

# THE BOOK

MARCH 2005, NUMBER 65

## Gustafson's Wiggins Lecture to Consider "Emerging Media of Early America"

Sandra Gustafson, associate professor of English, Notre Dame, will deliver the annual James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book on Friday, June 10, 2005, at 7:30 p.m. in Antiquarian Hall. The lecture will also serve as the keynote address for the conference "Histories of Print, Manuscript, and Performance in America" for which Gustafson has been the principal organizer and chair.

In "The Emerging Media of Early America," Gustafson will discuss print, manuscript, and performance as evolving and interacting textual media throughout the early period and up to 1900. Conventional media histories focus on print as an emerging technology, while assuming a static quality for oral or performance forms and manuscript. Over the years, the Wiggins Lecture have been conceived as a series of path-breaking studies in the history of the book. Gustafson's lecture will be squarely in this category. "In my lecture, I offer alternative histories to that conventional history, showing how theories of technology and history are bound up with the way we talk about textual media," she says. "So, for example, if we think about political oratory as it became an influential form in the Revolutionary and early national periods, with new modes of more democratic address being created (forms of rhetoric and delivery counting, in my mind, as a set of 'technologies,' as does the creation of new performance spaces such as the public balconies of Congress), we open up a different narrative about the technological evolution of performance. This narrative can then be extended to look at the rise of popular theater with new acting styles (also in a sense 'technologies'), new audio recording technologies, and improvements in acoustics in the late nineteenth century.

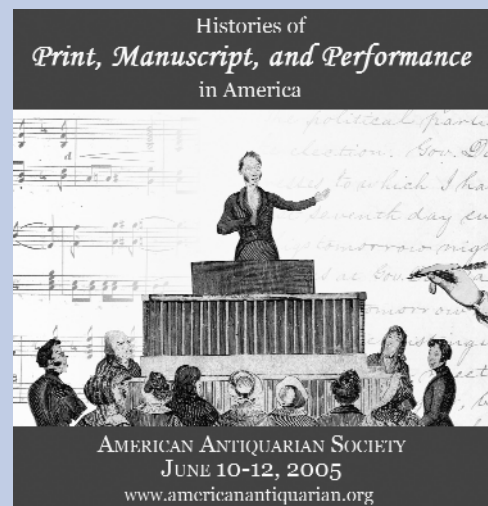
"Or if we look at Emily Dickinson's manuscript fascicles, which employ the medium of manuscript in novel ways that are central to her poetics, we see how the technological possibilities of manuscript change in relation to print and performance. Emerson predicted that the manuscript book or album would replace print as poetry's most important mode of circulation. 'A revolution in literature is now giving importance to the portfolio over the book,' he wrote in 1840, in an essay called 'New Poetry.'"

Gustafson plans to relate the framing of the issues in terms of technology and history to the current new media, especially electronic archives and scholarly tools. It should be pointed out

that Readex Corporation, which has collaborated with AAS for fifty years on the production of scholarly research tools, is a sponsor of the conference that features this lecture.

Gustafson is author of *Eloquence Is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America* (University of North Carolina Press, published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2000), book review editor of *Early American Literature* and director of graduate studies at the University of Notre Dame. Her current book project is "Speaking Democracy: Performance, Identity, and Civic Life in the Antebellum United States."

Following the twenty-one-year custom of publishing the Wiggins Lecture in the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* and separately following its delivery, Gustafson's presentation will appear in Volume 105, part 2. What is new this year is to present the lecture in the context of a conference that explores the lecture's theme. Conference registration is not a prerequisite for attendance at the Wiggins Lecture.



Further information about the conference program and registration procedures for "Histories of Print, Manuscript, and Performance in America" may be found in issue 64 of this newsletter and on the Society's website, [www.americanantiquarian.org](http://www.americanantiquarian.org). The conference will be held from June 10 to June 12, 2005, in Worcester.

---

---

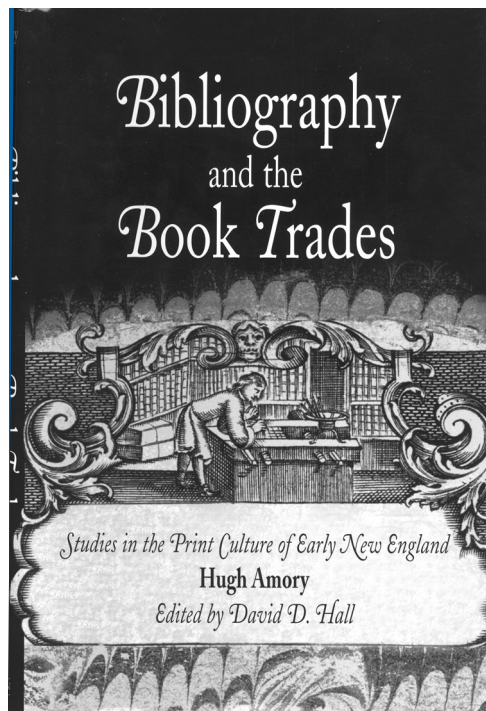
## Book Note

**Hugh Amory, *Bibliography and the Book Trades: Studies in the Print Culture of Early New England*. Ed. David D. Hall. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 174 + x pp; cloth \$49.95; ISBN 0812238370**

