



The Book

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Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture
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1986 Summer Seminar

The Society's 1986 Summer Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture, which explored the theme of "The American Common Reader: Printing, Entrepreneurship, and Cultural Change, 1759-1840," was a successful undertaking, although it ended abruptly and tragically with the death (from a cerebral aneurysm at the age of forty-four) of seminar leader Stephen Botein before the last seminar session on June 24.

Eighteen historians, literary scholars, and librarians, from points as far from Worcester as California and Oregon, convened in varied but intensive sessions beginning June 14 in the Society's Goddard-Daniels House and Antiquarian Hall under the sensitive tutelage of Steve Botein, who had returned to lead the seminar for its second year.



Pictured are faculty and participants of the Society's second Summer Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture: 1st row--Harbert, Markoff, Lehuu, Prude, Botein, Winsell, Allen, Arbour; 2d row--Pennell, Haas, Sung, Bumgardner; 3d row--Zonghi, McKeever, Hoffman, Venezsky; 4th row--Rhineland, Cohen, Green; 5th row--Moss, Meerse, Otness, Fountain, Hench.

This year's participants were: Susan M. Allen, reference librarian, Denison Library, Scripps College; Daniel A. Cohen, Ph.D. candidate in history, Brandeis University; Gary Fountain, chair, Department of English, Miss Porter's School; Marilyn L. Haas, reference librarian, Lockwood Memorial Library, SUNY at Buffalo; Earl N. Harbert, professor of English, Northeastern University; Nicole Hoffman, Ph.D. candidate in American studies, University of Utah; Isabelle Lehuu, Ph.D. candidate in history, Cornell University; Jane L. McKeever, Ph.D. candidate in library science, University of Chicago; Mar-

jorie Markoff, cataloguer of special collections, Millersville University; David E. Meerse, associate professor of history, State University College, Fredonia, N.Y.; Richard J. Moss, associate professor of history, Colby College; Harold M. Otness, associate professor of library science, Southern Oregon State College; Melissa M. Pennell, assistant professor of English, University of Lowell; Mary F. Rhineland, assistant curator of manuscripts, New England Historic Genealogical Society; Carolyn H. Sung, executive officer, research services, Library of Congress; Richard L. Venezky, Unidel professor of educational studies, University of Delaware; Keith A. Winsell, free-lance editor, Thurmont, Md.; Roberta Zonghi, curator of rare books, Botton Public Library.

Last year's seminar had focused on the career of the Society's founder, Isaiah Thomas. Those seminarists ended their sessions with, in Botein's words, "a nagging sense that somehow something worth knowing about lay just over the horizon" that was marked by the retirement into scholarly pursuits, philanthropy, and gentility of the great Mr. Thomas. Therefore, the seminar syllabus was fine tuned to permit this year's participants much greater scope to investigate the changes wrought in American printing, publishing, and reading during the first four decades or so of the nineteenth century. Adding the career of Mathew Carey, the Irish-American publisher of Philadelphia, as a second focal point for study and discussion helped considerably to effect that goal. James N. Green, curator of rare books at the Library Company of Philadelphia, planned his residence at AAS as an Albert Boni Fellow to coincide with the seminar. Engaged as he is in a study of Carey's publishing career, Green added much to the concreteness of the seminar's analysis of Carey, who, with his traveling agent, the famed Parson Weems, brought a new sense of entrepreneurship to the American book trade beginning in the 1790s. In this transformation, the American Revolution looms large, for new forms of cultural authority emerged in its wake. An important result, in Botein's view, was a "de-gentrification" of print, brought about by new republican and evangelical forces.

The seminar's visiting faculty provided other valuable perspectives for the group. David Hall discussed the colonial New England world of print with its recycled texts by tracing with the participants the metamorphoses of Janeway's *Token for Children*. Jonathan Arac invited the seminarists to find the relevance for their work in the literary theories of Foucault and Raymond Williams.

