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The 2010 Material Cultures Conference, hosted by the Centre for the History of the Book at the University of Edinburgh, examined the troubled intersections between book history and the digital humanities. This topic was carried through eight panels, a roundtable discussion, aptly named, ‘Gutenberg Again?’ with participants Jerome McGann, Kathryn Sutherland, and Alan Galey, and plenary talks by Roger Chartier, Peter Stallybrass, and Jerome McGann. Taken together, these discussions may well represent the most sustained effort to examine the conjunctures of these two fields. Recurring conference themes included the sustainability of digital texts and archives, the need for new research methods in book history to interpret such texts, and the inherent omissions within digital representations of print culture.

The most resounding note, however, was Peter Stallybrass’s reintroduction of technological determinism as a subject for debate in his plenary talk, ‘Printing and the Invention of Manuscript.’ Stallybrass argued that printed forms, such as immigration forms, tax forms, and even personal checks are ways in which print (and printing, a process which is itself a form) has shaped and limited possible human interactions within the nation state. Underlying Stallybrass’s claims was the belief that technological change can take on a perpetual and independent motion that surpasses human intervention. The lagging human element, which as the conference unfolded became largely representative of the humanities scholar, underpinned many of the conference’s discussions about technology’s long-term effects on human experience, research, and the universal library.

Both the roundtable and Jerome McGann’s plenary presentation, ‘What do Scholars Want?’ were concerned with how to confront a technological shift that has left the academy in its wake. McGann argued that the ‘ivory tower’ status of academia has excluded scholars from conversations about the changing technological shape of the universal library. As a result, few solutions have been developed for supporting digital scholarship at the institutional level. McGann’s own Rossetti Archive is faced with the possibility of a state of ‘deep preservation’ because there are no financial means to sustain the operability of completed projects. McGann pointed to the commercial sector’s development of technological innovation to explain the lack of support for the long-term sustainability of digital materials. Although McGann proposed few solutions to the problems facing academia and libraries in the twenty-first century, perhaps his strongest call was to bring the digital humanities into the undergraduate classroom so that its import translates beyond scholarly circles. Similarly, Sutherland described the current moment as the incunable age of digital media. She argued that the humanities have waited too long, seriously compromising their ability to intervene in a conversation that is already underway.

Many of the panels, including ‘E-Text,’ ‘Electronic Text,’ ‘E-Books and Their Discontents,’ ‘The Book Reloaded,’ and ‘Digital Elisions,’ pointed out this scholarly lag and proposed methods, both on the part of digital humanities and book history, for moving forward. Both Anne Steiner and John Savage addressed the dearth of tools available for the book historian when attempting to interpret the electronic text or digital archive. Other panelists examined omissions in the material representations performed by these archives. Whitney Trettien, for instance, used the Houghton Bible’s fore-edge paintings, missing in electronic versions of the text, to discuss how online archives can distort material meaning.

There were also several panels that celebrated the possibilities of the digital medium for book historians. In the ‘Digital Editions’ panel, Stacy Erickson addressed how recent literary anthologies are now supplemented with comprehensive online facsimiles that challenge pre-conceived notions of strict canonicity attributed to these common student texts. Jim Mussell similarly disturbed conceptions of digital genres by arguing that a hybrid digital project combining strict editorial standards with practices of commercial archives (including large-scale digitization, OCR, and data-mining) can aid in representing the diverse qualities of serial publications online. In the panel, ‘Going Digital,’ Eleanor Shevlin demonstrated ways of researching book history that are unique to an online environment, and David Buchanan introduced StreetPrint, an open-source software tool for easily creating online collections, which raises pressing questions about the accessibility and usability of traditional web archiving practices.

Because digital archives are representations of material books, it seems indisputable that book history is involved in the development of the digital humanities as a discipline. However, the Material Cultures Conference demonstrated the myriad ways that scholars of the book are latecomers to these conversations and also made a cogent case for the necessity of their future involvement.

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SHARP WEB:
http://sharpweb.org

SHARP 2.0

SHARP was conceived in the same month – August 1991 – that the World Wide Web project at CERN was made publicly available. It was one of the earliest scholarly societies to set up a website; SHARP-L was one of the first listservs in the humanities. I’m happy to report that SHARP is still keeping up with the pace of new technology: a new website, the webcasting of conference events, and even a SHARP Twitter account, all in the last few months. In June, the new SHARP website was launched. This was the culmination of two years of hard work, involving both the previous and current ‘webmasters’ (Patrick Leary and Lee McLaird), our selected website designer Matthew Young and his colleague Todd Edwardson, Sydney Shep, George Williams and myself. Spanish and French translations have been provided by Benito Rial Costas and Julie Frédeville. The new site aims to reflect the key qualities of SHARP: its friendliness and accessibility, its scholarly strength and diversity, its international membership, and its dynamism. It includes an up-to-date calendar of history of the book events, a searchable index of history of the book resources, and a SHARP blog, which will host its first guest posting later this month. The site also includes links to SHARP’s Flickr page (for SHARP-related photographs) and to our Twitter account (@sharporg). Feedback to date has been very positive, and we’re looking to improve and expand the site in the coming months. Should you have any comments about the new site, please direct them to Lee at <webmaster@sharpweb.org>.

SHARP 2010 in Helsinki was the most technologically advanced SHARP conference to date, and we’re very grateful to Jyrki Hakapää, Kirsti Salmi Nikiander, and their colleagues for making this possible. Several of the plenary sessions were webcast (that is, broadcast live across the internet), conference photographs were uploaded to the conference’s own Flickr account every night <http://www.flickr.com/sharp2010/>, and delegates on Twitter were encouraged to post ‘tweets’ during the conference.

The webcasting facilities were provided by the University of Helsinki, although at some cost to the conference budget; according to viewers, the audio and video quality was excellent. It’s not clear exactly how many people tuned in but we believe that, for each plenary, at least fifty people viewed at least part of the broadcast. Unfortunately, we were unable to record these broadcasts for posterity but hope to do so at future SHARP events.

About a dozen delegates at Helsinki were ‘tweeting’ – that is, commenting on the plenary sessions, the paper sessions, or the conference more generally – with many more following, and commenting on, those posts. These tweets (all tagged with ‘#sharp10’ or ‘#sharp2010’) have been archived in chronological order at the following addresses: <www.bit.ly/c6eMfu> (#sharp10) and <www.bit.ly/cft7jS> (#sharp2010).

If you’re on Twitter, do think about following @sharporg. Alternatively, you can view recent tweets at <www.twitter.com/sharporg> or via the home-page of the SHARP website. Note: @xxxx (eg @iangadd) in bold is the ‘name’ of the tweeter posting the message (their icon is also shown); some tweets include another @xxx – this means they are replying to (or citing) that person. (There is, I’m afraid, no easy way to recreate the exchange from these lists); RT (=retweet) is when a user forwards another person’s tweet to their own followers. Many of the retweets were by people not at the conference, including those tweeting on behalf of Blackwell’s bookshop, Ashgate publishers, RBMS and Finnish libraries; anything with a hash is a tag (eg #sharp10).

Ian Gadd
Vice-President, SHARP

STOP PRESS

Thanks to our new bibliographer, Meraud Ferguson Hand, SHARP now has a presence on LibraryThing. The aim is to capture as many new titles in as wide a variety of languages as possible. Eventually, we will add the material from past SHARP News bibliographies and link them to their respective book reviews. If you would like to suggest titles for SHARP’s library (including English-language ones), please do so via LibraryThing comments. Titles need to be published within the last 10 years; single-authored books directly related to book history; or edited collections and special themed issues of journals (i.e. not individual articles). For more information and to start contributing, check out: <www.librarything.com/profile/sharporg>
The compulsion to write came from a need at my own personal eleventh; 'you probably can't find it anywhere.' And in fact I did find room for thoughts and inspiration at my own personal eleventh SHARP conference. For many others, it was their first SHARP conference, and they chose a good one. Some of the best sessions I attended involved long-time SHARP conference presenters with new attendees—who were not necessarily also new scholars.

At the official opening of the conference, Martyn Lyons delivered 'A New History from Below? The Writing Culture of European Peasants, c. 1850 to c. 1920.' Lyons discussed the tension between individual case studies and more general accounts of writing and writers. Considering the letters home written by immigrants and World War I soldiers, Lyons said that members of the lowest classes "wrote even when they were barely literate." The compulsion to write came from a need "to hold families together and to manage their affairs" from afar, according to Lyons.

