



# The Book

Number 13, November 1987

Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture  
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## AAS Plans 1988 Summer Seminar

The American Antiquarian Society's third Summer Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture is set for June 18 - 28, 1988, in Worcester. The 1988 seminar will focus on methods of inquiry, especially literary theory and social history, in examining the theme "The Politics of Writing, Reading, and Publishing in Nineteenth-Century America."

The seminar is intended for all persons, including advanced graduate students, who are presently pursuing literary, cultural, or social history, and for librarians, bibliographers, and others with an interest in book history.

Leading the seminar will be David D. Hall, professor of history and American studies at Boston University, chairman of the AAS Program in the History of the Book in American Culture, and a visiting lecturer in the two previous AAS summer seminars. Hall will himself be assisted by several visiting scholars, including Robert A. Gross, professor of history and American studies at Amherst College; Michael D. Warner, assistant professor of English at Northwestern University; and Michael Winship, editor of the *Bibliography of American Literature*; and by AAS staff members, including Marcus A. McCorison, director and librarian; Georgia B. Barnhill, curator of graphic arts; Sidney E. Berger, curator of printed books; and John B. Hench, associate director for research and publication.

As before, reasonably priced housing for seminar participants will be available on the campus of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, which is adjacent to AAS. Field trips are planned in conjunction with the seminar.

The deadline for receipt of applications in March 18, 1988. For further details, including information on fees and financial aid, and for application forms, interested persons should write to John B. Hench at the American Antiquarian Society, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609 or telephone him at (617) 752-5813 or 755-5221.

## Chartier Delivers Wiggins Lecture

"Frenchness in the History of the Book: From the History of Printing to the History of Reading" was the subject of Roger Chartier's presentation, the fifth annual James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture, given on September 30, 1987, at the Society. Chartier, who co-edited with Henri-Jean

Martin the remarkable four-volume *Histoire de l'Édition Française*, is director d'études at the Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris.



This poster, commissioned for the Society's 175th anniversary celebration in October, was designed by the noted graphic artist Lance Hidy. A limited edition of signed and numbered posters sells for \$50 each. Unsigned posters are also available for \$35. Postage and handling is \$5 per order. Requests may be addressed to the Society's publications office.

Describing, first, a phase of research and interpretation that employed quantitative methods — this was work done, for the most part, in the 1960s — Chartier went on to explain that French historians, though initially indifferent to the methods of descriptive bibliography as practiced by British and American scholars, have learned to appreciate the material form of the book in relation to the practice of reading. Much of his lecture focused on the history of reading and how it has moved to center stage in French studies of the book. There is much to describe in a history of reading: how it varies over time, from one social group to the next, and in different contexts, whether private or public.

After sketching the main phases of this history and pleading for more research that would fill out his broad outline, Chartier turned to the history of publishing, the theme or idea that gives unity to the *Histoire de l'Édition Française*. He marked out three main phases of publishing in France, the first of which originated long before the invention of printing, the second in the early sixteenth century, and the third in the nineteenth. Chartier appealed for comparative studies that would help reveal how or when these same patterns occurred elsewhere.

Concluding, Chartier emphasized anew the significance of book history for the history of society. It is through book history, he argued, that social historians can refashion a more complex understanding of power.

"Frenchness in the History of the Book" will be published in volume 97, part 2, of the Society's *Proceedings* and as a separate pamphlet.

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.

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## *European Conferences on the Book*

The following is my report on recent meetings that I attended in Europe on the subject of the press and publishing in the eighteenth century. The conferences, in order of discussion, were I. "Livres et Révolution," Paris May 20-22, 1987; II. "La Diffusion et la Lecture des Journaux de Langue Française sous L'Ancien Régime," Nijmegen, June 3-5, 1987; III. "Arbeitsalltag und Berufliches Selbstverständnis im Frühen Europäischen Zeitungswesen," Meersburg, May 24-28, 1987.