**H**ugh Amory (1930-2001) was an extraordinary chronicler of the history of book in early America. *Bibliography and the Book Trades* presents seven of his essays, revealing both the breadth of his attention and the sharpness of the gaze he directed at reading, printing, and the book trades. Considering subjects ranging from a Pequot medicine bundle to the North American Imprints Program, the essays reveal Amory's facility at crossing traditional disciplinary boundaries: between Native Americans and Europeans, between the American colonies and Europe, and between objects and their circumstances. Objecting to the New Bibliography's "unexamined and unjustified distinction between the 'bibliographical facts' constituted by the discipline itself, and other kind of facts," Amory instead insisted that attention be paid to "social and linguistic contexts" (11-12).

Amory's approach is exemplified by the first essay in the collection, "The Trout and the Milk: An Ethnobiographical Essay." Aligning his ethnobiographical endeavor with James Axtell's ethnohistory, Amory insists on the cultural significance of books and documents as objects. He considers a medicine bundle--"a piece of fine woolen cloth and a page from a Bible, folded and rolled together"--found in the grave of a seventeenth-century Mashentucket Pequot child (13). Minute attention to the text of the Bible fragment allows Amory to identify the small-format edition from which it came, and to speculate on how it found its way to this "pagan site" (13). Instead of "the more familiar tale of how the missionaries imposed . . . [the Bible] on their alien subjects," Amory sees this medicine bundle as an instance of Pequots appropriating the Bible (19, 17). Moreover, he emphasizes the similarity between such appropriations and the roles small-format Bibles played in New England Puritan culture. Thus, while Amory connects Pequot "reuse of the Bible for 'medicine'" with early native views of arriving Europeans as supernatural beings, and particularly with Native Americans' sense of the power of print, he also compares it to New Englanders' superstitious belief "that the possession of a Bible made [them] invulnerable to Indian attack" (14). Indeed, he concludes provocatively that "it matters little whether we describe small-format Bibles as European medicine bundles, or this medicine bundle as an Indian Bible. The two are culturally congruent, in their respective cultures" (29).

In "God's Altar Needs Not Our Pollishings': Revisiting the Bay Psalm Book," Amory approaches the Bay Psalm Book



through the disciplinary lenses of physical bibliography, critical theory, and textual criticism (34). By close comparison of printed texts, he demonstrates that a new supply of type arrived in Cambridge in 1643, coinciding with the "resignation--or dismissal" of printer Stephen Day (40). He then describes nineteenth-century book collectors' transformation of the Bay Psalm Book into "an icon of American civilization" to be revered, rather than read (42-44). Indeed, Amory reports in the essay's third section that when collation of Bay Psalm Book facsimiles revealed substantive revisions, literary scholars were dismissive, on the grounds that "You can't tell which is worse" (45). To Amory, however, it matters that "the Founder[s] . . . revised and rethought their amazing English" (44). Moreover, textual details such as Day's handling of running-titles

and his use of "wrong-font italics" reveal his inexperience and incompetence, marking him as a "rank amateur" who produced a "botched, antiquated, and shabby" book (48-49). That Day's 1643 departure from the Cambridge press was followed by improvement in print quality suggests to Amory that "[t]he Bay Colonists learned the hard way that they needed the art of print" (48, 50). And all of this accumulated detail leads to a surprising rereading of the oft-cited demand for "'a little more Art' . . . [in the] psalm book in 1651" (49). Amory finds that "the colonists . . . were not rejecting the literalism of the founders, as Cotton Mather believed," but rather the shoddy workmanship of amateur printers like Stephen Day (49-50).

