



The Book

Number 6, July 1985

Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture
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Letter from Paris

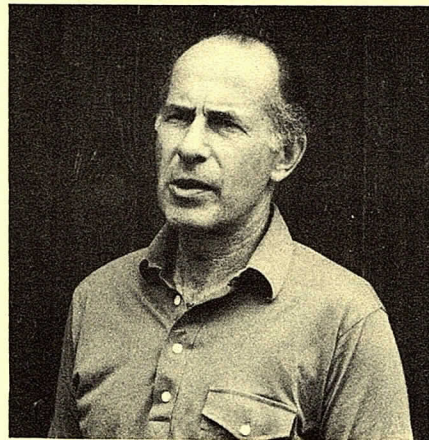
Paris in May belongs to the Parisiens . . . and to the French who, in this month of holidays (May Day, VE Day, Ascension, Pentecost), flock to the city to immerse themselves in museums new and old, in quarters like the Marais—where strollers with their green Michelins in hand are more likely to be French than German or American—and in stores large and small, all of them announcing “soldes” or “reductions.” Among the thousand and one pleasures that this city provides for the sympathetic stranger, few surpass that of lingering in the Luxembourg Gardens on a holiday afternoon in perfect weather. A week ago, the woman who rents toy sailboats had not yet emerged, but on this afternoon twenty or thirty small children, charming beyond belief in suits and dresses, watch their boats anxiously as they careen in a strong breeze around the pond. Elsewhere, the Grand Guignol is performing, and for those who are young in size as well as in heart, there is the thrill of riding in a donkey cart. The whole is a dreamlike scene, vast in scale yet strangely intimate and immediate. The French still use their parks, as perhaps we have never learned to do.

A different species of pleasure awaited those who went to hear Peter Laslett speak at the Collège de France on the intergenerational structure of the family, past and present. Highly statistical and speculative, his talk was punctuated by prophecies of crisis. When it came time for questions, a hand went up at the very back of the room—beware in France of those who choose to sit in the last row—and suddenly we were listening to Louis Henri, the veritable founder of historical demography and the man whose use of French parish registers inspired the studies that lay behind *The World We Have Lost*. The thrust of Laslett’s lecture was that there were very limited intergenerational structures in early modern Europe (under “unfavorable demographic conditions”) as contrasted with substantial structures in the middle of the twentieth century, a schema that prompted another back-of-the-room witticism that, the less connected the generations, the greater the power of tradition, and vice versa.

But what of the history of the book? One active lieu remains the seminar that Roger Chartier directs in the setting of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. An institution without any American equivalent, the EHESS is both a graduate school and a research center, as well as the world capital of the “Annales” school and, to those on the outside, a special

sort of “club.” The EHESS is all of this and more, an institution that welcomes a stream of visitors from abroad on the order of a hundred or so a year. Thus had Chartier and his audience listened, this late winter and spring, to Paul Saenger, Raymond Birn, Robert Darnton, and myself, among others, speaking on their recent work. If it sometimes seems that the French, in analyzing culture and society, use a quite private language, any such impression is checked by the evident cosmopolitanism and generosity that the EHESS in general, and Chartier in particular, manifest toward others. A further case in point: Chartier spent a recent session of his seminar summarizing at length Cathy Davidson’s evidence of readers’ notations (the kind of research she pursued as a fellow at AAS last summer) in copies of early American fiction—evidence that Chartier, like Davidson, hoped would provide further insight into the practice of reading in past times.

Indeed, the history of reading has been of particular
(cont. on p.2)



Larzer Ziff

Larzer Ziff to Lecture on The Book and Literary History

Larzer Ziff, professor of English at The Johns Hopkins University, will deliver the third annual James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture on Tuesday, November 5, 1985. His lecture, entitled “Upon What Pretext?: The Book and Literary History,” will be given in Antiquarian Hall at 5 p.m. The lecture is open to the public at no admission. A dinner, priced at \$16.00 per person, will follow. Those wishing to reserve places at dinner should send payment to Ann-Cathrine Rapp at the American Antiquarian Society, 185 Salisbury St., Worcester, Mass. 01609, by Friday, November 1.

