



The Book

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Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture
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Note from the Editors

We want to hear from any of our readers who have knowledge of, or are interested in, two prospective conference topics. One of these concerns the interaction between literate and nonliterate populations in North America, that is, between Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans. It is time, we think, to consider this interaction and its fruits across the whole range of European efforts to "civilize" and Christianize such groups. D. F. McKenzie and James Axtell are among the scholars who have recently reflected on the complex role of literacy in these processes.

A quite different topic is the iconography of reading, which in the hands of historians such as Roger Chartier has become an intriguing aspect of book history. The casual museum goer is quickly aware of portraits that include books—the apparent book of devotion held by an old woman, the lawyer's treatises that fill a shelf behind some local worthy. What would be the outcome of a systematic survey of portraits, prints, and any other iconographical materials?

Gross to Give '89 Wiggins Lecture; Michael Schudson Chosen for 1990

Robert A. Gross will deliver the seventh annual James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture on "Printing, Politics, and the People" on Friday, October 27, 1989, at 5:15 p.m. in the AAS library building. Gross is professor and chairman of American studies at the College of William and Mary, having recently moved there from Amherst College. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of the AAS Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

A dinner will follow the lecture, at \$21.00 per person. Places may be reserved by sending payment to Ann-Cathrine Rapp at AAS by Monday, October 23.

In addition to continuing the lecture series named in honor of the former *Washington Post* editor, U.N. ambassador, and AAS president, Gross's lecture will be one of several events held at AAS this fall in observance of the 350th anniversary of the introduction of printing into the British colonies that became the United States. New Haven rare book dealer Wil-

liam S. Reese is guest curator of an exhibition entitled "The Printer's First Fruits: An Exhibition of American Imprints, 1640-1742, from the Collections of the American Antiquarian Society," which will be on view in Antiquarian Hall from October 17 through November 22. Reese will also deliver a lecture on the subject, open to the public, on Wednesday, October 18 at 4:45 p.m. in Antiquarian Hall. AAS will publish a catalogue of the exhibition.

Meanwhile, Michael Schudson, professor in the Department of Communication at the University of California at San Diego, has been selected to deliver the 1990 Wiggins Lecture, which will help mark yet another printing anniversary. His topic will be "Preparing the Minds of the People: Three Hundred Years of the American Newspaper."

Fourth Summer Seminar Planned; To Focus on American Renaissance

The fourth AAS Summer Seminar in the History of the Book in American Culture will take place June 9-19, 1990. Theme of the seminar will be "The American Renaissance: Critical and Bibliographical Perspectives." Serving as co-leaders will be David S. Reynolds and Michael Winship. Other faculty will include AAS staff and visiting scholars.

Reynolds is a professor of English at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is author of the prize-winning book *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville*, published by Knopf in 1988, much of the research for which was carried out during Reynolds's residence as an AAS-National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow in 1982-83.

Winship has been editor of the *Bibliography of American Literature* since 1977. He is completing a doctorate in bibliography at Oxford University under D. F. McKenzie's direction and this winter will become associate professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin. He has been awarded a 1989-90 Peterson Fellowship at AAS for research on nineteenth-century American publishing.

Full details on the seminar will appear in the November issue of this newsletter.

A Wide-Ranging Conference On Current Work in the Field

The "Work in Progress" Conference on June 27 drew a near-capacity audience to the Society's Goddard-Daniels House for seven informative and wide-ranging presentations. David Watters (University of New Hampshire) spoke on *The New England Primer Improved* and *Female Education*. Two historians dealt with divergent aspects of religion and the press: Joan Hoy (an independent scholar) discussed Quaker books and Quaker culture in the early Republic and Ann Braude (Carleton College) told of her research on American Spiritualist periodicals. Richard John (soon to go to William and Mary as a postdoctoral fellow at the new Commonwealth Center for the Study of American Culture) reported on "The Postal System and the Transformation of American Print Culture, 1790-1860." Isabelle Lehuu (Cornell University) then spoke on her current project, "Revolution in Print: New Objects in the History of Nineteenth-Century Reading." During the last session, Michael Turner (Bodleian Library, Oxford University) and David Hall (Boston University and chairman of the AAS Program) updated the audience on the collaborative histories of the book with which they are involved, in Britain and the United States, respectively. Finally, several members of the audience spoke briefly on their own work in progress. AAS will doubtless schedule more of these pleasant and useful occasions in the future.