The collection highlights Amory's transatlantic perspective as well. Emphasizing the fluidity of national boundaries and national identity, Amory objected to "bibliographies organized on national or regional grounds" (4). The collection's third and fourth essays assess the significance of imports in the colonial book trade. In "'A Bible and Other Books': Enumerating the Copies in Seventeenth-Century Essex County," Amory explores the variety of Bible formats to illuminate patterns of Bible importation, locating "the beginning of something like an American market" in the 1670s and 1680s (72). In "Under the Exchange: The Unprofitable Business of Michael Perry, a Seventeenth-Century Bookseller," Amory uses the inventory records of Perry's failed bookstore to demonstrate slow colonial sales and a limited market "dependen[t] on the English trade" (93). "Printing and Bookselling in New England, 1638-1713" (originally printed in

---

abridged form in *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*) draws on the three preceding essays to describe the colonial book trade broadly and yet in rich detail.

Amory's newly published account of "A Boston Society Library: The Old South Church and Thomas Prince" describes Prince's acquisition of the books that became the "New England Library," clarifying the distinction between this closed and non-circulating library and the "Public" or "South Church Library" (146). Amory attends closely to the marks Prince and others made in the books in the collection, tracing the circulation of books and considering as well the probable influence of these libraries on Benjamin Franklin (once a member of the Old South Church) and his Library Company (147).

Amory's passionate commitment to examining different kinds of data and his meticulous attention to detail result in essays richly dense with evidence. To the reader navigating the sheer mass of information presented here, Hall's eloquent introduction and explanatory headnotes offer helpful guidance.

Amory's passion is revealed as well in his impatience with what he perceived as flawed work. What Hall describes as Amory's "near instinctive combativeness" is revealed in strongly-worded rejections of competing views as "literally preposterous" or "fundamentally . . . mistaken" (8, 30, 167). Yet Amory's handling of error is not merely combative. For Amory's essays suggest the illuminating potential of attention to failure, whether of incompetent printers like Stephen Day or bankrupt booksellers like Michael Perry. Thus "A Note on Statistics, or, What Do Our Imprint Bibliographies Mean by 'Book'?" calls attention to the gaps and errors of imprint bibliographies, cautioning readers (initially of *The Colonial Book*) to approach such data with skepticism. Appropriately, the collection's final endnote reports a recent policy change in the North American Imprints Program, testifying to the continuing impact of Amory's scholarship. This important collection will surely influence a new generation of scholars in the field, even as it serves as a fitting tribute to Amory and his work.

Lisa M. Gordis  
Barnard College

### ***A History of the Book in America, Volume 3***

The coeditors of *The Industrial Book, 1840–1880*, Volume 3 of *A History of the Book in America*, have submitted the completed manuscript to the HBA Editorial Board for its members' review and comments before its submission to Cambridge University Press in the summer of 2005. Members of the editorial team that has produced the volume are Scott E. Casper (University of Nevada, Reno), Jeffrey D. Groves (Harvey Mudd College), Stephen W. Nissenbaum (University of Massachusetts at Amherst), and Michael Winship (University of Texas at Austin).

In the introduction, the editors describe the volume. *The Industrial Book*, a collaborative history of the creation, distribution, and uses of print and books in the United States from 1840 to 1880, takes up five major themes. First, these decades witnessed the ascendancy of what we call the industrial book: the manufactured, bound product of a publisher, and the quintessential product of the industrialization of both the printing and papermaking trades. In terms of capital, work force, and production, the manufacturing of books constituted a modest segment of America's industrial revolution. However, it represented a striking change in the production of printed matter, and the books themselves played a disproportionately significant role in justifying and embedding a market culture in the lives, homes, and ideas of Americans. Second, during these years a national book-trade system emerged in the United States. Book publishers created and became aware of themselves as participants in a trade: a system of communication, competition, cooperation, and distribution. The fundamental element of this system, discounted sales to dedicated retailers, linked publishers to booksellers across the nation, often through wholesale dealers ("jobbers"). Improved mecha-

nisms of transportation, credit, and marketing underlay and facilitated the system, which established New York especially, and Philadelphia and Boston secondarily, as the center of America's book trades, with Chicago emerging as an important distribution center in the postbellum years.

Third, publishers, editors, and authors worked to define a sense of the American book. This occurred narrowly in the development within belles lettres that much later came to be known as the American Renaissance and more broadly in domains that spanned both learned and popular cultures. The notion of the American book developed certainly in conceptions of what constituted "American" themes or topics but also in the material efforts of publishers who packaged the texts in bindings and in advertisements. Fourth, the ascendant book culture disseminated in the products of the national book-trade system came to embody a set of values that was centered on, though by no means limited to, the middling classes, at once explaining and manifesting what it meant to live in a bourgeois world. Reading and writing, first enumerated in the United States census in 1840, were conceived as essential to American citizenship, economic success, and cultural achievement. Public schooling, initiated in a few states before 1840, penetrated the entire Northeast and Midwest before the Civil War, and the former Confederate states, including their formerly enslaved populations, after it.