Jonathan Prude postulated contrasting pictures of the industrializing New England countryside of the early nineteenth century that formed a principal locus for the new American common reader. Mary Kelley introduced the seminarists to the novel as an important genre in America by leading them in a stimulating discussion of *Hope Leslie* by Catharine Maria Sedgwick. Marcus McCorison described the organization and customs of eighteenth-century colonial printing houses and demonstrated the operation of the Society's wooden press that formerly belonged to Isaiah Thomas. Keith Arbour "made bibliography simple" and had the group folding sheets of paper into duodecimo signatures. Georgia Bumgardner provided a rich overview of graphic techniques and showed numerous examples of early American book illustrations, thus suggesting the intriguing possibilities inherent in a scholarly analysis of the relationship of image to text. John Hench set the visitors to leafing through bound newspaper volumes and collateral sources to ensure that all knew that when we talk about the history of the book we mean more than just books.

For respites from the daily grind at Worcester, the participants made field trips to Harvard's Houghton Library and to Old Sturbridge Village. At the Houghton, hosts Roger Stoddard and Katherine Pantzer generously brought out many treasures, including a rich and intriguing assortment of bibles in all sorts of formats, thus ably adding broader geographical and chronological context to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American imprints under scrutiny in the Society's own library. At Sturbridge, interpreters Donald Smith and Margaret Thompson joyfully demonstrated the printing and book-binding practices of a nineteenth-century rural New England printing office. This hands-on experience was a special pleasure for the three amateur printers among the group, and acted as "reality therapy" for the others,

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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.

according to one of the participants. There was, in fact, throughout the seminar a distinct emphasis on the materiality of the physical object—the book and other forms of print. This was both useful and healthy, although it contributed in part to the inevitable tensions in a seminar of this sort between the emphases on the specific, even exceptional, and on the general.

Except for the participants' own "book biography" reports, all other sessions were led by Steve Botein, in a characteristically enthusiastic, sympathetic, and stimulating manner. Steve was in on the planning of the summer seminar program almost from the beginning, and the intellectual shape of the first two undertakings bore Steve's unmistakable stamp. He was as giving a person intellectually as any scholar I have ever known. Devoid of pretense, he was also a great connector—a connector of disparate ideas and disparate people. His mind was strong on synthesis, which quality was especially useful in keeping a structured yet free-flowing summer seminar in the history of the book as intellectually coherent as it was. All who knew him will miss his cheery presence and infectious enthusiasm for all life offered.

J.B.H.

Wiggins Lecture Details

Cathy N. Davidson, professor of English at Michigan State University, will deliver the fourth annual James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture at 5 P.M., on Wednesday, October 29, 1986. The title of her lecture, which will take place in Antiquarian Hall, is "Ideology and Genre: the Rise of the Novel in America." The lecture is open to the public free of charge. A dinner, priced at \$17.00, will follow. Those wishing to reserve places at dinner should send payment to Ann-Cathrine Rapp at AAS, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, Mass. 01609 by Friday, October 24.



Cathy Davidson

Professor Davidson has taught in the Michigan State English Department since 1976. In 1980-81, she was visiting professor of American literature at Kobe College in Japan. She is a graduate of Elmhurst College and holds master's and doctoral degrees from the State University of New York at Binghamton. Among her fellowships are awards from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and AAS. Her next book, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*, is scheduled to be published by Oxford University Press this September.

Book Notes

THREE BOOKS ON LITERACY

Literacy continues to attract attention, and three recent books deserve brief notice here.

R.A. Houston pursues the connections between literacy (the ability to read and write) and social structure in *Scottish Literacy and the Scottish Identity: Illiteracy and Society in Scotland and Northern England 1600-1800* (Cambridge University Press, 1985). Quoting on his first page Peter Laslett's assertion (made in 1965) that "the discovery of how great a proportion of the population could read and write . . . is one of the most urgent of the tasks which face the historian of social structure," Houston employs the traditional method of signature counting to determine the numbers of people who were literate/illiterate in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland. Like David Cressy and Roger Schofield before him, he concludes that literacy strongly depended on occupation and had little to do with any system of state-sponsored education or modernization of the economy. Questioning the traditional assumption that Scotland was a disproportionately literate society, he dismisses the presumed influence of the Calvinist educational program. Houston's relentlessly economic point of view makes him uncomfortable with Lockridge's argument for the influence of religion in New England (see pp. 154-57); he concludes that "in the Old World the impact of religion was much attenuated by social and economic factors." His figures on book ownership (including some comparative materials) indicate severe limits on the ownership and circulation of books despite contemporary assertions to the contrary. Chapters on "oral culture and literate culture" and "the politics of literacy" stress "the continuing importance of oral culture" and the *conservative* function of increasing literacy.