On Wednesday morning, the first time slot was crammed with intriguing sessions, at least three of which promised to be especially relevant to my own research interests. I chose one, and it was stellar. 'Cross-Genre Perspectives on Reading and Using Books' featured Barbara Hochman's work on African Americans' reading of Uncle Tom's Cabin; Joan Shelley Rubin's exploration of composer Howard Hanson's use of Walt Whitman's poetry to create the ideologically fraught "Song of Democracy"; and Barbara Ryan's slides and text depicting and interrogating William McGregor Paxton's paintings of women servants reading. The next panel focused on book trade personnel, with three wonderful papers by Fiona Black, David Finkelstein, and Sydney Shep. They were especially adept at weaving their slides through their presentations to illustrate points and provide evidence.

Wednesday afternoon, when a combination of jet lag and lunch should have sent me napping, I was kept fully awake by the blending of theoretical and empirical work apparent in the presentations of Barbara Siberman, Kinohi Nishikawa, and Janice Radway. Siberman discussed black journalist and activist Ida B. Wells's acquisition and deployment of "full expressive literacy...for self-defined goals" while Nishikawa drew connections between the 'black pulp fiction' of pimp-turned-author Iceberg Slim and "the cultural practices of street-corner men." Radway demolished the notion of girl zines as simply an outsider art, arguing among other things that zines offer a complex dissonance in their positioning of the author/creator as someone beyond the individual 'actual self.'

The sessions ended with a general discussion of 'Conceptual Re-Evaluations From Below,' with a distinguished group of panelists holding up categories and theories for our reconsideration. After a bountiful welcoming reception hosted by the City of Helsinki, I could have gone home happy, full of stimulating thoughts to ponder in a quiet room—but two more days of equally engaging papers and conversations awaited.

On Thursday, I enjoyed the session on modern libraries in Sweden, England, and Latvia. Later, Johanna Archbold and Carl Keyes gave substantive presentations on the early development of periodicals in Dublin and Philadelphia and on the growth of advertising in literary magazines. I was sad to have missed the session on multidisciplinarity but happy to find myself at that night's banquet seated next to one of its presenters, anthropologist Adam Reed, who briefly recounted his work, and the next day made a very helpful suggestion after hearing my paper at the Friday morning panel on 'Reading Environments.' Thursday afternoon's keynote address was interesting, as was the reaction to it. A colleague at the talk afterward Skyped with a colleague back home who had listened to the webcast so they could discuss Professor Bottigheimer's speech in much the same way they might have after strolling out of the auditorium together, had they both been physically there. On Friday morning, I felt lucky that my paper was assigned to a session featuring the work of Simon Frost, who regaled us with tales of the prolific and seldom-studied self-published novelist Archibald Clavering Gunter who entertained many an immigrant in steerage, and Johan Jalbrink, who took the unusual and productive approach of comparing the reading practices of wealthy café society in Stockholm to those of the peasantry in Sweden's rural south.

My customary SHARP conference experience is to feel grateful to have learned so much, from so many, in so few days, while at the same time regretting that I missed so much that happened in the concurrent sessions, at the other banquet tables, on the far side of the reception halls. Like Finland itself, SHARP 2010 offered room for thoughts—from below, above, and alongside; in webcasts; on Twitter; and in each of us who participated in our own way.

Cheryl Knott Malone
University of Arizona

Since I am a new SHARP-ist and a Ph.D. student, this review is an account 'from below' of the 2010 SHARP conference in Helsinki. The conference started on Tuesday 17 August with the 'Reading from Below' tour: a half-day trip to explore various sites north of Helsinki—including the memorial cottage of Alekasis Kivi, a famous Finnish writer. Esko M. Laine from the University of Helsinki was the perfect guide. He explained that peasants in seventeenth-century Finland had to show their reading aptitudes in order to be allowed to marry. The clergy was in charge of administering the test, and priests did not hesitate to punish those who were unable to read. Some of the peasants had many children before obtaining the precious certificate, and many preferred to flee their village rather than failing the test.

The last step of our trip took us to Tuusula church, where we were welcomed by Dr. Laine dressed as a seventeenth-century priest and his wife also in period costume. Laine asked volunteers to stand up at the altar and read a short extract in Finnish, German or English. Rather than take the dreaded reading test, I imitated Finnish illiterate peasants and escaped. We came back to Senate Square just before 2pm, in time for the first talk. After welcome speeches, Martyn Lyons from the University of New South Wales presented an ambitious talk on the 'old' and 'new' histories from below. His case studies focused on European peasants from 1850 to 1920, with a special focus on the World War I. The transnational perspective as well as the focus on the individual peasants rather than 'the peasantry' offered interesting insights into the way the war was perceived by those who had little or no formal education.

Wednesday was a busy day, with panels scheduled from 9am to 5.15pm and a reception in the evening. The general panel...
discussion on 'Conceptual Re-evaluations from Below' featured four speakers, including Jonathan Rose from Drew University and Johan Svedjedal from Uppsala University. Rose asked the audience to think of an important aspect of book history that might still be unexplored. I looked at the program of the conference and realized that there was not a single talk on would-be writers—all those who failed to get into print for lack of connections and (sometimes) talent. Responding to a question on the press and other media 'from below,' Rose stated that book historians have to privilege books rather than 'texts' in more ephemeral forms. Svedjedal then offered comments on the metaphor 'from below,' pointing out that this category is relative and can change over time. After the talk, we all enjoyed the hospitality of the City of Helsinki in the magnificent City Hall.

On Thursday morning, only four panels were proposed for each time slot, and each was held in a different historic venue of a sponsoring group, whether the home of the Finnish Literature Society, the National Library of Finland, the Finnish Academy for Swedish Literature, or the History of Science Museum. These panels were narrow in focus, befitting their locations, and the microhistorical nature of their subjects. Talks of interest included Stephen Coflough's presentation of the provision of Oxford University Press books for mechanics' institutes and other working class institutions in the 1880s, as well as Marie-Cecile Bouju's presentation of clandestine publications in occupied France during World War II. In the afternoon and back at the main University of Helsinki venue, a choice of eight parallel panels was proposed with a much broader range of subjects. Since I was taking part on the panel on World War I, I had to leave early to catch my flight, so I missed the end of the discussion. The long wait at the airport gave me time to reflect on what Ann Steiner, from Lund University, had said about book historians' neglect of contemporary subjects such as digitalization.

To conclude, this SHARP conference was an exceptional opportunity to meet people from different countries and different disciplines, who all have an interest in the materiality of books. Some little things could have been better. Several panels featured three speakers from the same university, which is not, I believe, the ideal way to present one's research; at times there was some variability in the quality of the presentations. On the practical side, a printer in the computer room would have been useful. But on the whole, the organizers did a very good job. I felt that the atmosphere was welcoming and supportive—especially for scholars 'from below' such as graduate students—and I will definitely try to attend the SHARP conference in Washington next year.

Lise Jaillant
University of British Columbia, Canada

SHARP 2010 in Helsinki was invigorating with the company of like-minded colleagues and easily navigated, thanks to the generous hospitality and attentiveness of the organizers and hosts. I'll reflect on the conference theme, the plenary sessions, the book exhibit, and conclude with some thoughts that I would have expressed if time had not run out at the end of the concluding session of the conference.

First, the conference theme, Book Culture from Below, was threaded through many of the sessions and particularly the plenaries held at the end of each day. This interest reflects the ongoing research of our hosts, several of whom are part of a multidisciplinary project funded by the Academy of Finland, titled 'The Common People: Writing, and the Process of Literary Attainment in Nineteenth-Century Finland.' The two conference committee chairs, Jyrki Hakapaâ and Kirsti Salmi-Niklander, are engaged in this endeavor. One of the goals of the project is to view Finland from an international perspective. What more economical or effective way is there of bringing the international perspective to one's doorstep than by organizing a conference such as this one?

As Martyn Lyons indicated in his opening remarks on history from below, each scholarly generation has been able to look more deeply into reading and writing practices. Perhaps the pace of transformation, of bringing cultural areas that were once considered below the radar into the scholarly spotlight, is more rapid thanks to the work of book history and the new archives that are being formed to support its work. (A shout-out here to Jen Smith and Klaus Nielsen, whose session I chaired, for their provocative papers on unconventional contemporary figures—an artist/authors and a poet/performer—and their reception.)

