspondences (122). Catherine Ingrassia develops this notion further by underscoring the oral contexts of Haywood's work, both her fiction and her periodical: her examination of the writing as a conversation or dialogue provides a fascinating perspective on Haywood's notorious ambiguity, and reaches further to problematize the very nature of eighteenth-century prose. Nicola Graves argues, more conventionally, that Haywood "offers women's education rather than women's revenge as the key to improving" their status, a view fundamentally endorsed by Juliette Merritt's exploration of Haywood's appeal to women's reason (173).

This is a very welcome volume of essays of almost uniformly high quality. The Introduction is pleasantly accessible, providing a good survey of contemporary and historical perspectives on Haywood's journalism, and the bibliographical essay by Newman is especially welcome. Many of the essays address the ways in which Haywood's audiences read the periodical, its conventions, and its paratexts; these offer highly suggestive insights into reading history. There is, however, relatively little contextualization in terms of contemporary literature – only four references to Daniel Defoe, for example – and very little reference indeed to print history, although these topics surface briefly in some essays. In addition, since the editors rely heavily in this Introduction on the critical perspectives offered by Helene Koon's seminal 1978 article "Eliza Haywood and *The Female Spectator*" and Kathryn Shevelow's book on gender construction in the early periodical, it would have been helpful for readers to have a thorough summary of these works included in the Introduction, rather than solely in the bibliographical essay. Moreover, since the questions of Haywood's aesthetic self-consciousness, originality, manipulation of literary conventions, and political ambiguity run consistently throughout the essays, the Introduction – if addressed to a general reader of eighteenth-century studies – might usefully have made the connections between these issues clearer, and marshaled the arguments of the

contributors more lucidly. Nonetheless, as the editors observe, *The Female Spectator* has been inexplicably neglected, and this fine volume is a great stride forward in remedying that.

Barbara M. Benedict  
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Ruvani Ranasinha. *South Asian Writers in Twentieth-Century Britain: Culture in Translation*. Oxford English Monographs series. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007. x, 302p. ISBN 9780199207770. £53.00; US\$99.00.

Ranasinha's study, based on her doctoral dissertation, traces the publication and reception history of twentieth-century South Asian Anglophone writing in Britain. Authors covered in detail include Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Nirad Chaudhuri, M. J. Tambimuttu, Kamala Markandaya, Ambalavener Sivanandan, Farrukh Dhondy, Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, and Meera Syal, although many other writers with origins in or ties to the countries and cultures of the Subcontinent are also discussed. Taking a roughly chronological approach, Ranasinha examines how these writers' works reflect "the changing assumptions that frame the translation of non-Western cultures into what is perceived as mainstream, metropolitan culture and the dominant code of English" (5), and specifically how South Asian writers have moved from the margins to the center of British cultural production, not just in literature, but also in television and film.

The book's primary readers are likely to be those who are interested in the particular writers under discussion, or in the role of South Asian writing within postcolonial literature more broadly. Although the Introduction and promotional materials highlight Ranasinha's use of original archival material, including readers' reports and the earlier authors' correspondence with their publishers (the later writers' letters either have not been archived or are restricted by copyright laws), the references to this material rarely reveal new insights into the authors' publication and reception histories. At best (or worst), they confirm the difficulties faced by all writers who are perceived as minor or marginalized. For example, in 1964 Chaudhuri took his book *The Continent of Circe* (1965) to Chatto and Windus, because Macmillan's reader wanted to cut references to

Kipling from the manuscript "on the grounds that the impression was not to be created that I was in any way inspired by Kipling" (97). And the North American publisher of Markandaya's *Two Virgins* (1974) removed the tilak marks from the foreheads of the Hindu girls on the novel's cover, in order "to foreground the timeless, universal aspects of the story" and "to prevent the Indian locale from adversely affecting sales" (150).

However, Ranasinha's attention to the changing dynamics of publishing and reception over the course of the twentieth century does help clarify how and why South Asian writers have been able to move from a condition of being perceived as 'orientalized' Others to being much more organically central to the rich world of Anglophone culture. The last two chapters, on Dhondy and Rushdie and on Kureishi and Syal, are especially interesting – and heartening – as they chart the ways in which publishers, critics, and ordinary readers increasingly seem to focus on the intrinsic aesthetic satisfactions of the cultural productions, rather than on their perceived (exotic) origins. For example, Ranasinha notes that Syal's acknowledged influences include Dickens, Austen, Alan Bennett, Harper Lee, Woody Allen, Rushdie, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker, thus "confirming the cross-cultural nature of models of cultural identity that cannot be located in relation to origin and destination alone" (232). As Ranasinha puts it, the more contemporary works are "not necessarily 'Asian'" in their orientation and outlook, and the writers "justifiably resent" being put into ethnic and cultural boxes: "Like their forerunners they wish to transcend race, religion, class, and culture and tell 'universal' stories, an aspiration that is no longer synonymous with 'white,' thanks in great measure to their predecessors" (265).

Solveig Robinson  
 Pacific Lutheran University

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Thierry Rigogne, *Between state and market: printing and bookselling in eighteenth-century France*. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2007 (SVEC 2007: 05). xvii, 313p. ISBN 9780729409070, £65, euro 100, \$125.

French-language books of the century before the Revolution of 1789 continue to excite the interest of historians and bibliogra-

phers. Thierry Rigogne's monograph, which comes with a laudatory foreword by Robert Darnton, who rightly hails a "major contribution," is in essence a thorough examination of the survey into the French provincial printing and bookselling trades instigated in 1764 by Antoine de Sartine, Malesherbes's successor as *directeur de la Librairie*. The title could be seen as misleadingly general, but the author's attention to the wider context – the century's other surveys from 1700 on, administrative history and the extensive modern literature on the trade in books in and around the French kingdom – justifies his claim to have grappled with central problems. All in all it is a nice example of a clearly focused and disciplined study that opens up a much-debated field for fresh scrutiny and that is not afraid to state where new and further research is needed.

Six tightly written and abundantly documented chapters take the argument forward from the perceived need to seek information on the trade to an overview of its complexities and incoherences in the decades immediately before the Revolution: 'Surveying the book trade' (8–35); 'Policing the book trade: the system and its failures' (36–64); 'Local administration: corporate bodies, urban institutions and state agents' (65–97); 'The concentration of printing' (98–145); 'Booksellers: the rise of the bookstore' (146–183); and 'Print markets' (184–218).

