

THE BOOK

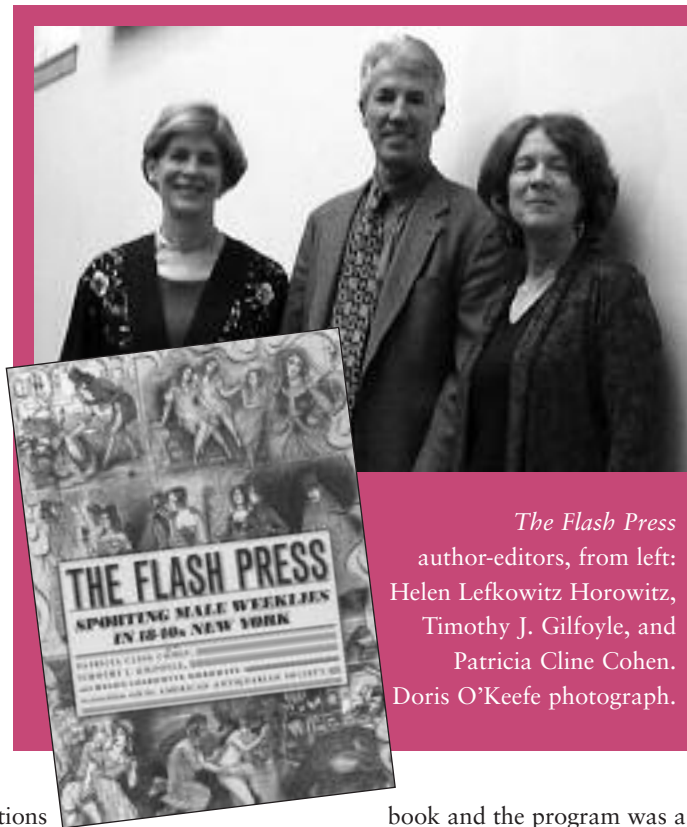
JULY 2008, NUMBER 75

Lowbrow, Ribald, and Back in Print *The Flash Press: Sporting Male Weeklies in 1840s New York*

Much excitement attended the publication, this spring, of *The Flash Press*. In collaboration with AAS, the University of Chicago Press has published this new addition to the series Historical Studies of Early America. The authors, Patricia Cline Cohen, Helen Horowitz, and Timothy J. Gilfoyle, launched the work at an AAS public lecture, and—so far—reviews have appeared in the *New York Times Sunday Book Review* and London's *Daily Telegraph* and *Times Higher Education*.

The *Flash*, the *Whip*, the *Rake*, and the *Libertine*—four newspapers that describe sex and the 1840s city—are the source for this study, and they are among the most frequently called-for newspapers in the collections of the American Antiquarian Society. These “disreputable newspapers” are now the focus of an academic book. Cohen describes herself as the detective and genealogist on the team. By her calculation, based on the 104 issues that survive in the AAS collection, some 142 appear to have been printed. A group of 10 arrived fairly recently as a gift to the Society, having been marked up and retained as evidence by the New York district attorney's office in libel and obscenity trials.

The impetus for publishing these newspapers appears to have come from the London newspaper press, where the *Town* chronicled its world of prostitution. The five men who became the editors of the New York newspapers featured in *The Flash Press* were, in Cohen's view, “remarkably talented men” attuned “to the brothel world and also to the saloon culture and competitive athletic sporting life of ... the fast young men of the city.” The pages that they produced included articles, gossip columns, illus-



The Flash Press author-editors, from left: Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, Timothy J. Gilfoyle, and Patricia Cline Cohen. Doris O'Keefe photograph.

trations, advertising (“wants-to-know” columns), and letters to the editor, some purported to have come from great distances away. She discovered how these ventures were produced and financed in the records of a court case that described the production of the *Sunday Flash* in late 1841. Respectable newspapers' complaints about competition from the flash press resulted in the indictment of four of the editors. Unable to revive their newspapers after these episodes, the editors moved on. They had established a genre that would emerge in New York again and elsewhere in the United States, and they had made it clear that New York was the nation's center of publishing.

