



# The ABAA NEWSLETTER



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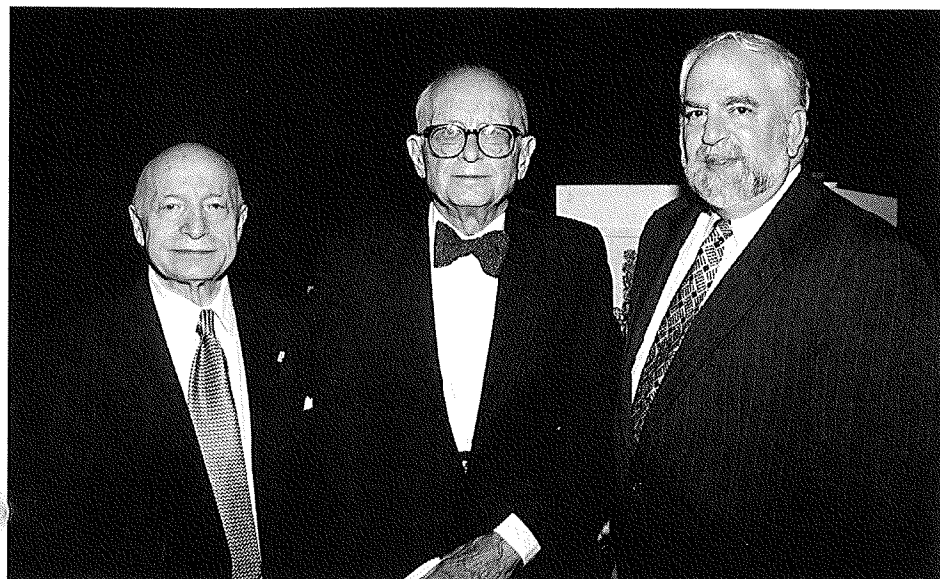
INSIDE: *The Nature of Book Collecting.* By John Gach. . . . .PAGE 3

## Internet Mania: Boom and Bust for Books

by Ben Weinstein

On the fourth of July, my wife Rose and I hosted the Weinstein family reunion. Of the fifty or so relatives from all over the country attending this annual event, we can usually count on seeing the seventeen members of my immediate family who are directly involved in the rare and out-of-print book trades. At these gatherings, as one might expect, after the usual formalities of baby kissing and backslapping, we booksellers invariably find each other and get to the conversation we enjoy the most. We trade anecdotes about who bought what and who sold what. We pass along a little gossip about other booksellers and perhaps relate a fish story or two about the big one (a customer or a book) that got away.

This year, the conversation turned very quickly to the topic of the Internet. I noticed that voices were more animated than usual and that everyone had very strong opinions about how the Internet has been changing the way booksellers do business. In the past, when I began to hear everybody talking about how well they did in gold or real estate or the stock market, it always seemed to me like a sign that the bubble was about to burst. When everyone was in on the act, that was the time when the market was going to collapse. It is worth pausing to reflect on past tulip crazes and how speculative ventures might be applied as cautionary tales to what is going on with the Inter-



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The three principals of the tenth "Maury A. Bromsen Lecture in Humanistic Bibliography," held at the Boston Public Library, May 22, 1999. (L to R): ABAA member and endower of the series, Dr. Maury Bromsen, Dr. Daniel J. Boorstin, former Librarian of Congress and the evening's speaker, and Bernard A. Margolis, president of the BPL. See p. 26 for more information.

## Digital Alternatives to Printed Catalogues

by Dan Gregory

In a previous ABAA *Newsletter* article, "Book Cataloguing, Present & Future," I explored the ways new technologies are changing the process and potential of printing rare book catalogues. Databases allow for a more efficient use of catalogued entries than do descriptions typed into a word processor (or, perish the thought, a typewriter). Scanners and digital cameras, when used with desktop publishing programs, allow for an economical way to insert pictures of books directly into catalogues. Laser and ink jet printers give dealers the ability to produce attractive catalogues without hiring a professional designer or printer.

Despite these advances, the same variety of printed mailings that exists today, from the peaks of elaborately produced catalogues to the valleys of cheaply photocopied lists, will probably exist ten or more years from now. The production quality of the average printed book catalogue, if such a thing were able to be quantified, might increase a bit in that period, but not in a startling fashion.

Attempts to market digital books have been made several times in the last few years, thus far with little success. The printed book is a mousetrap that needs no improvement, or at least has little

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## ABAA Board Increases Dues

At its April 14, 1999 meeting, the Board of Governors voted to raise membership dues starting January 1, 2000 as follows: from \$350 to \$450 for Full Members; from \$75 to \$100 for Associate Members; and from \$200 to \$250 for Second Full Members.

ABAA membership dues have not been raised since 1989. During the ensuing ten years, membership has stayed relatively constant, so income from dues has not increased. Further, in 1993, the Board of Governors voted to change the basis of revenue sharing of profits from book fairs, so that, in effect, the book fair income to the national treasury was effectively ended.

The ABAA now derives about seventy percent of its income from dues and thirty percent from book fair taxes and has lost the income from book fair coverage, while expenses—postage, printing, rent, professional fees, etc.—have all increased during these ten years.

The Board has, for the past four years, tightened the budget figures (for example, cutting advertising from \$7,500 in 1997 to \$1,000 in 1999; office supplies from \$6,000 to \$4200, etc.) to adjust to this decline in revenue. We have, since 1997, maintained a balanced budget. Operating on the premise that prudent reserves for the organization are one year's operating expenses, we have kept that sum in reserve.

In looking at projected budgets for future years, the Board of Governors felt further cuts were not possible, and, with the cost of just about everything going up, a dues raise seemed overdue. The Board passed this motion unanimously.

*Priscilla Juvelis, President  
Donald Heald, Treasurer*

## Letters to the Editor

*From: Frank Manasek*

Vast disjunctions between printed words and people's perceptions of them have always intrigued me. Thus, as the author of *Collecting Old Maps*, reviewed by Harry Stern (ABAA Newsletter, Spring 1999) I wish to offer a response to John Sinkankas' comments allegedly relating to the review and book.

