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The Book

Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture
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HBA Update

With systematic planning for the fifth and final volume of the collaborative history under way, volumes 2, 3, and 4 have reached the midway point where contributors (some of whom remain to be chosen) are at work on chapters, or parts of chapters. Meanwhile, all but a small part of Volume I, *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World,* is in the final stages of the editorial process, and, with luck, the entire volume will be sent off to Cambridge University Press in March. The numerous charts and tables prepared by Russell Martin, the research assistant for the project, will be an interesting feature of the volume. The data series for total imprint production, based on the North American Imprints Program bibliographical data base, will be complemented by Hugh Amory's study of production as measured by printed sheets for the year 1765, and by Amory's review of the strengths and limitations of existing bibliographies.

David D. Hall, Harvard University

AAS Summer Seminar for 1997

The Program in the History of the Book in American Culture will offer a six-day seminar, "Getting Into Print," from Monday, June 9, to Sunday, June 15, 1997. Leading the seminar will be Joan Shelley Rubin (History, University of Rochester) and Meredith L. McGill (English, Rutgers University). Through readings, discussions, and case studies using the Society's collections, seminar participants will consider the forces enabling and limiting access to print and social, cultural, economic, and institutional factors that have shaped the creation of printed texts in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America. The faculty will include Ann Fabian (History, Columbia University) and Michael Warner (English, Rutgers University), and members of the AAS staff.

Details will be forthcoming shortly in a printed flyer that will be posted in its entirety on the Society's gopher (gopher://mark.mwa.org) along with the application instructions. Notices will also appear on electronic bulletin boards. Printed flyers will be sent to all subscribers to this newsletter. If you are not on our mailing list and would like to receive a flyer, please contact AAS.

The editors of Volume 5, David Paul Nord, Joan Shelley Rubin, and Michael Schudson. Photo by John B. Hench

AAS Launches Mellon Fellowships, Monograph Series with Cambridge

A four-year, $500,000 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will enable AAS to establish three new categories of long-term fellowships, effectively doubling the number of long-term awards the Society, can make annually. One of the fellowships is linked to a new scholarly monograph series that AAS is establishing with Cambridge University Press..

The Mellon grant establishes the following:

- *Mellon Postdoctoral Research Fellowships* provide tenures of nine or ten months and stipends of up to $35,000. Foreign nationals are eligible to apply.
- *The Mellon Post-Dissertation Fellowship* will be open to scholars no more than three years beyond receipt of the Ph.D. to come to AAS for a year to extend research and revise the dissertation for publication. Maximum stipend will be $35,000. Mellon Post-Dissertation Fellows will be required to give first refusal on the resulting manuscript to the AAS-CUP monograph series (see below).
- The grant also establishes the *Mellon Distinguished Scholar in Residence* program, in which the Society will invite a senior scholar to spend an academic year at AAS.

The AAS-Cambridge series will publish books stemming from research in the Society's collections. The series will be highly selective (two or three titles a year at

most), with the principal criterion being the excellence of the scholarship and writing. Prospective manuscripts will come from other AAS fellows (short- and long-term) research associates (i.e., non-stipendiary fellows), AAS members, and other researchers, in addition to the Mellon Post-Dissertation Fellows.

This is the second collaboration between Cambridge and AAS. Cambridge will publish the Society's five-volume work in progress, *A History of the Book in America*, beginning in 1998.

The deadline for applications for all academic fellowships at AAS except the Mellon Post-Dissertation Fellowship is January 15 annually. The first deadline for the latter competition will likely be in the fall of 1997 for tenure during the 1998-99 academic year.

AAS Receives Grants for HBA

Several institutions and organizations in the book world have recently made grants to AAS in support of *A History of the Book in America*. The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and the American Booksellers Association have each awarded the Society $5,000 to support an oral history project in connection with Volume 5 (post-World War II). The Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America has made a grant of $6,000 in support of the collaborative history generally.