Gilfoyle's contribution to the book and the program was a discussion of libertine republicanism, his definition of the bond that united the strange bedfellows who made up the editorial departments of the flash press. They promoted male heterosexual indulgence, defended prostitution, espoused a radical, democratic critique of privilege and hierarchy, and expressed hostility to organized religion. But it was still the nineteenth century, and “the liberty promulgated by this new journalism proved short-lived.” The editors who had been protected by the right to free speech would be “challenged by that very system. They were sued.”

Helen Horowitz's contribution stems from her interest in the definition of obscenity and in its use as a way to charge the editors with malfeasance. The arrests and subsequent trials of the editors played “a key, but largely forgotten, role in the national struggle between censorship and the rights of free expression.”

Most of the editors went on to careers in journalism, leaving their mark on publications such as the *National Police Gazette*

and on other forms of entertainment. Some also had brushes with the law. By midcentury the genre was transformed and transplanted, often with “muted erotic elements,” although the printing subculture based on sexuality sharpened its focus on visual depictions and abandoned political criticism.

From 1843, when they were shut down, until 2008, these bawdy newspapers and their story have been in the purview of collectors and archival scholars, but now they are back in circulation. In addition to the illustrated introductory essays, *The Flash Press* includes sections of transcribed excerpts, a collection of the illustrations by John Manning, and a foldout facsimile of the front page of the *Sunday Flash* for October 17, 1841.

Patricia Cline Cohen, Timothy J. Gilfoyle, and Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz. *The Flash Press: Sporting Male Weeklies in 1840s New York*. University of Chicago Press, in association with the American Antiquarian Society, 2008. 288 pp., 49 halftones. Cloth \$50.00 (ISBN: 978-0-22611-233-6); paper \$20.00 (ISBN: 978-0-22611-234-3).

The Newspaper and the Culture of Print in the Early American Republic PERSPECTIVES ON THE AAS SUMMER SEMINAR

LEADER'S VIEW

One day we marveled at the first newspaper printing of the Declaration of Independence in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*; another day we peeked at copies of the *Weekly Rake* and the *Venus' Miscellany*, two salacious New York “racy papers” of the 1840s and '50s. From small-format colonial newspapers of the early eighteenth century to huge blanket-sheet story papers of the 1850s, the 2008 Summer Seminar in the History of the Book was knee-deep in newsprint.

Although they are not “books,” of course, newspapers have always been an integral part of American print culture and a major component of AAS collections of early American imprints. So in 2008, for the first time, the summer seminar was devoted to the study of newspapers. The seminar was led by two historians of newspapers and journalism, David Paul Nord (Indiana University) and John Nerone (University of Illinois). They were ably assisted by AAS staff members Vincent Golden (curator of newspapers), and Gigi Barnhill (Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Graphic Arts). For one day Jeffrey Pasley (University of Missouri) joined the group as guest instructor.

The twenty seminar participants were chosen to represent a broad range of interests in the history of print culture. Several were students specifically of newspaper history, but most were drawn to newspapers as part of broader interests in literature or cultural history. Eight of the participants came from English or literature departments, seven from history departments, three from communication or journalism, one from religious studies, and one from professional library service. More than half were Ph.D. candidates, and the rest ranged across the ranks of professorship.

As expected, the AAS collections provided a splendid laboratory for the study of newspapers in eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century America. Since its founding by Isaiah Thomas in 1812, AAS has been one of the nation's leading collectors of newspapers. Thomas seeded the collection with significant runs of eighteenth-century papers that he had collected for his *History of Printing in America* (1810). Nearly 200 years later, AAS holds about 2 million original issues of more than 15,500 newspaper titles. And new issues and titles are added nearly every day.

