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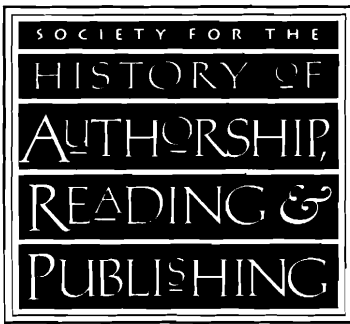
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SHARP News

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In My View: 'Easing into Biography'

Book historians make good biographers. Many of them, toward mid-career, turn naturally to the form, writing life stories of important figures in literature, history, publishing, and other fields. Why should this be so? Why is the transition so natural?

First, book historians know how to use archival evidence – manuscripts, letters, business records, memoranda, journals, clipping files, and scrapbooks. These are the raw materials of book history; they're also the ingredients of biography. Historians of the book are comfortable working in archives because they've been there before. They understand how to let the evidence speak, how to reconstruct (or, occasionally, invent) narratives that allow the surviving material to tell its story.

Historians of the book understand the importance of central figures in all periods – great men and women who, through personality and vision, are able to bring about change and achieve success. Publishing houses are often guided by such people (G.P. Putnam, for example, or Allen Lane or Bennett Cerf). Book historians know also how an editor or agent, or even an illustrator or book designer, can shape a single career or an entire movement. It's natural, then, to want to tell the life stories of these figures, to show how they arrived at their visions and reached their goals.

Most importantly, historians of the book understand the mechanisms by which the words and thoughts of significant people are made public. One cannot interpret a subject's writings if one does not comprehend the way in which he or she interacted with publishers – those charged with conveying the words to readers. It's a happy situation for an author when the publication mechanisms of the time, and the strategies favored by a particular house, are a good fit. By the same token, a writer can be thwarted by a wrong choice of publisher. Ending up with a house not sympathetic to one's aims and ideas can be disastrous.

Some examples from literature demonstrate the point. Theodore Dreiser's relations with his publishers were nearly always bad. He did not trust the tribe of Barabbas, and they did not trust him. Willa Cather, by contrast, had good dealings with the houses that handled her work, perhaps because of her own experiences in the literary marketplace before she turned full-time to fiction. Biographies of Dreiser and Cather should tell these stories.

For F. Scott Fitzgerald, things were more complicated. During his peak years, the literary industry had not yet developed certain techniques that would have served him well. From the publication of his first novel in 1920 to his death in 1940, there was in effect no paperback publishing in the United States. Book

clubs were in their adolescence, and television had not yet begun to assert its influence on the country. Fitzgerald needed such outlets to recycle his work and make it pay over a period of years. These outlets did develop rapidly during the decades immediately following his death, and the revival of interest in his writings owes a great deal to the new methods, seen first in the fifties and sixties, of recycling literary writing and keeping it alive and selling. This was too late for FSF himself, but just in time for his posthumous reputation.

William Styron, an author whose life I have written, is a good example of a writer whose career changed with the developing American book trade of his times. When Styron published his first novel, *Lie Down in Darkness* in 1951, the U.S. book industry did not differ appreciably from the business that had issued the works of Edith Wharton, Ellen Glasgow, and James Branch Cabell. Publishing was still a gentlemanly calling, insulated from the coarser pressures of commercialism. Serious authors such as Styron were not expected to aspire to audiences or incomes beyond a modest size.

All of that changed during the course of Styron's career. There have been long hiatuses between the publication of his major books; during these periods the book trade has undergone alteration. *Lie Down in Darkness* had a respectable hardback run in 1951 and went into paperback, but that was about all that was available. For *Set this House on Fire* in 1960, however, the paperback and book-club rights were sold before publication – still a new practice in those years. With *The Confessions of Nat Turner* in 1967, the paperback rights were marketed before the book was complete in manuscript, and the book-club sale was handled through an auction. Foreign rights, by this time, had also become important and lucrative; a few years before they had yielded only pocket change. And for *Sophie's Choice* in 1979, publication was a carefully orchestrated event, with movie and book-club and paperback and foreign rights all sold well before the clothbound book appeared.

These developments have allowed Styron to make a good deal of money, but more significantly they have given him audiences for his words and ideas that he could not have anticipated in the late 1940s, when he decided to become a writer. He has, as a consequence, developed a much stronger public voice than might have been predicted. It was a great help to me, as his Boswell, to understand the mechanisms of the American book industry well enough to place him within its context, and to interpret the results.

From my small soap box I urge book historians to yield to their urges to become biographers. Resist blandishments to be entirely an empiricist. Embrace the mongrel genre of biography. If you are a biographer, you can give play to both empirical and imaginative

talents, and you get to tell a story. You can be simultaneously a scholar and an artist, as it suits your purposes, and as it serves the larger demands of your calling.

James L. W. West III, Director, Penn State Center for the History of the Book

1999 SHARP Book History Prize Competition

The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing is pleased to announce competition for its third annual SHARP Book History Prize. A prize of \$1,000 will be awarded to the author of the best book-length scholarly monograph on the history of the book, broadly defined to include the history of the creation, dissemination, and uses of script or print. All submissions must be in English, and must have been copyrighted in 1998. (Translations of works originally copyrighted earlier are eligible, but the translations themselves must have been copyrighted in 1998.) Published collections of essays, critical editions, and reference works are not eligible, and will not be considered.

Submissions must be in the possession of all members of the jury by **1 March 1999**. Please submit three copies of each entry, one to each member of the jury:

Dr. Wayne A. Wiegand, Chair, SHARP Book Prize Committee, c/o School of Library and Information Studies, 600 North Park Street, 4226 HC White Hall, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706 USA, (email: wwiegand@facstaff.wisc.edu)

Dr. Patricia Fleming, SHARP Book Prize Committee, c/o Faculty of Information Studies, 140 St. George Street, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON M5S 3G6 Canada, (email: fleming@fis.utoronto.ca)

Dr. W. Boyd Rayward, SHARP Book Prize Committee, c/o School of Information, Library and Archives Studies, University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW 2052 Australia, (email: w.rayward@unsw.edu.au)

The winner of the competition will be announced at the 1999 SHARP conference, which is scheduled for July 15–18 in Madison, Wisconsin, USA. For more information about SHARP and its annual conference, visit SHARP Web at <http://www.indiana.edu/~sharp/>

Austrian Book History On the Go

For many years, Austrian book history research has lagged behind the intensive research done in Germany and other neighbouring countries. In part this has been due to language barriers hampering coordinated research efforts (until 1918 books could be found published in about fourteen languages spoken in the territories governed by the Hapsburg Monarchy). There is a mass of secondary literature in Polish, Czech and other Slavic languages as well as in Hungarian, which has rarely been used by Western and Austrian scholars. The situation has been different in Bukovina, Galicia and elsewhere in Bohemia or Germano-Austria. Material related to the booktrade is now not only to be found in archives in Vienna, but also in cities of the so-called 'successor states', such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and so on. Yet little has been done in terms of effective cross-borders research. As a consequence, larger parts and periods of this history are still a terra incognita. To change this situation, the *Gesellschaft für Buch-*

forschung in Österreich (Society for Book Research in Austria) was established in 1998. The founding session was held in the Oratorium of the Austrian National Library on October 9. Appointed to the Board of Directors were Dr. Helmut W. Lang (Austrian National Library), Dr. Josef Seethaler (Austrian Academy of Sciences - Historische Pressedokumentation), the publishers and antiquarian dealers Walter Drews and Dr. Otmar Seemann, among others. Dr. Peter R. Frank was elected first president and Dr. Murray G. Hall was appointed secretary.