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Editors: Robert A. Gross and John B. Hench
Managing Editor: Caroline Sloat

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

AAS Staff Notes

Caroline Sloat was recently promoted to to the posts of editor of publications and academic program officer at AAS. Her many duties, some new to her and some old, include serving as editor of the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* and holding key administrative responsibilities for the Society's Program in the History of the Book in American Culture and for *A History of the Book in America*. She joined the AAS staff in 1993. As editor of publications Sloat succeeds John B. Hench, editor since 1973, who has been named vice president for academic and public programs.

Nord Delivers Wiggins Lecture

The 1996 James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture was given on October 18, 1996, by David Paul Nord, professor of journalism and adjunct professor of history at Indiana University. In "Free Grace, Free Books, Free Riders: The Economics of Religious Publishing in Early Nineteenth-Century America," Nord explores the business strategies of religious publishers. He focuses on the Bible Society of Philadelphia (founded 1808) and the American Bible Society (founded 1816), with some examples drawn from other large, national evangelical publishers. Because their aim was universal circulation, not profit, religious publishers were inclined to give away their books. But because they needed large revenues to print more books, they were also inclined to sell them. Nord shows how publishers developed pricing and distribution strategies to sell *and* give away books at the same time. Given the not-for-profit goals of the publishers and the economic nature of religious publishing, he argues, these early mass-media entrepreneurs made sensible, though not always successful, economic decisions.

Nord's lecture will be repeated at Yale University on Wednesday, February 12,1997, at 4 p.m. in the Hall of Graduate Studies, Room 211. The Yale sponsors of the lecture are the departments of American studies, history, and religious studies, and the Divinity School. The second delivery of the lecture is underwritten in part by a grant to the American Antiquarian Society by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. The lecture will be published in the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, volume 106, part 2, in the spring of 1997 and separately as part of the complete series of Wiggins Lectures which are available from the Society.

The 1996 SHARP conference hosted by AAS included a reception in Antiquarian Hall on Thursday, July 18, at which conference attendees were offered tours of the library and an exhibition prepared by Research Librarian Joanne Chaison of AAS sources used by authors of seminal works in the history of the book. The conference provided a photo opportunity for an informal reunion of matriculants, faculty, and staff who had participated in AAS Summer Seminars. Front row, from left: John Hench, Caroline Sloat, Bill Pannapacker, Sarah Wadsworth, Melissa Homestead, AAS President Ellen Dunlap, Mary Kelley, Michael Winship; second row: Joanne Chaison, Priscilla Older, Shirley Wajda, Lydia Schurman, Barbara Hochman, Susanna Ashton; third row: Jeff Douglas, Meredith McGill, Marilyn Davis DeEulis, Priscilla Murphy, Gigi Barnhill, Cornelia King, Katherine Preyer, Stephen Nissenbaum; fourth row: Paul Wright, Laura Wasowicz, Jeff Groves, Thomas Horrocks, Stephanie Girard, Robin Bledsoe, Martin Bruckner, Robert Gross; back row: SHARP News Editor David Finkelstein, Alison Scott, Martha King, David D. Hall, Susan Allen, David Andrews, and SHARP Vice President Simon Eliot. Photo by Doris O'Keefe.

Roundtable on Print Culture in the Undergraduate Classroom at the 1996 SHARP Conference: A Report

When Caroline Sloat showed me the vast room that would be the site of the roundtable discussion on print culture in the undergraduate classroom, I had my misgivings. After all, the session was scheduled for the late afternoon on Thursday, the first day of the SHARP conference, when many scholars would still be hunting for their luggage at Logan Airport or navigating the Massachusetts Turnpike. Would anyone be present to listen to the panelists? Would our voices echo among the few empty chairs? I'd probably have to harangue the audience into taking seats in the front few rows to create the illusion of a well-attended session.

I needn't have worried. Perhaps because the topic hit home with so many SHARP members or perhaps because a lively discussion of the same issue took place on SHARP-L in the weeks preceding the conference, the room filled rapidly. Seasoned faculty members, graduate students, special collections librarians, preservationists—all crowded in to hear five speakers discuss the innovative curricula and pedagogical tactics that have helped them move print culture studies out of the graduate seminar room and into the undergraduate classroom where so many of us spend so much of our academic lives.