Paris (cont. from p.1)

interest to Chartier for a number of years. Earlier this year, Éditions Rivages brought out *Pratiques de la Lecture*, a collection of essays by a diverse group of historians, all of them French with the exception of Robert Darnton. The closing text is an interview/debate/discussion between Chartier and Pierre Bourdieu that is informed by the conference but ranges more widely. Here we find, reiterated in the space of several pages, the assumptions and categories that Bourdieu brings to the study of culture. Most notable is the argument that culture is always a matter of politics, that is, that it always involves relationships of power. Bourdieu also stresses the importance of knowing, first and foremost, from whom and where a text or statement emanates; he maintains that the "whereness" tells us more about a text than its ostensible contents. Bourdieu extends this principle into a general critique of intellectuals and their efforts to describe the past. In effect, he insists that everyone become self-critical about the lever he or she leans on to move the world, to organize reality. Under the impetus of this critique, the words "reading" and "book" assume complicated identities!

Bourdieu, too, has left his mark on another new book, Alain Viala's *Naissance de l'écrivain* (Les Éditions de Minuit, 1985), a social history of the writer in seventeenth-century France.

An excellent bookstore at which to find these books and almost any others emanating from the EHESS, is Librairie du Regard, directly across the street from the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme at 41, Rue du Cherche-Midi, 75006 Paris. As for restaurants, I can gladly add my voice to the general chorus of approval for Patricia Wells's *The Food Lover's Guide to Paris*.

D.D.H.

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The Editors welcome all news relevant to the interests of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

Notes on Research Collections

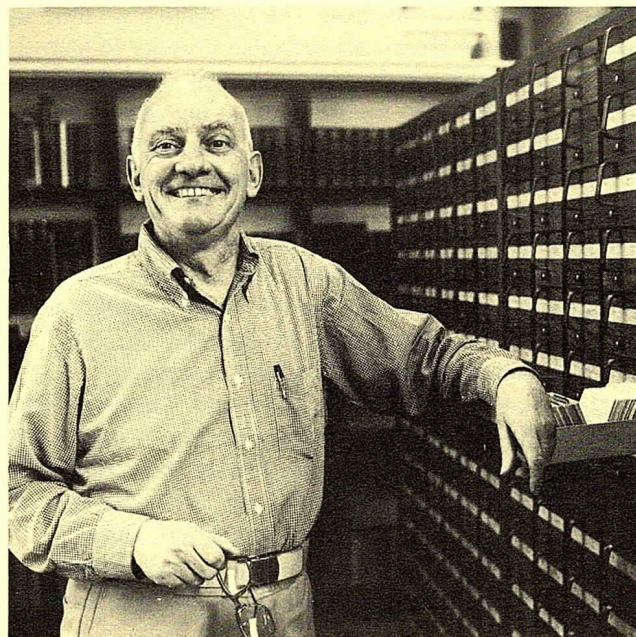
AAS IMPRINTS FILE

The imprints file at the American Antiquarian Society, thought to be a feature unique among American libraries, is located near, and is an adjunct to, the Society's card catalogue of early printed works. Like the catalogue, it was developed over a period of forty years by the Society's former chief cataloguer, Avis Clarke, and has been continued through the present by her successors.

Whereas the Society's general card catalogue treats books and pamphlets as texts and enters them under their authors, titles, subjects, and other points of reader access, the imprints file records these materials as artifacts in early American printing history. Items are entered individually under date of printing, again under place of publication, and again under the names of their printers and publishers.

These are the usual three components of an imprint, hence the collective name "imprints file" for this other card catalogue, whose three divisions are called the chronological file, the geographical file, and the printers' file. Each American book or pamphlet from 1639 through 1820 (and now increasingly through 1830) appears in all three files, under each of these aspects. Under each place name or printer, the entries are again filed chronologically, so as to constitute a printing history in card form.

In the printers' file, each series under a printer's name is preceded by a so-called printer's history, typed on a series of colored cards, presenting a chronological career outline. This account gives the exact years during which a printer worked in different areas of the book trade, or printed in different towns; it also lists any periods in which the printer was associated with other printing firms. In addition, a few basic facts of personal biography are included in these condensed occupational histories.