Research Notes

THE POETRY OF EMPIRE IN BRITISH AMERICA, 1690-1750

My concern has been to understand the polite literature reflecting on mercantilism and the polity of British America from the Glorious Revolution to the eve of the Seven Years' War. My particular interest has been the "poetry on the affairs of state" that comments on three issues: the promise of material wealth and cultural refinement extended by the imperial contract; the contest of provincial laws and liberties with metropolitan prerogatives; and the threat to provincial security posed by Spain, France, and France's Amerindian allies.

While recovering the thematics of imperial discourse has been a principal goal of the study, an equally fundamental aim has been to refine the current understanding of literary practice in British America. One revision of this understanding has to do with the demarcation of written and print culture. While historians of the book rightly speak of the pervasive and growing influence of print upon British America, the domination of the press over literary communication

was far from total during the first half of the eighteenth century. Certain species of discourse were transacted in manuscript or performed orally. Of the genres of poetry that commented upon the affairs of state, for instance, those that were most dangerous for authors — pasquinade, satirical ballads, and ribald songs engaging in ad hominem attacks on political figures — rarely saw print. Indeed, the rhetorical extreme of provincial political discourse is frequently found in manuscripts rather than in imprints. The most difficult element of the research for this study has been locating the surviving texts of the manuscript literature. Systematic inspection of surviving diaries, letterbooks, account books, and public legal records, was required to establish a corpus of material for study.

When I held a Samuel Foster Haven fellowship at AAS in 1986, the late Stephen Botein posed three questions that proved extremely helpful to my research: "Which manuscripts presuppose a print culture?"; "What sort of audience is generated by a manuscript work?"; "Is the decision to circulate a work as a manuscript a rhetorical decision?" Botein's questions allowed me to see certain generic distinctions between the manuscript poetry upon the affairs of state and the manuscript belles lettres generated by and for the provincial clubs and salons. Political poems, despite their status as manuscripts, invariably underwent a type of publication: pasquinades were posted in public places (the town pump, the statehouse door, the tavern common room), ballads were "sung up" by the joint-stool singers, and satires were passed about by hand. In contrast, much of the manuscript belles lettres reinforced the intimacy and exclusivity of polite, private

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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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society. It was not meant to be voiced outside of the charmed circle of one's companions.

By examining the "paper wars" over the prerogative in Massachusetts and New York, I've tried to recapitulate the dialogue between printed, "official" statements and manuscript, "unofficial" declarations. While these debates afford substantial information about provincial politics, their interest for historians of the book lies in what they reveal about the political symbolism of the manuscript. Since the time of the Whig scriptoria during the Stuart reaction of the 1680s, the manuscript possessed an aura of frankness, communicating "the truth which can't be told." Although the Glorious Revolution and the repeal of the Licensing Act made the circulation of seditious remarks less dangerous to writers, and although the penalties for publishing proscribed views were less dire in British America than in the metropolis, the recourse to manuscript nevertheless suggested that the matter being communicated was tendered despite the displeasure (tyranny?) of the authorities. Time and time again opponents to the prerogative communicated their views in manuscript, suggesting that their opinions were ventured in the face of executive oppression. A signal instance: when Governor Cosby ordered the burning of two printed ballads and several issues of John Peter Zenger's *New-York Weekly Journal* at the place of public execution in New York, James Alexander engineered a ballad campaign, circulating manuscript satires and commissioning songs whose written character testified to the constraint of the press.

Besides investigating the paper wars over the prerogative, this history contains sections discussing the rhetoric of imperial animosity employed in the propaganda efforts against Spain and France and the attempt in Britain and the colonies to make commerce a heroic subject. The University of Chicago Press will be publishing my book, *Oracles of Empire; Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690-1750*, in 1990.