The fifth theme cuts across each of the other four: in each case other factors complicated, stood against, and existed outside the consolidation and nationalization of the industrial book. The most striking material development of the period, the publisher's case-bound, manufactured book, was only one among many

forms of print. Even as metropolitan publishers and printers of books and daily newspapers oversaw factories that employed hundreds of workers and large-scale presses, small shops across the United States, continued to print the ephemera of everyday life (broadsides and pamphlets, railroad schedules and printed forms) and the weekly newspapers that served millions of Americans. The system of distribution that publishers such as G. P. Putnam & Co., Ticknor and Fields, and Harper & Brothers sought to create never worked entirely smoothly, and it never included all of the nation's book publishers. The American Book Trade Association came into existence to address publishers' imperfect sway over local retail prices, while publishers inside and outside the "legitimate" trade sparred over non-copyrighted foreign works. Those who employed nationalistic terms like "American literature" borrowed from English models in such matters as styles of magazines and modes of literary celebrity, even as Americans in parlors, Sunday schools, and learned societies read the productions of foreign pens that were also the products of American publishers. And middle-class culture existed alongside numerous communities of interest, defined by race, gender, class, ethnicity, ideology, religion, occupation, avocation, or region. As the United States became a continental nation, the printed word became the vehicle that helped define these communities' distinctive identities across geographical distance. Nonindustrial printing, an imperfect and partial system of publishers' control, continued literary and economic relationships with Europe, and the efflorescence of localized and specialized identities: all of these indicate the limits of the major developments. Together they, too, form a significant part of this narrative.

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](mailto:csloat@mwa.org)

Ellen Dunlap, President

John B. Hench, Vice President for Collections and Programs

*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 editors welcome all news relevant to the interests of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

Copyright © 2005 by American Antiquarian Society

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Scott E. Casper

Chapter 1: Manufacturing and Book Production

Michael Winship

Chapter 2: Labor and Labor Organization,

Bruce Laurie, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Chapter 3: Authors and Literary Authorship

Susan S. Williams, Ohio State University

Chapter 4: The National Book Trade System

1. Distribution and the Trade, Michael Winship

2. Trade Communication, Jeffrey D. Groves

3. Courtesy of the Trade, Jeffrey D. Groves

4. The International Trade in Books, Michael Winship

Chapter 5: The Role of Government

1. Copyright, Meredith L. McGill, Rutgers University

2. The Census, the Post Office, and Government Publishing, Scott E. Casper

Chapter 6: Alternative Publishing Systems

1. Diversification in American Religious Publishing, Paul C. Gutjahr, Indiana University

2. Other Variations on the Trade, Scott E. Casper

Chapter 7: Periodicals and Serial Publication

Introduction

1. Newspapers and the Public Sphere, John Nerone, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

2. The Business of American Magazines, Eric Lupfer, Humanities Texas

3. The Cultural Work of National Magazines, Susan Belasco, University of Nebraska at Lincoln

4. Religious Periodicals and their Textual Communities, Candy Gunther Brown, Saint Louis University

Chapter 8: Ideologies and Practices of Reading,

Barbara Sicherman, Trinity College

Chapter 9: Sites of Reading

Introduction

1. Libraries and Communal Reading, Kenneth E. Carpenter, Harvard University

2. Homes, Books, and Reading, Louise Stevenson, Franklin and Marshall College

3. City Streets and the Urban World of Print, David M. Henkin, University of California at Berkeley

Chapter 10: Cultures of Print

Introduction

1. Erudition and Learned Culture, David D. Hall, Harvard University

2. African American Cultures of Print, Jeannine Marie DeLombard, University of Toronto

3. Literacies, Readers, and Cultures of Print in the South, Amy M. Thomas, Montana State University

Chapter 11: Alternative Communication Practices and the Industrial Book

Introduction

1. Speech, Print, and Reform on Nantucket, Lloyd Pratt, Yale University

2. Handwriting in an Age of Industrial Print, Tamara Plakins Thornton, University of Buffalo

3. Amateur Authorship, Ann Fabian, Rutgers University

Coda: Scott E. Casper

Bibliographical Essay

## The Case for ‘Charles Anderson Chester’

In late 1849, an unidentified someone presented American book-buyers with a sensational pamphlet novel titled *Life and Adventures of Charles Anderson Chester*. Change that to someones, plural. Because upon inspection, *Chester*, which recounts Philadelphia’s then-recent, election-night race riots, seems to have been the work not of an individual author but rather a creation patched together by an assortment of writers, illustrators, publishers, printers, and readers all working in tandem.