Richard Anders and the File

The bibliographical sources for these printing biographies are not included in the printers' history cards, but are recorded separately in a file in the catalogue department called the printers' authority file. Nearby are six other drawers of printers' histories not yet included in the printers' file—usually because they are later in time, occasionally because we have no imprints with these printers' names as yet. These records were all compiled by Miss Clarke, in addition to the many hundreds appearing in the printers' file.

Before the advent of computerized production of cards, the Society's catalogue cards were typewritten. A short form was adopted for typing up the imprints file cards, briefly giving author, title, and imprint. The full bibliographical description of the book or pamphlet was found in the main (alphabetical) catalogue. Today, cards produced for both the Society's general card catalogue and the imprints file contain full bibliographical information.

Richard Anders
American Antiquarian
Society

Research Notes

WRITING, ORALITY, AND POWER IN REPUBLICAN AMERICA

This study examines the rhetorical form of the changing relationship between writing and orality in America from the early eighteenth to the early nineteenth century. I begin with the assumption that writing and speech are not simply different techniques of language, with a fixed relation to each other, but are rather practices varying from context to context and taking on different shapes, given different rhetorical and political conditions. I therefore discuss phenomena ranging from the role of the Virginia gentry in mediating literate and oral worlds to the politicization of print in the urban seaports, arguing that writing and speech are differently defined and opposed in the thought and practice of these settings.

My aim is less to provide an exhaustive analysis of the subject in all possible settings than to show that different rhetorical strategies were in place. I then focus on the roles of print, writing, and speech in what J. G. A. Pocock calls "the language of republicanism," showing how they shaped and were shaped by the republican paradigm. This argument is developed in explications of the Zenger case, the career of Benjamin Franklin, and the establishment of a written constitution (with the changed understanding of legitimacy that it entailed).

Given the varying practices of writing in the period, I find it imperative to ask what the consequences of such differences are for literary criticism. I examine in detail, for example, just what republican writers meant by such terms as "literature," and address the difficulties that their ideas and practices pose for literary histori-

ans. Those difficulties are examined in a reading of Charles B. Brown's *Arthur Mervyn*. But it is also curious to note that an avowedly literary culture arose in the early nineteenth century alongside what can only be described as a cult of oratory. I conclude by examining the relation between this remarkable rise in the prestige of certain forms of orality (culminating in the career of Daniel Webster) and the development of a recognizably modern understanding of literary practice—a relation conveniently seen in Emerson, for whom (and in whom) the poet and the orator were sometimes indistinguishable.

Michael Warner
The Johns Hopkins
University

Book History Scholars Awarded 1985-86 Fellowships

Two scholars awarded AAS fellowships for 1985-86 are working on topics in American book history. Charles E. Clark, a University of New Hampshire historian, was awarded an Albert Boni Fellowship for work on his study of "The Public Prints: An Essay in Anglo-American Journalistic Origins." James R. Raven, a doctoral candidate in history at Cambridge University's Pembroke College, will research "The Commercialization of the Booktrade" at AAS as a Kate B. and Hall James Peterson Fellow.

Raven was also granted a fellowship by the Newberry Library to work in Chicago on the same subject. He was one of the two scholars awarded fellowships by both AAS and the Newberry as part of a new, informal joint fellowship arrangement.

Book-Trade Manuscripts Discussed at Oxford

Worcester College, Oxford University, was the setting in mid-April for the Oxford Seminar on Book-Trade Archives, which was attended by more than three dozen invited librarians, archivists, publishers, and scholars. The purpose of the gathering was to discuss, at the international level, the availability, accessibility, and usefulness of manuscript and archival material pertinent to historians of printing, publishing, and related book trades.

Organized by Michael Turner of the Bodleian Library and Giles Barber of the Taylor Library, both at Oxford University, the meeting was a sequel to a more general nuts-and-bolts meeting of several key people concerned with the history of the book in their respective countries that was held at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, West Germany, in the spring of 1983.

The sessions over the three-day conference were organized along two basic lines. First were several sessions devoted to nation-by-nation reports on the current state of such collections and on scholarly access to them. Among the countries surveyed in this manner were Great Britain, the United States, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and, collectively, several Eastern European states. The organizing principle for the second group of sessions was topical rather than national. Thus individual sessions were devoted to such subjects as "Book Trade Archives: Official Control and the Trade," "Book Trade Archives and Copyright," "Book Trade Archives and the Technical Historian," "Book Trade Archives as a Source of Biographical Information on Members of the Trade," "Book Trade Archives: International Markets and Economics," and "Book Trade Archives and the Literary Historian."