To give Austrian book history a broader recognition, the Gesellschaft wants to co-ordinate and promote the research of printed works (books, newspapers and magazines, sheet music, maps, pamphlets) as well as research on booktrade and publishing activities. Special focus will be placed on the Austrian Monarchy (including Galicia, Bohemia, Hungary, Transylvania, etc.) and the republics up to the present day. Publishing in exile will also be a topic, as will the Hebraic book trade in Austria. Younger scholars in particular will be encouraged to explore theory and practice of the history of the book. Members of the Gesellschaft will receive twice a year the *Mitteilungen* (Newsletter), with the first issue due to appear in Spring 1999. The format will be that of a small journal. Aside from news about the Gesellschaft and its members, the issues will contain scholarly articles, reported on research in progress and relevant bibliographical references.

The Gesellschaft is willing to help students, scholars, antiquarian dealers and others with their research, referring them to relevant sources. It will also serve as contact for scholars from abroad. Academies and libraries, university teaching staff, antiquarian and retail booksellers and publishers as well as private researchers and collectors at home and abroad are invited to become members. If you wish to join the society and receive the *Mitteilungen*, write to Dr. Murray G. Hall, Kulmgasse 30/12, A-1170 Vienna, Austria, Europe. fax: (431)-485-87-10; email: buchforschung@bigfoot.com.

Peter R. Frank & Murray G. Hall

SHARP News is the quarterly newsletter of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing, inc. Annual membership in SHARP, which includes a subscription to *SHARP News*, is \$35 in the United States and Canada, £25 in Britain, \$40 elsewhere. Address editorial correspondence to the Editor, David Finkelstein, Scottish Centre for the Book, Napier University, Craighouse Road, Edinburgh EH10 5LG Scotland (Email: d.finkelstein@napier.ac.uk); address book review correspondence to the Book Review Editor, Fiona Black at Information Services, Regina Public Library, PO Box 2311, Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3Z5 Canada (Email: fblack@rpl.regina.sk.ca); send bibliographic notices to the Associate Editor, Linda Connors, Drew University Library, Madison, NJ 07940 (Email: lconnors@drew.edu); send membership dues and changes of address to the Membership Secretary, Barbara Brannon, Director of Public Relations, Wesleyan College 4760 Forsyth Road, Macon, GA 31210-4462 (Email: barbara_brannon@post.wesleyan-college.edu)

Studying German Book History

What follows is a report of a longstanding initiative in Germany to teach book history. The Department of Buchwissenschaft was initiated in 1984 at the Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen and is one of four departments at German universities that centre round the study of the book. There is nothing quite like Buchwissenschaft abroad, so there cannot be an exact translation equivalent, however it can be defined as book history studies combined with the study of modern book trade and publishing. In Erlangen, Buchwissenschaft can be chosen as main, second or third subject leading to a masters or doctors degree. At the moment there are about 120 students, half of whom are studying Buchwissenschaft as a main subject. Admission is limited to 20 to 30 students per semester, which allows excellent conditions for study.

What is Buchwissenschaft? Buchwissenschaft is not a subject that students will usually have studied before coming to university. The central object of study and research is the book: that is, the realisation of intellectual content and transmission of information through printed text and image. The book is studied within the context of cultural and economic history, focusing in particular on its preservation, dissemination, and transmission through and within society. Buchwissenschaft aims to provide a sound historical understanding of the role of the book within society, touching on such areas as the history of reading and writing, palaeography, the history and methods of the art of printing, typography, all aspects of book trade and publishing trade from the beginning until today, the history of public and privately owned libraries, book art and book illumination. Alongside this are offered practically orientated topics such as electronic publishing, editing, publishing house management and desktop publishing. Further information about the current university calendar, university regulations, publications of the staff, and bibliographies can be obtained on the following website: <http://www.phil.uni-erlangen.de/~p1bbk/> or by contacting: **Prof. Dr. Ursula Rautenberg**, Institut für Buchwissenschaft, Harfenstr. 16 91054 Erlangen, Germany

Calls for Papers

The Scottish Centre for the Book at Napier University in Edinburgh is hosting a conference on **Reading Practices and Reading Formations** from 24–25 September 1999. The study of reading, readers and reader communities is at the forefront of much contemporary scholarly activity in the humanities. Linking in with the conclusion of Britain's official celebration of the Year of Reading, this conference will offer a forum for the assessment of work in this field to date and a platform from which to launch further initiatives in the study of reading experiences. Invited conference speakers will include Professor Janice Radway (Duke University), who will be giving the annual Macmillan Lecture in the Sociology of the Text on 24 September, Simon Eliot (Open University), Lindsay Fraser (Booktrust Scotland), and Jonathan Rose (Drew University). Proposals of one page length are invited for papers of 20–25 minutes duration on any topic pertinent to the

theme of the conference. Deadline for receipt of proposals is **26 April 1999**. Address proposals and enquiries to: Reading Practices Conference coordinator, Scottish Centre for the Book, Napier University, Craighouse Campus, Craighouse Road, Edinburgh EH10 5LG Tel.: [44] 131 455 6150 Fax: [44] 131 455 6193 email: scob@napier.ac.uk Or visit our website at www.pmpc.napier.ac.uk/scob/scob.html

Papers are requested for a proposed special session at the 1999 Modern Language Association conference on the application of **Pierre Bourdieu's** theory of the cultural field, arising from mid nineteenth-century French literary culture (Flaubert in particular), to the British field of the nineteenth century. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following: the problem of relative autonomy; is the British field more or less relatively autonomous from economic, political and/or social fields than its French counterpart?; the phenomenon of seriality; How did the Dickensian serial novel accomplish its integration of 'intellectual', 'bourgeois' and 'popular' audiences?; the import of marginality; what are the differences and/or similarities between the Brontës' position at the outskirts of the British field and the Symbolists' position in France? between the presence or absence of nationalist or racist ideologies in each? Why did *l'art pour l'art* emerge later in Britain, and then not as closely identified with poetry?; the production of belief; what distinctive practices designed to consecrate belief in or through literature took shape in particular works or writers?; the British habitus and literary studies. Can Bourdieu's analytical nexus between dispositions and positions revive Marxian, Weberian or other critical approaches to this corpus? What dispositions and/or positions do 19th-century British culture and the American academy share?