Contrary to John's perception, nowhere in the book, nor (as far as I could discern) in the review, is a buyer "forbidden" to profit; nowhere is it stated or even implied that the expectation of profit be "denied their customers"; neither the book nor the review propose any "laws" and, surely, none but the most naive among us would equate the purchase of books or maps with that of shares! The point made in the

book was simply that investment, in itself, is rarely a wise rationale for collecting antiquarian maps. Becoming a dealer and profiting in that way is not a part of the subject of the book or the review, although *Collecting Old Maps* deals with the concepts of value, the marketplace, and collecting for pleasure as well as collecting for profit. This is, in fact, discussed in a most positive light, not slighting the anticipated financial gains from a good collection!

In short, I suspect that John would be in thorough agreement with the relevant passages in *Collecting Old Maps*. I am grateful for feedback about the book, which is now in its second printing. But John's letter seems to be merely a superficial misinterpretation of the actual printed word. ■

## MAC Symposium: Bookselling Today

**by John Spencer**

Throughout the years, many booksellers have remarked that the ABAA should offer more to its members. The opportunity to participate in book fairs and to attend ILAB congresses is a wonderful benefit of our organization. However, there are many ordinary concerns, common to all booksellers, both veteran and new, that are not addressed in these formal and distant venues. Our world is evolving; these issues weigh more heavily on us as technology advances, and the increased competition that it has wrought impacts us. It is time to review not only our own business practices, but alternative methods and ideas to determine how each of us can best optimize our time, reduce our costs, and protect our investment in our inventory.

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter has scheduled a symposium to address these basic aspects of the book selling business. We are inviting all members of the ABAA and ABAC (Canada). We have invited rare book insurance providers, international financial firms, worldwide shippers, paper restorers, book selling suppliers, book software programmers, etc. to set up exhibits, make presentations, and to be available for individual appointments.

We begin the two-day symposium on Tuesday, September 28, 1999 with a tour of the Buffalo Public Library, with its *Huckleberry Finn* manuscript and fine book collection. After lunch and a tour at the Roycroft Campus, we go to SUNY Buffalo to explore its James Joyce collection. That evening we will enjoy a dinner cruise on the upper Niagara River.

Wednesday is devoted to business. Exhibitors will give presentations, and we will discuss aspects of our business. We will share this day with our guests, rare book librarians from the region, each of whom will receive a gift certificate good at any ABAA member firm.

On Thursday, we raise money for the ABAA Benevolent Fund, with a mini golf tournament. This is open to all symposium attendees: ABAA members, their guests, and exhibitors.

When planning your trip to Buffalo, New York for the September 28-29, 1999 MAC Book Symposium, consider the University of Rochester Book Show on Saturday, September 25.

For information about registration and updates check [www.Rarebooks.to/MAC](http://www.Rarebooks.to/MAC) or contact John Spencer at Riverow Bookshop, phone: 607-687-4094. ■

# A Preliminary Inquiry into the Nature of Book Collecting

by John Gach

I am here mostly concerned with the phenomenology of the connections of collectors to collecteds. Instead of explaining collecting by reducing it to what it is not, I shall try to explore cognitive and emotional aspects of collecting in general, and book collecting in particular, without ever losing sight of collecting itself. I shall endeavor to describe structures and patterns underlying the relationships of collectors to their coveted objects, especially of book collectors to books. Collectors are no more conscious of such patterns than bicyclists are conscious of the mechanics and physiology of bicycling.

The last time I spoke on a similar topic I recall putting the audience to sleep—perhaps my only contribution to humankind's betterment. In that earlier lecture, produced in my prepostmodernist, high "structuralist" phase, I gave a very abstract, semistructuralist, and semiotic analysis of the relationship of book collecting to academic scholarship, more or less attempting to show, among other things, that collecting the physical manifestations of texts is a necessary condition for scholarship.

## Introduction: Books and Texts

I shall here recapitulate only those points required to understand what I shall be discussing herein. We have created books after the image we have of ourselves: material things with bodies and souls. Texts are the souls and book-forms—the existing presentations of texts—the bodies. Texts are sequences of words arranged in a meaningful pattern according to the grammar and syntax of a language in such manner as either to constitute or to purport to constitute a unitary object. Physical books store texts in a re-usable form. There are, of course, other ways to store texts: manuscripts, various modes of computer storage, and human memories come to mind. Restricting myself to book-forms of the kinds with which we are all familiar, it is obvi-

ous that between the initial creation of a text and its final distribution in physical form a complex mediating process must be involved: the work of editors, designers, printers, publishers, binders, wholesalers, retailers, and so on. Analytical and descriptive bibliography chart the passage of texts through this mediating process and chronicle the succession of appearing texts.

In the days when authors produced manuscripts or typescripts instead of computer files we had a clear procession from the completion of a text, through its passage in the mediating processes of production, and on to its emergence in book-form. Along the way, texts typically change—sometimes a lot. Thomas Wolfe's novels, for example, were, *qua* books, actually products of the editing process at Scribner's, with the published books bearing little more than a family resemblance to the monstrous and unwieldy manuscripts Wolfe submitted.

In most cases the physically existing book-forms are the only surviving exemplars we have of an author's text. In such cases the Ur-text can be nought but an ideal construction—though I and many others would argue that such is the case for all texts, regardless of whether manuscripts exist or not. The Kidd-Gabler controversy in the 1980s about the Ur-text of Joyce's *Ulysses* perfectly illustrates the point, as richly detailed at the time in the *New York Review of Books*.

There are two distinct sorts of reasons for wanting books: as presentations of a text one wishes to read (or fantasizes that one will have time so to do) and as physical objects with their own interests, histories, associations, and connections. If one's sole motive is to read the text, then the material characteristics of the object are secondary, though even for reading they are not irrelevant. From my experience as a bookseller I can guarantee that people who do not collect, and who know nothing about books as physical objects, react quite sensitively to the aesthetic properties of books, though they

lack the vocabulary and conceptual apparatus for talking or thinking about books as material things.

The two motives do not necessarily conflict: one can want a physical book both to read and for its other attributes as well. Reading and possessing only conflict where the physical characteristics of the desired object have nothing to do with reading, as is the case with publisher's dummies, fine bindings, unopened copies, and perfect copies in dust jackets of modern firsts. Certainly most of my customers who buy antiquarian books acquire them both as readable texts and as material artifacts, the possession of which pleases them.