*Chester* was not unique in this respect. On the contrary, it — and many more cheap reading materials — springs from an ascendant penny press that had made print collaboration necessary. What with mass production, wide distribution, and runaway consumption having become the trends of a trade that targeted customers up and down the class ladder and across an expanding nation, mid-nineteenth century literary production was, by default, a joint exercise. Authors no less than merchandising middlemen labored within a communications network that depended on the sum of its parts.

If *Chester* was but one of those parts, it was and remains an important one. It showcases the collaborative transactions that defined print at a critical stage. And it demonstrates the connectedness that exists today among researchers who find common cause in the history of the book. In short, while *Chester*’s print history affords us a look at the interdependence that characterized antebellum print, it also models the interdisciplinary scholarship practiced by book enthusiasts across the board.

My interest in *Chester* began in the summer of 2004. I had received a month-long Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellowship to do research at The Library Company of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. I was at that time studying the popular antebellum writer George Lippard. His works bear a striking resemblance in plot, character, and setting to the once-unattributed *Chester*. Philip Lapsansky of the Library Company had done some work on *Chester* that inspired my own; I would like to thank

him and his colleagues, James N. Green and Cornelia King, for their help with this project.

The resemblance of *Chester* to Lippard’s work is so close that it has long been labeled an imitation of his signature style. It was, however, the extent of that resemblance which led me to suspect *Chester* as something other than approximation. Those suspicions grew when I considered not only the content of *Chester* but also the context of its publication in light of Lippard’s career. So vexed is *Chester*’s history, and in ways so reminiscent of Lippard’s dealings with printers and publishers, that there is a case to be made both for his having authored *Chester* and for his having done so in company. Never mind the story itself. The story informing *Chester*’s appearance intrigues for what it says about the interdependence of antebellum print.

With *Chester*, Lippard appears to have been up to his old publishing tricks, angling for advantage but seldom, if ever, acting alone. The evidence of *Chester* and its close cousin, *The Killers*—a thriller that replicates whole sections of *Chester* while rehearsing the same storyline—hints that he hurriedly wrote the former to meet market demand, back-pedaled with the latter to refine his prose, and then moved to reap the profits from a polished work which another publisher might bring out to his benefit. He had done as much with his best-selling *The Quaker City* five years before, buying back the copyright and stereotype plates from his

original publisher in hope of a greater payday from subsequent editions. He had reason to do as much and more with *Chester*. For even as *The Killers* began appearing serially on December 1, 1849, in Lippard’s *Quaker City Weekly* newspaper, the author was still reeling from the bankruptcy of his own publishing concern. Flush with success, he had gladly collaborated. Now down and out, why go it alone?

Enter Joseph Severns. Severns had been publishing Lippard’s fiction since 1848 and was also co-publishing, with Lippard, the same *Quaker City Weekly* newspaper that launched installments of *Chester*’s twin, *Killers*. The paper, in fact had become the forum for

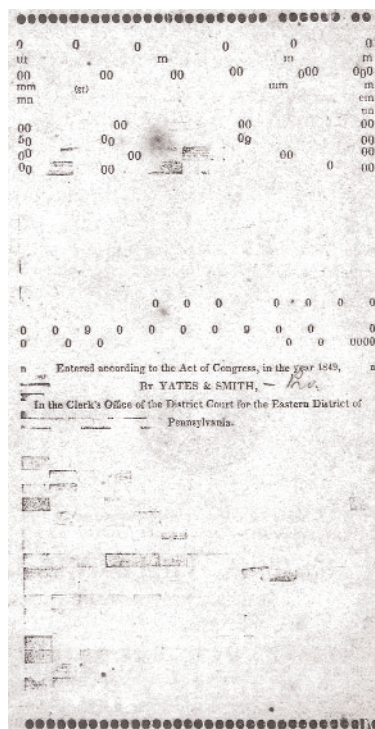
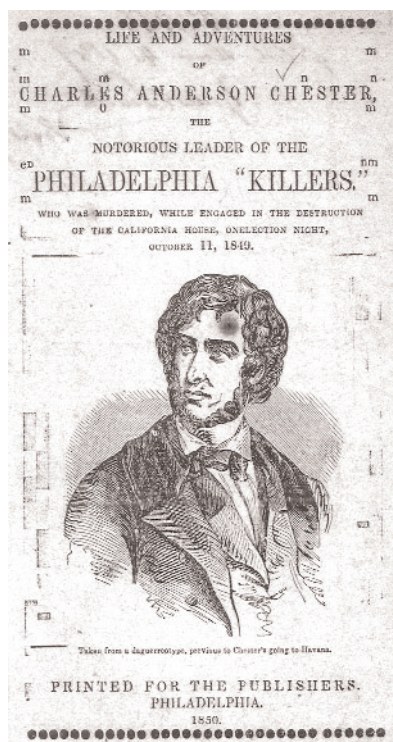
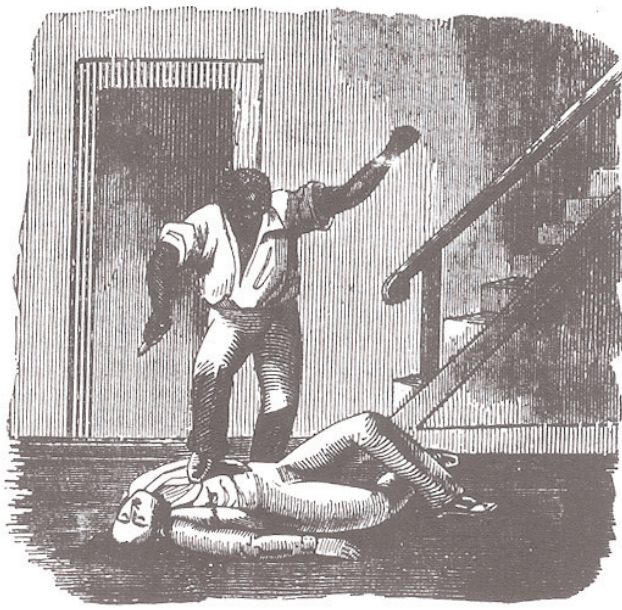