Vitas and 2-page abstracts or 10-page papers to arrive by **1 March 1999** to David Payne, Dept. of English, 9030 Haley Center, Auburn University, Auburn, AL 36849; FAX (334) 844-9027. Inquiries to David Payne at payned1@mail.auburn.edu.

An interdisciplinary conference entitled Gendering Library History will be held by the School of Media, Critical and Creative Arts, Liverpool John Moores University and the Department of Information and Library Studies, Loughborough University, at the Dean Walters Building Saturday 15th May 1999. This one day conference has been organised to focus on some of the many neglected issues connected with gender and library work. Confirmed plenary speakers include Paul Sturges, Alistair Black, Suzanne Hildenbrand, Mary Niles Maack & Margaret Kinnel. 250 word proposals for 25 minute papers are now solicited. Deadline for receipt is **1 March 1999**, and should be sent to: Nickianne Moody, MCS, Liverpool John Moores University, Dean Walters Building, St James Road, Liverpool L1 7BR Tel: 0151 231 5028/5037 Fax: 0151 643 1980 e-mail: N.A.Moody@livjm.ac.uk

The collaborative project 'Science in the nineteenth-century periodical' (SciPer), recently launched at the Universities of Sheffield (Centre for Nineteenth-century Studies) and Leeds (Division of History and Philosophy of Science), announce its inaugural conference, to be held at Oxley Hall in the University of Leeds, entitled

Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical. Proposals for individual papers or complete sessions of two or three papers are now invited for consideration. Approximately thirty minutes will be allowed for each paper, and plans are to publish a selection of the papers from the conference. Abstracts of 200 words should be sent by **1 June 1999** to: Dr. J. R. Topham, School of Philosophy, University of Leeds LS2 9JT email: j.r.topham@leeds.ac.uk (no file attachments please) tel: 0114-2228484 or 0113-2333280 fax: 0114-2228481 or 0113-2333265

Conference Announcements

The Cambridge Project for the Book Trust is hosting a conference entitled **Lost Libraries** at Magdalene College, Cambridge University from 15–17 September 2000. The conference will explore the often neglected circumstances of the disappearance of a great library and consider the consequences of that loss or destruction. Periods to be covered range from ancient times to the present day. Paper proposals of one page length are invited for consideration by the organisers. These should be sent by **30 April 1999** to: Lost Libraries, Conference Administrator, CPBT, The Malting House, Newnham Road, Cambridge GB-CB3 9EY

The Society for the History of Natural History and the Natural History Museum of London announce a joint international conference on **Drawing from Nature: Art and Illustration in the Natural History Science**, to take place 14–16 April 1999 at the Natural History Museum, London. Topics to be explored at the conference include: the role of illustration and its integration with text; the relationships between authors, artists, and engravers; the relevance of illustration printing techniques; illustration forms, from the realistic to the diagrammatic; and the background and function of paper museums. Speakers will include Nicholas Barker (on Besler's "Hortus Eystettensis"), Martin Kemp (Professor of the History of Art, Oxford), and numerous others from England, the United States, Sweden, and Italy. The conference fee is £90 for members of the Society, £110 for non-members, and includes lunches and receptions. For further information and a registration form, contact either Leslie K. Overstreet, Curator of Natural History Rare Books, Special Collections Dept., NHB 51/MRC 154, Smithsonian Institution Libraries, Washington DC 20560-0154, USA phone: (202) 357-3161; fax: (202) 357-1896; email: loverstr@sil.si.edu, or Paul Cooper, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London, phone: 0171 938 9367; email: p.cooper@nhm.ac.uk

A conference entitled **Australian Media Traditions: Historical Perspectives**, will take place at the State Library of NSW, Macquarie St., Sydney, Australia on 16–17 July 1999. Themes covered will include Writing media history, Popular magazines, Radio & TV history, Politics & the media, Crime, Sport and Foreign reporting, Indigenous media and changing news values. For further information, contact conference convenors Bridget Griffen-Foley, History Department, University of Sydney, Australia (email: bgfoley@history.usyd.edu.au), or David McKnight, Humanities, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia (email: david.mcknight@uts.edu.au)

A conference is being organised by the **Children's Books History Society** to take place at the University of East Anglia, Norwich from 29 July–1 August 1999. The purpose of the occasion is to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the founding of the Religious Tract Society, one of the foremost publishers of children's books throughout the nineteenth century. Speakers will focus on major events in the progress of the Society's publishing activity and it is hoped that an exhibition of significant works will be on display. For further information, contact The Secretary, Mrs Pat Garrett, 25 Field Way, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire. EN11 0QN Tel: /Fax: 01992-464885; email: cbhs@abccgarrett.demon.co.uk

The 21st annual conference on book trade history held under the auspices of Birkbeck College (University of London) and organised by Dr. Michael Harris, will take place 4–5 December 1999 at the Honourable Artillery Company, Armoury House, City Road, EC1Y 2BQ. The theme of the conference will be **Libraries and the Book Trade**. Luncheon, morning coffee and tea on both days is included in the conference fee of around £75. Further details are available from Dr. Michael Harris, CEMS, Birkbeck College, 26 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DQ.

The remarkable centenary of a highly specialised periodical will be celebrated in the 'Sala di Dante' at the National Central Library in Florence from 22–24 April 1999. 'La Bibliofilia', founded in 1899 by Leo S. Olschki – reflecting the principal personal interests that were to make him the world-known authority he became in the description and valuation of antique books – will be the topic of an international convention with many great experts in this field in attendance. The programme is divided into two parts; the first dedicated to the history of the periodical; the second on bibliology in general focusing on research in this particular field. The proceedings will be published in the periodical during the course of 1999. The opening of the convention will coincide with the inauguration of an historical exhibition of the publisher's 113 years activity, supported by a catalogue as proof of its cultural contribution to the field of Humanities by establishing a privileged means of spreading Italian thought throughout the world. Further information regarding this conference is available from: Costanza Olschki, Casa Ed. Leo S. Olschki, Viuzzo del Pozzetto (Viale Europa), 50126 Firenze (Italy) Tel. (+ 39) 055.65.30.684; Fax (+ 39) 055.65.30.214; E-mail: costanza@olschki.it

Exhibitions

An exhibition entitled **Women of the Book: Jewish Artists, Jewish Themes** will be held at the Sharadin Art Gallery, Kutztown University, Kutztown, Pennsylvania from 4 February– 7 March 1999. For more information, contact Dan Talley, Director, Sharadin Art Gallery, Kutztown University, Kutztown, Pennsylvania, email: talley@kutztown.edu

The British Museum in Great Russell Street, London will feature an exhibition entitled **The Popular Print in England** from 8 May–29 August 1999. It will include popular and media prints produced

from the 16th to the mid 19th century on subjects as diverse as those found in today's tabloid newspapers: crime, royalty, politics, war, sex and comedy.