Jeffrey Groves, associate professor in the Humanities and Social Sciences Division at Harvey Mudd College, led the way by describing how he goes about "Dramatizing the Familiar: Showing Students What They Don't Know about Books." During the first week of his freshman humanities course, Groves uses two hands-on exercises to capture the attention of "students who are primarily interested in engineering and science and who have no training in the history of the book or bibliography." Appealing to the mechanical bent of the Harvey Mudd population, he first asks students to build a book and then to dissect one. They spend the first class period in small groups, applying clamps, scissors, hammers, nails, sewing needles, staplers, vise grips and other tools to such materials as paper, cardboard, twine, thread, glue, tape, wood, cloth, and leather. They must create something that "functions like a book"—however they understand that phrase. Still in their small groups, students begin the second class meeting by examining a modern paperback book and a casebound book between 75 and 125 years old (all donated by a local bookseller and hitherto destined for the bargain shelf). Then Groves distributes X-acto knives to each group and

Paul Wright, editor, University of Massachusetts Press, converses with SHARP President Jonathan Rose.

instructs them to dissect their books neatly, noting their observations as they cut the books apart and making sure that each group member takes a turn wielding the blade. Students' reactions to the task of destroying a book typically range from shock and dismay at violating the sanctity of the object to gleeful fervor at breaking one of the prime taboos of education. By the end of day two, Groves finds that "books have moved from being invisible technologies to becoming intriguing machines." Together these attention-grabbing exercises accomplish several objectives important to any course in book history: they prompt students to think about the structure and function of books, to discover how unfamiliar they are with the pervasive technology of print, and to begin evaluating their own and their culture's fetishization of books.

A similar emphasis on the book as object occupied a later panelist, Karl Jirgens, professor of English literature at Laurentian University. To illuminate his talk "Beyond the Book Machine: A Case Study of Metamorphosis," he brought with him a pile of books that challenge, play with, or violate the traditional codex form. Accordion pleats, venetian blinds, and fan-folded books, loose-leaf and double-bind arrangements, decks of cards and three-dimensional pop-up books—these are some of the myriad of forms that render the book as sculpture and redefine the activities of reading and writing. The unlimited possibilities of the three-dimensional book could, Jirgens suggested, stimulate students of contemporary literature and creative writing to non-traditional efforts of their own.

University of Maryland doctoral student Eleanor Shevlin turned our attention from the esoteric to the ubiquitous. Her presentation, "What's in a Name? The Title as a Teaching Tool," demonstrated how ordinary book titles present "an invaluable avenue for introducing students to the print culture concerns...of authorship, reading, and publishing." Professors of literary studies commonly ask students to use titles to identify and analyze themes in a given work, or to trace relationships between authors and periods by understanding such allusive titles as Tennyson's "St. Agnes' Eve" or Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Less often do teachers use titles to introduce students to the marketing forces and editorial decisions that influence how a work will be presented to a reading public. Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* is one example of "a title chosen for its sales potential" rather than for reasons of authorial intention. Similarly, the English publisher's marketing of *Moby Dick as The Whale* in an attempt to reach juvenile readers suggests to students how a work can be reshaped for new audiences simply by retitling it. A few such examples usually suffice to stimulate students to discover market forces at work elsewhere in the world of print. Turning from telling students how titles have guided interpretation and delimited subject matter for audiences in the past, Shevlin shared a clever exercise that brings home to students how profoundly titles shape their own reading experiences: she distributes an untitled Bret Harte poem that seems to represent the rapturous song of a lover racing toward the beloved. After students have described the poem's subject matter she reveals its title, "What the Bullet Sang," whereupon they inevitably discover that they have misread the poem. If we focus students' attention on these often overlooked titles, Shevlin maintained, we can "illuminate not only individual works, but marketing trends, reading processes, authorial compositions, publishing practices, and generic transformation as well."