Much of the talk focused on matters relating to historical materials of use to scholars of the book trades, but other discussion concerned the problem of future scholarly access to archival materials still in active files in present-day printing and publishing firms. Indeed, a not-so-hidden agenda item of the seminar was to spur the interest of modern-day book-trade executives in confronting the issue of how the archives under their care may be preserved and made useful for coming generations of historians, whether in-house or in a research library.

Matters of special interest to historians of the book in American culture were presented at the conference by several individuals. Alice D. Schreyer, now of Rutgers University, spoke about her just-completed project as a consultant to the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress to prepare a selective guide to resources at LC for the study of the history of the book. This work is scheduled for publication next year. William L. Joyce, of the New York Public Library, spoke about a pilot project under his direction to test feasibility and methodology involved with compiling a guide to book-trade archival and manuscript materials located in American repositories. This pilot project is being carried out under the auspices of the Bibliographical Society of America (in cooperation with the Center for the Book and AAS), and is being funded by a grant to BSA from the H. W. Wilson Foundation. James J. Barnes, a Wabash College historian, was the principal involved in the session dealing with copyright and the records that that legal institution has generated for the book-trade historian. The undersigned discussed the manuscript holdings of the American Antiquarian Society relevant to the history of the book, reiterated the willingness of the Society's Program in the History of the Book in American Culture to cooperate with other institutions in stimulating an awareness of book trade archives as historical sources, and pledged that the pages of this newsletter, *The Book*, would continue to be available to archivists and researchers for the dissemination (under the "Notes on Research Collections"

heading) of thumbnail descriptions of such materials.

The presentations of others at the conference—and not just the more obvious cases of those representing Great Britain and Canada—reminded this participant just how important an international, not just an interdisciplinary, perspective is to the study of the history of the book in American culture.

With respect to bibliographical control over the sort of documentary material discussed at this conference, the position of the United States seems relatively advanced—in potential at least, if not yet in actuality. A single-institution guide like that to the LC's collections prepared by Schreyer provides a methodology, viewpoint, and incentive to emulation, and would be valuable for those reasons alone even if it were not a guide to a repository of such obvious importance and richness as LC. The BSA project, if carried beyond the pilot stage to completion, should provide a rational method for undertaking such a task on a national scale. Finally, the recently instituted RLIN format for the machine-readable cataloguing of manuscript collections ought to provide a means for the even wider dissemination of information about book trade archival collections and might also provide a standardized reporting structure that could be widely followed.

Although this was an international conference, the conclusion drawn by the participants was that for the time being much of the work of collecting, preserving, and making accessible the documentary heritage of the book trades must proceed country by country. Nevertheless, some first steps can and should be made toward control of such resources at the international level. Joyce offered to circulate information about the RLIN archives and manuscripts format to all participants. Turner, one of the conference hosts, pledged to continue what he had done before the seminar, that is, to collect and circulate sample collection descriptions to provide a range of useful models. It was further agreed that various kinds of articles on the general conference theme, if published in scholarly and library journals around the world, could have a salutary effect in stimulating a continuing interest in this vital subject.

J.B.H.

First AAS Summer Seminar Concludes

The first AAS Summer Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture concluded just as this issue of *The Book* was going to press. All indications were that it was a highly successful undertaking.

The theme of the ten-day seminar, led by Stephen Botein of Michigan State University, was "The Making of Literate America: Diffusion of Culture Based on Printing, 1759-1850." In addition to seminars with various scholars in the field of the history of the book, participants made trips to Harvard University to examine several pertinent Harvard library collections and to Old Sturbridge Village to visit a restored nineteenth-century printing office.