Fellowship Announcements

The American Philosophical Society Library is accepting applications for short-term **Mellon Resident Research Fellowships** for conducting research in its collections. The fellowships, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, are intended to encourage research in the Library's collections by scholars who reside beyond a 75-mile radius of Philadelphia. The fellowships are open to both US citizens and foreign nationals who are holders of the PhD or the equivalent, PhD candidates who have passed their preliminary exams, and independent scholars. Applicants in any relevant field of scholarship may apply. The stipend is \$1,900 per month, and the term of the fellowship is a minimum of one month and a maximum of three, taken between 1 June 1999 and 31 May 2000. Fellows are expected to be in residence for four consecutive weeks during the period of their award.

Applicants should submit the following material for consideration: (1) cover sheet stating a) name, b) title of project, c) expected period of residence, d) institutional affiliation, e) mailing address, f) telephone numbers, and email if available, and g) social security number; (2) a letter (not to exceed three single-spaced pages) which briefly describes the project and how it relates to existing scholarship, states the specific relevance of the American Philosophical Society's collections to the project, and indicates expected results of the research (such as publications); (3) a c.v. or résumé; and (4) one letter of reference (doctoral candidates must use their dissertation advisor). Published guides to the Society's collections are available in most research libraries, and a list of these guides is available on request. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the Library staff by mail or phone regarding the collections.

Applications must be received by **1 March 1999**. Address applications or inquiries to: Mellon Fellowships, American Philosophical Society Library, 105 South Fifth St., Philadelphia, PA 19106-3386. Telephone: (215) 440 3400.

Applications are invited for the **John Hill Burton Fellowship** to be held jointly at the National Library of Scotland and the Scottish Centre for the Book, Napier University, and the **Norman MacCaig Fellowship**, to be held jointly at the Centre for the Book at the British Library and the Scottish Centre for the Book, Napier University. Both are available for the academic year 1999/2000. These non-stipendiary Fellowships are intended primarily, though not exclusively, for historians of the book, bibliographers and textual critics on study leave from their own universities or colleges. In the case of the Norman MacCaig fellowship, particular emphasis will be given this year to work on reading and reading practices. The appointments can be either for one semester or a year. The Fellowships carry access privileges to the collections of the National Library of Scotland and the British Library respectively, and to the Edward Clark Collection at Napier University. They also provide access to funding for internal UK travel, office accommodation at Napier's Craighouse campus, and

secretarial and administrative support. The Fellows would also be expected to contribute to the Centres' seminar series and general activities.

Application for both Fellowships is by cv and a statement of research intentions or plans which should be submitted **not later than 26 April 1999** to Professor Alistair McCleery, Scottish Centre for the Book, Napier University, Craighouse Campus, Edinburgh. EH10 5LG UK. Informal inquiries can be directed to Professor McCleery, tel: [44] 131 455 6150 or email: a.mccleery@napier.ac.uk

New Journal Announcement

Nineteenth-Century Feminisms is a new journal to be published twice yearly, beginning in the Fall of 1999. It will be devoted to issues of gender, culture, and writing by and about women from anywhere in the Empire, Britain, Canada, and the United States in the long nineteenth century (1785 to 1918). Papers are invited on a variety of subjects, such as the politics of print culture, the production of a female tradition in publishing, women and the academy, censorship of the press, women and periodical publication, women and art history, feminism and race in the nineteenth century, and nineteenth-century women writers in English. They welcome articles developed from a wide range of disciplines, including the Arts, Natural and Social Sciences, Medicine, and Popular Culture Studies.

Manuscripts for submission should be sent in duplicate to Joanna Devereux and Lorraine DiCicco, Editors, *Nineteenth-Century Feminisms*, Department of Modern Languages, King's College, University of Western Ontario, 266 Epworth Avenue, London, Ontario, Canada N6A 2M3. Deadline for submission of material for consideration for the Fall 1999 issue is **31 March 1999**. Thereafter, they can be sent at any time. Papers should be limited to 5000 words and should conform to the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook*. Information about subscription rates and the journal can be found at the following website: <http://www.odyssey.on.ca/~ncf>

Scholarly Liaisons

SHARP members who are also members of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) are urged to submit an entry describing their recent and current work on authorship reading and publishing projects for the 1999 list of ASECS/SHARP research projects. This list will be distributed at the ASECS meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 24–28 March 1999 and will eventually be mounted on the SHARP website. (The 1998 hand-out is currently available on URL: <http://www.indiana.edu/~sharp>) One paragraph entries describing your projects and related publications should include a project title and your name and affiliation. Please send entries, preferably by Email, by 10 March 1999 to: Eleanor Shevlin, 2006 Columbia Road, NW, Washington DC 20009 (Email: es65@umail.umd.edu)

The SHARP panel at ASECS will take place on Saturday 27 March from 9.30 – 10.45 am. Lisa Maruca organised and will chair the session entitled 'Economies of the Book: Business, Work, Technologies, Texts.' The panel will feature four short papers:

Carol Percy, 'Selling *Sterling English*: Women's Words as Commodity'

Eleanor Shevlin, 'Economies Entitled, or The History and Adventures of the Novel as Property'

Simon Stern, 'Gender and Copyright in the Eighteenth Century'

Sylvia Pamboukian, '*Fight the Future*: Printing Technology in a Luddite Public Sphere'

Martha Woodmansee will serve as commentator.

Seminars

The Centre for the History of the Book, University of Edinburgh, announce their **Winter 1999 Book History Seminar Programme**. All seminars take place on Fridays 1–2 pm in Edinburgh University Library, George Square.