In describing a course that used a nineteenth-century magazine as its central text, Sherry Linkon, associate professor of English at Youngstown State University, reflected on the contribution original materials can make to undergraduate education. Her upper-division literature course on "The *Atlantic Monthly* Circle" required students to use primary materials, from gift-book editions of Holmes's *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* to bound volumes of the *Atlantic*. Comparing various bindings and editions of a single work and discovering inscriptions on flyleaves led students to apprehend books as artifacts and to understand reading as a social activity inscribed in the acts of giving and loaning books. Once they began to work with the bound volumes of the magazine, other avenues of discussion opened up. Students read literary works in their original context, embedded among travel and science articles, art and music criticism, or political commentary. They considered how serialization might affect reading and writing patterns, or how relationships among writers, critics, and editors might influence literary styles. Most SHARPists would agree with Linkon's conclusion that original materials offer valuable opportunities to engage students in an examination of print culture that modern reprints of the same works simply cannot provide.

But how many teaching institutions have archives and special collections necessary to support such instruction? And how many of those actually have faculty who use the

collections to teach book history courses? Susan Allen, director of library and media services at Kalamazoo College, addressed these questions when she surveyed nearly seventy-five institutions that make up the Oberlin Group of liberal arts college libraries. Some of her findings proved surprising. She discovered no correlation between endowment or academic ranking and the number of instructional programs in special collections, suggesting that "even lower-ranked institutions without endowed funds manage to provide as many instructional opportunities supported by special collections as their more wealthy and higher-ranked sister colleges." Moreover, though nearly half of the institutions she surveyed reported collections broad enough to support book history courses, only 18 percent actually offered such courses. This missed opportunity, Allen argued, "may become a grand opportunity" for putting special collections to good use "introducing students to and supporting them in the vital interdisciplinary study of books and their design, printing and publishing, reading, and other aspects of material culture." Allen concluded by discussing programs at five small, liberal arts colleges that exemplify the kind of collaboration between faculty and special collections staff that she would like to see become more widespread.

Audience members suggested several other fundamentals for successfully engaging undergraduates, but Lynne M. Fors seemed most apt when she argued that the essential ingredient will always remain the teacher's enthusiasm for the material. If the passion displayed during and after the session is any barometer, SHARP members should be wildly successful in their efforts to teach print culture in the undergraduate classroom.

Julie Bates Dock
Torrance, California

American Booksellers Association Library

The library of the American Booksellers Association contains a comprehensive collection of books, periodicals, reports, and other materials on the bookselling and publishing industries. Prior to 1989, much of the collection was housed in the Graduate Library of the City University of New York as the Crouse Library for Publishing Arts.

The library's holdings include approximately 3,000 volumes on all aspects of the industry. Contained in the collection are published works (many out of print) on such topics as bookselling, book design and production, trade, scholarly and children's book publishing; author/publisher relations, book collecting, censorship, and a wealth of biographies of luminaries of the book trade. In order to best serve the membership of ABA, current collection policies focus on acquisition of materials on the history and business of bookselling. In addition to the over 100 periodicals and newsletters relevant to the book trade, the library holds the complete collection of *American Bookseller, Bookselling This Week* (formerly *ABA Newswire*) and *Publishers Weekly*. Records of ABA Convention and Trade Exhibit Meetings and other association archival records are held in the library, and the library's vertical files contain subject files of clippings, special studies, reports, and ephemera.

The library is open to the public by appointment only and brief reference questions will be handled by telephone or e-mail. Contact Shelley Markowitz, Librarian, American Booksellers Association, 828 S. Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591. Telephone (914) 591- 2665, ext. 279, Fax (914) 591-2720, e-mail: smarkow@bookweb.org, ABA's Web page: http://www.bookweb.org.

Book Note

Simmons, R C, *British Imprints Relating to North America 1621-1760: An Annotated Checklist,* London: The British Library, 1996.

Given the number of short-title catalogs and imprint bibliographies that have come to prominence in recent years, one may be excused for wondering whether much grist is left for the bibliographical mill. ESTC, formerly shorthand for the Eighteenth-Century Short-Title Catalog, now stands simply for the English Short-Title Catalog, inexorably proceeding back in time to produce a machine-readable file of English imprints from the beginning of printing. Currently, the North American Imprints Program is proceeding into the decades of the nineteenth century. While these juggernauts (or glaciers?) move forward, along comes R. C. Simmons's new checklist to demonstrate that there is a future for clearly focused and imaginatively conceived reference bibliographies as well.