Although Rigogne's thesis about the trade's uneasy combination of a concentrated printing sector and a more freely expanding market open to booksellers of different backgrounds and ambitions is set out in a more recent article ("Printers into Booksellers: The Structural Transformation of the French Print Trades in the Age of Enlightenment," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 101, 2007: 533–61), specialists cannot avoid paying close attention to what is advanced – with graphs and careful statistical tables – in the present book. Put simply, the authorities in Paris and locally did succeed, despite evasions, buck-passing and feigned ignorance, in concentrating the number of printing-houses operating in the provinces. On the other hand, and even after the introduction of *brevets* in 1767, bookselling outlets of all kinds became more numerous and ultimately harder to control in the battle to suppress clandestine publications, foreign reprints and home-grown piracies. A marked increase in population, improved transport and communications and greater literacy all contributed to the mass of

printed matter available in most parts of France after 1750. It is a profusion one can still measure in a crudely impressionistic way by moving around the market for antiquarian and secondhand books in Paris and, to a lesser degree, in the provinces in 2008.

Unlike some of the eighteenth century's other surveys, 1764 excluded Paris from its fact-gathering. Thus, although the capital and its would-be monopolists are never absent from the dialogue, the emphasis falls on the printing and bookselling facilities of provincial towns. Reports by agents of the central administration, local officials and guild members contribute to a picture from which the views of participants are not missing. Nonetheless, these are official documents with the drawbacks that that status implies. Rigogne knows and lists many of the modern accounts that attempt to go behind governmental and police sources. Omissions like Françoise Weil's article "Une 'secte' de colporteurs venus du Dévoluy (1764–1780)" (*Australian Journal of French Studies*, XXXVII, 2000: 165–202) – relevant to the discussion of Bernard and Boisserand in Beaune (192) – are rare. But the fact remains that some critical questions are tantalizingly out of reach. The blanket claim that we operate in "the absence of sales figures or production statistics" (127) is perhaps unduly sweeping or pessimistic. Doing better involves meticulous searching and sampling, something that was never part of this book's explicit business.

There is more work to do, not just "a history of the printed form" (21), as Rigogne perceptively remarks, but also a full exploration of bankruptcies in the trade, of marketing practices like subscriptions and retail discounting and of advertising techniques and, generally, calendars of the documentary sources that are still accessible to us. Fortunately some of these things are happening, for example in catalogues of booksellers' catalogues and in the dictionaries of trade personnel being compiled by Frédéric Barbier, Sabine Juratic and their team. On that necessary way it is good to have a solid and reliable signpost to the rich information contained in the 1764 survey.

Wallace Kirsop  
Monash University

## IN MEMORIAM KAY AMERT

Kay Amert, emeritus professor in the University of Iowa School of Journalism and Mass Communication, founding member of the UI Center for the Book in 1986, and director of the UI Typography Laboratory from 1971 until her retirement last year, died Friday, 5 September 2008 at Mercy Hospital in Iowa City.

Kay was my teacher, mentor, and friend. I met her in 1997 as a UI Center for the Book student eager to enroll in her highly lauded typography class. I made it into that course, and subsequently took every class she offered on typographic history and practice, signing up as a graduate student under her guidance in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. From Kay I learned both the visual and historical aspects of typography – how to see fully a typeface and, understanding those letters, how to give life and shape to words and pages and books. Her archival work with printing history records was extensive and she introduced students to works created by the printer/publishers who for centuries led the way including one of particular interest to her, sixteenth-century French typographer Simon de Colines.

By the time I was her student Kay was no longer teaching classes in the Typographic Laboratory, the technology of digital fonts having fully superseded hot metal type in journalism practice. But she generously became an informal advisor to me after a series of departures at the Center for the Book left me without a mentor and with the responsibility for producing a significant letterpress book. The technical expertise she shared during our conversations is what made it possible for me to complete the project.

There isn't a day I teach that I don't think about Kay and her wisdom and generosity in the classroom. She gently guided each student along in the typographic tradition they were drawn to. It is impossible to travel from Iowa City into the greater book studies and printing history community without being asked about Kay. In conversations with her former students, far-flung colleagues, and those who knew her only by her work, I always feel privileged anew to have been her student.

Sara T. Sauers  
University of Iowa, Centre for the Book

## CONFERENCE REVIEWS

### Les Vies du Livre / The Lives of the Book

Université Nancy 2, France  
20 – 21 June 2008

While France has a long and proud book history tradition, research has, perhaps understandably, tended to be Franco-centric (with some honourable exceptions, such as Frédéric Barbier's work on Germany). The English-speaking world in particular has been somewhat sidelined in the French tradition, and since the retirement of Marie-Françoise Cachin and the concomitant, and much regretted, demise of the seminar *Le Livre et l'Édition dans le Monde Anglophone* at Université Paris 7, research activity in the field has been very much splintered. The bilingual conference *Les Vies du Livre/Lives of the Book*, held at the Université Nancy 2 under the capable and efficient organisation of Nathalie Collé-Bak, David Ten Eyck, and Monica Girard, thus provided a welcome forum for both the anglophone book history community in France and international scholars from as far afield as Iran, South Africa, and Australia, many of whom were then able to continue their discussions at SHARP 2008 in Oxford the following week.

The call for papers was designed to attract a broad spectrum of contributions, both historical and contemporary. Suggested topics included the historical evolution of the book, the status of the book in contemporary culture, the book and the text, the politics of book preservation, illustration and ornamentation, and audiences. The range of papers and posters presented at the conference fully reflected this broad-based approach, providing rich opportunities for cross-fertilisation between different research interests. The organisers wisely chose to limit the number of parallel sessions to two at a time, so that although participants inevitably had to select from the interesting-looking titles on offer, by exchanging notes over coffee, one was able to get a fully rounded impression of the conference as a whole.

The conference began with parallel sessions on "Adapting the Book Form" and related case studies, covering a variety of topics from reworkings of *Robinson Crusoe* in the eighteenth century to the role of screenwriters in the twenty-first. The second set of sessions

featured presentations on theoretical and material concerns, followed by a stimulating debate between book historians and textual scholars, in parallel with an introduction to the *Village du Livre* at Fontenoy-la-Joûte, not far from Nancy itself.