19 February 1999, 'The Reading Experience Database: First Steps towards a History of Reading', Dr. Simon Eliot (Open University)

26 February 1999, 'Every Picture Tells a Story: Text and Image in Vienna, 1900', Andrew Barker (University of Edinburgh)

12 March 1999, 'The Scottish Chapman', John Morris (National Library of Scotland)

The Institute of English Studies, University of London will feature the following sessions in its **Spring Term 1999 Sociology of Texts Seminar Series**. Seminars take place from 3–5 pm at the School of Advanced Study, 3rd Floor, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU.

1 March 1999, 'Garbage In, Garbage Out: The Poetics of the Archive', Professor David Greetham (City University, New York)

25 March 1999, 'The History of the Book and Libraries in the Context of Twentieth Century British Post-Imperial Cultural History: Perspectives and Problems', Ian Willison (Institute of English Studies)

The Scottish Centre for the Book at Napier University announces its **Spring 1999** lunchtime series of **Edward Clark Seminars** dedicated to the history of the book. All seminars take place 12.30–1.30 pm in room 516, New Craig, Craighouse Campus, Napier University, Craig-house Road, Edinburgh.

5 March 1999, 'Cultural Regionalism and Cultural Studies', Professor Cheryl Herr (University of Iowa)

24 March 1999, 'Reaching beyond Scotland: Oliver & Boyd's Nineteenth-Century Advertising Campaigns', Dr. Iain Beavan (Aberdeen University)

21 April 1999, 'The Makers of Chambers Encyclopedia', Dr. Sondra Miley Cooney (Kent State University, Ohio)

12 May 1999, Special Session: Reading in Scotland
'The Suffragette in the Kailyard: Options for Women Readers in early Twentieth Century Scotland', Kate Kelman (Napier University)

"'Nourishment for their Souls': Reading Provision for the Navvies in Scotland during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries', Dr. Heather Holmes (Napier University)

19 May 1999, 'Reading and Resistance: what are activists reading and why?', Dr. Chris Atton (Napier University)

1998 International History of the Book Projects Roundup

At the SHARP annual conferences at Cambridge, England in 1997 and at Vancouver, Canada in 1998, the writers co-chaired informal pre-conference 'reporting' sessions about history of the book and related cooperative projects now underway around the world. It is hoped that such sessions will become permanent features of future conferences. For this issue of the SHARP Newsletter, we agreed to summarise the Vancouver session and to present our reflections on specific contributions and trends. Comments are welcome.

First, it should be noted that for the Vancouver pre-conference session we did not ask for reports from Asia, Africa, or South America, or from Germany, the Netherlands or several other European countries. We propose to remedy this omission in time for the SHARP conference in Mainz in 2000, if not the Madison, Wisconsin conference this year.

In Vancouver, reports were presented on the following: recent progress on the six-volume *History of the Book in Canada*; the activities of the University of Toronto Centre for the Book; a proposed Centre for the Book in Canada; progress on the three-volume *History of the Book in Australia*; activities of the Centre for the Book at Monash University in Melbourne; progress on the project for the *History of the Book in New Zealand*; progress on the five-volume *A History of the Book in America* project sponsored by the American Antiquarian Society; the activities of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress; a report on plans for a new M.A. program in Book History at Drew University; progress on the seven-volume *History of the Book in Britain*, the first volume of which is scheduled for publication July 1999; the recent publication of a history of the book in Wales; progress on the four-volume *A History of the Book in Scotland*; activities of the Scottish Centre for the Book at Napier University; activities of the Centre for the History of the Book at the University of Edinburgh; and progress on the five-volume *History of the Irish Book*.

This sampling of ongoing cooperative activity is impressive in scope; moreover, as indicated earlier, it is only a partial listing. It is our opinion that the successful launching and continued progress of an increasing number of national publishing projects, taken together, begin to converge on what we can think of as a de facto world history of the book. As the only international association for the history of the book, we think it is of central importance for SHARP to monitor, encourage and publicize the progress of these efforts. These collaborative national projects are especially noteworthy because of the substantial resources they have harnessed from research institutions, libraries, foundations, university presses and governments. From our perspective, however, they also demonstrate how book history is of central interest to the humanities in general.

Since the early 1980s, the French projects, the *Histoire de l'Édition Française* complemented by the *Histoire des Bibliothèques Françaises*, have led the way in book history studies. Their central place is due mostly to the location of the original editors, Henri-Jean Martin and Roger Chartier, within the tradition and power base of the *Annales* school of history which has

dominated the academy in France since World War II. While today center stage is held by the large number of projects in the English-speaking world (as seen by the reports in Vancouver), many of these endeavours, directly or indirectly, follow the lead of the French.

However, in contrast to the relative homogeneity of the French record, the history of the book in the English-speaking world is revealing an essential hybridity. In part this is because the historical experience in the English-speaking world is embedded in a fairly traumatic imperial and post-imperial experience. This is apparent in the first two projects to be published: the preliminary but detailed survey in *Book & Print in New Zealand: A Guide to Print Culture in Aotearoa*, which, appropriately, suggests how 'print culture' has been critical for the preservation and promotion of Maori oral traditions alongside the Anglophone book-based presence; and *A Nation and Its Books: A History of the Book in Wales* (published in November 1998), where print culture is likewise shown to have been instrumental in the preservation and promotion of the Welsh vernacular. Moreover, the exploration of such hybridity has the effect of bringing mainline historians of the country into the study of its book history as a key to its distinctive cultural identity. Thus the Welsh history is conspicuous for the contributions of two of the country's leading general historians: Glanmor Williams and Geraint H. Jenkins. Hybridity will be even more conspicuous in the eventual history of the book in South Asia and confirms the entry of the history of the book into the mainstream of historical scholarship in an age of globalisation.

In this latter respect the French have resumed their leadership role. Over ten years ago the (then) final volume of the *Histoire de l'Édition Française* could not get beyond the 1950 because of the inability of historians to deal with a period which still lacks adequate archival resources. At SHARP 1998 in Vancouver, the French triumphantly announced the 700+ page *Édition Française depuis 1945*, having employed 'davantage journalistes, économistes ou sociologues qu'historiens', thereby solving a critical problem sooner or later facing us all—and reminding us of the essentially interdisciplinary nature of the history of the book.

Finally, at Vancouver the French and the French Canadians took the initiative in proposing a collaborative survey of the emerging world history of the book 'de la vieille Europe aux Nouveaux Mondes. . . du XVIIIe siècle à l'an 2000' ending with the 'mass-médiatisation du livre', at an International Colloquium to be held at Sherbrooke, Ottawa, in May 2000.