It's always exciting when attending a conference reveals unexpected connections and inspiration to one's own work. The session headlined by Ruth Bottigheimer who spoke of the origins of fairy tales (Fairy Tales: A New History, SUNY Press, 2009) could not have been more timely. Her account of the published sources—and their readers—through which these tales became part of the culture was both appropriate to the conference theme and resonated for me as the editor of a project that will result in the publication of a large collection of broadside ballads collected by the founder of the American Antiquarian Society in the second year of its existence. He described these as 'songs in vogue with the vulgar in 1814.' But is that all? Bottigheimer's detective work suggests that uncovering the origins of these texts is worthwhile. What does this deceptively simple description by the astute printer and publisher Isaiah Thomas of the collection that he formed really
mean about these rhyming verses that were so cheaply printed and distributed in Boston? Stay tuned!

I was pleased to see that there was, indeed, a book exhibit. I drifted through a few times and toward the end of the conference I found the very nice representative from Brill without a ‘customer,’ and began chatting with him. In my current capacity as director of book publication, I advise authors – the scholars doing research at AAS – that the book exhibits at scholarly conferences are not just for shopping for books. They are also for shopping for a publisher and they, it turns out, are attending the conference to meet authors! What better way to see what – and how – a publisher produces work in one’s own area than at a conference, or to introduce oneself to a potential publisher? Conferences with book exhibits have a valuable resource waiting to be exploited.

Finally, because time ran out at the thought-provoking final session that made its inevitable way to the impact of digital resources on student research, I am appending my thoughts. Writing from a library involved in creating digital surrogates, it occurs to me that in all the concern for the limitations of doing research online, what I wasn’t hearing related to the metadata for the online resources. Students are cutting to the chase – searching key words without the context that was once as clear as choosing a library to use, but now requires some background on the electronic resources. As was noted, young people are intuitively adept at online research, so that’s not what they need to be taught about using the Internet. But isn’t there room for exercises that teach about the selection and parameters of digitized resources and their economic models with consideration of the benefit of complementing online research with books? Google is not the whole answer and long-time users have observed that less is available since the Google Book settlement. It is just possible that familiarity with commercial databases and originating libraries (via their websites) could eliminate hand-wringing about shortcuts to research and help shape a better approach to scholarship in the digital age.

Caroline Sloot
American Antiquarian Society

SHARP PRIZES 2010

DeLong Prize 2009

The George A. and Jean S. DeLong prize is awarded to the author of the best book on any aspect of the creation, dissemination, or uses of script or print published in the previous year. It has been a pleasure to work with the other jurors on the DeLong prize this year, my thanks to Amadio Arboleda and Marija Dalbello. We have read and evaluated over thirty books covering all periods of the history of the book. The prize for the work published in 2009 goes to Catherine J. Golden for Posting It: The Victorian Revolution in Letter Writing issued by the University Press of Florida.

In Posting It, Golden argues that “The objects of postal ephemera carry with them peculiar life histories and inform our sense of time and place.” Her research into postal artefacts is a window to the burgeoning material culture of Victorian life from the humblest family – who because postage was prepaid could finally afford to receive mail – to the well-off, who purchased and used the paraphernalia of letter writing: the desk, the inkwell, the letter holder and opener, the pen sharpener and the other items on the postal stand at the Great Exhibition of 1851. Golden argues that “the material artefacts of the Victorian revolution in letter writing act not only as emissaries of culture but as "materials of memory" (7) that inform our understanding of customs, distinctions of class and gender, attitudes to friendship and love and aesthetic taste.

A self-confessed hoarder of ‘several shoeboxes and file folders filled with cherished correspondence’ of her own, Golden is at home deciphering the physical objects, from the pens and inkwells, the use of the wrapper and seal, or the cross writing of letters to ensure privacy. She relates these historical artefacts to the fictional equivalents shedding light on the narratives themselves: in just one of the many examples she cites of the practice of posting intimidating anonymous letters she gives the example of a letter from ‘Wildfire’ which was sent in 1862 in order to dissuade competition from a new London coffee house. It threatened arson. Such abuses of the post were a concern of all those who opposed Rowland Hill’s uniform penny post, and it is manifest in the fiction of the time.

Golden relates the arguments of the postal reformers who depicted “mothers pawning their clothes to pay for the receipt of a letter, children going without bread for postage” (153) as well as those of the opposition who voiced concerns that by making postage affordable to the masses it would become a vehicle for immorality, crime, debt – and that very twenty-first-century concern – spam! It is characteristic of Golden’s work that she looks back and forward across history, relating the Victorian letter writing revolution to previous centuries and especially to the concerns and benefits of computer-mediated communication today.

Following uniform penny postage the reformers published anecdotes of the benefits that it had immediately achieved. Golden argues that this was not simply empty rhetoric; citing evidence of both the growth in letter writing materials, and the collections of letters and cards, many of which have been preserved, Golden upholds the claim that “that personal letters of advice, affection, friendship and courtship, although in prior use to the Penny Post, increased following reform, as much as postal reformers had predicted” (196). The huge collection of articles of stationary available from Thomas De La Rue is illustrative of the commercial expansion of writing materials: “lace letter papers, embossed papers, glazed and coloured papers in many colours, hand coloured papers, stationary in fancy packets, ‘at home’ note cards, embossed in silver and gold for weddings and message cards – on plain white, tinted, goffered, enamelled, and ‘ridescent papers, the changing colours of which are produced by a thin film of colourless varnish” (198).

Similarly Golden’s analysis of the letter collections of Victorian writers including Lewis Carroll, Florence Nightingale, Beatrix Potter, Anthony Trollope, Charlotte Brontë and the Valentine cards and Bereavement notes – as well as the ordinary letters like that of the Dunblane school boy – shows the imaginative variety of uses to which authors would put their letter writing skills.

Catherine J. Golden’s Posting It never fails to engage the reader with new evidence and relates it directly to the literary texts of the period. It aptly demonstrates how through the study of the material artefact we gain “insight into nineteenth-century society and Victorian notions of nation, gender, social class and status, aesthetics, identity, privacy, public space, and authority” (7) – all key concepts in critical discourse today.

Alexis Weedon
SHARP DeLong Prize Committee Chair
SHARP Graduate Essay Prize

This year’s prize goes to Spencer Keralis, a Ph.D candidate in the Department of English at New York University, for “Pictures of Charlotte: The Illustrated Charlotte Temple and Her Readers.”

Keralis’s essay addresses the extended printing and publishing history of one of the nineteenth-century’s most popular and un-killable novels, Susanna Rowson’s Charlotte Temple. That novel has had a special place in book history scholarship since Cathy Davidson’s pioneering analysis in the 1980s of the book’s immediate popularity in the newly sovereign United States. Davidson’s influential argument integrated two new discourses, gender and book history, in a powerfully original synthesis. A generation later, Keralis adapts Davidson’s model of historicized reader history by attending to what he calls the ‘cult of Charlotte Temple’ in the nineteenth century. Working from a database of dozens of illustrated nineteenth-century editions of the text, he examines the aestheticized interaction between its illustrators’ representations of the novel’s characters and scenes, and the reactions of its readers, male and female. The result is a critical analysis so lucid that it holds up a mirror to the cult of sentiment for which the story of the seduced Charlotte Temple was one of the nineteenth-century’s exemplary texts.

Spencer Keralis’s essay will be published in the 2010 volume of Book History. Graduate students interested in submitting work for the 2011 competition should consult <sharpweb.org> for further information and deadlines.

SHARP Brisbane 2011

The Long Twentieth Century
The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
28-30 April 2011

The twentieth century began in the midst of one print revolution and ended in the midst of another. This conference aims to bring together research on topics in book history, publishing studies, media studies and histories of reading from across the ‘long twentieth’—from the closing decades of the nineteenth century to the opening decade of the twenty-first. It will look back from the digital age to the print and broadcast revolutions of the twentieth century, and examine the diverse experiences of print modernity across the globe.

The convenors of The Long Twentieth Century are very pleased to announce our keynote speakers, Professor James English (University of Pennsylvania) and Dr Simone Murray (Monash University).

Dramatic developments in publishing in the late nineteenth century coincided with equally dramatic changes in the nature of authorship, reading practices, print markets, education, and the international trade in books. The rapid expansion of print culture was central to the transnational experience of modernity, and deeply enmeshed in the rise of distinctively modern forms of entertainment, consumption and communication. Perhaps only now do we find a comparable moment of change and challenge. The digital age has signalled a new print revolution. Once again, the international trade in print and intellectual property is at stake in a globalised market and mediascape. Once again, publishing, reading and writing find themselves refigured by powerful new technologies, and previously unimagined forms of communication and entertainment. Once again, the language of crisis is all about us, as the complexion of the book is renewed amidst new cultural forms and formations.