So where does the joy in acquiring and possessing antiquarian books come from? Why do we do it?

## What Are Collectors and What Do They Do?

Well, of course, we don't all do it. According to a recent survey of Americans coming out of new book stores, less than one percent had even heard of secondhand books, much less rare books. It's a pretty *recherché* and culturally elitist endeavor, almost by definition. And that, of course, is one of its pleasures. Few mind sharing the higher status of belonging to an elite group.

I mention this in passing, because I do not believe it plays a very important part in collecting, except deep in bookdom at the level of assembling world class collections. There elitism can be quite an important motive, even a primary one. But this usually occurs only after one has already been collecting for some time and is fully conversant with all the implicit rules of collecting.

There are, I believe, two basic types of collectors: those who collected in childhood and those who did not. The childhood collectors I shall term nativist collectors—those who, if they do not collect, suffer emotional distress similar, if

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# 23rd Annual Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair

The twenty-third annual Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair will be held November 19-21 at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston.

The Antiquarian Book Fair, one of the country's oldest and largest antiquarian book fairs, will this year feature 138 national and international dealers who display and sell rare, collectable, and antiquarian books, modern first editions, photographs, maps, and autographs. There will be something for everyone, from the serious collector to the casual browser, with prices ranging from one dollar into the six figures.

Some of the more novel and sought-after items that will be exhibited at the 1999 Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair include unusual photographs of Marilyn Monroe and the first edition of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* offered by La Scala Autographs; a first edition of Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (Paris, 1955) inscribed by Nabokov to journalist and fellow butterfly collector Robert Boyle, which includes a fine drawing of a butterfly as part of the inscription, offered by Biblioctopus; and original photographs of American suffragettes Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, letters signed by Anthony and Stanton, and first editions of each of their biographies, offered by Priscilla Juvelis.

Additionally, Cultural Row, a special feature at the fair, will have exhibits from area institutions such as the Peabody Essex Museum, American Antiquarian Society, Boston Athenaeum, and The New England Historic Genealogical Society.

The book fair is open Friday, November 19, from 5:00 to 9:00 P.M.; Saturday, November 20, from noon to 7:00 P.M.; and Sunday, November 21, from noon to 5:00 P.M.

Those attending the Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair may also want to take in other antiquarian events. This is the inaugural year for The New England Antiquarian Print Fair, also to be held at the Hynes Convention Center from November 19 to 21, 1999. Nation-



ally and internationally recognized dealers will exhibit at the Print Fair and will feature prints, drawings, and other works, many by New England artists and of New England subjects. With the purchase of a ticket to the Boston International Antiquarian Book Fair, attendees may enter free into the Print Fair, which is open the same hours as the Book Fair.

For more information on the Print Fair, please contact Commonwealth Promotion at 617-266-6540. In addition, Skinner Auctioneers and Appraisers will host a Books and Manuscripts Auction at Heritage on the Garden, 63 Park Plaza, Boston. For more information, call Skinner Auctioneers & Appraisers of Antiques & Fine Arts at 978-779-6241. ■

# Year Two at Olympia II

by Adrian Harrington

Last year's outstanding success was always going to be a tough act to follow and the following analysis shows that whilst we managed to improve many things there is still much work to be done before this fair is all that it so obviously can be. The ABA committee and the office worked exceedingly hard this year to achieve the many improvements that we hope you noticed.

Many dealers found that having a full day to set up was a vast improvement on last year's rush and, despite the appalling problem of a fresh batch of bad shelving, everything was ready for opening by 11:00 A.M. on Thursday. A large queue had gathered outside and the first rush was allowed in. Brisk trade was to be seen everywhere and by close of play over 1,600 people had come through the door, and that was with the linkway closed. The following three days continued to produce results for those who had brought enough stock with them although a number of dealers reported zero sales. As for myself, I was busy selling right to the end on Sunday and had an exceedingly good fair, although down on last year. Saturday evening saw many an intrepid dealer walking on a mercifully fair weather evening to l'Orangerie in Holland Park for a very pleasant drinks-and-nibbles party which was very well attended and enjoyed by one and all.

The new layout was voted a success by most of the dealers I spoke to and, with minor adjustments will be retained next year. The café worked much better in its new location but the food, although an improvement on last year continues to disappoint. Next year we hope to use an Italian firm that seems to have a concession from the much disliked official firm of caterers. The question of Sunday opening remains a thorny one with many dealers, myself included, doing good trade on that day and some doing nothing. We must retain the Sunday for the foreseeable future if we are to keep our prime location at Olympia and not lose it to another event. However, with two years experience under our belts we are looking at opening at 4:00 P.M. on the Thursday with set up being from 8:00 A.M. on the same day. This would give seven hours set

up time as opposed to this year's seven and a half hours and would save exhibitors a whole day in expensive London.

We hope to illuminate the glass cases next year and the signage will include the city and country of origin of exhibiting dealers. Additionally the web site, which is now in place, will carry items of stock from participating dealers. Thus the catalogue makes a return in a different and more modern form. The shelving will be personally sorted and replacements arranged by myself and John Marrin, as it seems that contractors cannot be relied upon to do this simple task. This should, once and for all, get rid of the shelving gremlins. There are many other small but important improvements that we hope to make. All your comments were noted and although many were contradictory we still hope to square them for the year 2000. As many of you are aware, the ABA's move to Olympia has prompted all the other book fairs to follow us. This is no bad thing as it makes the area around our fair the main one for bookselling with us at the center.

A number of factors worked against us this year. It was half term week in the U. K. and many people were away on holiday. Saturday was Derby Day which quite a number of people would prefer to go to rather than attend a book fair. The biggest loss, however, was the link between the Antiques Fair and our own event on our first day and on Sunday, as required by Health and Safety legislation. Going by last year's figures it cost us some 600 prime quality visitors. A number of our exhibitors said that they felt that the connection with the antiques fair produced no results. Not so! I sold to people from that fair on all four days and several dealers have told me that they made significant sales to these visitors and as a result picked up new customers. Next year we are hoping to open a link from the floor upstairs. This would be directly into the Antiques Fair, would never need to be closed, and would be in addition to the existing link.