Ian R. Willison, University of London

John Y. Cole, Center for the Book, Library of Congress

Book Reviews

David Reed. *The Popular Magazine in Britain and the United States, 1880-1960*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press; London: The British Library, 1997. xvi, 287p. ill. ISBN 0-8020-4214-7 (cloth). \$CAN75.00; ISBN 0-7123-0417-7 (cloth). £50.00

In this comparative study of popular magazines in Britain and the United States over an 80 year period, historian David Reed provides something much needed in the field of periodical history: reliable generalizations about national and international

trends within the industry. From the initial development of low-priced magazines aimed at a mass readership in the 1880s to the development of specialized monthlies in the 1960s, Reed examines why two different nations with the same print technology ended up with different kinds of mass-market magazines. For example, he examines the heavily illustrated American magazines which arose at the turn of the century in comparison to their text-based British counterparts, and the early emphasis on women's magazines in the United States and magazines for boys and girls in Britain. Through these sorts of comparisons Reed illuminates the fact that technological advances have often, incorrectly, been allowed to overshadow the significant role played by cultural and artistic factors in the development of mass-market magazines.

A drawback, however, is that while each chapter is devoted to the most popular magazines in each nation over a twenty-year period, the magazines to be discussed in each chapter are not named at the beginning of the chapter or as section headings throughout, thus making it frustrating to find, let alone to follow, the progress of particular magazines in each country. Moreover, by avoiding the use of such generalizations as the "Quality Group," the "Family" magazines, "Women's magazines," and the "penny-weeklies," Reed makes it difficult for the reader to compare trends between similar types of magazines over time. While Reed makes it clear in his introduction that he does not wish to simplify what is obviously an extremely complex set of historical variables, his avoidance of any compartmentalisation beyond twenty-year divisions results in a thorough, but unwieldy, study.

As Reed rightly notes, few comprehensive histories of popular mass-market magazines exist in either nation, most scholars, understandably, choosing to research one magazine or a group of similar magazines. In addition to this general lack of material, matters are further complicated by the fact that one of the few comprehensive histories available is Frank Luther Mott's *A History of American Magazines* (5 v., 1957-68), a work suspected of unreliability. This is a suspicion which Reed's research supports; while Mott records that the *Century* was the first American magazine to use halftone reproductions of photographs, Reed notes that he was unable to find any examples in support of Mott's claims (p. 45). As such clarifications demonstrate, in the field of periodical history some very basic work remains to be done. This study is a step in the right direction: Reed is meticulous in his methodology, and in terms of raw data this study is extraordinarily impressive.

Sharon Hamilton, Dalhousie University

Michele Moylan and Lane Stiles, eds. *Reading Books: Essays on the Material Text and Literature in America*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996. x, 288 p. ill. ISBN 1-55849-062-0 (cloth). \$50.00/£39.95. ISBN 1-55849-063-9 (paper). \$16.95/£13.50

Each of the essays in this volume considers some aspect of the book as a physical object. As Lane Stiles states, "one way that readers are...always situated in relation to any text...is through the materiality of that text" (p. 250). In *Reading Books* materiality is taken as an integral element in the literary, cultural and historical meaning of every book. Bindings, covers, title pages, illustrations,

as well as advertising copy and other aspects of “packaging” are examined as “parts of a semiotic system” (2); all become relevant factors in shaping response. The collection engages a range of specific authors, texts, and publishing projects in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century America.

By examining particular moments in the history of textual production, the volume isolates a variety of issues in the history of interpretation. One recurrent issue is the difference between “book” and “text” in critical usage. The privileged position of the “text” in literary discourse is challenged by the very title of this volume: *Reading Books*. The word-choice reflects a realignment of assumptions that, gaining momentum in recent years, has contributed to the rise of “book history” itself. The tension between “book” and “text” serves to sharpen the volume’s focus on the interplay between material embodiment and reading practices.

It is no simple matter to assess the role of the material “book” in creating textual meaning. The editors assert that “there is no such thing...as a text unmediated by its materiality”; yet the “disembodied text” is more than “a useful...critical fiction” (12). As Michelle Moylan’s essay on Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona* implies, it is just the indeterminacy of a text that engenders its numerous material forms. Stressing the interpretive function of advertisements and illustrations in several specific editions of the novel, Moylan’s discussion shows how the Indian theme in *Ramona* was alternately underscored and virtually elided. This essay suggests with particular clarity that material forms already reflect interpretation, even as they also shape it.

The volume’s concern with material embodiments highlights many gaps between authorial or editorial intent and reception. Through its advertising, cover, or frontispiece a book may well set out to delimit the reader’s “horizon of expectations” (53), and “guide” the reader’s relation to the text (165). But neither book nor text can legislate response. Influenced by a myriad of individual and cultural factors, readers are difficult to ‘condition’ (169).

Reading Books suggests not only that material form is well worth pondering but also that books are always ‘texts’ themselves. The collection explores how the physical book contributes to canon formation, to pedagogy, to the image of an author, to the idea of ‘literature’. Some of the essays go farther than others in linking the details of publishing history or physical format to larger questions of cultural ‘work’ or reading conventions. The essays by Williams, Casper, and Stiles offer especially valuable perspectives on the reciprocal relations between readers, books, and mediating institutions.

Readers approaching this volume – like the readers constructed within it – will bring disparate assumptions to their reading, and may profitably pick and choose among the diverse essays. If read in sequence, however, the volume also exemplifies a range of approaches (and methodological challenges) for reading ‘material’ books. The volume will be as useful for the questions it raises as for those it resolves.

Barbara Hochman, Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Frank Donoghue. *The Fame Machine: Book Reviewing and Eighteenth-Century Literary Careers*. Stanford: Stanford

University Press, 1996. 213p. ISBN 0-8047-2563-2 (cloth). \$39.50/£30.00

Dustin Griffin. *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 317p. ISBN 0-521-56085-3 (cloth). \$52.95/£35.00

To assent to the rise of the professional critic as the legitimate arbiter of a literary work’s standing is not controversial. Indeed, such a stance was welcomed during the eighteenth century by not disinterested writers who — through lack of patronage, disgust with their patrons or from a paradoxical desire to democratize cultural discrimination — considered that patronage by enlightened nobility and gentry was no longer appropriate in the economy of letters. These books may be seen as two sides of the same coin, Frank Donoghue alleging that the period saw the “comprehensive professionalization of literary production and reception” (p. 6), while Dustin Griffin argues the contrary, that patronage was more widespread and lasted longer than Whiggish authors and historians would have us believe.