For Houston the cup is half empty. For Jeffrey Brooks in *When Russian Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861-1917* (Princeton University Press, 1985) the cup is half full. Brooks owes something of a debt to Margaret Spufford (which he acknowledges) in that his starting point is a body of cheap books and newspapers roughly comparable to the chapbooks described in *Small Books and Pleasant Histories*. Only a few collections survive of the Russian equivalents, usually because, like Samuel Pepys in seventeenth-century Britain, one person

set out to collect the materials. Brooks provides us with an inventory of themes, as well as a detailed history of writers, publishers, and distributors. Like Spufford, he has to fall back on statistics at the printers' end in deducing that these books achieved wide readership. What is unmistakable, however, is the emergence of a commercial literature, as contrasted with the products sponsored by the state church or by educational reformers, that conveyed a striking set of messages to its readers—for example, the message of economic opportunity. A chapter on "science and superstition" demonstrates that the writers of this popular literature attacked folk superstitions. Anyone who is interested in late Victorian responses to emergent popular culture will find parallels in the hostile response of educated Russians to the new commercial literature.

Brian Stock's *The Implications of Literacy* (Princeton University Press, 1982) is hard going for the Americanist, since its subject is early medieval culture and many of the quoted texts remain in Latin (the bane of those of us who are "illiterate"). Yet the argument is brilliantly put: the intertwining of oral/literate cultures in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was much greater than we might at first suppose.

D.D.H.

MARKS IN BOOKS

The Houghton Library, Harvard University, has published an illustrated exhibition catalogue, *Marks in Books, Illustrated and Explained* (1984). We quote from the introduction by Roger Stoddard, who arranged the exhibition: "When we handle books sensitively, observing them closely so as to learn as much as we can from them, we discover a thousand little mysteries. Size and shape, covers and paper, types and arrangement, picture and ornament are messages that we can learn to read." The entries in the catalogue are variously amusing and informative. They include such phenomena as owner's signatures, printers' errata, indications of library ownership or placement, and the techniques of composition.

D.D.H.

Notes on Research Collections

THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY

This survey of the Huntington's archival resources in the history of American printing and publishing is not intended to be comprehensive but to provide a brief overview, showing the variety of materials in the Huntington and highlighting documents and collections that have been largely overlooked by historians.

Among the library's colonial-period holdings are several manuscripts dealing with printers' litigations. The first of these is a two-page memorial to the lieutenant governor of Massachusetts Bay, dated 1725, in which Boston printer Bartholomew Green defends his *Boston Weekly News-Letter*. Charged with inaccurate and distorted reporting of the liturgical practices and theological

teachings of Dr. Timothy Cutler, the pious and impartial Green staunchly holds his ground. The second item is an October 4, 1750, complaint presented by William Bradford in New York against Henry Holt for not paying £1,200 in printing bills. Another Bradford document is an undated solicitation for subscriptions to his printing of the "Acts of Assembly." The introductory paragraph gives the purpose of the 20-shilling subscription as "defraying the charge of reprinting." This is followed by 38 signatures.

The correspondence between the English publisher William Strahan and his friend the Philadelphia printer David Hall is a remarkable source of information on colonial American printing and its relationship to English publishing. Most of these letters are in the American Philosophical Society, but there is a small group of seven letters held at the Huntington. In them, Strahan writes about collecting debts, exchanging credit, and buying Caslon type for Hall.

Printing in eighteenth-century America was certainly a risky financial business, and this is supported by two letters from the Philadelphia printer Robert Aitken to entrepreneur John Nicholson, an associate of financier Robert Morris. In the first letter, of November 9, 1796, Aitken asks for money from his friend to pay the builders of his new printing shop and the salaries of "2 journey-men printers besides my son & 2 boys employed." Four years later, as a veteran printer, he warns Nicholson, "I am truly sorry to find you are determined on printing a news-paper—my mind recoils at the experiment, & much fear you will repent the business."