In terms of statistics for the fair I would like to thank all of you for filling in your forms. Ours is the only antiquarian book fair

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## ILAB Book Fairs

1999

**October 14-17**

Florence, Italy (ALAI)  
Palazzo Corsini

**October 15-17**

Cologne, Germany (VDA)  
Gürzenich

**October 29-31**

Sydney, Australia (ANZAAB)  
Hotel Intercontinental

**November 19-21**

Boston, MA (ABAA)  
Hynes Convention Center

**December 16-19**

Madrid, Spain (AILA)  
Gran Hotel Reina Victoria

2000

**January 27-30**

Stuttgart, Germany (VDA)  
Württembergischer Kunstverein

**February 11-13**

Los Angeles, CA (ABAA)  
Marriott LAX

**March 2-4**

Amsterdam, The Netherlands (NVVA)  
RAI Congress Centre

**April 13-16**

New York, NY (ABAA)  
Park Avenue Armory

**May 25-28**

Paris, France (SLAM)  
La Maison de la Mutualité

**June 8-11**

London, England (ABA)  
Olympia Exhibition Centre

**September 21-23**

Edinburgh, Scotland (ILAB)  
18th International Book Fair

**October 20-22**

Cologne, Germany (VDA)  
Gürzenich

2001

**February 23-25**

San Francisco, CA (ABAA)  
Concourse Exhibition Center

# An American Tale or The London Book Fair

by John Windle

The Antiquarian Book Fair at Olympia II in London took place June 3-6, 1999. The most immediately noticeable change was the layout of the hall, which was greatly improved over last year's confusing maze. Well-lit and good-sized stands (especially in comparison with those at the Paris fair a few days earlier) were flanked by an area for food, drink, and rest where one could browse through catalogues and enjoy a sandwich while wondering whether to buy Geoffrey Tory's *Champfleury*, of which there were two at the fair and a third available from a visiting dealer.

As always, the fair provided an embarrassment of riches, and this year I want to highlight some of the more unusual items I spotted that sparked my imagination and renewed my enthusiasm for old and rare books. Manuscripts and books are a means for traveling through space and time to a different place and age, and no one provided a quicker form of transport than Jenny Steadman at the Traveller's Bookshop. Along with an interesting and varied selection of books, she was showing *shushuts* and *kupas*, which are decorative women's headpieces from the Kalash people of Northwest Pakistan. The Kalash live in three

remote valleys and are amongst the last pagan peoples on that continent. Jenny had just returned from a rare visit and had brought back artifacts from these little known tribes. Combined with books on the region, they sparked the imagination indeed, and made one want to buy the books and plan a trip there as an adjunct to one's collection.

In a totally different vein, a newcomer to London, though a very experienced bookseller from his early days with Jake Zeitlin to almost thirty years in business for himself, Michael Thompson from Los Angeles, had a quartet of scientific off-prints relating to the earliest work on

## Harrington

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to take such accurate measurements of the state of the trade and as such it would be a shame to break such a long tradition. Even with the wags who boast that they always put zero or always put the amount they spend rather than take they are a statistical constant and as such do not distort the overall picture.

As Table One indicates, fifty-four percent of sales were to the trade, twenty-seven percent to private customers, and nineteen percent unsorted. The average take per exhibitor was £19,145. Unfortunately we failed to get an overall best take but we do know the best three takes for the first three days: £111,950, £90,625, and £65,500 on Thursday; £67,005, £66,172, and £39,500 on Friday; £43,350, £32,500, and £30,000 on Saturday. On all days, the worst three takes were zero.

Finally I would like to thank my committee for their sterling and ceaseless efforts, John Marrin for attending at an ungodly hour of the morning to supervise the contractors; Nigel Garwood for attempting to take on the problem of the café and caterers; Deborah for doing most of the work; Vanessa for doing the amazing job of getting us so much coverage in the media against such a wall of apathy from the

exhibiting dealers; and Philippa for her steadfastness and calm approach, and all

of the exhibitors for attending and making this such a pleasant fair to be part of. ■

**TABLE 1: Fair Sales**

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	TOTAL
Exhibitors	£ 744,013	£ 98,869		£ 125,025	£ 967,907
Visiting Booksellers	£ 323,213	£ 316,751	£ 93,723		£ 733,687
Private	£ 484,624	£ 199,530	£ 157,573		£ 841,727
Unsorted	£ 311,238	£ 36,825	£ 28,293	£ 181,920	£ 558,276
TOTAL	£ 1,863,088	£ 651,975	£ 279,589	£ 306,945	£ 3,101,597

**TABLE 2: Fair Attendance**

Complimentary tickets	2,570
Onsite ticket sales	501
Walk-ins from antiques fair (2 days only)	427
TOTAL	3,498

**TABLE 3: Questionnaire Results**

Apply next year?		
Yes:	72	No: 9
Maybe:	17	No response: 64
Sunday opening?		
Yes:	39	No: 55
Maybe:	17	No response: 61

**TABLE 4: Ratings from 1 (very good) to 4 (poor)**

	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	No response
Sales	14	30	35	16	67
New Clients	2	22	49	36	53
Organization	48	43	7	2	62
Café	7	27	28	35	65
Layout	28	58	8	4	64
Security	50	46	5	2	59

DNA. Their interest increases when you realize they were co-authored by Rosalind Franklin (sister of bookseller Colin Franklin) who many feel was unjustly denied at least a share, if not most, of the credit for the Nobel Prize awarded to Watson and Crick. Another newcomer to the London fair, though hardly to the world of rare books, was Bennett Gilbert, also from Los Angeles, who was showing remarkable early printed books including (for my money if only I could afford it) the better of the two *Champfleury's*, unwashed in eighteenth-century calf and attractively ruled in red. He also had a clutch of thirty-six mostly unrecorded French booksellers' catalogues and ephemera, and four early volumes of printed *motets* for four voices, each in matching musical bindings dated 1588 for an early Polish collector.