Simmons's work is even more remarkable for following in the wake of John Alden and Dennis Landis, *European Americana: A Chronological Guide to Works Printed in Europe Relating to the Americas, 1493-1776* (New York: Readex Books, 1980-). Simmons acknowledges his indebtedness to Alden and Landis in his introduction (and most helpfully in the notes to his entries, which cite Alden and Landis numbers when appropriate) but he argues for the distinctiveness of his own effort as well. First, Simmons has included British reprints of American works, a category excluded from Alden and Landis. Second, he has organized his checklist on a national rather than a multinational basis, a design which, he believes, reflects the fact that European Americana can be better appreciated when approached within a narrower political framework. Finally, he has been able to uncover some materials not known to Alden and Landis by investigating the holdings of specific libraries and classes of materials, especially chapbooks and ballads. Simmons also, one should add, fills a gap in the present coverage of *European Americana,* whose published volumes cover the years 1493-1650 and

1701-1750 at this date. Simmons thus provides us with an important tool for enlarging our understanding of North American history from 1621 to 1760. One of his stated purposes was "to complement the extraordinarily useful chronological American bibliography of Charles Evans," and perhaps the best way to appreciate Simmons' achievement is to see his work as an extension of Evans's enumeration, not as a duplication of Alden and Landis.

In addition to the checklist itself, Simmons also furnishes a perceptive introduction to the bibliographical record, tracing some of the more prominent categories and themes. He notes the position of London as the publishing seat of the empire but also the rise of provincial printing, especially in Edinburgh and Glasgow. He surveys some of the kinds of literature he encountered in his research: sensational stories of kidnaping and transportation, rogues' narratives, geographies, histories, and official documents. Although precise figures are not forthcoming, Simmons does suggest "the numerical importance" of religious works (animated by the Puritan controversies of the seventeenth century and by the Great Awakening of the eighteenth). Especially illuminating is his discussion of British reprintings of American works, often brought about by a combination of American hunger for publicity and legitimacy with British curiosity about the colonial scene.

The arrangement of the checklist is chronological, and within each year, the entries are arranged alphabetically. An entry consists of the following elements: an identifying number (e.g. 1732#4), followed by the author, title, imprint, pagination, format, and year printed. Notes include citations to other bibliographies as well as helpful annotations if the title itself is not explicit about a work's contents. If the work was reprinted, the note mentions any subsequent editions (exceptionally rewarding in this regard is the entry for the Bay Psalm Book, 1647#3). Finally, the entry concludes with location symbols. A small but helpful feature here is that all symbols for British, Irish, and European libraries are separated by a semi-colon and grouped together, North American library symbols are separated by a comma. The result is that one can tell at a glance which copies are on one side or the other of the Atlantic. Unfortunately, it is not clear which copies Simmons actually examined, although he says "many hundreds were looked at." One thus has no way of knowing, in many cases, which entries are based on Simmons's personal inspection of the books and which are based on catalogue entries.

Another shortcoming, at least to this reviewer, is Simmons's rendering of the imprint statement and physical description. For an example, take entry 1717#8: "Hayley, Thomas. The liberty of the gospel explained, and recommended. A sermon... 15 February, 1716. .. London. J. Downing, 40p. 8vo. 1717." Why the imprint should not read, "London. J Downing, 1717," followed by a short physical description—"40p. 8vo"—is a mystery. Simmons's practice disregards the customary arrangement of most Anglo-American bibliographies, not necessarily troubling in itself or a bad thing. But one would like to have a rationale for the new practice and a statement of its superior merits. Whatever its faults may be, the established practice does have the virtue of clarity, the combined imprint/description statement Simmons gives us takes some getting used to. One has only to compare the arrangement of Simmons's entries with the entries in Thomas R. Adams, *The American Controversy: A Bibliographical Study of the British Pamphlets about the American Disputes, 1764-1783* (1980) to appreciate the difference. And chances are, readers of Simmons will be turning to Adams, as Adams continues the story of British Americana to the end of the Revolution.