The purpose of the seminar was to link newspaper history to what has come to be called the “history of the book” or the “history of print culture.” The guiding idea of book history is to place printed materials in the economic and cultural contexts of their production, distribution, and use. Context is key. In the seminar we focused on a variety of contexts that shaped the American newspaper in the decades after the Revolution: party politics, federal law and policy, business and technology, voluntary associations, and reader communities. We were especially interested in how readers actually used newspapers (and other print materials) in their daily lives.

The seminar unfolded over four days, with four intense sessions each day (and two wrap-up sessions tucked into the morning of day 5). Morning sessions were colloquium discussions of recent historical scholarship on newspapers; afternoon sessions were “hands-on” workshops with materials from the AAS collections. Our main goal was to allow participants to read and handle rare, historical newspapers—to get a sense of typography, paper, and design, as well as of content. But the sessions also involved work with other materials designed to set the newspaper—the physical artifact—in historical context. We looked at newspaper publishers' accounts and subscription books, at post office ledgers and laws, and at private letters and diaries.

One highlight of the afternoon sessions was a demonstration by Golden of Isaiah Thomas's eighteenth-century printing press, which the society has preserved. Another was a “show and tell” session led by Barnhill on the technology of illustration printing in the early nineteenth century.

Although the days were packed with print, evenings were times for socializing, including a visit to another institution important to the history of Worcester: Ralph's Chadwick Square Diner. In the early twentieth century, Worcester was a leading center of dining-car manufacture in America, and several of these Worcester Lunch Car Company creations are still in business around town. And just as they were a hundred years ago, they remain wonderful places to grab a sandwich, sip a beer, or—à propos of the summer seminar—read a newspaper.

David Paul Nord, Indiana University



Lowest step, left to right: Theresa Strouth Gaul, Duncan Koerber, David Nord, John Nerone, Chalet Seidel, Kristen Doyle Highland, Paul Erickson. Row 2: Joseph Adelman, David Wallace, Kristin Stone, Kirsten Wood, Sara Babcox First, Betsy Klimasmith. Row 3: Gene Allen, Barton Price, Steve Smith, Georgia Higley, Karen Roggenkamp, Carol Humphrey, Brian Sweeney, Ben Fagan. Row 4: Frank Fee, Jr., Rick Bell.

RESPONSES

First, a confession: What initially attracted me to this year’s summer seminar was not the chance to visit the American Antiquarian Society specifically—as a Canadian, I didn’t know much about it, to be honest—but my admiration for the work of the two seminar leaders, a fascination with newspapers in the early American republic, and the opportunity to meet scholars and graduate students from other disciplines who share my interests.

But by the time the seminar was over—in fact, within a day or so of my arrival—it became clear that AAS is a remarkable place, welcoming to researchers, and endowed with amazing collections and expertise among its staff. It’s impossible to capture in a few paragraphs the richness and variety of the materials laid out for us every afternoon, carefully chosen to illustrate the themes featured in the reading-intensive morning sessions. Isabelle Lehuu’s 2000 book describes the United States antebellum press as a “carnival on the page.”¹ Well, we had a daily carnival on the reading stands, from high seriousness of purpose (initial printings and commentary on the Declaration of Independence) to the fantastically excessive, blanket-sized “Quad” editions (the blockbusters of their day, I suppose), scurrilous gossip sheets, and original diaries of printers and readers. There were chances to read and handle famous papers such as the 1830s-era New York *Sun* (surprisingly, half the size of today’s tabloids) and *Herald* (where the maddening self-assurance of James Gordon Bennett’s voice prefigured, for me at least, every wise-guy columnist who has followed in his churning wake).

The AAS policy of putting the physical objects into researchers’ hands, and not relying on microfilm, is (in my experience) unique among institutions with holdings of printed matter, and it has a powerful effect. The history of the book is largely about the physical, printed object, not just the abstract text; and we had the luxury of immersing ourselves in the physicality of print and its processes. Vince Golden’s demonstration of an eighteenth-century hand press—“Old No. 1,” which Isaiah Thomas brought to Worcester in 1775—and Gigi Barnhill’s step-by-step deconstruction of the painstaking process of chromolithography (using, as always, authentic historical materials) took us even deeper into the physical world of print.