One of the delights of book fairs is the serendipitous find that adds to or completes an often long-lived hole in a collection. I happened to be standing with Roland and Marianne Folter as they were concluding the purchase from Antiquariat Banzhaf of a very rare account of the Fortsas hoax, a presentation copy from the author to the author of the hoax and one of a very few on colored paper. This can now join the copy of the hoax itself that Roland bought twenty-five years ago, also a presentation copy and one of a very few on colored paper, proving once again that in book collecting, as in life, patience and persistence will usually be rewarded in the end—and yes, the dealer from whom Roland bought the original copy of the hoax was I.

Next to Banzhaf was another European dealer, Antiquariat Brabant, where a noted American dealer bought some exquisite Regency period bindings for what seemed quite nominal amounts, with Edward Bayntun Coward seconds behind him to share in the wealth. Bredford Libri Rari needs no introduction to knowledgeable continental collectors; but for those new to the fair, his stand had some magnificent early books, including the Schøyen copy of the 1484 Koberger *Antoninus* (Goff A-778) beautifully rubricated and with elaborate initials incorporating grotesque figures accompanied by fine penwork

borders in each volume. Andy Cumming of Lewes sold a very fine *Night Thoughts* with the Blake engravings, uncut and in a lavish, though later, crushed morocco: there was very little else by Blake to be seen. Roy Davids filled his stand with portraits of (mostly) literary figures including Edmund Spenser, Cromwell, Charles I, and Lord David Cecil. But his *clou* was an autograph letter signed from Chatterton to Horace Walpole with superb content. Chatterton is *de facto* rare; but to have a letter in which he promises “never using my pen again but in the law” and observes that “poverty attends literature” was poignantly delicious.

Most dealers seemed to agree that the crowd appeared a little smaller than last year, though the ticket sales belied that. Perhaps the better layout and the increased number of dealers made for a slightly more dispersed fair, but in any event there was nothing but praise for the organizers. Although it might be advantageous to have the fair more accessible (the District Line seems especially prone to slowdowns at present) one cannot fault the hall and its facilities, especially with the ever cheerful Tennyson Packing Service in house to pack and ship for one and all. There is a considerable if intangible asset in having them there for those who might otherwise never dream of buying a set, or a heavy book, or something framed or of high value that they don't want to carry around. Their efficiency and reliability is well proven, making the entire process of visiting five fairs in a week so much more easy and pleasurable for me, knowing that my books will be back in my office soon after I get home—much better shipped and packed than I could have managed on my own.

It would be invidious to select one stand that won “best of show” honors but, personally, I found Robin Halwas's exhibition stunning. A 1524 Giovio *De romanis piscibus* was in amazingly fresh original condition and his Strawberry Hill Walpoles in mouth-watering crimson straight-grained morocco were unequaled amongst eighteenth-century books on display. Many dealers said their sales were almost entirely to the trade and that few if any new customers were in evidence. Per-

haps this is a good indication of the current strength of the trade and that the pervasive influence of Internet trading has not impacted the overall state of our business. Having been wrong at every stage of the birth and development of the Internet, I can confidently predict that dealing in books above a fairly nominal value will remain an occasional adjunct to a dealer's normal course of business and that, if anything, attendance at fairs and buying from printed catalogues will increase as people become disenchanted with the abstract and detached world of the Web. It's fine for buying modern books and standard texts, but the personal selection of the rare book as a physical object at a fair, auction, or from a catalogue cannot be replaced by on-line browsing, however sophisticated the web sites become. Perhaps for now at least the clincher is that every dealer I spoke to told me how great the buying had been, and I suspect they would not have bought those self-same books sitting in their shops browsing Bibliocity. The combination of buying and selling in real time in a real space is irresistible, and long may it remain so. ■

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## New York Chelsea Fair Canceled

Promoter Sanford Smith and the Middle Atlantic Chapter regrettably have decided to cancel the New York Chelsea Fair planned for September, 1999, MAC Book Fair Co-Chair Tom Congalton recently announced.

Unfortunately, planning for the fair began late, and Smith missed most of two months with illness and was thus unable to devote the time to the project he otherwise would have.

Smith's office will be mailing refunds to the dealers who did sign up. It is the hope of the Book Fair Committee and Smith's office that we might revisit this idea next year, with an eye toward producing a fair that would be both less costly and shorter (i.e., one day of set-up and two or two and a half days of fair). We'll keep you posted. ■

## Arthur Rackham and His Books

*The Southern California Chapter recently hosted Illustrated Books: Their History, the second in what promises to be an ongoing series of lectures on rare book collecting. Michael Thompson can be credited with the work that went into organizing the series held at the Beverly Hills Public Library in May and the Clark Library last fall. The talks have been of the highest quality and of great interest to booksellers and collectors alike. Moderated by Gordon Hollis, the event held last May featured four lectures on illustration: William Daily ("The Art of Dust Jackets"), Roger Gaskell ("Science Books of The 18th Century") and Bennett Gilbert ("Illustration in the Renaissance"). The following piece is an excerpt from David Brass' lecture on "Arthur Rackham and Children's Books," which he has generously allowed us to publish in the ABAA Newsletter.*

by David Brass

Arthur Rackham has entertained children and adults for a hundred years. Many other book illustrators, such as Edmund Dulac and William Timlin, each of whom is well known for his own style, have copied Rackham's style at one time or another. He was truly the originator of the goblins, elves, strange distorted figures, and gnarled trees with faces that we all instantly associate with Arthur Rackham, and to make sure that we would always recognize his work, he very often put himself in the picture—whether as a human figure or the face on a tree!

Arthur Rackham was born in London on September 19, 1867, thirty years after Victoria became Queen. As a young man, he suffered from poor health, and in January of 1884, his parents sent him on a five-month sea voyage to Australia, where he first started making sketches of the landscape. In the autumn of that year he entered the Lambeth School of Art, where he studied in the evening, but he made his living during the day as a clerk in a shipping office. By 1885, he was working part time as an illustrative journalist for the *Westminster Budget*.

His first published drawing can be found in the magazine *Scraps* (1884), but his first book was not published until 1893. This book was called *To the Other Side*, the other side being the United States, and was a travel brochure that is now very scarce. In 1894, he was commissioned to illustrate Anthony Hope's *The Dolly Dialogues* and two more travel guides, *The Illustrated Guide to Wells-Next-the-Sea* and *Sunrise-Land*. At this time, his drawings were considered to be very good but not particularly exceptional, and it was not until he was asked to illustrate a book written by S. J. Adair Fitzgerald with the most unusual title, *The Zankiwank and the Bletherwitch*, that we see the beginnings of the familiar Arthur Rackham style.