Simmons provides us with entries for 3,212 publications dealing with some aspect of North America through 1760. To put this in broader perspective, there are 9,085 North American imprints through the same date (according to a quick check of the North American Imprints Program data base). The universe of (predominantly) English-language Americana thus extends to 12,297 imprints through 1760, with British imprints accounting for roughly one-fourth of that total. The earlier the date, the higher the ratio. For example, I count 1,170 British imprints in Simmons through 1700, the NAIP database yields 992 imprints for the same period.

The individual authors most frequently represented in Simmons's list include John Cotton (39 entries), George Whitefield (38 entries), George Keith (27), Cotton Mather (25), Thomas Hooker (25), Increase Mather (23), and Thomas Bray (19). All of these are familiar names to students of colonial America; less familiar, perhaps, is the transatlantic pattern of their publications. Only seven works authored solely by John Cotton were printed in America, and only one of Thomas Hooker's—all posthumously, according to NAIP (not surprising given the fact that Cotton died 1652 and Hooker in 1647 while the Cambridge press was hardly unpacked at that time). George Whitefield, on the other hand, had more works printed in America before 1760 (90 imprints) than in Britain. George Keith's numbers (30 American imprints) were about the same on either side of the ocean. Cotton Mather and Increase Mather were, of course, fixtures of the Boston press, 414 of Cotton's works were printed in America before 1760 and 132 of Increase's. Only two works by Thomas Bray—well known for his support of colonial library societies—were printed in America. I trot out these bare figures only to suggest that such comparative studies can be made more meaningful by analyzing exactly what titles by these authors were printed in Britain (and America), where, when, and by whom. Simmons points us in the direction of this much richer contextual view. The case of the Virginia Presbyterian minister Samuel Davies is worth noting. There are 14 entries for Davies in Simmons

and only 9 in NAIP, with little duplication. What were the conditions which led to some of his works being printed in Britain and others in America? To understand Davies better, to re-read him, we need to consider his writings in a transatlantic context.

Simmons's work itself is rather difficult to use for this purpose, although he invites his readers to take up such questions, and indeed the introduction makes explicit the necessity of historical bibliography "for any study of publishing history. "Simmons includes a title index and an author index, but there is no index of printers, publishers, and booksellers, or to place of publication. Such geographical and book-trade indexes are especially useful for studying the history of the book and the spread of ideas. Curiously, Simmons announces that his work "was not compiled as an exercise in bibliography and its compiler is a historian not a bibliographer," unnecessarily setting at odds two disciplines that are meant to be complementary. Indeed, one could argue that all bibliography is essentially historical.

Similarly, the lack of a general index which might include broad subjects or genres makes it difficult for one to pursue the investigations that Simmons suggests in his introduction. The title index gathers a good number of sermons, but not all, if one's interest lies in the direction of poetry or travel narratives or medicine, there is no recourse but to dwell among the main entries—not an unpleasant task, to be sure, but life is short, art is long. Along the same lines, having no concordances to the standard bibliographies cited in the notes makes it difficult to measure the extent of various kinds of printed materials in *British Imprints.* For example, with a table of Evans and Bristol numbers keyed to Simmons entries, one could then more readily follow the reprinting of American works in Great Britain, an activity Simmons rightly says is "essential in any study of cross-cultural relationships." The way is clear for an industrious soul to come up with such a table, of course, and perhaps personal indexes are always inevitable.