The afternoon sessions focused on contemporary social, cultural, and economic issues including copyright, foreign rights, and literary prizes, in parallel with a series of historical case studies looking at related issues such as the emergence of the fictional character as a species of intellectual property and how twentieth-century American publishers presented Charles Chestnutt as an Afro-American author. The first day concluded with two richly stimulating plenary talks by Barbara Bordalejo of the University of Birmingham, presenting her department's work on an electronic edition of Chaucer, and Tony Lacey of Penguin Books on his experiences as Publishing Director at one of Britain's leading publishers. The evening was rounded off to perfection with a reception at Nancy's magnificent town hall and (coincidentally, the organisers assured us) a splendid *son et lumière* display in the outstandingly beautiful eighteenth-century central square, Place Stanislas, deservedly listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The second day's programme proved equally stimulating. The first two parallel sessions focused on case studies of the publishing histories of Ben Jonson and James Thomson and on the significance of the publisher's collection. This was followed by sessions on book circulation and consumption from the sixteenth century to the present day and on new book practices such as bookcrossing, audio versions, and readers' blogs.

After lunch, keynote speaker Marie-Françoise Cachin gave a wide-ranging, rich, and informative talk whose title, "Books are not absolutely dead things," was drawn from Milton's *Areopagitica*. The two final parallel sessions focused on books and art, with contributions on artists' books, books and architecture, and photography in books printed at the turn of the twentieth century, and on books and politics, looking at the role of radical bookshops in twentieth-century Britain and the curious publishing phenomenon of the "political catechism" as a thermometer of France's revolutionary fever throughout the nineteenth century. The conference concluded with a round table at which Tony Lacey, Peter Robinson (University of Birmingham) and

Claire Parfait (Université Paris 13) debated "The Future(s) of the Book," a topic which sparked a lively debate. Warmest thanks and congratulations to the organisers, and early warning to all SHARP members – the published proceedings promise to be well worth looking out for.

Susan Pickford  
Université Paris 13

### Evidence of Reading, Reading the Evidence

London, England  
21 – 23 July 2008

In July of 2008, the Open University and the Institute of English Studies at University of London organized the conference, *Evidence of Reading, Reading the Evidence*, in honor of RED, *The Reading Experience Database (1450-1945)*. Their call for papers on the history of reading brought together an extraordinary number and variety of scholars. The result was a strong, highly focused collection of papers and panels and keynote speakers. I was delighted to be able to attend and extremely grateful for the help provided by a graduate student bursary from The Bibliographical Society as well as a research travel grant from Stanford University's Department of English.

The history of reading provides crucial background for my dissertation, *Distraction: Dramas of Attention in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, which offers a literary history of the mental state in England, France, and America between 1747 and 1818. Though my focus is on the friction among Enlightenment theories of concentration and the formal changes distraction wrought in eighteenth-century fiction, I am also working to develop a larger method for analyzing the changing historical relationship between characters' and readers' imagined attention spans. Being able to hear the latest scholarship on the history of reading and to get feedback from those working in other periods was invaluable.

My own interest in the history of attention (and distracted reading practices) shaped my experience of the conference. Kate Flint's opening keynote on "Books in Photographs" and Leah Price's concluding comments at the roundtable were two personal highlights. Flint called our attention to the highly posed scenes of reading we see in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century photographs. She empha-

sized the difficulty of pinning down the evidence of a book having been read, and of a reader's level of engagement. Books appeared in these images as objects of absorption, but also as stage props, as armrests, as art objects, as trash. Flint's careful analysis of the evidence such scenes of reading provide brought out a few of the conference's ongoing themes: the importance of questioning and contextualizing seemingly obvious evidence of reading; the need to acknowledge the interplay between fictional representations of reading and our histories of it; and the importance of theorizing book-use as well as book-reading.

Leah Price picked up on this last point at the end of the conference. She urged critics to consider more deeply the relationship between the reading of books and other uses for them: sorting, storing, displaying, carrying. Price also raised important questions about online reading, pointing out that any history of reading must now also include analyses of virtual libraries, such as Google Library or Goodreads, as well as new evidence of online reading practices, such as mouse-clicks, or eye-movement tracking. Most importantly for me, Price and Flint both broke with the traditional assumption that looking at a book means paying attention to it – one of the hardest myths about absorption in my own work on distraction fights against.

Throughout the conference, I attended panels and papers that seemed most relevant to my dissertation work. This includes a chapter, for example, on divided attention in Jane Austen's novels (suggesting that she grants more psychological richness to characters who can multi-task while reading); another is on sustained attention in *Clarissa*, (arguing that Richardson's plot structure relies on a competition between religious concentration and secular distraction). Because of this, Mary Brook's discussion of women's multitasking – or, more specifically, reading while embroidering – in early modern England was especially interesting for my work on Austen. Hearing Rosemary Dixon's talk on reading lists for the study of divinity in the eighteenth century gave me an entirely new way to open my discussion of *Clarissa*. Tuesday's highlight was Matthew Grenby's discussion of eighteenth-century children's reading practices, a historical topic especially fascinating as an early site for training readerly attention. Wednesday brought a lively presentation by Barbara Benedict on 'ways of reading' in Jane Austen. Her discussion of Captain Benwick and Marianne Dashwood's self-centered reading

in *Persuasion* and *Sense and Sensibility* reminded me of an important connection between narcissism and absorption in early nineteenth-century novels.

The most valuable moments of the conference, for me, came out of the productive interplay of themes and interests on our panel, "Readers and Reviewers in the Eighteenth-Century," chaired by Bob Owens. Antonia Forster opened the session with a paper on images of novel reading in eighteenth-century reviews, arguing that eighteenth-century reviewers portrayed themselves as fulfilling readers' needs, and saw their role as that of directing their audience's attention to the best works of fiction. Forster argued that this attempt to parse good works from bad often relied on categorizing, not books but readers into good and bad 'types,' including the "amorous Reader," "the hasty reader" and the "innocent reader." This piece was followed by Kate Loveman's, who showed how an understanding of the coffeehouse tradition of jesting undercuts traditional assumptions about eighteenth-century readers' absorption and credulity, and revealed how this changes our interpretation of reader-reception for works by Defoe, like *Robinson Crusoe*. I concluded the panel with new work on selective attention and the eighteenth-century reader. Looking at Samuel Johnson's periodical essays *The Rambler* (1750-52) and *The Idler* (1758-60), I argued that one of his, and other, essayists' main goals was to keep readers from being overwhelmed by the volume of options in eighteenth-century print culture. Johnson, I suggested, hoped to teach his readers strategies to economize their time and focus, and embedded lessons in his essays to develop their skills of selective attention.