In this book, we see for the first time Rackham's strange, weird, creative, and wonderful mind at work. The creatures are spindly, gnarled, and definitely have an alien but, somehow, not scary appearance. I am sure that the children of the day would have laughed at the illustrations and would not have been frightened by them! By now, Arthur Rackham had become firmly established as an illustrator of children's stories, boys' adventure books, and occasionally even the odd travel guide, but he did not at this time repeat the style of the *Zankiwank*, with the exception of the weird and wonderful little book entitled *Two Old Ladies, Two Foolish Fairies, and a Tom Cat*. That title conjures up all sorts of strange and unrepeatable thoughts!

Rackham spent most of his time illustrating in monochrome the typical boys' books of the next eight years, including titles such as *The Money-Spinner, Captain Castle, The Grey Lady, Feats on the Fjord, The Argonauts of the Amazon, Brains and Bravery, The Greek Heroes, Two Years before the Mast, and Where Flies the Flag*. The Arthur Rackham illustrations that we all know and love first appeared in 1905, when Rackham was thirty-eight years old, in Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*, which was closely followed in 1906 with J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*.

The publication of these two works marked a turning point in Rackham's career, for they were the first of a new type of children's book offered in rather different formats. First, the regular trade editions, bound in green and brown cloth respectively, contained tipped-in plates mounted on stiff brown card that were bound together at the end of the book, following the text. These books had fifty-one and fifty colored plates respectively and were sold at five shillings each (about \$1.25). These books were for the children of the fairly well-to-do, since five shillings was about twenty-five percent of an average weekly wage in those days!

The second format heralded a new style of book—the collectible! *Rip Van Winkle* and *Peter Pan*, published in limited editions of 250 and 500 respectively, were handsomely bound in white vellum with silk ties to keep the contents from the prying fingers of children. Each book was signed by Arthur Rackham on the limitation leaf, instantly making it something rather special. The books were published at two guineas, or forty-two shillings (over \$10) each, a fortune for everyday folk of the era. These were not children's books for children but children's books for adults, and they firmly established Rackham as the foremost children's book illustrator of the time. He was now in the very fortunate position of being able to choose which books he wanted to illustrate.

His output increased dramatically over the years 1907 to 1909. There appeared *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the rather dark *Ingoldsby Legends*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Tales from Shakespeare*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Undine*, and the wonderful *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. All of these books were offered in the two formats that were to become known as the first trade edition and the deluxe signed limited edition. Rackham was also illustrating other titles that only appeared in the cheaper format—Rudyard Kipling's *Puck of Pook's Hill*, *The Land of Enchantment*, and *The Book of Betty Barber*.



## House Calls

# Their Marks

by Rob Rulon-Miller

On an unusual summer day in this part of America—gray and dry—I drove southwest through the Minnesota corn and soybean crop to Sioux City, Iowa, to see what had been described to me as The World's Largest Book. Sioux City is across the Missouri River from South Sioux City, which is in Nebraska, and just south of Sioux Falls in South Dakota. The landscape here is flat and fecund, with swift running water surging around bluffs and ledges—a vast, beautiful part of the country where state boundaries run long and true as if drawn with a carpenter's pencil and a yardstick, or follow the torturous course of sinewy rivers.

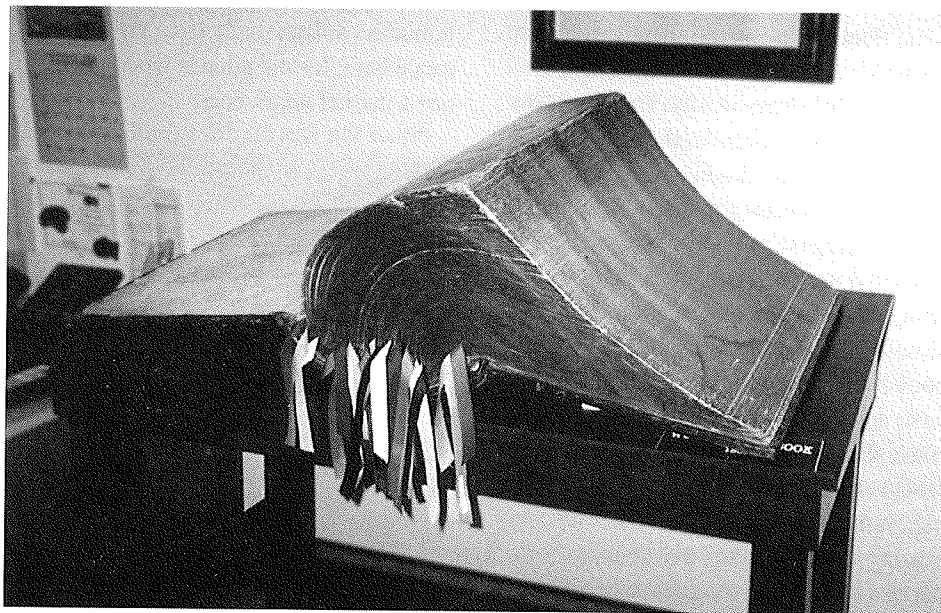
Bob Barron, who owns the book, told me on the phone that it was a ledger book commissioned for the Texas State Fair in Dallas in 1881, and that it was signed by thousands of people, including William McKinley. How big could this book be? I thought. Would it fit on a table? Could I lift it? How was it bound?

As cities go, Sioux City is short, and the Hilton Hotel where I stayed, at twelve

stories, seemed like the tallest building. I walked from the hotel to the corner of Seventh and Douglas and rode the elevator up to the fourth floor office of Bear Graphics, owned by Mr. Barron. The door was open, and I walked in on a virtual hive, workers buzzing about this way and that. The World's Largest Book was right in front of me as I walked in,

spread-eagle on a large, sturdy oak table. But I walked right by without ever seeing it because I was distracted by a cheery receptionist wearing a telephone headset, orange foam at her ears and lips. This was Sioux City? With such hustle and bustle? And the World's Largest Book?