The Long Twentieth Century seeks proposals for 20-minute papers and 90-minute panel sessions on any aspect of book history or print culture studies addressing the conference theme. Possible topics include:

* Modern books’ and modern readers’—print cultures and modernity;
* The print diaspora—colonial and post-colonial book and readers;
* Asian modernities—print and digital revolutions in Japan, China, India and beyond;
* From print technologies to reading devices—transformations of the book;
* Print and screen cultures—aesthetics, adaptation, convergence;
* High, popular and middlebrow cultures—the democratization of book talk;
* Bestseller lists, literary prizes, and modern classics’—new definitions of literary value;
* Books and government—a policy, piracy and intellectual property;
* The ‘business of books’—globalization and changing industry structures;
* Institutions and instruction—histories of literary education;

* Redefining periodical cultures—newspapers, magazines, blogs and digital time;
* Transformations in the ‘world republic of letters’—cultures, careers, corporations;
* ‘Deprovincializing Europe’—local, national, transnational histories of books and reading;
* Web archives and libraries—the ideal of a universal library and the polities of digital reproduction.

Papers addressing book history in Asia, Africa, and post-colonial cultures are especially welcomed, alongside those addressing Anglo-American, European, and Australasian contexts.

Please submit abstracts to the conference conveners at <UQSHARP2011@gmail.com> by 1 November 2010.

SHARP Washington 2011

The Book in Art and Science
Washington DC
14-17 July 2011

Sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, the Library of Congress, the Corcoran College of Art + Design, and the Folger Shakespeare Library and Institute, the nineteenth annual conference of SHARP, The Book in Art and Science, will be held in Washington, DC, Thursday 14 July through Sunday 17 July 2011.

Evoking Washington’s status as an artistic and scientific center, The Book in Art and Science is a theme open to multiple interpretations. Besides prompting considerations of the book as a force in either art or science or the two fields working in tandem, it also encourages examination of the scientific text: the book as a work of art; the art and science of manuscript, print, or digital textual production; the role of censorship and politics in the creation, production, distribution, or reception of particular scientific or artistic texts; the relationship between the verbal and the visual in works of art or science; art and science titles from the standpoint of publishing history or the histories of specific publishers and more. Such topics raise a host of possible questions:

* What tensions exist between the book in art and the book in science?
* What collaborations emerge? How do these tensions or collaborations differ according to time or place?
* What roles have material forms—manuscript, print or digital embodiments or books, periodicals, journals, editions—played in the histories of artistic and scientific works?
* How does the lens of art or science inform histories of reading and readers?
* What does this lens reveal about histories of authorship?
* How have commercial factors or economics influenced the production or distribution of scientific or artistic works?
* What roles have states or institutions played in the history of the book in art and science?

The conference hopes to welcome many longstanding SHARP members but also aims to attract new members. The conference’s address of art and science in its title invites those working on the illustrated book, book arts, the history of science, technology, knowledge production, or the scientific book, to join us. Similarly, it is hoped that the stellar holdings in Russian, Eastern European, Iberian, Latin American, Caribbean, Middle-Eastern and Asian written and visual texts held in Washington libraries and museums will encourage both scholars from these parts of the world and those who are working in the media histories of these cultures to attend. As always, proposals dealing with any aspect of book history are welcome.

Sessions will be 90 minutes in length, including three 20-minute papers and a discussion period. In addition, the program committee will consider proposals for sessions using other formats—for example, roundtables or demonstrations of resources and methods. We encourage proposals for fully constituted panels but also welcome proposals for individual papers. While SHARP membership is not required to submit a proposal, all presenters must be members of SHARP before the registration deadline for the conference.

The deadline for both panels and individual proposals is 30 November 2010. Proposals for panels should list the session chair and names of participants along with abstracts for each talk. All abstracts should be no more than 400 words. The program committee will determine which proposals to accept and will notify proposers about their decision.

SHARP has allotted $5,000 to fund 7–10 travel grants to help scholars with limited funds attend the conference. Grants will not exceed $500, although one or two awards may be slightly higher if circumstances warrant. Scholars interested in being considered for such grants should complete the appropriate section of the proposal form.

For proposal questions, please email <SHARP2011proposals@gmail.com> (program committee). For all other questions, email <SHARP2011@gmail.com>

The link to the electronic form for both session and individual-paper proposals is available now at <www.sharpweb.org> and will be posted on the conference website.

If you want to propose a session with an alternative format, please email the program committee at the address above to obtain a special form for such submissions.

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**BOOK REVIEWS**


This text provides an introduction to current scholarship taking place in the fields of Chinese book and library history and print culture, and offers those interested in the subject an array of essays through which to learn more about the topics. It comprises the proceedings of the 2006 Pre-Conference of the IFLA Rare Books and Manuscripts Section. As such, it does not provide a book-length discussion of a single topic, but allows for readers to delve into a variety of subjects and serves as a good starting point for those eager to learn more about Chinese calligraphy, printing, and libraries but unsure where they might start.

Quite a few papers address wood block printing. What is especially useful about this collection is that a number of the papers talk about the development of print culture as a part of regional heritage, such as Xumei and Xiwen’s “The Calligraphy and Printing Cultural Heritage of Gansu – The Development of the Engraved Printing Process and Papermaking: An Archaeological Approach.” This is balanced by other papers, such as Zhizhong’s “On the Invention of Wood Blocks for Printing in China,” which explores the topic within a national context. Both in this and other contributions throughout the book the reader is able to approach the subject matter from a variety of angles. The above examples also illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of the work, wherein one paper uses archaeological practice as a way to learn about print culture in the Gansu region, and the other favors the exploration of previous historical studies.

The compilation’s interdisciplinary approach is evident in work on other topics as well. Technique is discussed in regard to clay board printing and wood block printing. Similarly, other essays bring to light methods for book production and design, and for paper-making in both modern and historical contexts. Regional calligraphy and print history are also highlighted.

Other essays discuss wood blocks, paper relics, and manuscripts as artifacts and high-light preservation concerns. Some explore the collections in which these artifacts are contained, both from the perspective of the holding institutions and, in one case, from the perspective of a wealthy donor. The historical significance of collections is also highlighted. All the papers are informative and enjoyable; a particularly fascinating paper was one on deceptive tricks used by some publishers during the Ming Dynasty.

The book contains a wealth of information for researchers and specialists, although the text is probably a bit too advanced for most classroom teaching. It may be appropriate in whole or in part for advanced graduate work, although the text does assume expertise beyond what might be found in an undergraduate or beginning graduate classroom. It situates itself well with other compilations of essays discussing book history and technologies, even for those who may be unfamiliar with these aspects of Chinese culture. As a reader with a better understanding of Western print culture and history, I still found this text to be very accessible and enjoyable, and feel it would be well-suited to any research collection as a foundation for the study of Chinese print culture, libraries, and calligraphy.

Julia Skinner
University of Iowa


No one library owns more than about one-sixth of the Virgils that have been printed since 1469, and Princeton’s collection, with more than 900 volumes, is not even the world’s largest—though it is possibly the most...
Indexing is tedious labor, but the result here is a volumen both ducis and utilized beautifully produced and useful, we predict, for generation of scholars in several disciplines, including reception history, art history, history of reading, and history of the book.

David Scott Wilson-Okamura
East Carolina University


Professor Minnis here builds upon the work in his Medieval Theory of Authorship and, more particularly, “The Author’s Two Bodies: Authority and Fallibility in Late-Medieval Textual Theory.” In this book, as in his previous article, he applies to textual theory the political idea of The King’s Two Bodies (Ernst Kantorowicz). In medieval and early modern political theory, according to Kantorowicz, one can distinguish between the ‘body’ of the king as a holder of an office (the political person) and the ‘body’ of the king as an individual with particular ideas, attitudes, relationships, and foibles (the ethical person). Such embodiment of authority and fallibility is to be seen not only in kings, but also in priests, popes, and in the tension between the divinity and humanity in Christ—and, Minnis argues, in the author. Further, he states, in the later Middle Ages the prioritizing of the two persons shifted, largely under the influence of Aristotelianism. More subjective ideas of personhood came to the fore, and the dynamics of office versus person came to be reversed; the king or pope was seen as primarily a personality, an individual, a subjectivity, who exercised such authority as came with the position held (12). To illustrate the tension between authority and fallibility within this late medieval context, Minnis considers two of Chaucer’s pilgrims, who author fallibly but nevertheless with potency.