The excellent questions and suggestions I received from the audience and the general intellectual vibrancy of the conference gave me renewed energy to finish another chapter of my dissertation, as well as my second article on distracted reading practices. I came to this conference with a general interest in attention and the eighteenth-century reader. I left with new critical frameworks, source materials, and strategies for approaching scholarly work on the history of reading. It couldn't have been more valuable.

Natalie Phillips  
Stanford University

There was anxiety and despair in some sessions of the excellent *Evidence of Reading: Reading the Evidence* conference, but for me the dominant emotion was excitement, as the boundaries of what counts as reading, and reading materials, expanded before my eyes.

There was anxiety at the imminent death of print culture, and despair at the solipsism of private reading experience. Anxiety over the ephemerality and pastness of books came through in the responses to Kate Flint's visually arresting presentation, "Books in Photographs," suggesting that fear of loss is one reason for the current interest in book history. Yet while books became more transient, newspapers became more enduring, read for decades or even centuries after publication, as Uriel Heyd showed, with evidence from indexing and binding, and the market in back issues of papers, including local papers.

The solipsism appeared in Jonathan Rose's keynote lecture, "Altick's Map: The New Historiography of Reading," in which he referred to Heather Jackson's (2001) work on marginalia, which found as many interpretations as readers of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. Some of the responses to Rose's lecture, which called on historians of reading to start building some theories from their evidence, were that the unreachably private nature of reading meant that any attempt to reconstruct that experience must end before it has begun.

But many conference papers confirmed that those myriad interpretations are actually the starting point: they confirm the complex nature of reading, and the agency of the reader. However, the interpretations are still amenable to generalisation and theory-building. More importantly, marginalia are only one form of evidence. As David Vincent illustrated with the multimedia reception of Dickens in figurines, dramatisations and episodes he never wrote, "recapturing the reading experience requires much more than just reading." Simon Frost confirmed this with his examples of George Eliot bicycles and sauce bottles, as evidence of reader reception and commodity culture.

Evidence of all sorts was the theme of this three-day conference, which set out to bring "as many diverse approaches as possible ... into energetic debate," to enable "the study of the history of reading to progress beyond the boundaries of specific institutions, disciplines, methodologies, geographical locations and time periods."

It did what it set out to do, with literary and historical approaches mingling in many panels, forcing us to hear the other point of view, even if we didn't always understand it. Literary theory had a rough ride, particularly in Rose's keynote lecture, and the public sphere was only maintained by Leah Price's spirited defence during questions. Throughout the conference, a tension was visible, between the attractions of a well-loved or well-known single text, and the unpredictable, messy promiscuity of historical readers.

For me the most exciting papers were those at the empirical end of the spectrum (my comfort zone), where straightforward historical spadework dug up evidence that flew in the face of established theory. Take Mike Esbester's study of one journey by Victorian public transport, as revealed in the annotations of a quintessentially Victorian text, a railway timetable. This was a text 'studied for action,' read in a non-linear way, suggesting that Engelsing's theory of a shift in reading from intensive to extensive, public to private, applies only to a limited range of reading material. The promotional posters and handbills of travelling showmen, part of a huge genre of printed ephemera studied by Sadiya Qureshi, raised similar questions, challenging me to imagine a more profuse reading world of the past. Is there anything that can't be read, I wondered. I was reminded of *The Two Ronnies* TV comedy sketch, in which a short-sighted patient at the optician's starts to read the furniture, seeing a hat-stand as an 'I' and so on. Presentations such as these did not allow the history of reading to be conflated with the history of the book.

I didn't feel the anxiety and despair, but there were pangs of jealousy when James J Connolly described the *What Middletown Read* database, which will soon record every book each borrower took from the public library of Muncie, Indiana between 1891 and 1902, a phenomenal resource for tracking the reading habits of a particular place and time. Perhaps the 'constructed reader' will be banished from Muncie, as in Haarlem between 1850 and 1920, where, according to research by Boudien de Vries, working-class Roman Catholic and Protestant readers often ignored the guidelines of their respective religious communities; the constructed reader would have been more obedient. There was warm admiration for John Moulden's *tour de force* of forensic book-historical detective work, using a bundle of cheap song and prose books from the early nineteenth century, found wrapped in a sheet,

to reconstruct the reading culture of a poor Irish farming family and the wider print culture of which they were part.

A session on the new version of the *Reading Experience Database*, the inspiration for this timely and well-run conference, suggested that the number of entries has indeed reached a critical mass. Unfortunately, I didn't hear the papers based on RED research, nor on digitised texts, although there were two such panels on the conference programme.

Was anything missing? More work on reading in public libraries, the influence of Bible-reading practices, and reading and identity, would have been helpful. On the latter, Ilona Dobosiewicz and Liliana Piasecka gave a moving paper on nineteenth-century Silesian resistance, through the teaching of Polish literacy, to the imposition of the German language. This paper also revealed how reading was entwined with regional as well as national identities. As one grateful peasant wrote: "Now we know, and the children will know as well, who we are!"

Historians of reading cannot be so emphatic, as the miscellany of this conference revealed. I found that exciting, and I am not yet concerned at the lack of theory that could accommodate railway timetables, George Eliot bicycles, and the Western canon.

Andrew Hobbs  
University of Central Lancashire

## CALLS FOR PAPERS

### Sites of Performance: Mapping/Performance/History

2-4 April, 2009

University of Nottingham, UK

Proposals are welcomed for this interdisciplinary conference marking the completion of the AHRC funded project, "Mapping Performance Culture: Nottingham 1857-1867," which has involved a collaboration between theatre history and geography. Plenary speakers are Mike Pearson, Professor of Performance Studies, University of Aberystwyth and Glen Hart, Ordnance Survey of Great Britain.

*Sites of Performance* invites reflections on the multiple ways in which considerations of space, landscape and mapping can inform and offer new methodologies to theatre history and historiography. Moving beyond the idea of mapping as metaphor in creating theatre

histories, papers are sought which emphasize spatial and temporal connections between different elements and events, examine ideas of repetition and duration, and highlight the importance of geographical, social and performative landscapes as interactive. We thus aim to bring together academics from a range of disciplines who are interested in the making/writing of theatre and performance histories and cultural geographies, as well as the potential of historical GIS in analyzing spatial-temporal patterns within a community, and to address the potentials and problems in turning to maps rather than narratives in the making of histories.

Examples of potential areas for proposals might include: Maps and performance; Landscapes of performance; Spatial histories of performance; Performance and site; Repetition and duration in histories of performance; Techniques for representing patterns in space and time; Capturing/representing histories/historical mapping at a local scale; The potential of digital cartography for cultural geographies/cultural histories.