I. The Paris meeting, sponsored by the CNRS and organized by Frédéric Barbier, was quite interesting, featuring particularly a brilliant *mise au point* and analysis of directions for future research by Roger Chartier at the end. American participants were Robert Darnton, Carla Hesse (Rutgers), and myself.

That the revolutionaries saw printing and publishing as important was amply demonstrated in Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrinck's (Universität Bayreuth) analysis of the "eloges de Gutenberg" from the period — there was even a proposal to admit the inventor of printing to the Pantheon in 1792. A general theme which emerged from a number of talks had to do with evaluating whether there was a truly significant increase in the amount of publication after 1789 or merely a shift from genres such as the book to others such as newspapers and official documents (generally agreed to be the two great growth areas). This was approached from a variety of directions, ranging from such basic ones as a survey of paper-making methods (essentially unchanged) and the capacity of type-foundries, through studies of the fate of publishing firms (the privileged printers of the Old Regime often faced bankruptcy, but there were tremendous opportunities for newcomers). No definitive conclusion emerged, but it is clear that any evaluation of the extent of the "reading revolution" following 1789 needs to bear in mind the significance of the limits imposed by the available forms of technology and business organization.

Relatively few papers dealt with the content of books published during the Revolution. A discussion of the publication of scientific books showed a pattern of sharp decline early in the Revolution followed by a steady recovery starting under the Directory, which may be typical of many genres. An interesting paper on slanderous pamphlets demonstrated the importance of this genre early in the Revolution but also the difficulty of separating the study of pamphlet literature from the study of the periodical press (which was excluded *ex officio* from the scope of the colloquium). A group of contributions from German scholars looked at the availability of French revolutionary literature in Germany during the revolutionary decade, pointing to a rather conservative bias in the circulated literature and a peak of publication located surprisingly late — in 1795-98. Several interesting talks on the history of libraries during the Revolution pointed

out the importance of the subject for judging the accessibility of books. The expropriation of the collections of religious institutions in 1789 completely reformed the French library system, but the resulting problems were beyond the capacity of revolutionary authorities. Much amusement resulted from a description of the National Assembly's decision to order the completion of a national union catalogue in 1790. It was to be completed in six months, and a staff of twelve was allocated for the project.... Not the least utopian of the Revolution's projects!

Among the papers dealing with reading during the Revolution were several analyses of book ownership based on papers remaining from the revolutionary confiscations of emigres' books and those of revolutionary figures executed during the Reign of Terror. Interesting details about the book holdings of prominent individuals emerged, but little in the way of broad generalizations.

In summary comments, Henri-Jean Martin took a gloomy view of the Revolution's impact on books and libraries: "La France á pendant longtemps perdu la memoire." His point may serve as a useful correction to the standard conclusion that the Revolution greatly increased reading, but it seems rather one-sided. Roger Chartier's closing summary was more balanced. He looked at (1) the short-range impact of the Revolution on printers and publishers; (2) the nature of the revolutionary *espace public*; and (3) the Revolution's place in the long-term history of reading. Under (1), he was struck by the persistence of the *ancien régime typographique*, in terms of both techniques and mentalities. Even new publishers sought government patronage and shied away from reliance on the open market. Efforts to restore a corporate structure in publishing persisted and finally succeeded under Napoleon. In connection with (2), Chartier made the interesting point that the image of readers broadened to include a large popular audience that could only be reached through public reading aloud, but that this *retour a l'oralité* remained dependent on printed texts. A theme that needs much more exploration! (3) suggested a number of points indicating conflicting conclusions that can be drawn from the evidence and that cannot simply be subsumed by adopting the Engelsing thesis of a shift from "intensive" to "extensive" reading. This brief summary cannot begin to convey the impact of Chartier's magnificent survey and commentary on three days of wide-ranging and innovative papers. The revolutionary period clearly presents a wide-open field for original work.

Frédéric Barbier (CNRS) is attempting to arrange for publication of the colloquium papers, which is anticipated but not definitely assured.

II. Hans Bots (Catholic University of Nijmegen) organized the Nijmegen meeting at the Institut Pierre Bayle pour les recherches de l'histoire des relations intellectuelles entre les pays de l'Europe occidentale a l'époque

moderne. American participants were Paul Benhamou (Purdue) and myself. Other participants came from France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Belgium.