Participants in the seminar were: Ralph J. Coffman, director, Burns Library of Rare Books and Special Collections, Boston College; Caroline R. Danchak, cataloguer, Watkinson Library, Trinity College; Cornelia Hughes Dayton, Ph.D. candidate in history, Princeton University; Christopher Densmore, associate archivist/librarian, State University of New York at Buffalo; Elizabeth Gifford, Ph.D. candidate in English and American literature, Brandeis University; Barry J. Hennessey, associate professor and head of technical services, Dimond Library, University of New Hampshire; Joan M. Hoy, Ph.D. candidate in American studies, Boston University; Jeffrey Hugh Kaimowitz, curator, Watkinson Library, Trinity College; Haynes McMullen, professor of library science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Michael Moon, Ph.D. candidate in English, Johns Hopkins University; June Namias, Ph.D. candidate in history, Brandeis University; Theresa Rini Percy, research librarian, Old Sturbridge Village; Catherine J. Quoyeser, Ph.D. candidate

in modern thought and literature, Stanford University; Elizabeth A. Swaim, special collections librarian and archivist, Wesleyan University; Barbara J. H. Taylor, Potomac, Maryland; Jonathan S. Tryon, associate professor, Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, University of Rhode Island; Michael D. Warner, Ph.D. candidate in English and American Literature, Johns Hopkins University; Steven Weiland, executive director, National Federation of State Humanities Councils; Bruce I. Weiner, associate professor of English, Saint Lawrence University; Robert D. Woodward, Ellis and Nelle Levitt professor of journalism, Drake University.

One of the products of the seminar was a selective bibliography prepared for and by the seminar participants. Copies of this bibliography, which focuses on scholarship of the last couple of decades, may be had by writing John B. Hench at AAS and enclosing a check or money order for \$2.50 to defray costs of copying, postage, and handling.



Pictured are faculty and participants present at the opening session of the Society's first Summer Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture: (seated, from left to right) Kaimowitz, Weiland, Weiner, Tryon, Warner, Woodward, Danchak, Swaim, Taylor, Namias; (standing, l. to r.) Hoy, Percy, Georgia Bumgardner (AAS), John Hench (AAS), Densmore, Gifford, Coffman, Moon, Hennessey, McMullen, Quoyeser, Dayton, and Botein. For full names and affiliations of the participants, see accompanying article. Hoy and Quoyeser are shown wearing the official seminar T-shirt, designed by Richard C. Baker, the Society's chief conservator.

Miscellany

The American Antiquarian Society has received a grant of \$49,700 from the Exxon Education Foundation of New York. The award will be used to help defray the general administration costs of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture, including print-

ing and office expenses, this newsletter, and a portion of staffing costs.

The Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago, the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, and the Illinois Center for the Book announce a two-day interdisciplinary conference on aspects of the social history of the American book dur-

ing the nineteenth century. The conference will be held in Chicago on Friday and Saturday, October 18-19, 1985. Ten invited speakers will present papers on broad problems of book production, distribution, and influence upon American society of the period, focusing upon the role of the book as the American frontier moved westward.

Conference registration forms and information on accommodations can be obtained by contacting Michael Hackenberg, Conference Director, Graduate Library School, University of Chicago, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

As part of its program to interpret the social and cultural life of Americans during the era of industrialization, the Strong Museum in Rochester, New York, will sponsor a symposium and exhibit on reading in America between 1840 and 1940. The symposium will be held on Friday, November 21, 1986. Proposals for papers are welcomed on topics in the popular, cultural, and social history of reading, especially work that considers relationships between reading and American material culture, e.g., public and private architectural space, household furnishings, popular and traditional art,

reading-related accessories, and books themselves. For further information, contact Mary Lynn Stevens Heining, The Strong Museum, One Manhattan Square, Rochester, New York 14607; telephone (716) 263-2700.

The *History of Reading News* is the newsletter of the History of Reading Special Interest Group (SIG) of the International Reading Association (IRA). Published twice a year, the newsletter provides information on papers presented at the group's annual meetings and at other conferences, on publications, and on other items relevant to the history of reading. For example, one issue listed nineteenth-century textbook collections. In addition, the newsletter includes three or four book reviews once a year.

Full membership in the History of Reading SIG is restricted to members of the International Reading Association, but non-IRA members may receive the newsletter. For information, write to the group's secretary, Margaret M. Waters, School of Education, Brooklyn College of CUNY, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210, or send dues of \$7.50 direct to the SIG treasurer, Janet Miller, UPO Box 99, NKU Campus Station, Highland Heights, Ky. 41076.

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