Proposals for both papers and research posters are welcomed. Deadline for abstracts is **14 November 2008**. Extended proposals of 1,000 words should be addressed to the Conference organisers: Dr Jo Robinson, School of English Studies, University of Nottingham <Jo.Robinson@nottingham.ac.uk>, and Dr Gary Priestnall, School of Geography, University of Nottingham, NG7 2RD, <Gary.Priestnall@nottingham.ac.uk>.



### Victorian Networks and the Periodical Press

21-22 August 2009

University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis, MN

The Research Society for Victorian Periodicals (RSVP) invites proposals for its 2009 annual conference. While papers addressing any aspect of Victorian periodicals will be considered, RSVP particularly welcomes proposals for papers on the ways in which the newspaper and periodical press relied on a variety of networks, including journalistic, business, communication and technology, transportation, imperialist, immigration, political/activist, scientific, philosophical, literary, artistic, and other social networks.

Other possible topics include: gossip, celebrities, and blackmail; leisure clubs and soci-

eties; networks of influence; Transatlantic and transnational networks; family and kinship networks; networks of readers, writers, and publishers; sites of production, distribution, and syndication.

E-mail two-page (maximum) proposals for individual presentations of 15 minutes (20 minutes maximum) or for panels of three by **1 February 2009** to all three committee members:

Molly Youngkin, myoungki@lmu.edu;  
Sally Mitchell, sm@temple.edu; and  
Deborah Mutch, dmutch@dmu.ac.uk.

Please include a one-page C.V. with relevant publications, teaching, and/or coursework.

The program will also include a plenary speech named in honor of Michael Wolff, a presentation by the winner of the 2009 Colby Scholarly Book Prize, and workshops devoted to digital resources and to methods of teaching periodicals. Pre-conference activities include the William Holman Hunt exhibition at the Minneapolis Institute of the Arts. More information about the conference can be found at <[www.stthomas.edu/english/victorian](http://www.stthomas.edu/english/victorian)> or <[www.rs4vp.org](http://www.rs4vp.org)>.

RSVP will award grants covering the conference registration fee to three graduate students presenting papers. Graduate students who would like to be considered should include a cover letter explaining how their conference proposal fits into their long-term research plans as well as any other special considerations. Recipients will be notified in early spring of 2009.



### Johnson at 300

27-29 August 2009

Houghton Library, Harvard University,  
Cambridge, MA

Houghton Library is pleased to announce an upcoming symposium dedicated to exploring Johnson's manifold contributions to intellectual and creative cultures. The symposium will examine or re-examine various aspects of Johnson's life and legacy. Several session themes have been identified by symposium organizers. Those interested in participating in one of these sessions, should submit an abstract (300 words) or completed papers by email to the session chair (indicated in parentheses after each session) by **15 January 2009**.

*Johnson and Gender* (Isobel Grundy <[isobel.grundy@ualberta.ca](mailto:isobel.grundy@ualberta.ca)>)

*Johnson, Boswell, and the Circle* (Gordon Turnbull <[gordon.turnbull@yale.edu](mailto:gordon.turnbull@yale.edu)>)

*Lives of the Poets and 18th-Century Biography* (Bruce Redford <[bredford@bu.edu](mailto:bredford@bu.edu)>)

*Johnson and the Periodical Essay* (Stephen Fix <[Stephen.E.Fix@williams.edu](mailto:Stephen.E.Fix@williams.edu)>)

*Johnson and the Arts* (Richard Wendorf <[wendorf@bostonathenaeum.org](mailto:wendorf@bostonathenaeum.org)>)

*Johnson and 18th-Century Intellectual History* (Michael Suarez <[michael.suarez@campion.ox.ac.uk](mailto:michael.suarez@campion.ox.ac.uk)>)

*Johnson and Non-Boswellian Biography* (OM Brack <[OM.BRACK@asu.edu](mailto:OM.BRACK@asu.edu)>)

*The Dictionary* (Bob DeMaria <[demaria@vasser.edu](mailto:demaria@vasser.edu)>)

There is space for two or three additional sessions and proposals are now being accepted. Session proposals should include session title and a list of participants (chair and three speakers). Proposals should be sent to Thomas A. Horrocks <[horrocks@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:horrocks@fas.harvard.edu)>. See <[http://www.hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/conference\\_johnson.html](http://www.hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/conference_johnson.html)> for complete details.



### RSS Conference on Reception Study

12-13 Sept 2009

Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

The Reception Study Society [RSS] promotes informal and formal exchanges between scholars in several related fields: reader-response criticism and pedagogy, reception history, history of reading and the book, audience and communication studies, institutional studies, and gender, race, ethnic, sexuality, postcolonial, religious, and other studies.

The 2009 conference features a number of keynote speakers: James Phelan, Humanities Distinguished Professor, Ohio State University; Steven Zwicker, Stanley Elkin Professor in the Humanities, Washington University; Barbara Klinger, Professor of Communication and Culture, Indiana University and winner of the Katherine Singer Kovacs Award for best essay from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies; Michael Bérubé, Paterno Family Professor in Literature at Pennsylvania State University.

Suggestions for panels and papers in all areas of English, American, and other litera-

tures, media, and book history are welcome. For a list of possible topics and panels, see the RSS website: <<http://English.udel.edu/RSSsite>>. Please submit proposals of 250 words or less by **1 May 2009** to Philip Goldstein at <[pgold@udel.edu](mailto:pgold@udel.edu)> or University of Delaware, 333 Shipley St., Wilmington, DE 19801, or visit the website.

Selected conference papers will be published in the RSS journal *Reception: Texts, Readers, Audiences, History*, an on-line, refereed journal which publishes theoretical and practical analyses in the related fields of the RSS, focusing mainly but not exclusively on the literature, culture, and media of England and the United States. Submissions are welcome at any time. See the RSS website for vol. 1 of *Reception*.



### Destined for Men: Visual Materials for Male Audiences, 1750-1880

16-17 October 2009

American Antiquarian Society, Worcester,  
MA

Through the activities of Center for Historic American Visual Culture (CHAViC), the American Antiquarian Society (AAS) is making its visual collections better known and introducing these materials to historians and other scholars to suggest the possibilities of their use in academic research. Past conferences have examined the visual and material culture of New England to 1830 and childhood seen through text and images.