Figure 1. Deposit title page for *Life and Adventures of Charles Anderson Chester*, December 1849. Figure 2. Copyright page. Courtesy, The Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Title Page Deposit Records.



“Come on you dam Killers,” he bawled, “I’ve stuck your bully, and I’m ready for de wust of you!”—page 34.

*The murder scene, Life and Adventures of Charles Anderson Chester.*  
Courtesy, Library Company of Philadelphia.

Lippard’s work, announcing as it did in September 1849, that: “ALL OF MR. LIPPARD’S FUTURE WORK WILL BE PUBLISHED ONLY IN THIS PAPER.” Sure enough, Lippard had by then been forced through financial hardship to sell to Severns the plates of the five novels that had already appeared in *Quaker City Weekly* under his name. Author Lippard needed his publisher’s dollars; publisher Severns possessed the means but not the matter of print without Lippard. Their mutual dependence demonstrates that going it alone was not an option.

That returns us to *Chester*. Rather than an imitation, that work ranks instead as just the sort of joint production that made the world of antebellum print so special and, conversely, that made the predicaments of Lippard and his publishers anything but. Written under an author’s duress, and with an entire newspaper office’s resources at the ready, *Chester* epitomizes the interdependence of print at a time and in a place in which interdependence was the norm.

Two kinds of print artifacts put the pieces of the *Chester* puzzle in place. The first consists of existing deposit title and copyright pages for *Chester*. On December 4, 1849, an unknown party entered a copyright request for that work in the Clerk’s office of the District Court for the eastern District of Pennsylvania. This was the first of three steps by which antebellum copyright could be secured; it required applicants to deposit with the designated legal authority where publication was to occur, mock-up print pages for the title and copyright pages of the work in question, often before said was even complete. This would explain the lag between *Chester*’s 1849 copyright and 1850 publication dates.

Meanwhile, the proof-stage state of the deposit pages nominates Lippard as *Chester*’s author, if not its outright owner. By

comparing the 1849 deposit title page with *Chester*’s finished 1850 title page, we find a near-perfect match. That suggests several things. On the one hand, the deposit page is finished enough to argue against *Chester*’s being a hasty rip-off of a serial *Killers* which, to repeat, appeared in its first installment on Saturday, December 1. It would have taken more than three days (one of them a ‘rest day’) to prepare so admirable a print job. On the other hand, the deposit page is not finished enough to suggest the text is complete. Ink smudges—not the ghost rectangles—appear where unmasked space typing has come through during the printing of both deposit plates (figs. 1 and 2). These spectral bars, used to secure page-layout amidst the blank spaces in between printed characters, would in turn suggest that how ever much of *Chester* was ready to run in late 1849, it was not a final-form *Chester* but a *Chester-as-it-was* that had gone to press.

In other words, a serial *Killers* and a fledgling *Chester* were passing into print simultaneously, meaning that some rogue author could not have lifted his text from one to the other, since the two texts were being printed at the same time. Throw in the identical double-columned line-endings for the finished *Chester* and the serial *Killers*, and a tangled tale of attribution unravels: any supposed ‘plagiarizing’ appears to have been an inside job, with Lippard himself reusing the *Quaker City Weekly* newspaper galleys of *The Killers* to churn out *Chester* in his home office. Not only does *Chester* look to have come from Lippard’s hand, it has his inky fingers on the deposit pages.