Complementing these manuscripts is a collection of printing miscellany from the early eighteenth century through the Civil War that was assembled by the Boston bookseller Charles Eliot Goodspeed and sold to Henry Huntington in 1922. This 800-piece collection consists of almost every type of ephemeral printing of the period, with a concentration on business printing and the Boston area. It contains maps, caricatures, invitations, and menus—everything from a 1744 Massachusetts lottery ticket to a May 26, 1868, gallery pass for the impeachment of the president. Of particular interest is the material relating to book publishing and selling. One of the items is an "Address to the Booksellers of United States," prepared by seven Philadelphia and Baltimore booksellers headed by M. Carey and Son. The 1820 address calls for a lowering of exorbitant book prices and a meeting of principal booksellers in New York to find a solution to the problem. It is a truly rare and extraordinary document.

One of the strengths of the library's literary holdings is in the nineteenth century, and the emphasis in this period is on authors' personal papers and manuscripts rather than on publishing archives. The obvious exception is the James T. Fields Collection, which includes over 4,000 letters from prominent American and English literary

figures to *The Atlantic Monthly* editor and junior partner in the firm of Ticknor and Fields. Much of this correspondence has been published, and a thorough study of Fields as editor was done by John C. Austin in his *Fields of The Atlantic Monthly* (1953). Both Fields and his wife Annie Adams Fields wrote extensively about their experience with writers, and many of their notes on this subject appear in the collection. In addition, the Huntington in 1979 was fortunate to acquire over 200 volumes from Fields's personal library.

Correspondence between American publishers and editors and their authors can be found throughout the literary file. Some of the least known are the papers of the printer and lawyer John Bouvier, who published law books, the most famous of which is his *Law Dictionary* (1839); the papers of the political scientist and educator Francis Lieber, particularly the correspondence dealing with his founding and editing of the *Encyclopedia Americana* (1829-33); and the collection of Frederic E. Lockley, Jr., an Oregon historian and one of the editors of the *Pacific Monthly*.

By far the largest printing archive in the library is that of the Merrymount Press and its founder, Daniel Berkeley Updike. Upon his retirement in 1941, Max Farrand, director of the Huntington, donated his personal collection of Merrymount Press imprints, which entailed ninety percent of the 762 titles and editions separately listed by Julian Smith in his bibliography. This was followed in 1949 by the purchase of the Merrymount Press library and type specimen collection. In 1953, the Merrymount business records and correspondence, containing 215,000 pieces that cover the period from 1893 to 1948, came to the library.

Will Bradley and Thomas Maitland Cleland, two important figures in American book design and graphic arts, have their careers well documented at the library. The Bradley Collection includes correspondence, posters, original art work, and a major portion of his ephemeral printing. Cleland's book and graphic designs are represented by an extensive collection of drawings, watercolors, and proofs, as well as by his file of photographic negatives.

The Huntington has not vigorously pursued archival records of Western American printers but has a fine collection of imprints of the best California printers. There are, however, several exceptions. Supplementing the massive Taylor & Taylor Archive in the Kemble Collections at the California Historical Society (reported in the last issue of *The Book*), the library has personal and business records of the San Francisco printer Edward DeWitt Taylor. Edwin Bliss Hill began printing on his own private press in Detroit in 1882, moved his press with him to Arizona in 1914, and continued printing small brochures and broadsides on Henry David Thoreau, Sherlock Holmes, and many other literary and Southwest

topics until his death in 1949. Hill's collection contains correspondence documenting his printing activities, as well as material by and about his friend the Chicago artist Frank Holme, of Bandar Log Press fame.

Alan Jutzi, Huntington Library

BOOK TRADES COLLECTION AT AAS

The Book Trades Collection in the manuscripts department at the American Antiquarian Society is ever growing and currently spans the years 1726-1939. Arranged chronologically, it includes information on American printing, publishing, bookselling, bookbinding, and public and private libraries. The collection is housed in three manuscript boxes and one oversize folder. A collection description and alphabetical checklist are available upon request.

The following diverse sources are contained in the collection: correspondence pertaining to the operation of several printing and publishing businesses; inventories and catalogues of almanacs, libraries, and school books; library subscription lists; receipts; accounts; petitions relating to duties on printers' trade materials; apprenticeship agreements; and printing businesses' deeds of sale. Many of the items in the collection are photocopies of originals held by several historical societies and archival repositories. For further information about the collection, please write or telephone the curator of manuscripts.