There is much more to say about my time in Worcester: how much I enjoyed meeting fellow researchers and the fiercely bright graduate students; how much I appreciated the care and thought that Nord and Nerone put into the readings and seminar discussions; how good the cranberry-walnut pancakes were at the Miss Worcester diner. But one of the main things I learned was this: The American Antiquarian Society is a treasure, somehow combining a remarkable collection, scholarly and curatorial rigor, and an easy, welcoming informality. I also found that AAS has quite a good run of the Quebec *Gazette* from 1764 onward, just after the British conquest of Canada—a terrific reason to schedule an early return trip.

Gene Allen, Ryerson University

¹ Isabelle Lehuu, *Carnival on the Page: Popular Print Media in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

My application letter for the 2008 summer seminar declared that I would be “particularly eager to learn more about early modes of production, including how newspapers were financed, printed, and distributed.” Knowing little about how the seminar would be organized, I intended to gain such knowledge primarily through secondary readings and lively discussions. I was certainly not disappointed in this regard, but what I had not expected was the opportunity to investigate the labor behind early American newspapers through hands-on research in the Society’s stunning collections. Seminar leaders David Paul Nord and John Nerone selected an array of texts for us to peruse, handle, and (for some of us at least) be awed by. My own work deals with the African American press, so when we were greeted by actual issues of *Freedom’s Journal* and the *North Star*—titles I had viewed only online or accompanied by the buzz of a microfilm reader—I stood amazed. Beyond appealing to my own love for the physical object, original issues provided invaluable clues to the way these papers were read and circulated. One of the issues of *Freedom’s Journal*, for example, has inscribed in ink above its masthead the title of another paper, the *Philanthropist*. The editors of *Freedom’s Journal*, I learned, must have sent their paper to this outlet, and presumably to many others, in the hope that articles from their own numbers—and favorable notices advertising their endeavor—would appear in the pages of a sympathetic journal. Moreover, postal records noted the delivery of one newspaper to the office of another, further demonstrating how a common practice bound newspapers together across the early republic. Aiding in our understanding of a journal’s mode of production, Curator of Newspapers Vince Golden enthusiastically demonstrated how many steps were involved in the actual printing of an issue, with an assist from AAS founder Isaiah Thomas’s original press. Moreover, Curator of Graphic Arts Gigi Barnhill used selections from the Society’s collection of relief cuts and lithographs to help explain the painstaking labor involved in creating a single newspaper illustration. The seminar’s five days were filled with such dis-

coveries, opening up numerous new avenues of research to pursue, and presenting me with tools to aid me on my journey.

Ben Fagan, University of Virginia

PARTICIPANTS

Joseph Adelman, Ph.D. candidate in history, Johns Hopkins University; Gene Allen, associate professor of journalism, Ryerson University; Richard Bell, assistant professor of history, University of Maryland; Benjamin Fagan, Ph.D. candidate in English, University of Virginia; Frank Fee, associate professor of journalism, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Sara Babcox First, Ph.D. candidate in history, University of Michigan; Theresa Gaul, associate professor of English, Texas Christian University; Kristen Doyle Highland, Ph.D. candidate in English, New York University; Georgia Higley, director of publications, Library of Congress; Carol Humphrey, professor of history, Oklahoma Baptist University; Betsy Klimasmith, associate professor of English, University of Massachusetts, Boston; Duncan Koerber, Ph.D. candidate in communication, York University; Barton Price, Ph.D. candidate in religious studies, Florida State University; Karen Roggenkamp, assistant professor of literature and languages, Texas A&M University-Commerce; Chalet Seidel, Ph.D. candidate in English, Case Western Reserve University; Steven Smith, Ph.D. candidate in history, University of Missouri; Kristin Stone, Ph.D. candidate in history, University of California, Davis; Brian Sweeney, Ph.D. candidate in English, Brown University; David Wallace, Ph.D. candidate in English, Louisiana State University; and Kirsten Wood, associate professor of history, Florida International University.