That leaves the illustrations. The images gracing *Chester*’s pages likewise tell us something. Especially revealing is what we find facing the book’s copyright page. There a crude woodcut depicts the wicked Black Herkles—personification of the story’s race riots—with dagger in hand as blood runs from the chest wound of his white victim, the protagonist *Chester* (fig. 3). One of the few illustrations of black-white confrontation from the period, it is a racially charged graphic not to be found elsewhere in contemporary publications.

Significantly, one sees hidden in the blood trickling from *Chester*’s chest an artist’s signature, “Darley,” when read from bottom to top. Darley was, of course, F. O. C. Darley, the illustrator of the frontispiece for *The Quaker City*’s follow-up, 1845 edition and so known to Lippard. While some wayward publisher could have plundered an existing woodcut to enhance *Chester* as a text, both the rarity of the image singled out here, as well as Lippard’s ties to the artist, indicate the image was made to order for Lippard for *Chester*.

Born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, Lippard thus becomes the leading candidate for *Chester*’s authorship. The publishing ploys surrounding the novel fit. Material evidence sets the timing right. And a visual consideration of *Chester* reveals a rare antebellum artifact. Read with an appreciation for its full context, *Chester* confirms that no text from Lippard’s mid-nineteenth-century America had, strictly speaking, but one author. Consider it a case closed by book history.

David Faflik  
University of North Carolina

---

## Finding aid for Adventist newspapers in AAS collection now available

The arrival of a historian of science studying scientific reporting in the popular press as a 2004-2005 Botein Fellow was the incentive for the preparation of a finding aid for the extensive collection of Adventist newspapers at AAS. James A. Secord, professor of the history and philosophy of science, Cambridge University, is engaged in a study of newspapers to understand how different groups of people in nineteenth century urban America and Europe approached the natural world, especially nature in its more surprising and spectacular manifestations. “When I was giving Secord a tour to the stacks, he became very excited when he saw the collection of Adventist materials,” recalled Vincent Golden, curator of newspapers. “He knew he needed them for his project, but had not realized that AAS had such an extensive collection.” The initial collection was acquired by AAS in 1947, but never processed.

Gaylord Albaugh did not include these serials in the *History and Bibliography of American Religious Newspapers* (published by AAS in 1994), because they were established after its 1830 cutoff date. To accommodate Secord, Golden immediately began to retrieve the materials—shelved in more than one place in the library—to create a finding aid. Golden’s starting point was the *Union List of Adventist Serials*, published by the James White Library (of Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan), in 1978. The bibliographer responsible for it had not visited the Society, however. Golden’s list runs to sixty-nine pages enumerating the issues of some one hundred fifty titles. Some examples of titles on this list include: *Advent Herald* (Boston and New York), *Advocate of Holiness and the Speedy Coming of the Lord!* (New Haven and Boston), *The Day-Dawn* (Canandaigua, New York), *Lover of Zion*, and the *Herald of the Approaching Messiah!* (Hartford, Conn.), *Millennial Harbinger* (Bethany, Va.), and the *Second Advent of Christ* (Cleveland, Ohio). In addition, there are two anti-Adventist periodicals, the *Anti-Millerite and Scriptural Expositor*, which began publication in Concord, New Hampshire, with the issue of February 15, 1843, of which the Society holds nine issues up to August 1843, as well as the inaugural issue of the *Latter Day Witness*, published in Boston on March 15, 1843. (The complete list is not available on the website, although a reference has been added to the guide to the collections.)

Having made the comparison with the Andrews University document, Golden has concluded that the Society’s can be “considered one of the better collections outside Adventist institutions.” The checklist includes the title of each periodical, following changes over time and additional notes, such as changes in editors and publishers, and whether the item is bound or still has its paper wrappers. During the course of the project, Golden became aware of the extent and mission of this religious group’s publishing activity. “In addition to the newspapers and periodicals, hymnals, children’s books, and tracts, although not in the checklist, exemplify how actively this group published. The number of agents and their geographical locations named in this literature indicates that it was intended for wide distribution.”

And Secord’s conclusion after studying the newspapers: “The Adventist movement, which had tens of thousands of followers, led to the creation of dozens of different newspapers throughout the country. Examination of the outstanding collection of these little-known and extremely rare titles at AAS, offered a rare glimpse into controversies within the movement about the relation between celestial and spiritual events. Comets remained a subject for wonder and fear of global destruction throughout this period, especially in France, and although scientists had attempted to explain them as the products of natural law, their significance continued to be much debated.