The bulk of the book, as is indicated by the title, examines Chaucer’s Pardoner and Wife of Bath, the two most highly particularized and complex of his creatures, both of whom claim an ‘authority’ to teach and to preach, the one claiming expertise in matters of sin, the other in matters of marriage. Both, however, are fallible authorities indeed: the Pardoner as a usurper of priestly office and one who scandalously practices the sin against which he preaches, and the Wife who in the medieval world is excluded from public discourse by her female body. Chaucer’s exploration of these ideas, as Minnis makes clear, was keen and perceptive, but, more to the point, it was also very particular and current, since Chaucer was responding directly to issues and debates of his time, not least those arising from Wycliff’s challenges to orthodox traditions. The four chapters of the book, then, focus on two parts, the first on the Pardoner and second on the Wife; each part is divided into two chapters, the first presenting the issues of debate, primarily between Scholastic and Wycliffite thinkers; the second chapter in each half is on Chaucer and how these matters of high philosophy are reflected in his representation of the Pardoner and the Wife.

While the book as a whole is a study of medieval ethical philosophy and how this is reflected in Chaucer, the preface suggests some ways in which these questions remain current. Minnis’s interest in such matters arises in part, he says, from the contrast between Bush and Clinton as Presidents; the Presidency is a particularly telling example of the contrast between the high office, surrounded with its dignity and spectacle, and the officeholder, subject to scandal through personal and ethical failure. The introduction suggests that this book’s consideration of medieval ethical philosophy has a currency as evident in the anti-Bush bumper sticker, ‘Nobody died when Clinton lied.’

Similarly, current concerns with scandal within the Catholic priesthood, and dissatisfaction with how the Church responds to such issues, have roots in medieval Canon Law and the medieval Church’s decisions on how to deal with the sinfulness of priests, primarily by taking an approach that would minimize scandal, since laypeople must have confidence in, and must not presume to sit in judgment over, their priests (17–18). Or, again, within the teaching of literature, as Minnis observes, one hears periodic calls to have this author or that removed from our course offerings, yet, if one were to remove the works of all ‘scandalous’ authors from the Norton Anthology, one would have little left (xiii–xiv). Similarly, to step slightly beyond Minnis into a more recent controversy, should a Nobel-winning poet and professor of literature, accused of immoral behaviour (indeed, of ‘crimes’—though none have been proven in a court of law), be prevented from taking
up a Professorship of Poetry in Oxford?

Professor Minnis writes with elegance and clarity. At the same time, this book involves a very dense philosophical discussion which makes it a slow and challenging read; it deals with intricacies of high philosophical debate with, as Minnis himself characterizes it, a modern Protestant's fascination with medieval Scholasticism. And while the scope of the book is, in one sense, quite narrowly focused on a particular question, it pursues a thread that takes us into a great web of interrelated ideas. Though dense and difficult, the book deserves a broad audience; it will most certainly be of considerable interest to Chaucerians and those who find the Pardoner and Wife of Bath intriguing, but also of great interest to those who are interested in medieval philosophy and ethics and how debates in those areas had an impact on literary culture. To those interested in the history of authorship, such as readers of this newsletter, it offers far-reaching reflections and insights on the universal tension between the author as authority and the author as person.

Stephen R. Reimer
University of Alberta


Eighteenth-century geographical theories tied cultural differences to climatic and topographical differences. Combining this principle with the contributions of several decades of recent cultural studies, Maria Schoina analyzes how the experience of Italianness shaped the authorial identities, literary texts, and representational practices of the Shelleys, Byron, and Hunt. Romantic ‘Anglo-Italians’ builds upon the notions of acculturation, hybridity, and identity construction in the works of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Stuart Hall. The methodological framework adopted thus presents much of the potential, as well as some of the pitfalls, of comparative approaches.

The first chapter examines eighteenth-century representations of Anglo-Italian spaces and identities, focusing on capriccio paintings and de Staël’s Corinne. Cultures define themselves by encountering and rewriting a cultural ‘other,’ and the reciprocity of this process is exemplified by the Anglomania of Baretti, Alfieri, and Beccaria. The capricci of Pannini and Canaletto, combining eighteenth-century London with Renaissance Venice or ancient Rome, establish a visual lineage between the past glories of Italy and the present power of Britain. Corinne, on the other hand, mediates Italian culture for British taste, and the difficulties she encounters signify the difficulties of acculturation and hybridity.

Chapter two discusses Mary Shelley’s invention of the ‘Anglo-Italian.’ Schoina invokes Pierre Bourdieu’s linking of ‘taste’ and social difference, although the primary sources alone amply support the argument that ‘taste’ defines identity. For Shelley, Anglo-Italians have aesthetic taste and linguistic proficiency, have traveled beyond guidebook routes and consorted with the native cultural elite; they are an acculturated avant-garde, capable in turn of re-educating the British. Further, this hybrid identity enables Shelley to claim cultural authority on the basis of her Italian experience, without forsaking female propriety, since the term officially designated a male coterie. Finally, Schoina argues, the Rambles reveal Shelley’s awareness of “the difficulty of [...] inhabiting a space in-between cultures” (88).

In chapter three, Schoina characterizes Byron’s experience of Italianness as ‘insider knowledge’ of Italian culture, society, and people, and as the fashioning of a protoan identity, continually modified by encounters with cultural others. His emotional consonance with Italian culture and his close association with Italians led Byron to undermine the uniqueness and authenticity of his Italianness, and the difficulty of effectively translating this experience for the unassimilated Briton. Bhabha’s notion of hybridity interestingly applies to Byron’s cosmopolitanism and acculturation, of which Beppe – with its performance of national identities and hybrid poetic form – is an excellent example.

Chapter four examines the founding members of The Liberal – Percy Shelley and Leigh Hunt. The essential Englishness of this group problematizes the relevance of the Pisan space for the authors’ perceptions of identity and belonging. For Percy Shelley, the shift from a feeling of ambivalence to one of being ‘rooted’ coincided with his envisioning of Pisa as a ‘nest’ for a utopian liberal community. By contrast, Hunt’s substantially literary knowledge of Italy rendered his actual Italian experience unsettling – hence, in his “Letters from Abroad,” the cultural mediation of ‘translating’ the Italian space into English spaces familiar to the readers.

The level of abstraction necessary to apply cultural studies to literary texts sometimes complicates Schoina’s otherwise readable style, and makes the book as a whole feel slightly fragmented. However, Romantic ‘Anglo-Italians’ commendably tries fresh ways to tell a well-known tale. Particularly stimulating is the recurrent emphasis on the discontents of acculturation, which ‘de-romanticizes’ the relationship between the English Romantics and Italian culture. Though Ashgate could have better supported the author with more consistent editing, Romantic ‘Anglo-Italians’ is a provocative contribution to the study of Romantic transnational and cultural networks.

Maria Paola Svampa
Columbia University
E-RESOURCES REVIEWS

Introducing Reviews of E-Resources

The exciting proliferation of digital projects in all disciplines and time periods has expanded access to and scholarly work on archival materials. However, not all projects are made equal, and not all projects serve the SHARP community. With this review, SHARP inaugurates a new section of the newsletter: E-Resources Reviews. Both subscription and open-access projects will be the focus of future reviews. To write a review or suggest a digital project, contact this section’s editor, Katherine D. Harris <e-resources@sharpweb.org>


Research into nineteenth-century periodicals has recently thrived due to large-scale commercial digitization projects like British Periodical Series, which provides the full text of over 500 titles. However, these cost-prohibitive projects frequently disregard the serials’ materiality. However, because these databases rely on optical character recognition scans (OCR), an inexact process when dealing with nineteenth-century materials, search returns often seem arbitrary. Although Nineteenth-Century Serials Edition (NCSE) focuses on only six titles, it applies the careful editorial principles prescribed for open-access scholarly digital projects to the breadth and immensity of serial publications.

Traditionally, the binding of serials into volumes bends these ephemeral, diverse objects to the logic and status of the book. The editors working on the NCSE, directed by Laurel Brake, former senior research fellow at Birkbeck, University of London, took advantage of the digital medium to represent this genre’s unique physical and temporal characteristics. The project’s postdoctoral researchers, James Mussell and Suzanne Paylor, describe the complex development of serials as more akin to “a family tree, in which new branches . . . are constantly being discovered” (142). These complicated relationships became the project’s greatest challenge; the NCSE team soon realized that because many of the serials printed several editions of a single issue, the project team would be digitizing, for example, 100,000 pages of text rather than 67,000, as was the case with one title. Although this meant a re-negotiation of editorial intervention, their decisions more accurately illustrate the physical form and context of the serial. The criticisms from scholars (including Brake herself) about the volumization and digitization of serials are addressed by the NCSE’s inclusion of wrappers, advertisements, front matter, indices, and special editions temporarily represented within the site’s tiered design.