For Donoghue, the “transformation of the conditions of literary production” by the middle of the eighteenth century “precipitated a crisis among aspiring authors ... [T]hey had neither a clear index of literary fame (such as affiliation with a patron had once bestowed) nor a way to specify the relationship of one piece of their writing to the next (since market demands so greatly influenced what they chose to write)” (2). The vacuum was filled by the critical and literary periodicals, which rose in number from thirty published in London in 1745 to more than seventy-five by 1765. Donoghue argues, contra the conventional story of the democratization of reading, that the growth of the periodicals was an attempt “to police the relations between [the] new variety of readers, the books they were buying, and the authors of those books” (10). By exploring key moments and texts in the lives of Sterne, Goldsmith, and Smollett, Donoghue is able to use biography as an opening into not only the literary lives of authors (though he specifically excludes poets and philosophers) but of the books they write and the readers who purchase them.

Griffin shares this aim, as he makes explicit in his first paragraph. But his goal is quite opposite, for he seeks to show that “the patronage system is a pervasive feature of eighteenth-century English culture, and that the relevant context is therefore a broad one” (5). Griffin provides a handy summary of his argument in the form of nine propositions, including such statements as: during the eighteenth century the economies of patronage and marketplace overlapped, that the relationship between patron and client was never exclusive and dyadic but “involved job-related patronage and relatively small grants” (10), that the patronage system “was always a site of contestation,” which can be seen “in the language of dedications, prefaces, letters, novels, and poems” (11). In contrast to Donoghue, Griffin focuses on poets: Dryden, Swift, Pope, Savage, Leapor, Young, Lennox.

Both books provide much stimulation, though I find Griffin more persuasive, particularly his second chapter “The cultural economics of literary patronage.” The rightness and inevitability of the shift from individual, traditional patronage to the marketplace of collective patronage by readers have been all too easy assertions. Readers (en masse), then and now, are unlike

traditional patrons because they cannot provide protection, place-holding employment, bounty and control of national culture. In view of the relatively short print runs, the high price of books relative to average disposable incomes, and the restriction of secondary and tertiary education to a select few, it is hyperbolic to speak of an open market for literary productions. The next scholarly frontier should be an exploration of the economics of eighteenth-century culture.

David Hunter, The University of Texas at Austin

Aled Jones. *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England*. Aldershot, Hants: Scolar Press; Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1996. xii, 231 p. ill. ISBN 1-85928-132-X (cloth). £45.00/\$74.95

Powers of the Press, refreshing and exciting to read, spotlights a type of publication – the newspaper – now increasingly recognised as having been a major player in nineteenth-century print culture. Early last century the venerable notion of public opinion became coupled to the metaphorical mighty press engine. By mid-century, with fiscal resistance removed, this liberated locomotive was accelerating its independent progression along the ideological fourth estate track towards the pinnacles of civilisation and enlightenment. The Fourth Estate myth, seen *par excellence* in Henry Fox Bourne's press histories at the century's end, persisted well into our own. In fact, it was only in the 1970s that the Whiggish extolling of this once dominating vehicle of communication was subjected to all-out historiographical attack and demolition, and more or less supplanted by theories of the press as willing conscript to the social order in all its hegemonic facets. While providing a clear focus and a productive paradigm for a spate of British press studies, this latter, revisionist approach has run the danger of reductionism and of the loss of historical voices.

Historian Aled Jones's book is an ambitious attempt to restore polyphony: to display the whole spectrum of contemporary attitudes to newspapers in England during the nineteenth-century, from fear to pride, distaste to reverence, scorn to enthusiasm, and showing changes over time. This is done through "a series of related studies of the diverse ways in which cheap newspapers, as new forms of communication, were understood and received" (p. 8). Drawing on a wide range of contemporary archival and published materials, chapters examine views of press liberty; iconographic and fictional representations of the newspaper world; the documentation of newspapers through histories, directories, catalogues and indexes; the likely influences of currents of thought on ideas about press power; relations between newspaper interests and political parties; and the place of public discussion.

The strongest chapters are "The liberty of the Press" and "The political debate". Resting on a sound and familiar historical infrastructure, the diachronic polyglottism displays the changing complexities of Liberal and Tory attitudes to and involvement with newspapers, and thus leads us to an enlarged understanding of how the press has become part of the modern British political process.

In some theoretical passages I would have preferred less elliptical prose and more documentation of specific allusions. En passant references to de Tocqueville, Marx, Edward Said and

George Steiner are not footnoted and Raymond Williams's ideas are heavily drawn on but insufficiently expounded, while those of Benedict Anderson (of *Imagined Communities*), which seem to pervade much of the discussion, are unnamed. The chapter entitled "Imposing order", an historiographical survey and discussion of what librarians call bibliographical control, is straightforward enough, but much of the ground has been covered earlier in newspaper and periodical studies and in the literature of librarianship. While parts relating the slippery and amorphous concepts of press power and public opinion to nineteenth-century philosophical, psychological and occult theories and fads (including phrenology and spiritualism) are arresting, some of the connections seem tenuous and, moreover, it's not always clear whether they are being forged by the nineteenth-century speakers or by Jones.

Jones acknowledges an intellectual debt to three areas of scholarship: the innovative approaches of Roger Chartier and others to *histoire du livre*; empirical studies such as those of Lucy Brown and of Alan Lee in nineteenth-century newspaper history; and twentieth-century media sociology. With *Powers of the Press* the author has repaid this in kind. Heard again, selected, contextualised words from the past spark a sense of how people might actually have regarded and received proliferating penny and cheap papers. All this evidence reinforces and illustrates Lucy Brown's assertion (*Victorian News and Newspapers*, 1985) that in the second half of the nineteenth century the newspaper became part of the normal furniture of life for all classes (272). Jones also presents historical precedents for polarised and ambivalent views of media roles today. Thus, this most important book provides insights for methodologically challenging reception studies, an ideological superstructure for nineteenth-century newspaper history and a valuable historical dimension for twentieth-century communication studies.

Elizabeth Morrison, Melbourne, Australia

Martha L. Foote and Canadian Association of Law Libraries Staff, eds. *Law Reporting and Legal Publishing in Canada: A History*. (Canadian Association of Law Libraries Occasional Paper No. 2.) Kingston, ON: Canadian Association of Law Libraries, 1997. ISBN 0-9696763-1-X (paper). \$CAN35.00

Most of these essays were previously published in the journal *Canadian Law Libraries* between 1993 and 1996. There are three surveys: Canadian legal bibliography by Neil Campbell, Canadian law publishers by Vivienne Denton, and a brief history of digital aspects by John N. Davis. In addition, several essays discuss developments within one or two provinces and one, by Jules Larivière, discusses law reporting at the federal level.

This volume will appeal mostly to legal historians and to those interested in the history of books, bookselling and publishing in Canada, but some of the essays raise themes of contemporary relevance which should interest legal academics, practising lawyers, policy-makers and legal publishers. The province-by-province chapters are generally competently done at the empirical level and include detailed accounts of how law reporting began in each province, and of the constantly shifting constellations of law societies, courts and legal publishers who were involved. Each chapter follows the story down to the present with reference to newly

developing electronic or digital modes of access to court decisions. The chapters which are most satisfying are those which attempt to integrate recent work in Canadian legal history, notably the chapters on New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and on British Columbia.