CHAViC invites proposals for its 2009 conference which will look at prints, illustrations, and photographs from the perspective of the intended male audience. Topics might include presentations on the following: Men's clubs as collectors or male patrons of the arts; Prints and photographs of working class men or celebrities; Advertisements designed for men such as grooming products, clothing, cigars, beer and other spirits, machinery, guns and ammunition, real estate, accoutrements for the home such as pipes and billiard tables, yachts, stables, race horses, etc.; Depictions of female celebrities and "pin-ups"; Runaway slave advertisements; Political prints and city views; Subscription records for prints; Illustrated periodicals and publications directed to a male readership; Advertisements for popular entertainments.

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Please send a one-page proposal and two-page resume to Georgia B. Barnhill <gbarnhill@mwa.org> by **15 December 2008**. And, don't forget the AAS fellowship program. We again have a dozen or so short-term fellowships available for the study of visual culture. We are happy to consider proposals for exhibitions and curriculum development. The fellowship deadline is 15 January 2009. For further information, see: <<http://www.americanantiquarian.org/acafellowship.htm>>.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Teaching Book History

Since it was first proposed at SHARP Minneapolis 2007, the Teaching Book History Special Interest Group [SIG] has quietly gathered momentum. Leslie Howsam and Sydney Shep presented the concept to an enthusiastic lunchtime crowd at SHARP Oxford Brookes and demonstrated the SIG's online communication forum and resource sharing network mounted in the open source Learning Management System Sakei. We currently have over seventy-five participants and are actively encouraging any SHARPists interested in teaching book history to join. Please contact Leslie on <[lhowsam@uwindsor.ca](mailto:lhowsam@uwindsor.ca)> or Sydney on <[sydney.shep@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:sydney.shep@vuw.ac.nz)> for further information and to enrol in the website.



### Fellowship in Pre-Raphaelite Studies

The University of Delaware Library, in Newark, Delaware, and the Delaware Art Museum are pleased to announce a joint Fellowship in Pre-Raphaelite studies. This short-term, one-month Fellowship, to be awarded in 2009, is intended for scholars conducting significant research in the lives and works of the Pre-Raphaelites and their friends, associates, and followers. Research of a wider scope, which considers the Pre-Raphaelite movement and related topics in relation to Victorian art and literature, and cultural or social history, will also be considered. Projects which provide new information or interpretations dealing with unrecognized figures, women writers and artists, print culture, iconography, illustration, catalogues of artists' works, or stud-

ies of specific objects are particularly encouraged, as are those which take into account transatlantic relations between Britain and the United States.

The recipient will be expected to be in residence and to make use of the resources of both the University of Delaware Library and the Delaware Art Museum. They may also take advantage of these institutions' proximity to other collections, such as the Winterthur Museum and Library, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Princeton University Library, and the Bryn Mawr College Library. Each recipient is expected to make a public presentation about his or her research during the course of Fellowship residence. Up to \$2,500 is available for the one-month Fellowship. Housing is not provided, but the funds may be used for this purpose, or for travel and other research expenses.

The Fellowship is intended for those who hold a Ph.D. or can demonstrate equivalent professional or academic experience. Applications from independent scholars and museum professionals are welcome. To apply send a completed application form, together with a description of your research proposal (maximum 1,000 words) and a curriculum vitae or resume, to the address given below. These materials may also be sent via email to: <[fellowships@delart.org](mailto:fellowships@delart.org)>. Letters of support from two scholars or other professionals familiar with you and your work are also required. The deadline for applications is **1 December 2008**. For more information and an application form please write to:

Pre-Raphaelite Studies Fellowship  
Committee Delaware Art Museum  
2301 Kentmere Parkway  
Wilmington, DE 19806 USA  
or visit <[www.delart.org/fellowships.html](http://www.delart.org/fellowships.html)>.



### History of Canadian Publishing

The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario is pleased to announce that it has been awarded almost \$100,000 to develop a state-of-the-art, interactive website on the history of Canadian publishing. The grant was provided by the Canadian Memory Fund through the Department of Canadian Heritage's Canadian Culture Online (CCO) Program. McMaster University Library houses the largest and most varied collections of archives on the subject of Canadian publishing.

In certain cases the archives are complemented by collections of publishers' imprints. These archival resources (McClelland & Stewart, Macmillan Canada, Clarke Irwin, Guernica Editions, etc.) have been used extensively by researchers in the fields of literature, cultural studies, economics, education, sociology, and the history of the book. The digital project, which will take about 12 months to complete, will focus on the history of Canadian publishing houses, people in publishing, authorship, design & illustration, aspects of publishing unique to Canadian culture, and other related topics. McMaster University Library will take the lead in this project in partnership with the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at the University of Toronto and Queen's University Archives. Although the site will document Canadian publishing on a broad scale, content will focus on materials from the three participating institutions. The project coordinator is Carl Spadoni, the Director of Archives and Research Collections. In addition to collaborating with Anne Dondertman at Thomas Fisher, and Paul Banfield at Queen's, he will be working with project specialist Judy Donnelly, a team of McMaster library staff, including librarian/archivist Rick Stapleton and digital strategies librarian Nick Ruest, as well as library staff, faculty, subject experts, contract employees, and students at all three institutions. The project team welcomes the participation of colleagues and students who are interested in writing case studies or thematic pieces. Please contact Carl Spadoni <[spadon@mcmaster.ca](mailto:spadon@mcmaster.ca)> or Judy Donnelly <[judithdonnelly@hotmail.com](mailto:judithdonnelly@hotmail.com)> for more information.



### Bibliography Week 2009

Each year at the end of January in New York City, many of the principal national organizations devoted to book history — the American Printing History Association, the Bibliographical Society of America, the Grolier Club, among others — have their annual meetings. Other groups plan interesting events, too, and many of these are open to the public. A preliminary schedule for next year's festival [20-24 January 2009] is now available at The Grolier Club's website: <<http://www.grolierclub.org/bibliographyweek2009.htm>>. If you have any questions, comments, or corrections, do let me know. Otherwise, see you in January! Eric Holzenberg, Director, the Grolier Club.

## SHARP COPENHAGEN

### Published Words Public Pages: A Nordic Conference of International Print Culture

Royal School of Library and Information  
Science, Copenhagen, Denmark  
10 – 12 September 2008

The aim of the SHARP focus conference in Copenhagen was to gather together current research into print culture – book history, reading, textual studies, sociology of literature, library studies, literature and media studies – undertaken in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions and elsewhere. The conference had an international and interdisciplinary focus, reflected in the wide range of nationalities represented by the delegates, who hailed not only from the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions, but also from Japan, India, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Great Britain, Ireland and elsewhere.