In his closing *bilan*, Jean Sgard (Université de Grenoble) divided the twenty-three papers into two broad categories: those dealing with authors' and publishers' strategies of diffusion, and those dealing with the reception of periodicals. The contributions on strategies of diffusion uniformly pointed to the importance of publishers and of economic considerations in the distribution of periodicals. Authors understood the importance of "launching" a periodical and the way in which periodicals could be used to promote books: Voltaire stands as the master of such techniques (H. Durantou). Information about actual circulation figures showed that many journals survived for long periods with unexpectedly low sales figures, often 400 copies or below. Where hard information about subscribers is available, it points to an overwhelmingly aristocratic public and a small minority of genuinely devoted readers, often from more modest backgrounds. Newspapers and a few general-interest magazines had substantially greater circulations, and the Revolution saw a quick upward trend in sales figures, but a limit seemed to exist in the neighborhood of 15,000.

Several papers showed the value of private correspondence for studying the reception of periodicals. Journalists' own works are an important source of information about the reception of periodicals, from Pierre Bayle's day on down through the century. Though these professionals' comments were often critical, there was a general solidarity in defense of the periodical genre and a willingness to publicize other periodicals. The French provincial *affiches*, for example, publicized a wide variety of other journals. Claude Labrosse made a general argument for the notion that there was a clear "take-off" in periodical publication and diffusion in the period 1750-60, reflecting a new demand for rapid and accurate information in all domains.

Jean Sgard pointed out that few of the papers had dealt with the content of journals — a result of the definition of the common theme. Not much was said about the social function of periodicals. The evidence presented did seem to confirm the importance of Engelsing's thesis on the shift from intensive to extensive reading.

Bots will be publishing the colloquium papers in the series of *Studies of the Institute of Intellectual Relations between the West-European Countries in Early Modern Times* (APA-Holland University Press, Amsterdam and Maarssen, Netherlands).

III. I was only able to attend the last day of this, the second meeting on press history at the site of Martin Welke's Museum of Press History in Meersburg, West Germany (near Konstanz). Most contributions dealt with the German press, covering the period from the early 17th century to the revolutionary era. Among the talks I did

hear, some of the more interesting were Jeremy Black's summary of his new book on the 18th-century English press, Martin Welke's discussion of newspapers aimed at a popular audience in Germany before 1789, and Reinhart Siegert's talk on the German *Volksaufklärer* R.Z. Becker's periodicals, founded in the 1780s, which included, among other innovations, not only annual indexes of names and subjects but an "index of the good deeds reported in the journal"!

Martin Welke, formerly on the staff of the Bremen University library's 17th- and 18th-century newspaper collection, is now preparing to open a museum of newspaper history in the small vacation resort of Meersburg. He has assembled a most impressive collection of early newspapers (mostly German) and supporting documents. The museum, housed in a restored 17th-century building, is due to open next spring. He has also assembled considerable documentation about the German press on microfilm, and there will be a study room for visiting scholars. He plans to hold the third in his series of colloquia on press history in October 1988, on the press and the French Revolution. Proceedings will be in German. For more information, write Dr. Martin Welke, Schlossplatz 13, 7758-Meersburg am Bodensee, West Germany.

Jeremy D. Popkin, University of Kentucky

## Notes on Research Collections

### BOOK TRADE BROADSIDES AT AAS

In an effort to make the Society's numerous broadsides relating to the book trades more accessible to scholars, over four hundred items advertising books, serials, and newspapers were culled from the library's large, uncatalogued collection of broadsides printed from 1831 through 1876. Most of this work, which included the preparation of an informal index, was accomplished during the summer of 1986 under the enthusiastic supervision of Keith Arbour, then head of readers' services. The responsibility for indexing newly acquired broadsides is now continued by Jane Neale, assistant in the graphic arts department.