The NCSE chose a cluster of six titles that, taken together, span the century to represent a cross-section of serial diversity. Titles vary from weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly; represent both northern and southern England; and illustrate both pictorial and non-illustrated publications. Of the six serials, the Publisher’s Circular, the British publishing industry’s trade journal, may be of most interest to book historians. Unfortunately, NCSE has only digitized the ten years when this publication included more discursive commentary, from 1880–1890; including the advertisement- and list-laden years would further benefit researchers. The NCSE also digitized the Langham Place Group’s publication English Woman’s Journal, printed by Emily Faithfull’s Victoria Press, which employed only female compositors. In addition, the NCSE project includes the Monthly Repository, a Unitarian publication; the Tomahawk, an illustrated, satirical weekly; the Leader, a radical serial whose ten-year tumultuous publication history is a useful case-study of market pressures; and the Northern Star, the primary print publication for Chartism, managed and owned by Feargus O’Connor.

Because NCSE has made the serial’s materiality its primary concern, browsing full issues is an efficient process. A facsimile viewer that allows users to browse page-by-page or department-by-department and search within individual issues anchors the project. The titles are arranged using a hierarchical system that outlines the ‘family tree’ properties of the serial. Users can also enter the archive by browsing subject keywords. Because NCSE contains over 400,000 articles, the team used OCR and semantic data mining to derive subject keywords. As a result, browsing by subject is illuminating but limiting; subjects are grouped into twenty loosely defined categories such as ‘Arts and Crafts’ or ‘Science and Technology.’ Searching within the facsimile viewer is more comprehensive but, like commercial products, is reliant on OCR. A major improvement over commercial counterparts, however, is NCSE’s attention to the visual components of serials; the team added metadata to images by hand and created specific searches for image retrieval. The NCSE team’s comprehensive discourse about editorial and technical practices as well as their detailed scholarly apparatus for each of the titles is a clear demonstration of the need served by a scholarly digital edition of the nineteenth-century periodical press.


Jessica DeSpain
Southern Illinois University

IN SHORT


The essays collected in each volume, though anglophone in origin, nevertheless make a serious attempt to cover all of Europe. What is covered in the various collections depends on each editor’s decision; Vol. II: 1455–1700, for example, explicitly eschews periodical literature while Vol. III: 1700–1800 devotes a section to it. Each volume is preceded by a useful essay that goes beyond summarizing the contents and often points out areas where future research is needed. Each also contains a bibliography. Because many of the essays reproduced in the series are not readily available, the set—though expensive—should find a place on the shelves of libraries with limited budgets.
EXHIBITION REVIEWS

Artistic Bookbindings in the Archive of the Nobility
Encuadernaciones Artísticas en el Archivo de la Nobleza.
National Historical Archive, Toledo (Spain)
Archivo Histórico Nacional, Toledo (España)
21 January–21 June 2010

The archives belonging to nobility are an important part of Spanish documentary heritage of private origin. Several years ago, and Libraries, started an effort to conserve, describe and diffuse these kinds of documentary resources. This effort resulted in the creation of a special section dedicated to the nobility under the umbrella of the National Historical Archive.

The Archive of the Nobility, currently located in the Renaissance Hospital Tavera in Toledo, was created in October 1993. It is a cultural institution where Spanish noble archives are kept. Such archives have been acquired in part by the Spanish government and in part deposited by their owners for research purposes.

From this heterogeneous collection, the Archive of the Nobility has organized the exhibition under review at its headquarters in Toledo. The theme of binding is explored in this exhibit through the assemblage of several binding tools and bound documents, displayed chronologically along one single room.

Although the point of the exhibition is to highlight bookbinding history and techniques, it shows a broad variety of personal and familial collections of documents such as wills, writs of execution, letters, accounts, donations, privileges, legal disputes, property sale documents, petitions and titles. This fact explains why manuscripts and printed books are almost not represented, but, at the same time, it makes the exhibit especially interesting, helping to fill a still existing gap in the study of bookbinding. It is evident that the invention of printing was the most significant factor in the development of binding, however, it is often not recognized that, as a result of a progressive bureaucratization of the European monarchies, a growing documentary production permitted the co-existence of a significant practice of binding documents of the type on view here. It must be considered that although the most important Spanish bookbinding centers were Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Seville, other cities with their own courts, such as Granada, Valladolid and Zaragoza, also had roles in the binding of documents.

All periods and their styles are generally represented in chronological order, from the end of the Middle Ages to the beginning of the twentieth century. One can see the urban and elegant Gothic bindings ('Collection of Letters of Iñigo López de Mendoza, 1440–1515'); the 'Mudejar' style with arabesques ('Properties in the Town of Alfaro, 1581–1595'); fifteenth-century Renaissance bookbindings with geometric and classical patterns ('Final Judgment of the Lawsuit of Felipe Juan Baltasar Fernández Pacheco y Portugal, VI Marquis of Villena, 1619'); the iconicographic richness of the Baroque style ('Final Judgment of the Lawsuit of Pedro Pimentel, Marquis of Viana, against the town of Viana do Bolo, 1595'); the Neoclassic harmonious simplicity ('Genealogical Documents of Mauricio de Porras, 1794'); the interpretative Romantic bindings; the Modernist sinuosities; and so forth.

The distinction between the three main bookbinding materials — leather, cloth and paper — are also clearly discernible in the exhibition and allow one to observe the contrast between some precious sixteenth- and seventeenth-century velvet and silk bindings ('Title of Countess of Montemuevo, 1692' and 'Genealogy of Juan Francisco Páramo y Cepeda, 1658'), and numerous cardboard and popular styles ('Accounts of Nuestra Señora de la Concepción, 1622–1633' and 'Musical scores titled Aires Vascongadas para Canto y Piano, 1862'). The showcases dedicated to eighteenth-century paper bookbindings are simply fascinating. The visitor delights in seeing many allegations of various Noble houses bound with different kinds of decorated paper, such as marbled ('Allegations of Pedro de Alcántara, 1756–1807'), pasted ('Allegations of Pedro Zoilo Téllez, VIII Duke of Osuna, 1733–1787'), printed in woodcut ('Allegations of Juan Domingo de Alibis y Loynez, 1771') and embossed ('Allegations of Pedro de Alcántara Pimentel, XII Duke of Infantado, 1729–1790').

Given that the study of bookbinding has often focused on the most sumptuous pieces, this exhibition is a perfect opportunity to become more familiar with a field that has not been sufficiently considered, the binding of documents. Bookbinding is, in these cases, not only a kind of appropriation where the owner reworks and adapts a volume to his/her own taste, but also a process of creating a volume from kinds of documents originally created to remain singular. A visit is a rewarding experience for the book historian who wants to know about the many aspects that the study of bookbinding entails.

Benito Rial Costas
Madrid, Spain

The Author's Portrait: 'O, could he but have drawne his Wit' Firestone Library, Princeton University Princeton, NJ, USA 22 January 2009–5 July 2010

To the Reader.
This Figure, that thou here seest put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut,
Wherein the Graver had a strife
With Nature, to out-doo the life:
O, could he but have drawne his Wit
As well in brasse, as he hath hit
His face; the Print would then surpass
All, that was ever writ in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
Not on his Picture, but his Booke.
— from Ben Jonson's verses in Shakespeare's 1623 first folio

The latest exhibition in the Main Gallery of Princeton University's Firestone Library features one hundred portraits of poets, novelists, and essayists. The well-chosen items on exhibition are from the rich holdings of the university's Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. On view are paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, and sculptures, dating from 1481 to 1989. Among the authors depicted are William Shakespeare, Virgil, Mark Twain, George Sand, Sojourner Truth, Charles Dickens, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Phillis Wheatley, Confucius, John Milton, Alfreed Lord Tennyson, and Anne Killigrew. They are portrayed by artists such as Constantin Brancusi, Jean-Antoine Houdon, Willem de Passe, and Auguste Rodin. The multi-talented William Blake is present in the collection both as author and as artist.
The exhibition's simple title certainly conveys an accurate description of the works on view. But it is the suggestive and even subversive subtitle, one of the many epigraphs that accompany the authors' portraits, that hints at the complexity of the relationship between subject and artist, between writer and reader, between time (or era) and place (whether in the sense of location or of rank). The wide range of media represented in the exhibition goes far beyond the classic prints, sculptures, and photographs of the traditional canon. They include the more recent and less familiar, such as a woodcut of Puerto Rican poet Luis Palés Matos; a plaster cast death mask of German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe; and a pastel of Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw.