SYLLABUS

The summer seminar syllabus has been posted on the AAS website. The URL is

<http://www.americanantiquarian.org/sumsem08syl.htm>.

James Raven Awarded the Jeanne S. DeLong Prize in Book History

James Raven was awarded the Jeanne S. DeLong Prize in Book History, given by the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) for *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450–1850* (Yale University Press, 2007). Raven, a member of AAS, is a contributor to the first volume of *A History of the Book in America*. This picture is courtesy of retired AAS Vice President for Collections and Programs John B. Hench, who attended the 2008 SHARP conference in Oxford. He was there to present a paper based on his forthcoming book on overseas editions and to take advantage of being in England to do additional research and note-checking on the British side of this Atlantic world story. His conference paper was titled “Propaganda, American War Books, and the Dilemmas of Translation, 1944–1946.”



Book Notes

Leon Jackson. *The Business of Letters: Authorial Economies in Antebellum America.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008. Cloth \$60.00 (ISBN-13: 978-0-8047-5705-8).

“The History of the Book, as a discipline, is a product of the current status of the book as commodity,” Leon Jackson writes, focusing in particular on analogies between the conditions of antebellum authorship and of modern, academic authorship (7). Jackson presents both as thoroughly enmeshed in a series of multiple economies. The most obvious of these economies—and the one, as Jackson points out, that has received the most critical emphasis—is that of professionalization and the specific connection between authorship and financial reward. Yet the great achievement of *The Business of Letters* is to move away from an emphasis on professionalization in order to think about a social history of antebellum authorship that focuses on non-monetary economies. In the antebellum period, Jackson shows, these economies were “embedded” (a term borrowed from economic anthropologist Karl Polanyi) within each other. The end of the nineteenth century, however, marked a shift toward social disembedding. It is only in the context of such disembedding, in which the financial component of authorship is separated from its social aspects, that categories such as “amateur” and “professional” become fully visible; to apply twentieth-century definitions of these categories to the antebellum period is inherently anachronistic.

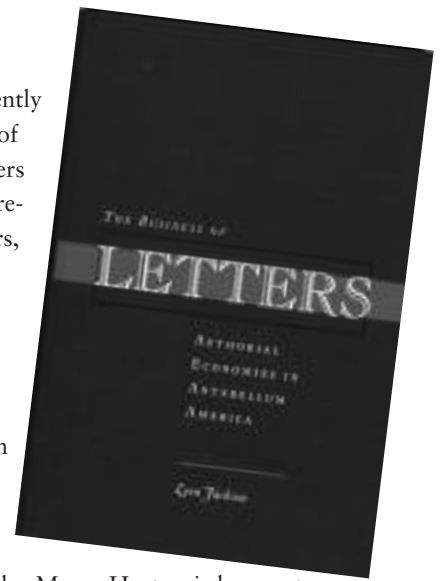
In order to explore this shift toward disembedding, Jackson presents specific case studies as well as richly described overviews of particular authorial economies, including (in order) patronage and charity; gift exchange in literary albums, letters, and newspaper exchange networks; rural economics and literary debt and credit; and emulation and prestige in literary competitions. Such economies, Jackson argues, were integral to literary “business” in the antebellum period. He is not interested in an “oppositional authorial economics” that sees gift exchanges as presenting “higher values” than those found in the marketplace; instead, he shows the ways in which these systems of exchange are mutually constitutive (91). Jackson’s expansive definition of “author” encompasses a range of nineteenth-century writers, from anonymous inscribers in friendship albums to editors posting public requests for payments in the pages of newspapers and magazines, and from anonymous entrants in literary competitions to canonical figures such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Herman Melville. Although some readers might wish for more exploration of the distinctions among these various types of authors, one of the virtues of Jackson’s archive is that it reveals the ways in which all of them were interconnected. In this exhaustively researched archive, the gift giving of *Southern Literary Messenger* editor Thomas Willis White is on a continuum with the verses written by school girls in their friendship albums, and Melville’s urban short story, “Tartarus of Maids,” is on a continuum with rural farmers who live in an economy of barter and trust. Authorship