From the outset, it was evident that SHARP Copenhagen presented an opportunity for scholars working on similar types of evidence in different countries to share experiences, research findings, and potential solutions to methodological problems. For many of these scholars, used to working in isolation in their own countries, it appeared to be the first time that such discussions had been possible. This was a fascinating and valuable aspect of the conference, made manifest to me in the panel on “Reading Histories: Libraries, Societies and Auctions in Norway and Denmark,” where the three panellists from Norway and Denmark found many fruitful areas of similarity in their research, and an audience member from Finland also commented on the remarkable parallels between the three papers and work carried out by herself and colleagues in Finland. It is to be hoped that the discussions begun at this conference may continue and lead to further international cooperation in the field of book history.

My path through the conference was dictated largely by my own interest in the history of reading, although I also found myself in a number of panels that did not deal with this subject but were nonetheless thought-provoking. I enjoyed, for example, the stimulating discussion about the difficulties of editing aural texts that followed Klaus Nielsen’s paper on ‘Radio Literature and Listening Read-

ers’ and Christian Benne’s paper on the book history of Ossian. I was fascinated to hear about the construction of a papermaking town constructed upon nineteenth-century paternalistic models in mid-twentieth-century New Zealand, in Sydney Shep and David Finkelstein’s joint presentation about the Kinleith Paper Mill. I also learned much from Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen’s paper on Hans Christian Andersen’s tales.

David Finkelstein chaired an engaging panel on “Enlightenment Publics,” in which Tue Andersen Nexø’s paper about the *Spectator* and public polemics sparked useful discussion about the limitations of Habermas’s conception of the public sphere in relation to eighteenth-century readerships. I also very much enjoyed Minna Ahokas’ paper which presented case studies of four Finnish readers of the Enlightenment, relating their reading experiences to previous assumptions about the spread of Enlightenment texts. In the panel on professional and non-professional readers, I found Maria Karlsson and Jenny Bergenmar’s presentation of the letters from the public to Selma Lagerlöf particularly helpful in thinking about the many motivations that may lead readers to claim to have read a book; in the case of the letters to Lagerlöf, for example, many members of the public wrote, declaring that they had enjoyed her books, as a preamble to asking for financial assistance. I also participated in a panel designed to showcase research drawn from material in the *Reading Experience Database*, in which we were grateful for a number of questions that helped to focus our minds on ways in which we can continue to improve and expand the resource.

The keynote addresses highlighted the wide range of subjects within print culture that the conference had brought together, with William St Clair focussing primarily on readers, Isabel Hofmeyr on printing, and Hans Walter Gabler on editing. And the final plenary session on “Methods, Disciplines and Futures,” in which Shafquat Towheed talked about the future of the history of reading, Pamela Schultz Nybacka discussed publishing, and Charles Lock gave a splendidly provocative paper on modern editing practices, again reminded us of the range of work that falls under the rubric of book history and/or print culture.

The conference posed a number of questions to me, related to this disciplinary breadth and inclusivity: firstly, and most obviously, what is book history, and where is the discipline going? Secondly, how do we relate the micro- and macro- aspects of book history or

print culture in a meaningful way? How do we unite individual studies of great depth with the wider historical questions and issues? How do we take proper account of the transnational or international qualities of both books and readers, while at the same time maintaining a focus on the different social, cultural and political conditions that pertain in different nations and at different times? No doubt these questions will continue to preoccupy me, and other delegates, for some time to come.

These were some of the intellectual pleasures of the conference, but more material delights were also available. The catering throughout was first-rate, as was the welcome reception at the Royal Library’s beautiful Black Diamond building, and the conference banquet in the Anarchist Free State of Christiania was extremely memorable. The quality of the food at the Spiseloppen Restaurant was truly excellent, and the company convivial and entertaining.

Katie Halsey

*Institute of English Studies, School of  
Advanced Study, University of London*



The title, *Published Words – Public Pages*, turned my attention towards the underlying *leitmotif* of the conference. Maybe I was simply open to notions of performance within the realm of books. The major performance of these three days in Copenhagen was the brilliant and personal chairmanship executed by Simon Frost. By his side he had a number of chairs of individual sessions who also performed on a high level.

The theme of this conference pointed to the fact that publishing and perception of words and pages might be analysed as multi-layered, performative aspects of a larger history of books. Authorship and reading, selling and reception of books are dynamic processes that turn texts into intellectual, economic, and aesthetic performances. The papers that were given during these three days to large extent laid emphasis on this circumstance; the speakers did their best to guide the rest of us through worlds of letters and pictures.

The performance of words and books in the physical world is a traditional field of research in book history, including printing, publishing and selling, as well as the outer appearance of books in general (paper 30a). This theme was well covered in Copenhagen

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by a large variety of papers. A number of presentations dealt with audiovisual and virtual aspects of texts and books. One paper combined textual scholarship with a multimedial approach to questions of priority of radio-broadcasted texts over the publication in print, an interesting point even from a bibliographical point of view (paper 3b). At the same time it showed the need for investigations of orality in the final version of the printed book. Online worlds are virtual performances of real life, just more perfect and more attractive. The performative qualities of books in worlds such as *Second Life* are often reduced to graphical elements and representations of links to full-texts (paper 5c). They are graphical elements intertwined with literature and art, performances of defined and finite places rather than infinite space. The multimediality of the online medium includes large amounts of pictoriality, reappearing in literature today. Another aspect of assumedly pre-print mediality, orality, experiences a renaissance today. Modern massmedia, such as radio and tv soaps, depends heavily on oral structures. However, its origins can be traced back to nineteenth-century print-related publishing formats, such as the Victorian serial (paper 8c).

Most papers, though, presented different aspects of the social performances of texts. The diverging receptions of texts occupy literary scholars and book historians alike. It was very interesting to follow the interlinked performative aspects of public reading and debates around the poems ascribed to the blind celtic bard Ossian (3a). While the English public discussed the authenticity of the songs, the German readers and critics focused on a modern notion of oral tradition revitalizing historical fragments. Several papers investigated the recycling of the nineteenth-century illustrated press. The cultural, pictorial, ideological and aesthetic performance of pictures became an international business. The trade with metal casts from England to Europe was followed up by the export of concepts of periodicals (paper 8a). Prolific writers such as Hans Christian Andersen created new objects out of an array of commercial illustrations, from scrapbooks to illustrated novels (paper 8b).