All the provincial chapters, however, present themselves as sources of raw material for future legal historians, rather than works of history in their own right. With their usual modesty, librarians point users in the right direction rather than telling them what conclusions they should draw from the material they peruse. At times this becomes a weakness. Vivienne Denton's essay on the development of the legal publishing industry looks at the increasing centralization of English legal publishing in Toronto from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, but notes only in passing the success of Eric Appleby's Fredericton-based Maritime Law Book Company in capturing the basic report series for all provinces except Quebec and Ontario, as well as mounting the popular *Ontario Appeal Cases*, *Quebec Appeal Cases*, *Federal Trial Reports*, and *National Reporter*. *Maritime Law Book's* example surely illustrates that there is an alternative to the relentless capitalization and internationalization of the publishing industry which has characterized the last couple of decades.

More recent developments in legal publishing appear in John Davis's chapter on the digitization of case reports. Davis describes in a chronological narrative the multitude of attempts by public and private actors to come to terms with new technologies. In a sense the prevailing eclecticism is the whole point, and imposing some imperative schema on these developments would probably be misleading. However, such a knowledgeable author might offer some type of prescription. Should we just let the market sort this out? Or does the public interest in accurate case reporting call for more of a governmental role? Is self-publishing by courts and tribunals of their decisions on the internet the answer? Is there a role for a revived Canadian Law Information Centre to coordinate access to decisions of courts and tribunals across the country?

As the editor of a legal academic journal (the *Dalhousie Law Journal*), I was struck by the absence of attention to such journals in this collection. There are some two dozen of them in Canada, mostly self-published, and they comprise a significant resource for legal research. Some of them are now going to be available online in full-text format through Lexis-Nexis. Perhaps the history of Canadian law journals could be the subject for another Occasional Paper?

Philip Girard, Dalhousie University

Michael Newbury. *Figuring Authorship in Antebellum America*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997. viii, 251 p. ISBN 0-8047-2858-5 (cloth). \$39.50

Between the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, authorship in America shifted from a genteel avocation driven by civic-mindedness to an aggressive profession urged on by the desire for profits. The causes of this transformation are well known, the consequences less so. As antebellum Americans struggled to understand what sorts of people authors were and what sorts of work they did, they turned, according to Michael Newbury, to other forms of labor to explore the phenomenon of authorship.

Authors, Newbury contends, invoked craftsmanship, industrialized production, chattel slavery, and white-collar labor to "figure" and hence figure out the status of the professional author. Newbury goes on to argue that when we juxtapose authors around the tropes they used to represent themselves and others, rather than around generic or gendered categories, we are able to see the contours of American literary history in new and exciting ways. All of this seems eminently reasonable, and I am convinced that the project is sound, at least in conception.

It is in execution, however, that Newbury's book disappoints. While he has read widely and carefully in antebellum labor history and in contemporary literary criticism, his interpretations, as a whole, lack conviction. In his discussion of Nathaniel Hawthorne, for example, he makes altogether too much of the author's 1855 rant against "a d___d mob of scribbling women." While the word "mob" had historical resonances with a depersonalised working class, it seems a stretch to claim that Hawthorne was attempting to redefine middle class domestic authors in terms of industrial working class activity and more tendentious still to infer an attempt to "collapse the actual writing . . . of domestic fiction into that fiction's reproduction" (p. 37). As Susan S. Williams has pointed out, Hawthorne's comment can be more appropriately read as his attempt to twit his publishers, Ticknor and Fields, with the success of their Boston competitors John P. Jewett and Company (See "'Promoting an Extensive Sale': The Production and Reception of The Lamplighter," *New England Quarterly* 69 (1996): 181). Likewise, Newbury's reading of celebrity authors' demurrals in terms of antislavery rhetoric, while ingenious, fails to live up to its promise. While it is true that both slaves and celebrities were notable for being objects of exchange rather than agents of exchange, it requires an extraordinary leap of interpretive faith to see Harriet Beecher Stowe's Little Eva as either a slave to celebrity or as Stowe's attempt to explain her own extraordinary fame. Newbury's depictions of hysterical fans mobbing the author in England and elsewhere are all drawn from the period after her publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; at the time she wrote and published the novel serially in the *National Era*, Stowe was relatively unknown. As these two examples suggest, Newbury's technique typically involves elaborate contextual reconstruction of discourses regarding labor that are then read into recalcitrant authorial tropes which, in turn, form links in an often complex chain of reasoning. Newbury's chains, however, have weak links.

The problem with Newbury's book does not lie in his methodology. I am convinced that tropes can define the reality they purport to explain, and we could learn a great deal about authorship by attending to its figures. Newbury's problem, rather, lies in his extremely limited and rather conventional body of primary evidence. He explains that he derives much of his evidence from "literary" writers, because they "think more about writing than others and, therefore...their texts are more fully and commonly suffused with figurations of this work" (14). This, surely, begs the questions of who or what constitutes a "literary" writer, and whether printers, publishers, booksellers, and reviewers thought just as much about authorship as did the "literary" authors themselves. If tropes do reveal underlying cultural assumptions, then

it is possible that texts that are less self-reflexively “suffused with figurations” will offer a more compelling body of evidence with which to work. We will have to wait to see. While Newbury’s work is articulate, ingenious, and intelligent, his broadest claims will not withstand scrutiny.

Leon Jackson, St. Lawrence University

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Sharpend

In keeping with our expansionist policy, *SHARP News* comes once again with a personal editorial, this time from James L.W. West III. Also featured is a roundup of international history of the book projects which we hope will become a regular annual column. Thanks to all who have given me the material you find in these pages.

A few items of interest to SHARP members that have recently come to my attention. Those following the book history activities of the Centre for English Studies in the University of London's School of Advanced Study, will be pleased to know that the Centre has been promoted to more permanent and formal stature as the Institute of English Studies from the beginning of this year. This is an important and well deserved recognition by the university of the importance of what is being done at the Centre, and we look forward to the work sure to come from the Institute. Notices have also been coming in regarding *Book History*, including a review in the November 1998 issue of *Library Journal* which notes: "Our field of play is the entire history of written communication," write the editors. Grandiose as this promise may be, the first 306-page, clothbound volume indicates the editors are well on their way.' Barbara Brannon writes that, as a result of the positive critical response, SHARP membership has risen dramatically over the last month. Great news all round for SHARP work, methinks.

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