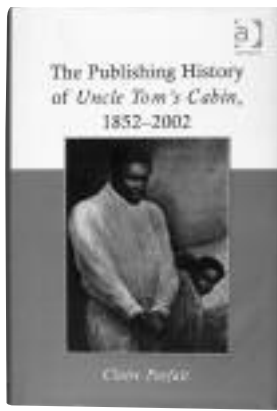
here is multiform and inherently collaborative, the work not of solitary geniuses but of writers highly influenced by the correspondents, editors, employers, literary judges, and readers with whom they worked.

Such juxtapositions provide provocative ways to recontextualize well-known antebellum authors. Jackson provides some models for these in the case studies in his book. For example, African American poet Charles Moses Horton is here not a proprietary author “defrauded” of his rights by his white master but, rather, a savvy negotiator of the economies of charity at work in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Thomas Willis White is not an ignorant amateur editor but a strategic negotiator of a personal, regional, and national gift economy, trading books and even china for articles and reviews. And Edgar Allan Poe is not just a “contentious personality” but an ambivalent participant in the “world of formal literary competitions” (218). Such studies broaden our understanding of these and other authors’ engagement with the market economy and open up a host of fresh approaches to rethinking the history of authorship in the antebellum period.

Jackson ends his study with a brief discussion of the authorial practices of William Charvat, the twentieth-century critic whose seminal work on the profession of authorship dominated the field in the second half of the twentieth century. As an author, Charvat was concerned with financial matters, sometimes choosing trade publishers in order to receive higher payment. But he was also concerned with many of the other economies that Jackson studies in *The Business of Letters*, sending copies of his books to colleagues, for example, and keeping track of those who had or had not acknowledged this gift. In the end, Charvat’s own career—like those of many modern academics—suggests that a concern with books as commodities is always accompanied by—or, in Jackson’s terms, “embedded in”—a gift economy that is at the heart of peer review and scholarly exchange. Jackson did much of the research for this book at the American Antiquarian Society and clearly registers his own “debt of thanks” to its staff and visiting researchers (vi). *The Business of Letters* is a significant contribution to studies of antebellum authorship. Yet some of its greatest insights concern the history of the book as a field and the ways in which the continued vitality of that field depends not only on its professional status but also on precisely the kinds of collegial exchange that AAS fosters through its many programs, including this newsletter.

Susan S. Williams, Ohio State University





Claire Parfait. *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852-2002*. Aldershot, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007. Cloth \$89.95 (ISBN-13: 978-0-7546-5514-5).

The last couple of decades have witnessed a veritable explosion of scholarship on Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. For a novel once considered too popular, too saccharine, or too didactic to be taken seriously by critics, Stowe's first novel has now achieved a stable position in the American literary canon. Indeed, Claire Parfait's new study of the novel's publishing history is ample evidence that there remains ever more to say about this text.

Parfait's *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin* is the first full-length study to address the novel from the perspective of book history. Although aspects of this study cover familiar territory (particularly work done by Susan Belasco, Barbara Hochman, and Michael Winship), Parfait is the first to offer a comprehensive study of the history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the publishing marketplace, from its initial serial publication in the *National Era* to its recent release as an e-book. A case study of a single text, Parfait's book can be read not only as a history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* but also as an account of the literary publishing industry as it developed in the United States. Over the course of this meticulously researched study, we see the shift from serials to cheap paperbacks, the emergence of illustrated editions and highbrow periodicals, and the rise of library and teaching volumes.

Parfait's chronologically organized study begins with Stowe's well-documented desire to write a novel that would both contribute to the antislavery cause and help support her family financially. When Gamaliel Bailey, editor of the antislavery weekly *National Era*, accepted the novel, neither he nor Stowe could have anticipated the number of issues in which it would appear. Parfait illuminates the extent to which the construction of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* became a collaborative enterprise among Stowe, her publishers, and her readers, explaining that "the favorable reactions of *Era* readers influenced both the final length of the novel and its material form as a book." Certainly the popularity of the serial attracted Stowe's first publisher, John Jewett. Although he did not pioneer the practice of using puffs or testimonials or typographical creativity, Jewett was the first to employ these tactics simultaneously to market a single novel, and the sense of urgency he created around *Uncle Tom's Cabin* helped make it the phenomenon it became.