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In 1910 and 1911, Rackham produced his only two-volume work, Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle: *The Rhinegold & The Valkyrie* appearing in 1910 and *Siegfried & The Twilight of the Gods* in 1911. The two volumes contained sixty-four tipped-in plates and were definitely intended more for adults than for children. In 1912 came *Aesop's Fables* and *The Peter Pan Portfolio*. The Detmold Brothers, Maurice and Edward, had produced something similar to Rackham's *Portfolio* nine years earlier, in 1903, with their sixteen illustrations of subjects from Kipling's *Jungle Book*, so I really cannot say the *Portfolio* was a first of its kind, but it was certainly better received.

Rackham had chosen twelve favorite illustrations from the fifty color plates in his 1906 edition of *Peter Pan*. These plates were substantially enlarged by the printer and set within picture style

mounts. The whole was sewn together with yellow ribbon into a very large, three-quarter vellum portfolio. The edition was limited to 500 copies, each with a limitation leaf signed by Rackham. The price? Five guineas or \$27.50! For the very rich, there were another one hundred copies bound in full vellum. Each of these was to have every plate signed by Rackham in pencil on its mount, but for one reason or another, he only signed twenty sets. *The Peter Pan Portfolio* sells now at \$9,500 for the regular and probably \$50,000 for the one of twenty!

During subsequent years, Rackham's popularity never declined, and many old-time favorites appeared, including *Mother Goose*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Romance of King Arthur*, *Cinderella*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, *The Compleat Angler*, *Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales*, and, in 1935, one

of my all-time favorites, *Edgar Allan Poe's Tales of Mystery and Imagination*. In the late thirties, Rackham's health began to fail, and his last work was the wonderful *Wind in the Willows*, which he finished literally just before he died.

In all, Arthur Rackham illustrated well over a hundred titles, forty-four of which appeared in the deluxe signed limited format, a remarkable achievement. Collectors of fine copies have fared rather well with these books. The trade editions now sell for between \$250 and \$2000, and the limited signed editions for between \$750 and \$8,500. His original artwork sells for anywhere up to \$65,000, and some of his very rare and very large oil paintings for even more. As I mentioned earlier, many other illustrators have at one or another copied his style, but none could ever equal it! ■

## House Calls

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Could there have been the World's Largest Anything in Sioux City, Iowa?

By the time the receptionist could break free to answer my hello, Bob Barron pounded up from behind. He had the healthy, robust appearance of an outdoorsman, and we did the man thing: shook hands, sized each other up, and talked about natural phenomena, like the river and how wet the early summer had been. Seeking my attention, he touched my arm with his first two fingers and paused rather dramatically. Then, as if my arm were a mere point in the arc in which he threw his arm... Ladies and gentlemen, (a drum-roll, please)...introducing the World's Largest...

Well, it isn't. Certainly not in height or width. The Audubon elephant folio has almost a foot over it in height, and a big book I once had on jade would probably have weighed as much. And don't I remember also some royal atlases at five feet or more I saw a picture of once? I'll mention here also, although it has no bearing on, nor can lay any claim to being a book at all, a carpenter's perversion that was exhibited at the Boston Book Fair last year by the Boston Public Library. BPL touted it as the "world's largest book," a most flighty interpretation of a couple of sheets of half-inch plywood held together with brass hinges.

But there it was, in all its bibliographic glory, open on the table, the covers supported by crushed wedges of Styrofoam. Maybe not the biggest, I thought, but probably not far from it. The book was on a table of regular height, but because of its thickness it was nearly at my chest as I stood over it. A dozen and a half ribbons marked the pages where there were signatures of note, and they dangled festively over the edge of the table. A single page could be turned as any single page could be, although the size of the sheet made the turning a little cumbersome, but because of the weight of the paper, to turn say twenty pages at once required using an arm. When I went to close the volume two sets of hands and arms were

needed, and a third set would have been helpful. One person had to muscle the binding and another needed both arms to lay the paper down evenly. On opening it up again the Styrofoam wedges, which we didn't position just right, squealed under the weight.

Bob had asked for an evaluation, which is why I actually made this trip. Not that I wouldn't have gone anyway, just to see the potential monster. I asked to be left alone so I could commune with the quarry, and I began to take some notes. You may guess on the value I placed on it, but the dollars really have little significance here, for the price is whatever one's market might bear.



In my appraisal I described it as a world's and state fair autograph album, a very thick and elaborately constructed folio, the leaf size measuring approximately 26.5 x 19.5 inches, the binding measuring approximately 27.5 x 20.25 x 13.5 inches thick, and containing approximately 3,000 pages of 36 pound Weston Linen Ledger paper. Each page is multiple-ruled in yellow, pink, blue, purple, and green, the rules enclosing twelve prize medallions printed in gold at the fore- and gutter edges, plus another twelve medallions at the head of the signature list. At the top and the bottom of each page are the names of the book's

manufacturers (at the head: "Geo. D. Barnard & Co. / Blank Book Manufacturers / Printers, Lithographers and Stationers / 421 & 423 N. Main St. St. Louis, MO" and at the bottom: "Byron Weston / Maker of fine / linen record paper / Dalton, Mass. USA"). In the corners of the versos are the founding dates of the two companies (1863 and 1872), and on the rectos the date of the book's manufacture and first exhibition (1881). In the middle of each page are twenty lines for the signatures and addresses of guests who attended the several world and state fairs at which the book was exhibited, as well as other signatures dating as recently as the 1940s, and perhaps later. The book is bound in full maroon calf with a United States escutcheon central on the front cover, gilt-stamped borders, the gilt-paneled spine in five compartments with three very large stepped raised bands, gilt lettered in two compartments ("Register" and "Geo. D. Barnard & Co. / St. Louis"). The book weighs approximately 250 pounds; the girth of the spine measures nearly seventeen inches and the open book measures approximately fifty-four inches between the fore-edges of the two covers.