These criticisms aside, Simmons has given us a very useful book. "No man is an island," said the author of *LXXX Sermons* (1640#1), and one of the salutary features of Simmons's work is to remind us of how interdependent we are—scholars, collectors (institutional and private), and booksellers. I haven't made an exact count, but it would be a fair guess to say that on roughly every page of Simmons there are at least two entries for works which survive in only one copy. It strikes me that the world would be the poorer for not having Simmons 1720#1 ("Advertisement. There is lately brought forth to this place from America, a savage: being a canibal-Indian"), which survives in one copy in the British Library. Or for not having Simmons 1742#26 ("A letter to the Negroes lately converted to Christ in America"), which survives in one copy in the library at Cornell. Aside from the fact that both imprints deal with the clash of cultures in America, currently lively topics in and out of academe, both imprints also illustrate the fact that culture itself often hangs on slender threads. The "death" of an imprint—through deaccessioning, theft, fire, flood, neglect, time—does diminish us all, as John Donne would have it. In Simmons there are literally hundreds of imprints which survive in only one known copy. It is no small feat to gather together such fragments into a larger pattern. To read Simmons (and he should be read as well as consulted) is to participate in the intellectual adventure which separates bibliography from indiscriminate list-making, whether of the computer- or human-generated kind.

Encouraging us to remove our provincial blinders, Simmons's work has the potential to stimulate a host of new approaches to the American past. Like William C. Spengemann, (see *A Mirror for Americanists* [1989] and *A New World of Words: Redefining Early American Literature* [1994]), Simmons takes up the familiar and views it from a fresh angle. This wider contextual view, manifest throughout Simmons's work, is epitomized in the amusing imprint the irrepressible John Newbery fastened onto his books: "Printed for the booksellers of Europe, Asia, Africa and America, and sold at the Bible and Sun in St. Paul's Church-Yard" (1760#91). An international perspective may be inescapable, after all. In any case, Newbery and Simmons remind us that behind such generalizations as "the book," "society," and "America" are particular books, printed and sold in particular places, at particular times. That kind of play between the general and the particular is the hallmark of all good history—and bibliography. .

Russell L. Martin
North American Imprints Program

Reading Experience Database

The Reading Experience Database (RED), run jointly by the Open University of the United Kingdom and the British Library's Centre for the Book, was launched on November 23, 1996. RED will record evidence of every type of reading experience for the period 1450-1914. Initially, it will be restricted to reading in the British Isles by those born in the British Isles, the reading of British travelers abroad and first-generation British and Irish emigrants living overseas. The organizers hope to expand the range in the future.

Printed forms on which a reading experience can be recorded are available by request and may also be found on the RED home page so that examples can be communicated electronically. Anyone interested in a particular individual who lived at any time in Britain during the period 1450 and 1914 who left letters, diaries, or annotated books containing evidence of reading experience should contact one of the individuals listed below. RED is looking for volunteers to

work their way systematically through such materials in order to record evidence of reading.

Further information and copies of the RED record form are available from Simon Eliot, The Open University, 4 Portwall Lane, Bristol BS1 6MD (sjeliot@open.ac.uk) or Mike Crump, Centre for the Book, The British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG. The Web address for RED is http://www.open.ac.uk/OU/Academic/Arts/ RED/.

Lecturers in Book History Available

Departments or institutions wishing to present a lecture in the field of the history of the book should bear in mind the opportunity offered by the OAH Lectureship Program and the extensive list of lecturers and topics available. The program directly benefits the work of the Organization of American Historians on behalf of the historical profession because it receives the speaker's fee ($900); the lecturers receive only their travel and lodging expenses from the host institution. Speakers and their topics related to book history include David Blight (Amherst College) W.E.B. DuBois's American Tragedy: *The Souls of Black Folk* in Text and Context; Ronald J. Grele (Columbia University), Oral History: Method and Theory and Oral History Workshops (beginners or intermediate); Mary Kelley (Dartmouth College) Women's Intellectual History: Sources and Strategies, Reading Culture/Reading Books: Print Culture in Nineteenth-Century America; William S. McFeely (University of Georgia), The People of Supelo Island: Writing History in the First Person Singular; Joan Shelley Rubin (University of Rochester), American Middlebrow Culture and Books and Readers in Modern America; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg (University of Pennsylvania), Constituting the New American: Political Rhetoric and the Popular Press in the New Nation; David J. Weber (Southern Methodist University), Readers, Writers, and the Meaning of the Spanish Frontier in North America; Bertram Wyatt-Brown (University of Florida), Southern Writers and Alienation. The complete OAH announcement is available from the Lectureship Coordinator at (812) 855-9854 or by e-mail tamzen@oah.indiana.edu.

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