Barbara Trippel Simmons,
American Antiquarian Society

Reading Symposium at the Strong Museum

"Reading in America, 1840-1940," a symposium that will investigate the nature of reading and its effects on the American people, will take place at the Strong Museum in Rochester, New York, on Friday and Saturday, November 21 and 22, 1986. Among the participants are Michael Denning, Columbia; Sally F. Griffith, Villanova; M. Thomas Inge, Randolph-Macon; Virginia and Nicholas Westbrook, Minnesota Historical Society; Robert A. Gross, Amherst; Linda M. Kruger, Columbia; Larry F. Sullivan, CUNY; E. Suzanne Owens, Ursuline; David L. Barquist, Yale University Art Gallery; Joseph J. Corn, Stanford; Michael L. Berger, St. Mary's; and Marilyn L. Haas, SUNY-Buffalo. An exhibition entitled "At Home with a Book" will also be on view during the symposium.

Preregistration is necessary. Fees before October 31 are \$35 for museum associates, students, and senior citizens, and \$45 for nonmembers. After October 31, the fees will be \$40 and \$45, respectively. Single-day registration is available. For further information, contact Donna Lederer, Strong Museum Education Division, One Manhattan Square, Rochester, New York 14607; telephone (716) 263-2700, extension 213.

Author's Query

(We have received the following author's query from Cathy Davidson at Michigan State University. We offer it here, and indeed the editors welcome such submissions from scholars and researchers in the field.)

For a book in progress, "The Life and Times of *Charlotte Temple*: The Biography of a Book." I am especially interested in hearing from anyone who knows of first-hand accounts (either in published or private sources) of reading this novel or of interesting inscriptions or marginalia in copies of the book. Information or photocopies of any materials will be gratefully received and, of course, returned and acknowledged. --Cathy N. Davidson, Department of English, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. 48824

Mills College to Host Inaugural Lieberman Lecture

Mills College will host the American Printing History Association's first annual J. Ben Lieberman Lecture in typography and graphic arts on Thursday, November 6, 1986, on the Mills campus in Oakland. Claire Van Vliet, fine printer and proprietor of the Janus Press in Vermont for thirty years, will speak on developments in American fine press printing over the past decade. In conjunction with the Lieberman Lecture, Mills will present a major exhibition of Van Vliet's "paperworks" in the Antonio Prieto Memorial Gallery. The show opens with a reception on November 6 and continues through December 31.

In addition to the lecture and reception, Van Vliet will conduct several workshops for Mills College book arts students during a week-long residence on the Mills campus. There will also be a workshop on various printing and binding methods, open to the public by application only, at a cost of \$40. The public workshop will be held on Saturday, November 8, from 9:30 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Van Vliet's talk will begin at 8 P.M. in the Student Union on the Mills campus. A reception will follow the lecture. The public is invited to the lecture and reception-opening; there is no admission charge to either activity or to the ongoing exhibition. Gallery hours are 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., Tuesday through Sunday. For information, call (415) 430-3302, or contact APHA, P.O. Box 492, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163.

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University; Michael L. Turner, Bodleian Library; James M. Wells, Newberry Library; and Edwin Wolf, 2d, Library Company of Philadelphia.

ASECS Annual Conference

The American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies will hold its annual meeting April 22-26, 1987, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Scholars and graduate students who are working in the field of the history of the book in American culture may be interested in the following seminars that are among those to be presented at the conference: "The Language of Politics in the Age of *The Federalist*" (chair, Dan Ritchie, Dept. of English, Box 86, Bethel College, St. Paul, Minn. 55112); "The Bible and the 18th Century" (chair, Christopher Fox, Dept. of English, Wilkes College; fall, 1986, Dept. of English, Univ. of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind. 46556); "The Reading Trade: The Theory and Practice of Reading in the 18th Century" (chair, John A. McCarthy, Dept. of Germanics, Univ. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. 19104).

Graduate students are invited to submit papers to the conference. Submissions should be addressed to the respective seminar chairs.

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