David S. Shields, *The Citadel*

AAS Completes Microform Cataloguing; To Host Workshop on Computer Searches

Late last March, AAS cataloguers completed a twenty-seven-month project to create a machine-readable catalogue of Early American Imprints, First Series (Evans), a major microform series edited at AAS beginning in 1955 and published by Readex Microprint Corporation. Then, in May, these 36,313 records describing the individual titles in the Readex microform series were tape-loaded into RLIN, the international bibliographical data base of the Research Libraries Group, Inc., of which AAS is an owner-member.

Thus for the first time, researchers throughout the United States and overseas have access by author, title, subject, genre, printer (or publisher), and place of publication to the wealth of materials reproduced in both the original Microprint and new microfiche versions of Early American Imprints. As users of these microforms know, the series reproduces the text of nearly every extant book, pamphlet, and broadside printed in what is now the U.S. from 1640 through 1800.

AAS is currently exploring additional ways of making this catalogue available for the widest possible use, including distribution of tapes of the catalogue to individual libraries and publication of the records in a CD-ROM format for use with personal computers.

This cataloguing project was funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Title II-C of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and was carried out by staff of AAS's North American Imprints Program (NAIP). NAIP cataloguers have been at work for nearly a decade on the creation of a highly detailed, machine-readable union catalogue of pre-1801 imprints of the present U.S. and Canada. The NAIP file, descriptive of the original materials, was the logical starting point for the creation of records descriptive of the microform reproductions. In assigning subject headings to thousands of NAIP records for the microform catalogue, NAIP cataloguers have increased significantly the completeness and usefulness of the NAIP file.

The pre-1801 phases of NAIP have been supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Council on Library Resources. This work has been carried out in cooperation with the Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue, based at the British Library and the University of California at Riverside. The Society's records of North American eighteenth-century imprints will be loaded into the special ESTC file in RLIN late this year; thus will American imprint records mingle with British and document the two-way transatlantic flow of the printed word.

Meanwhile, NAIP, which taken as a whole is a long-term project to create a computerized union catalogue of all North American imprints dated before 1877, continues on in different forms, also supported in the main by NEH grants. Work on cataloguing the Society's outstanding collection of children's books printed in the U.S. after 1820 proceeds under a second grant from the Endowment. The work of this phase deals with the imprints of 1861-76 and with undated (but clearly nineteenth-century) materials. Most of the records for imprints from the period 1821-60 have been loaded into RLIN, with the rest to follow by the end of September. NEH recently awarded AAS another cataloguing grant connected with NAIP, this

one designed to enable the Society to complete the machine-readable cataloguing of its American imprints from the 1820s.

Projects like NAIP and ESTC hold considerable promise for scholars to find new and better ways to gain access to printed research materials from the past—and to analyze information about them in the aggregate. On Saturday, October 28 (the day after Robert Gross's Wiggins Lecture), the Society will host a symposium concerned with scholarly uses of such electronic bibliographical data bases. Co-sponsor of the workshop will be the Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue, whose International Committee will convene at AAS that week. For information on registering for the symposium, contact John Hench at AAS.

1989 APHA Conference

"Colonial New England Printing" will be the subject of the fourteenth annual conference of the American Printing History Association, to be held at Harvard University on Saturday, October 7, 1989. For further information, write APHA Conference, John Hay Library, Box A, Brown University, Providence, R.I. 02912.

AAS Establishes New Seminar in Bibliography and Book Trade History

AAS has established a Seminar in American Bibliography and Book Trade History for librarians, scholars, and other professionals in New England interested in these subjects. Two sessions are scheduled during the seminar's inaugural year. On Wednesday, October 4, 1989, James Green, curator of printed books at the Library Company of Philadelphia who will be in residence at AAS as the Stephen Botein Fellow, will speak on "The Transformation of the American Book Trade, 1785-1825." Then, on Tuesday, April 3, 1990, Hugh Amory, a rare book cataloguer at Harvard's Houghton Library, will address the subject of "Historians and Cataloguers: The Future of the Short-Title Catalogue."

Both seminars will begin at 5 p.m. in the Society's Goddard-Daniels House. Participants may stay for a catered, dutch-treat, post-seminar dinner.

The bibliography and book trade history seminar joins two previously established regional seminars at the Society, one in American political and social history and the other in American literary history. For more information about any of these seminars, call or write John Hench.

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