Over the course of its various incarnations, the novel's content experienced subtle changes, which Parfait situates in relation to the demands of the publishing industry. For example, Parfait notes that Stowe changed Eliza from a "mulatto," in her manuscript, to a "quadroon," probably assuming that the whiter she was, the more sympathy white readers would feel for her plight. Similarly, in illustrations accompanying the novel, Uncle Tom grew older, presumably lessening the possibility that he would be perceived as sexually threatening. However, one thing that was *not* changed between the

serialized version and the book was the inclusion of a footnote attributed to the Reverend Joel Parker of Philadelphia, to whom Stowe ascribed a defense of slavery rooted in Christianity. She had apparently asked Jewett to remove the footnote in order to spare Parker's reputation, but the quotation nonetheless ended up in the book, sparking a public dispute between Parker and Stowe. In the end, the scandal only fanned the flames of the novel's popularity. This episode plainly underscores the centrality of the novel's material form to its reception; a quotation in a supposedly ephemeral newspaper with a limited audience has a significantly different valence than the same quotation in a bestselling novel.

One of the most valuable contributions of Parfait's study is her extensive discussion of the paratextual elements of various editions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Her careful attention to the packaging of the novel illuminates the rollercoaster arc of its reception and reputation. Stowe and the novel's publishers frequently changed the prefaces of the novel to appeal to different audiences. Although the novel's sales declined during the Civil War, sales rose in the Reconstruction years when a renewed interest in slavery and plantation life dominated the culture industry, and Parfait notes that the book was advertised as virtually apolitical. For southern audiences in the postbellum years, Stowe's introductions emphasized the novel's popularity, pitching it as a "timeless and innocuous work" without any controversial elements, whereas "memorial" editions in the 1890s often referred to its historical significance.

The expiration of the novel's United States copyright resulted in numerous cheap editions at the end of the century. These editions contributed to its declining literary valuation, and throughout the twentieth century, the status of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* remained in flux. Parfait notes that "paratextual elements occasionally clash within a single edition," as prefaces, covers, and introductions make conflicting or contradictory claims. Although interpretive depth is not the aim of this project, Parfait's study offers an examination of *Uncle Tom's Cabin's* inception, distribution, sales, reception, and reputation. What she has given us is an indispensable chronicle of the novel's life to date.

Sari Edelstein, Brandeis University

AMERICAN ♦ ANTIQUARIAN ♦ SOCIETY

a national library of American history

185 Salisbury Street

Worcester, Massachusetts 01609-1634

Telephone (508) 755-5221

E-Mail: csloat@mwa.org

Ellen Dunlap, President

The Book: Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture (ISSN 0740-8439) is published in March, July, and November by the American Antiquarian Society at the above address.

Editor: Caroline Sloat

The editor welcomes all news relevant to the interests of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

Copyright © 2008 by American Antiquarian Society

Joanne Chaison's Retirement

Research Librarian Joanne Chaison has left the corner office in Antiquarian Hall, which will be remembered as the setting for countless pleasant and stimulating conversations with fellows and readers. Joanne completed twenty-six years at AAS, serving the Society as broadsides cataloguer, cataloguer, and director of readers services before her appointment as research librarian in 1994. She excelled in connecting visiting scholars with the resources necessary for their hunches to blossom into dissertations and publications.

Along the way, Joanne's own scholarly publications also emerged. The opening event of the AAS summer seminars have included a unique icebreaker: an enticing and colorful array of the seminal publications in the history of the book, each exhibited with an example of the AAS primary source that informed that scholarly work. Every year, new publications were added—many of them becoming classics—so that what began as keeping track of AAS publications became codified in the bibliography of the history of the book. She also developed a program to introduce matriculants to a library truck filled with reference materials for the study of the history of the book. Beginning as a selection and discussion of books, this work evolved into an invitation to include it in *Perspectives in American*



I like books, those four-square
objects that you can hold in
your hand.... I like the people
who work with them, care for
them, collect them....