“In 1843 one of the most extraordinary comets of the century blazed across the heavens. Its timing coincided with the great religious revival in the antebellum republic inspired by William Miller, the celebrated New York farmer and preacher who predicted the end of the world. Contrary to my expectation, however, it turned out that the comet was not all that important within the movement itself as a sign of the last days; the Adventists paid attention to celestial phenomena, but drew their most significant conclusions from Scripture. Instead, it was their opponents who tended to picture Miller and his followers as superstitious and fearful in the face of comets.”

Caroline F. Sloat

## The Fascicles of Emily Dickinson

Research towards a dissertation on the writings of Emily Dickinson is not usually conducted at the American Antiquarian Society. While four of her poems and some of the correspondence of her relatives reside here, most scholars logically turn to the larger holdings at the Robert Frost Library and the Houghton Library for the majority of their research. But as a 2004-2005 Stephen Botein Fellow at the AAS, I had the opportunity to look at an array of manuscripts that have shifted and deepened my own study of Dickinson’s work.

In “Lyric Contexts: Emily Dickinson and the Nineteenth-Century Extended Poetic Project,” I explore some of the questions that Dickinson’s fascicles—her manuscript books—raise about nineteenth-century poetic practices. The AAS has an extensive collection of commonplace books, autograph albums, and scrapbooks that initially helped to shed light on this topic, as each was a place in which Dickinson’s contemporaries often copied and kept their own and others’ verses. Yet, when I looked closely at these materials, the differences between them and the fascicles suddenly seemed more important than their similarities. Unlike these bound, often store-bought books, Dickinson’s fascicles were homemade, as she stacked pages of folded stationery and sewed them together herself.

Critics have long assumed that Dickinson was unique, making it difficult for scholars who attempt to compare her practices with those of her contemporaries. By rejecting the already-bound and purchasable book as a venue for her verses, Dickinson seems to have compounded this problem. Her practices make it impossible to search for fascicle-like materials at any library or archive, therefore leaving us with either an incomplete comparison to materials that don’t really resemble her own or simply with her works alone.

Yet because the AAS staff was willing to listen to my description of Dickinson's materials—and because they took an active interest in thinking about the ways in which any cataloging system can come up short—my research did not end there. I was soon introduced to a variety of manuscripts and manuscript books that did not necessarily contain poetry, but that were constructed in similar ways to Dickinson's fascicles. In the end, the shift from a search based on genre to one based on methods of construction made all the difference to my project, one that would not have been possible without both the materials and the minds at the AAS.

Amongst these manuscripts were Betsey Gaylord's home-made collection of original hymns, Ichabod Cook and Ruth Henshaw Bascom's many volumes of hand-stitched diaries, hundreds of sermons written on folded pieces of stationery sewn together at the edges, and, in a few, rare instances, verses copied onto sheets of paper that were bound together by their writer. By studying these materials closely, Dickinson's own practices and choices became clearer to me. For instance, in the majority of cases, these hand-sewn manuscripts were made in such a way as to resemble store-bought books. In other words, most of these writers inserted—or nested—the folded pages into each other, creating an empty, bound volume into which they could inscribe their writings. Dickinson did not do this. Instead, she stacked folded pages onto which she had already made fair copies of her poems and sewed them together at the side. Her method allowed

her to set the parameters of the text as she went and, ironically, allowed for the stitches to come out while both the entries and the sequences on each folded sheet remained intact. While it was her first editors who unbound these sheets shortly after her death, it was her method that allowed her later editors to reconstruct them.

The collections at AAS have radically broadened the field of comparison when it comes to Dickinson's fascicles. While the generic status of the fascicles as poetry books has been relatively stable and undisputed, the materials at AAS have allowed my project to explore new ways of thinking about Dickinson's relationship to genre. As the project later moves into thinking about some of the other "extended poetic projects" of the time—ones by Barrett Browning, Whitman, Tennyson, Crane, and others—a rethinking of Dickinson's approach to genre early on helps guide the sorts of questions that need to be asked about each author's materials, process, and poetics.

I am deeply indebted to the Society, particularly Tom Knoles, for not only giving me access to these materials, but to guiding me towards them so helpfully. I would also like to thank Meredith McGill for her assistance throughout this process. Because of their work, I will be able to pursue new avenues of thought and will hopefully inspire a rethinking of the ways in which we approach some of our seemingly most well known authors.

Alexandra Socarides  
Rutgers University

[www.americanantiquarian.org](http://www.americanantiquarian.org)

01609-1634

Massachusetts

Worcester

185 Salisbury Street

**Society**

**Antiquarian**

**American**



Nonprofit  
Organization  
**U.S. Postage**  
**P A I D**  
Permit No 416  
Worcester, Mass.  
01609-1634