Each index entry contains a fairly lengthy transcription of the opening text of the broadside, as well as imprint information. The index generally provides multiple access points for each item. Most of the broadsides advertise a single title. For these, there are cards for authors, publishers, and titles. For advertisements for serials and newspapers, there are cards for title and publisher. If more than one book is advertised, only the first publication is fully indexed. And, for lengthy lists of publications, there is a single card for the publisher. The collection itself is arranged chronologically.

Most of the broadsides were issued in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, although there is remarkable geographical diversity for the collection. Pla-

ces of publication also include Pittsburgh, Nashville, Wiscasset, Maine, and Seale Station, Alabama. The collection, however, does not contain any broadsides printed west of the Mississippi.

Earlier printed broadsides at AAS, that is, those issued before 1831, are thoroughly catalogued in machine-readable form, and this material is accessible for extensive searching in the national database RLIN. Searchable subject headings for these earlier broadsides include the following: prospectuses; subscribers' lists; publishers and publishing; periodicals, publishing of; newspaper publishing; booksellers' catalogues; booksellers and bookselling; books; children's literature; and religious newspapers and periodicals.

The broadsides vary in style. Some are very plainly printed. Others incorporate wood engravings with the text. A few are printed in color, and one, an advertisement for a dime novel, has a hand-colored illustration. The subscription form for F.O.C. Darley's *Scenes in Indian Life* features one of Darley's etchings. Other interesting broadsides include the prospectus for William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator* (Washington, 1831), William Dunlap's *Rise and Progress of the Arts of Design in the United States* (1834), several catalogues for "fancy books," including *Fanny Hill* and *Love a-la-Mode*, and the prospectus for F.V. Hayden's *The Yellowstone National Park*, which included the beautiful chromolithographs printed by Louis Prang after paintings by Thomas Moran. The most arresting poster (26" x 42") is an advertisement for Ned Buntline's *The Shadowed Altar*

The advertisement is a rectangular poster with a highly decorative border. At the top, it reads "SUPPLEMENT TO THE DOLLAR WEEKLY TIMES." Below this, there are several small circular portraits of men, each with a name underneath. The central text is arranged in a hierarchical manner, starting with "AMERICAN PLATFORM" and "13th Volume." The main title "THE DOLLAR WEEKLY TIMES" is in large, bold, serif letters. Below the title, it says "ESTABLISHED IN 1812." The ad then lists various content features: "THE PIONEER OF THE AMERICAN CAUSE!", "AMERICA, HER PRINCIPLES, AND HER INSTITUTIONS!", "DEMAGOGUERY!", "CATHOLICISM!", "OUR COUNTRY.", "Sketches of the West.", "A FAMILY NEWSPAPER!", and "SUNDAY READING." At the bottom, it identifies the publisher as "CALVIN W. STARBUCK & CO." and includes the instruction "PLEASE PUT THIS UP IN SOME CONSPICUOUS PLACE." The entire ad is framed by a border of small portraits and text.

or *Betrothed and Wedded, Divorced: A Story of New York City Life*, which features a truly sinister relief cut by Aikens of a bat with spread wings over the scene of the bride and groom and the wedding party at the altar.

The broadsides themselves present a great deal of information on book publishing and bookselling. The prospectuses of newspapers and serials often spell out the political or social views of the editors and publishers. Responsibilities of book agents are frequently discussed in detail. Moreover, the broadsides depict the history of graphic design from 1831 to 1876, offering interesting examples of wood type and an array of ornamental type faces. This collection of broadsides, which joins a book trades collection in the Society's manuscript room and the Society's collection of salesman's sample books, provides another important source for the study of American publishing history.

Georgia B. Barnhill, American Antiquarian Society

### *JLH Announces Title Change*

The *Journal of Library History*, a quarterly publication of the University of Texas Press, announces that, beginning with the Winter 1988 issue, the title of the journal will become *Libraries & Culture*. Donald G. Davis, Jr., professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Texas at Austin and editor of the journal, cited the renewed interest in the institutional frameworks of recorded knowledge that has been inspired by the history-of-the-book movement, the increasing methodological sophistication of library historians, and the importance of library history for scholars involved with cultural and social history as developments that led to the decision to alter the journal's title. "The new title reflects not so much a shift from the original purpose of the founders as a broadening recognition of the role and influence of libraries, archives, and information agencies in society," he noted.