—Edwin Wolf 2nd



ON THE OCCASION of Joanne D. Chaison's retirement from the American Antiquarian Society, her *Perspectives on American Book History* co-editors,

Scott E. Casper & Jeffrey D. Groves

and the contributors to that volume,

Nancy Cook & Patricia Crain

Ann Fabian & Alice Fahs

Ellen Gruber Garvey & Robert A. Gross

Jen A. Huntley-Smith & Charles Johanningsmeier

Jill Lepore & Russell L. Martin

Trysh Travis & Glenn Wallach

Susan S. Williams & Paul M. Wright

with to celebrate Joanne's accomplishments and scholarly service. The Society has been at the forefront of promoting the history of the book, and Joanne has been deeply engaged in that effort. That engagement, of course, has been evident in her caring interactions with a multitude of scholars, in her informed suggestions about materials relevant to scholarly projects, and in the special way that she has brought researchers together 'under this generous dome.' But Joanne's efforts and contributions are also lastingly displayed in *PABH*, a book that took her insights into bibliography and archival materials and cast them far beyond Worcester.

In the bibliographical chapter of *PABH*, Joanne quotes Edwin Wolf on why he likes books and book people. Joanne directs Wolf's words to those 'patient souls who provide us with a veritable cornucopia of published reference sources for studying American book history.' We address Wolf's words back to Joanne, a worker in books whose outreach to book people has touched many scholarly lives, including ours.



PRINTED APRIL 2008 ON THE RITCHIE COLUMBIAN
AT THE FIRST-FLOOR PRESS,
THE LIBRARIES OF THE CLAREMONT COLLEGE.

Book History (2002), a volume that she co-authored with Scott Casper and Jeff Groves, working closely with Paul Wright, editor at UMass Press. Joanne was also instrumental in preparing the online edition of *Under Its Generous Dome* (<http://www.americanantiquarian.org/collections-guide.htm>), working with retired Vice President for Collections and Programs John B. Hench and Online Services Librarian Caroline Stoffel to include the current cataloguing status of collections and adding finding aids, inventories, and illustrated sidebars to the descriptions of AAS collections that appear in the printed version.

Joanne worked closely with the faculty of two of AAS's distinguished programs of long standing—the summer seminars in the history of the book and the undergraduate seminar offered at AAS each fall for a select group of undergraduates from nearby Assumption, Clark, College of the Holy Cross, WPI, and Worcester State College. To each of these programs she brought her deep knowledge of library resources and her enthusiasm for sharing them with both faculty and matriculants.

Joanne retired on May 1, 2008, taking with her the best wishes and deep gratitude of her colleagues and scholar-friends.

Caroline F. Sloat



News of the “Visual and Textual Worlds of Children” Conferences

The conference titled “Home, School, Play, Work: The Visual and Textual Worlds of Children” will take place in two parts, in two venues, November 14–15, 2008, and February 13–14, 2009.

Information about the first round of papers, to be given at the American Antiquarian Society on November 14 and 15, 2008, is now available on the AAS website, where a registration form and information about hotel accommodations may also be found. The deadline for registration is Friday, October 20. The AAS conference is sponsored by the Center for Historic American Visual Culture (CHAViC) and the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture (PHBAC) at the American Antiquarian Society, in conjunction with Worcester Polytechnic Institute and the Cotsen Children’s Library at Princeton University.

The second part of the conference will take place in Princeton, New Jersey, on February 13 and 14, 2009, sponsored by the Cotsen Children’s Library.

www.americanantiquarian.org

01609-1634

Massachusetts

Worcester

185 Salisbury Street

Society

Antiquarian

American



Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No 416
Worcester, Mass.
01609-1634