Some of the subject-artist relationships are prosaic, even familial. A photograph of author Beatrix Potter at age nineteen was taken by her father, Rupert Potter, who trained for but never practiced law, instead choosing to pursue the new art of photography. Other more enigmatic relationships and exotic places add dimension to the portrayals. According to the caption written below his early 1970s photograph, Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges is captured by Elsa Dorfman 'at the Midget Restaurant,' located in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The viewer sometimes wonders at hints of the nature of privacy in the public profession of the writer, and is reminded of the passage of time (Dorfman still works at her studio many decades later).

Many of the portraits stem from long friendships between artist and sitter, such as Édouard Manet and Charles Baudelaire, William Hogarth and Henry Fielding, Lucas Cranach the Elder and Martin Luther, and Ilia Pustovoytov and Leo Tolstoy. But not all of the subjects were finally pleased with their portraitists' renditions. Milton, Dickens, and Goethe were famously displeased with their portrayals by William Marshall, Daniel Maclise, and all artists, respectively. Even the identity of the artist is in dispute in the case of the portrait of Shakespeare, created for the first folio of his plays. Commonly attributed to Martin Droeshout the Younger, who was only twenty-two when this engraving was published, some experts conclude that his uncle, also named Martin Droeshout, an established engraver, was more likely to have been the artist who produced this 'stiff' vision of Shakespeare. Surely all can agree that it does not capture a whiff of the bard's words.

Does a portrait tell us anything useful about an author? Certainly for long-ago writers whose image was never frozen in photography, an artist's rendering can bring the reader closer to imagining how the author fit into the time and place. Does a photograph reveal any hidden secrets of the author's reputation? Or is it just a publicity gimmick to influence the reader's sympathy for the author of the words? There is no denying that our apprehension of the physicality and facts of a person — gender, age, facial expression — affect our impression of the author's works.


C. J. Dickerson
Norwalk (CT) Public Library

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Reading Pictures: Sixteenth-Century European Illustrated Books

This exhibition, curated by Daniel Traister of the University of Pennsylvania's Rare Book and Manuscript Library, is drawn from Penn's extensive holdings of sixteenth-century books. It features many volumes, from expensive folios to cheap duodecimos and editions of classical authors to anatomical treatises to astrology charts to popular religious texts — all handsomely arrayed in six wall cases and three display tables, open to the illustrated pages.

The exhibit is arranged roughly in chronological order, but one gains little sense of historical developments in technique or in the distinction between, say, woodcuts and engravings. Rather, the emphasis is on the variety of uses to which innovative printers put illustration. Many of these texts use illustrations in ordinary ways, as when Dido is pictured being consumed by flames — of lust, clearly — in the two Virgils on display. The first, from 1533, contains Renaissance humanistic scholarship on Virgil, while the second, from 1541, reprints commentary from late antiquity. In the earlier volume, Dido is the central focus of the picture; having driven a sword into her breast, she is poised at the top of steep steps just before plunging into the flames below. In the later one, she is in the background, her supine corpse framed by rising flames making only one part of the moral lesson in Book IV. It may be tempting to speculate that humanistic scholarship produced a more dramatic scene featuring a tragic figure while the classical commentary led to something analogous to a history painting. Yet such differences may have been the product of individual artistic intentions, or of the demands made by buyers willing to pay for a book made to precise specifications. The exhibition wisely leaves such possibilities open.

In addition to belles lettres, scientific books are also widely represented here. Books of anatomy are represented by Charles Estienne rather than the better-known Vesalius, and Tristre does not draw attention to Estienne's less advanced anatomical representations. Another book, a 1600 De Visione, Voce, Auditu by Hieronymus Fabricius ab Aquapendente, is open to a page of comparative anatomy examining the larynxes of various species. Peter Apian's Cosmographia (1574), in a smaller and cheaper reprint of the more sumptuous 1540 edition, has movable paper 'volvelles' that allow the reader to compare geographical areas on a global map. And a 1564 Prolem open to a map of the British Isles hints at the peculiar sociology of knowledge, with old ways of looking at the world (literally, in this case) by no means having been immediately replaced by new Copernican revolutions.

A similarly retrograde blend of old and new can be found in a hermaphrodite meant to illustrate the sublimate relationship of alchemy and medicine. On another plate, Plato, Aristotle, Galen, and Hippocrates play instruments meant to symbolize the harmonization of their medical doctrines in Symphorien Champier's Symphonia (1516). By contrast, humanistic knowledge contained in books on Turkish history and the history of the British Isles seems more usefully current. Yet one of the most fanciful illustrations is from a 1511 German translation of Vegetius's De Re Militari, a treatise on Roman military organization from late antiquity, where a ferocious siege machine with spikes bursting out of a giant human head is represented. Though little mention is made of the fact, the illustration is one of the rare examples in this exhibition that has been colored.

Other examples also leave questions unanswered, like the edition of St. Bernard of Clairvaux which is striking not only for the
engraving of Christ flanked by Bernard and his friend the Irish monk St. Malachy, but also for its illuminated text. The rubricated capital near the bottom of the facing page overlaps the text of Bernard’s vita, and may have been added by hand to the printed text. If so, it would have illustrative significance, but possibly one that was felt to fall outside the strict purview of this exhibition.

But the questions most pertinently raised by this exhibit are those displayed in the first case, which contains three copies of a single book of universal history, Hartmann Schedel’s Nuremburg Chronicle (1493). Each is opened to a different page, but on each the text describing three cities—Verona, Ferrara, and Damascus—is illustrated by a reprint of the same woodcut. These three images reveal a kind of print culture ekphrasis, as suggested by Traister’s title, with its evocations of the Renaissance doctinae at pictura poesis and poesia tacens, picture quenct. If modern critical theory has generally decided that the sister arts do little to illuminate one another, the question is still open as to what these oft-reprinted prints are meant to contribute to the books they adorn. If it is still difficult to understand how readers interpreted these images, Reading Pictures argues for the importance of Penn as a center and destination for the scholarship that remains to be done on the techniques and meaning of book illustration in early modern print culture.

Christopher Vilmar
Salisbury University


More an alphabetically-arranged encyclopedia than a dictionary, the publisher John Dunton’s book was the first substantial reference volume published in England aimed primarily at women. The editors of this facsimile provide a substantial introduction, examining the sources of the entries in considerable detail, while a generous index (which links the entries to their sources) completes the enterprise.

In his opening remarks to the intimate group gathered in Stratford-upon-Avon for the annual Print Networks Conference, organizer John Hinks explained that this July’s gathering was both unique and familiar: unique in its location (The Shakespeare Institute) and topic (The Book Trade in Early Modern Britain) but also familiar in its small size and program of two intense days full of a wealth of wide-ranging information and exciting research about the production, distribution, and reception of early print and manuscript. As Dr. Hinks welcomed the eager group (a mixture of literature and history professors, graduate students, librarians, archivists, and book collectors from Britain, Europe, the United States, and Canada with interests and experiences in a wide range of disciplines and fields), he also noted that about half of the conference participants were regulars to the UK’s yearly conference and half were newcomers – or, rather, he implied, merely soon-to-be regulars. Perhaps unintentionally, these opening remarks perfectly set up the presentations and discussions that followed during two sunny days in Stratford. The talks by the fourteen presenters and two guest speakers illustrated the kinds of dualities celebrated by the conference organizers and the diversity of the assembled audience; the topics of each of the papers were appropriately familiar for a conference on print and the production of early books, unique, unexpected, appropriately diverse, individual and inextricably connected – giving even the seasoned audience members something new to think about, and creating new perspectives on the overlapping professional and personal networks that developed in the British and Anglophone book trade between 1530 and 1750.

True to the conference’s overarching focus on ‘networks’ of print, many of the presentations centered on the interests or investments of one particular group or individual participating in the expansive literary marketplaces in London and across the United Kingdom – including printers and publishers like Anne Griffin, William Ponsonby, or Michael Sparke; book collector Sir Thomas Smith; seasoned or novice writers like satirist Henry Neville or General Thomas Gage; rural book peddlers; bookbinders; and Scottish, British, and American readers of newspapers and news pamphlets, drama, travel narratives, and poetry. Even with an admittedly tight and specific focus, however, each paper also simultaneously dug into and illuminated much larger and wider-ranging political, social, and economic contexts, connections, and implications. Throughout the two days, audience members thus learned about how individual participants in the book trade could – and did – make an impact on the larger whole.