### *AAS Now Offers Customized Database Searches*

Throughout the 1980s, the American Antiquarian Society has been creating machine-readable cataloguing records for tens of thousands of the early American imprints in its library collections. These are highly detailed records created according to the latest national cataloguing standards. They feature numerous access points of use to all manner of scholars, and are of special interest to researchers in the field of the history of the book. Most of these cataloguing records have been created by AAS staff working on National Endowment for the Humanities-funded grants, including the North American Imprints Program (US, Canadian, and British West Indian imprints through 1800), American Broadsides through 1830, and American Children's Literature, 1821-60.

As reported in issue no. 11 of this newsletter (March 1987), the majority of these records have been loaded in the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) Books file and are available for searching through that national utility.

Now the Society is happy to announce that customized searches of the whole AAS database are available through AAS. It should be understood that the database grows daily and that it will always be more complete tomorrow than it is today, but all sorts of research projects might well benefit from special bibliographical searches of even still-evolving bodies of data.

For further information on the AAS bibliographical database, on searching strategies, and on the costs of a search, inquirers should write to Alan Degutis, Head of Cataloguing Services, American Antiquarian Society, 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609.

### *ABH Session to Focus On History of the Book*

The 1988 annual meeting of the Association for the Bibliography of History (ABH) will include a session on "The History of the Book: State of the Art, 1987." Held concurrently with the American Historical Association's annual meeting, the session will take place 5-7 p.m. on Monday, December 28 in the Marshall Room of the Sheraton Washington Hotel in Washington, D.C.

Speakers are: John B. Hench, associate director for research and publication at the American Antiquarian Society, who will discuss the subject from the perspective of the Society's Program in the History of the Book in American Culture; John Y. Cole, director of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, who will address the past, present, and future of the center; and Margaret Child, assistant director for research services in the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, who will present an overview of the book preservation movement in the United States. Chairing the session will be Wayne A. Wiegand of the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

### *AAS Notes*

Several recent staff changes at the American Antiquarian Society will be of interest to past, present, and future researchers and others involved with the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

Joanne D. Chaison replaced Keith Arbour as head of Readers' Services in August. Chaison joined the AAS staff in 1981 and had most recently served as a cataloguer in the North American Imprints Program. Prior to joining the Society staff, she had been a reference librarian at the University of New Brunswick. She holds an MA degree in history from the University of Connecticut, Storrs, and a master's degree in library science from Simmons College. Arbour, known over the last several

years to all AAS readers and participants in Program activities, has embarked on a graduate program in American history at the University of Michigan.

Sidney E. Berger joined the staff in October as curator of printed books, a new position created upon the retirement of Carolyn A. Allen as acquisitions administrator. Berger will be responsible for the Society's acquisitions program and will also serve as a resource for readers using the Society's book collections. Armed with a Ph.D. in English literature from the University of Iowa and an MLS degree from the University of Illinois, he brings special qualifications to be tapped by the book history program. He has taught the history of the book at the college level and is himself a printer, having learned the art from his grandfather.

In other personnel developments, Nancy H. Burkett has been promoted to associate librarian and Lynnette P. Sodha joined the staff in November as development

officer, succeeding Mary V.C. Callahan, who retired after the successful completion of the Society's \$8.7 million Isaiah Thomas Fund campaign to start her own consulting business.

AAS will once again offer a number of short- and long-term fellowships for research in residence at the Society during 1988-89. A new award is the AAS/Northeast Modern Language Association Fellowship, which supports research in American literary studies. The Society's Albert Boni Fellowship is specifically connected with the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture, although work in this field may be supported by any of the other AAS fellowships. The deadline for receipt of completed applications and three letters of reference is January 31, 1988. Persons interested should request materials from John B. Hench at the Society.

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