There was also a special focus on the performance texts representing the silent bestsellers, religious texts. Three interlinked sessions presented eight papers dealing with different social, historical and geographical meanings of religious reading in Northern Europe, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and

Greenland (sessions 12, 18 & 28). These sessions were among those oriented primarily towards Northern Europe, while at the same time being in line with ambitious international research. Charlotte Appel did a great job in introducing and binding together all three sessions. The themes of the papers covered a wide field of research, from the social meaning of different forms of performances of religious texts and hymns (many texts were heard before they were read) to bio-bibliographical questions regarding book collections, writing and publishing. Although impressive as such, this research complex seems yet in search of a comprehensive Scandinavian form. Then it will, without doubt, emerge as a major Scandinavian contribution to international research in European book culture.

In some way or another, this core theme was accompanied and backed-up by another, yet less obvious theme that for some years has been at the heart of Northern European book history research. The conference offered some very strong performances of current research in the book cultures of the Northern European Enlightenment period. Interestingly, a majority of the papers that can be put together under this heading covered intellectual and cultural developments in the realm of Scandinavian countries who didn't gain political independence until one century later: Greenland (paper 12c), Norway (papers 18b, 24a & c, 28b) and Finland (paper 15c). Even the religious reading complex touched the Enlightenment theme, for example papers 18c and 28a, covering Swedish book history.

Lastly, there were several papers at least approaching the 'new' (?) theme of transnational book history, superbly introduced by William St Clair in his keynote on the first evening. The physical transmission of untranslated pictures on an international level (papers 8a & c) or the influence of developments abroad on exterior attributes of books were well dealt with (papers 2c). There were also papers on 'exile' printing, if one may use this term in a much broader sense including printing of runes in Britain (paper 1a) and of Lithuanian texts in Paris (paper 4a) as well as a few views of contemporary transnationalism around the world (papers 17b and Isabel Hofmeyr's keynote). Several of the papers included information pointing at a transnational direction, such as the investigations of reading cultures and book collections in Norway and Denmark in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (session 24). Unfortunately, no paper presented at the conference was a follow-up of St

Clair's, including a comprehensive Northern European view of the political, economical, technical and cultural transnational forces that formed the modern European culture (see for example, Donald Sassoon's *The Culture of the Europeans*, or the papers presented at the "Transnational Histories of the Book" workshop at The University of Edinburgh on 30 May 2008).

All in all, I enjoyed the conference very much. I only wished Simon would have been able to announce the next conference. Who will take up the baton next?

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In the SHARP Copenhagen panel "Journals and Politics," Jean-Charles Buttier (Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne and Bibliothèque Nationale de France) presented his extensive comparative and quantitative analysis of the various formats of nineteenth-century political catechisms. Buttier's corpus of 716 catechisms convincingly showed the formal stability of the genre and the extent to which their publication history has followed the historical and political developments of the century, especially in the context of the French Revolutions, thereby creating a material and textual format for a political memory. Aina Nøding (University of Oslo) discussed the place of translated literature in late-eighteenth-century Norwegian newspapers, the so-called 'intelligencers' (*adresseeviser*). Although these publications were mainly concerned with bringing advertisements and official announcements (the publication of news was not allowed), Nøding's extensive research into the archive of these periodicals underlined their importance for an understanding of the history of reading in Norway, and the intelligencers' role in making world literature available to a wider public. Both papers showed that, however ephemeral these catechisms and intelligencers might seem, they nevertheless formed stable intertextual networks for circulating textual material across temporal and geographical gaps.

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## NEW AWARD

SHARPiste Heather Gaunt, University of Tasmania, recently won the inaugural Australian Historical Association prize for an unpublished article written by an Australian post-graduate student. The prize includes a cash award of AUSS\$4,000 and publication in the journal *History Australia*. The judges commented: "Through several intersecting levels of analysis, this article deftly explores the history of a text – Henry Savery's serialised *The Hermit in Van Diemen's Land* – to gauge changing historical consciousness in Tasmania. Pierre Nora's concept of 'sites of memory' is utilised to launch an erudite and engaging reflection on the ways in which Savery's sketches of 'Manners, Society, and Public Characters' of Hobart in 1829 becomes an artefact for practices of colonial reading, for satire and social commentary, cultural aspiration and institutional ir/responsibility, taste, authority and benefaction. The judges were particularly impressed by the author's fluency and critical poise and for her ability to meld a strong appreciation of diverse historiography with an astute sense of local context. From this discussion the author also draws points worth careful consideration by those managing and presenting 'public memory' in museums and – especially, in this instance – public libraries. The author powerfully reminds us how volatile the life of objects can be, and how contested are the histories they present." Well done!

## SHARP NEWS UPDATE

Gail Shivel, our Book Reviews Editor for the Americas, is stepping down in early 2009. She has done sterling work and is ready to undertake a range of different tasks for SHARP. We would like to appoint someone immediately in order to have a smooth transition period of approximately six months. There is also the possibility of dividing the position into separate editors for Latin America and North America, so we can cover exciting new developments in Latino print culture and take account of the huge book history publishing industry in North America. If you are interested, please contact Sydney Shep <editor@sharpweb.org>.

Increasingly, *SHARP News* is reflecting our organisation's commitment to internationalism and multi-lingualism. In addition to more news from around the globe, we are in need of book reviewers of non-English language works who are able to contribute either on a regular basis or when a title of interest is published. Again, please contact the Editor at your earliest convenience.

Finally, we'd like to welcome Katherine D. Harris to the *SHARP News* team as **Electronic Resources Review Editor**. Kathy is Assistant Professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, San José State University, specializes in Romantic-era and nineteenth-century British literature, women's authorship, the literary annual, textuality and hypertextuality. She edits an online resource for the study of literary annuals, *The Forget Me Not: A Hypertextual Archive* <<http://www.orgs.muohio.edu/anthologies/FMN/>> which will also become part of her most recent work, a comprehensive literary history of British annuals. With Laura Mandell, Virginia Jackson and Eliza Richards, she edits *The Poetess Archive*, an online resource focusing on both British and American nineteenth-century authors <<http://unixgen.muohio.edu/~poetess/>>. She has also published in the *Poetess Archive Journal*, *PBSA*, and edited collections on teaching textuality and theorizing the digital.

Those of you who met Katherine at SHARP Oxford Brookes will know that the highly successful digital poster sessions were her brain-child. If you come across a resource of interest to SHARPists, please contact Kathy asap on: <[kharris@email.sjsu.edu](mailto:kharris@email.sjsu.edu)>. Welcome aboard!