Together, too, all sixteen presentations blurred the lines between the supposedly fixed professional roles and activities in the early modern book trade and complicated our expected notions of genre, geography, and early authorship; presenters and audience members unpacked ‘authorial’ prefaces written by publishers, for example, emphasized the niche markets that suggest that distribution and circulation moved beyond the reach of London booksellers, and linked practices in Britain and the Dutch Republic in a supposedly isolated period of print. The Book Trade in Early Modern Britain, all participants would no doubt conclude, was indeed diverse, complicated, and constantly evolving. Drawing connections between the materiality and content of some of the texts discussed (as well as emphasizing the singularity of each product of a certain ‘network’ of print), conference organizers also included a display of several of the relevant texts held by the Shakespeare Institute Library; following a paper about the careers, output, and interests of book producers Sparke or Ponsonby, participants could then examine some of the texts that appeared from their printing houses and bookshops and ponder their own questions, observations, and connections.

Further emphasizing the importance of local and international, professional and personal, and specific and universal ‘networks,’ the conference fostered collaboration between its diverse participants as well; during coffee and tea breaks and lunch outside in the Institute’s beautiful gardens, conversations continued about the particulars of a certain paratext or stage direction, or claims about early modern authorship, politics, and gender – and also extended to related concerns and observations about ongoing individual research projects, experiences in the class...
Commodities and Culture in the Colonial World 1851–1914

Workshop 1: Commodities in Motion
King’s College London and Museum of London (Docklands), UK
5–7 July 2010

This workshop marked the launch of a new Leverhulme-funded networks project which, over the next twelve months, will bring together scholars from Australia, India, South Africa, the UK and the US. Based in literary and cultural studies but using “a variety of complementary methodological approaches,” these scholars aim to “study the impact of colonialism, emigration, and global trade on texts and artefacts produced and consumed across the world between 1851 and 1914.”

http://www.commoditiesandculture.org

The first day’s sessions were held at King’s College London, the next two in the evocative setting of the London Museum (Docklands) in Canary Wharf. The museum is in a converted nineteenth-century warehouse, part of the regenerated docklands of the East End, and nestled among the skyscrapers of what is now one of London’s most important financial centres. Speakers were accompanied by the faint roar of aircraft buzzing in and out of City Airport and the rumble of commuter trains; a reminder of the sheer volume of global traffic that this area has always handled, and how large a role port cities have always played in forging and maintaining international relationships. Future workshops will be held in New York and Calcutta, locations that promise to provide equally rich trade histories.

I was unable to be present on all three days, but the sessions I did attend more than fulfilled their promise, encouraging lively dialogues between scholars who might otherwise never have met, working as they do in disparate disciplines and global locations. This workshop was so much more than the familiar disciplinary closed shop where old friends meet; it genuinely opened up an exciting new trade route for the exchange of ideas. There were several highlights, among them a paper by Ting Guo (University of Exeter, UK) on missionary printers in nineteenth-century China and the role played by literary translation and the printing press in the formation of colonial relationships, and a paper by Andy Liu (Columbia University, USA) on the local and social, as well as global and economic, significance of the nineteenth-century tea trade. The sessions also raised some key questions that will need to be tackled if networks such as this one are to succeed. Possibly the most pressing of these, is how we are to handle the relationships between micro- and macro-histories, and between the empirical and the theoretical – all of which were on offer here – but which, perhaps inevitably at this stage, struggled to enter into effective dialogue in the sessions I attended. There were fascinating micro-historical papers on individuals; particularly memorable were the stories of the Bombay ‘untouchable’ and political activist R.B. More (presented by Anupama Rao, Columbia University, USA), and of the four immigrant businessmen in Australia whose lives intersected in complex ways with both indigenous and colonial peoples (presented by Heather Goodall, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia). But it was difficult to connect these micro-histories with the larger theoretical questions posed by speakers such as Elaine Freedgood who provided a complex analysis of ballast in nineteenth-century shipping (and literature), which she called an expression of the conflict between the ship-shape and the chaotic. One wonders whether Australia’s immigrant businessmen might simply have called ballast the perfect commodity in that unlike most other goods it usually earned its own passage, but still, Freedgood is right to point out that material goods form only the most visible part of what we share when we trade internationally; our micro-histories – excellent as they are – need to be aware of this less quantifiable trade in ideas, anxieties and cultural mores.

Another question with which we need to grapple concerns the historical and physical imperatives which encouraged different migration and trade patterns. As one audience member pointed out, the concept of networks itself might be limited and limiting unless we also consider why goods and people went to some locations and not to others. Here there is room for a new methodology, perhaps, which maps not just social and political history, but also geology, oceanography, botany and meteorology onto the relationships we seek to investigate.

These are large questions, and in the interests of an increasingly global and interdisciplinary profession they will need to be addressed soon; methodological oceans may still divide us, but a common or at least transferable currency will undoubtedly be necessary if we are to continue to trade. This project and its workshops are significant and timely first steps.

Mary Hammond
University of Southampton

Dain Award of the American Library Association
Library History Round Table (LHRT)

The Phyllis Dain Library History Award is named in honor of a library historian widely known as a supportive advisor and mentor as well as a rigorous scholar and thinker, recognizes outstanding dissertations in the general area of library history. $500 and a certificate are given for a work that embodies original research on a significant topic relating to the history of books, libraries, librarianship or information science. The biennial award is given in the odd numbered years. Dissertations completed and accepted during the preceding two academic years are eligible, e.g., dissertations from 1998–1999 and 1999–2000 competed for the 2001 award.

Entries are judged on: clear definition of the research questions and/or hypotheses; use of appropriate source materials; depth of research; superior quality of writing; ability to place the subject within its broader historical context.

Entries are invited from students and recent graduates who have completed a research dissertation in library history and who are members of the American Library Association. A call for entries is typically included in the Libraries History Round Table Newsletter and appears in the American Library Association website and Newsletter. If you are interested in applying, please contact the current Dain Award Chair. The current Chair is Dr. Karen M. Christensen, University of New Mexico at karen.christensen@unm.edu.
context; and significance of the conclusions. A list of previous Dain Award winners can be found at: <http://www.ala.org/alainform/awards/dainawards/dainwinners.cfm>

Four copies of the dissertation and a letter of support from the doctoral advisor or from another faculty member at the degree-granting institution are required. Applications must be received by 14 January 2011. Receipt will be confirmed with 2 business days.

Submit manuscripts to:
Office for Research and Statistics
American Library Association
50 East Huron St.
Chicago, IL: USA 60611

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Publishing in Hot and Cold Wars 1939–1989

University of London
14–15 April 2011

This international conference will be concerned with the distinctive ways in which the communication of ideas, news and entertainment was conducted nationally and internationally during World War II and the subsequent Cold War. The main focus will be on print production, but there will also be an interest in the context for this in terms of broadcast materials, and documentary and feature films. A range of ideas will be examined, including propaganda, censorship, the sustaining of morale at home, and the projection of ideologies abroad. Additionally, there will also be an interest on how periodical and book publishers coped with the privations of war and the temptations (such as money from government agencies) of an ambivalent peace. Relationships between government, government agencies, actually or apparently independent institutions, and publishers and writers, will also be of interest.

While we hope that one strand in the conference will be concerned with Britain’s Ministry of Information, which operated during the World War II from London University’s Senate House (in which the conference will be held), there is also an interest in views from countries within the Axis during the 1939-45 period, and from countries in the Communist Bloc during the Cold War.

For enquiries, please contact: Jon Millington, Events Officer, Institute of English Studies, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU; tel +44 (0) 207 664 4859; Email <jon.millington@sas.ac.uk>

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A Conference to Mark the Centenary of W.T. Stead

British Library, London
16–17 April 2012

When William Stead died on the maiden voyage of the Titanic in April 1912, he was the most famous Englishman on board. He was one of the inventors of the modern tabloid. His advocacy of ‘government by journalism’ helped launch military campaigns. His expose of child prostitution raised the age of consent to sixteen, yet his investigative journalism got him thrown in jail. A mass of contradictions and a crucial figure in the history of the British press, Stead was a towering presence in the cultural life of late Victorian and Edwardian society. This conference marks the centenary of his death. We aim to recover Stead’s extraordinary influence on modern English culture and to mark a major moment in the history of journalism. In 2012 the British Library will open its state of the art newspaper reading rooms. In Stead’s spirit we will also investigate our own revolution in newspapers and print journalism in the age of digital news.

With Stead as a focal point, we will use aspects of his career to develop multiple avenues into the history of his time and ours. This is not a narrowly focused specialist conference, but one that aims to adopt wide cultural perspectives. A full call for papers is scheduled for 2011.

For more information, please contact: <stead2012@googlemail.com>

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