There has been no restoration, but because of the size and weight of the book, the binding has become quite chafed, especially on the spine, where some of the leather has been lost, and the hinges are broken. This extraordinary book, pound for pound almost certainly among the largest ever manufactured, was created as an entry by the two aforementioned companies for the 1881 Texas State Fair in Dallas, where it won first prize for papermaking and bookbinding. It contains approximately 60,000 signatures, including those of the Indian chief, Sitting Bull, and his entourage; United States Presidents Grover Cleveland, William McKinley, and Theodore Roosevelt; as well as many other dignitaries, military officers, national, state and local officials, and innumerable average citizens from all over the world who visited the world's and state fairs in St. Louis, New Orleans, and Dallas, and perhaps other locations and fairs as well not readily discernable.

To my appraisal, I probably should have added that the book is not a book at all, but rather an irreplaceable (if not indestructible) piece of Americana, a relic of the agricultural state fair of the nineteenth century and a touchstone of meaningful significance in the lives of the tens of thousands of ordinary people who signed this prodigious ledger. Their signatures now reach out to us across time, their names eternal in unique flows of ink. But since I didn't want to run up Mr. Barron's bill, I stopped before I got there.

I returned by way of Worthington and Mankato to St. Paul, and, conveniently, to a discussion on the ABAA list-server about signatures and the inscriptions in modern firsts and on photographs, and the inane preference of some of our members' customers who renounce authors' personalized inscriptions, preferring instead a signature, only unless the inscription is to the collector him—or herself. I'm not even sure how to respond to this cockamamie idea, except to say that the book collector's market has now surely expanded far beyond the parapets of wisdom and intelligence. I take solace in the trend described by Bennett Gilbert, who wrote:

This interesting thread seems to confirm the suspicion that the lunacy of the modern book collector is a madness I cannot fathom, as opposed to the fathomable madness of the early books collector. In old books, marks of human [use] and ownership are highly prized. This has extended in recent years even to the quite anonymous annotator. The development of appreciation for marked up books has been described by Barney Rosenthal in *La Bibliofila*, 1998, no. 2-3. It began with Roger Stoddard's 1985 exhibition *Marks in Books* and is now carried forward in conferences, collections of essays, and so forth.

Many years ago I came across a letter from Thornton Wilder and its message has resonated with me throughout my professional career. The letter was written to the New York publisher Critchell Rim-

ington, who apparently had asked Wilder to introduce a limited edition of one of Washington Irving's works:

THORNTON WILDER  
DAVID HOOK  
LAWRENCEVILLE, NEW JERSEY

Dear Mr. Rimington:

1. Busy shoeshiner has no time.
2. The collector being not sympathetic.
3. De luxe editions for the rich not worth while.

Sincerely

Thornton Wilder

May 13, 1928

"De luxe editions for the rich not worth while." In a 1997 review of *Collected Books: The Guide to Values* by Allen and Pat Ahearn, I railed at—among other things—the supposed importance of signatures penned for commercial gain, such as those in limited, signed editions meant specially for the collector's market. The book in question was William Gibson's *Neuromancer*. The "value" of the first edition (an Ace paperback) was placed at \$100 while the value of the deluxe, limited, signed edition published two years after fame and fortune hit was put at \$350. What is it, I asked rhetorically, that gave the limited, signed edition preference over the first edition. Sarcastically I replied, "Please don't say the signature." But in fact, it is the signature everyone wants. Why?

For almost as long as I have been a bookseller I have tried—not always successfully—to steer my customers away from limited, signed editions, rather having them concentrate on trade editions—editions which are designed to be read, and not necessarily to be collected. While there are exceptions, these special editions of modern authors are, bibliographically speaking, of little or no consequence, often having the same collation as the trade edition (with the exception of an inserted "signature leaf"—often not integral), and whose sheets are printed generally in the same press run as those of the trade edition. In many cases the signature leaves are signed by the author before they are actually inserted in the book itself.

This kernel of mine, this aversion to books produced for the sole reason of being *collected*, is perhaps planted in rocky soil. In the very year that Thornton Wilder wrote his letter to Rimington, Wilder dutifully signed 775 copies of *The Angel that Troubled the Waters*, which was followed in the years to come by limited, signed editions of *The Ides of March*, *The Women of Andros*, and others. Limited editions, editions produced in a restricted quantity to enhance their desirability (real or imagined), go back at least to Bodoni and Baskerville in the last half of the eighteenth century, and special editions of one kind or another have been with us for almost as long as books themselves. Books published since the advent of edition binding were often offered in several styles of binding to suit the purchaser's pocketbook. The notion of a large paper edition dates back at least to the mid-seventeenth century, and copies printed on special paper or vellum extend all the way back to Gutenberg himself.

So it is my penance to be beguiled by these limited, signed editions, which cost ever so much more than trade editions and generally don't even come with the artful jackets. Dealing in these books (and I confess to having have bought and sold them over the years) still leaves me feeling tawdry and squalid, as if I had foisted a set of Franklin Mint commemorative coins of astronauts on the trusting old gentleman down the street, my neighbor.

And now, having seen on that one unremarkable day in June sixty thousand signatures in an hour and a half, my argument is diminished, not dashed. These signatures, freely given and untainted by commerce, do mean something. Life pulses in their collective scrawl. There is eternal spirit in them. As Kevin MacDonnell pointed out on the list-server, there's even DNA to consider. And how can I tell you of Alice Wyndham whose autograph lies directly opposite the iron scratch of Sitting Bull, so that when the ledger is finally closed, her flowing, flowery signature sublimely kisses that of the great Indian chief: Alice and the chief together like that for the ages. Will there ever be a book big enough to hold all of that? ■

# Lighting a Fire

by Bennett Gilbert

After a year or so of inquiry and consideration, I was appointed to co-teach Library and Information Science 402 in the University of California, Los Angeles, Graduate School of Education during Fall Quarter, 1998. My co-teacher was Daniel J. Slive, Rare Books Librarian in the Department of Special Collections of UCLA's Young Research Library.

I don't remember the title of the course. I'm not sure I ever knew. It was something like an introduction to bibliography. This was, after all, graduate school, and as faculty we had the latitude to pursue the direction of our beliefs and abilities. I was determined to do what had motivated me to seek the job in the first place. This was to convey to students my own approach to the book and to see what happened when I did so.

Both Dan and I understood introducing our students to bibliography and the book as physical object meant getting them interested, bringing them to see its importance, inspiring them to engage in the material, and motivating them to follow through by taking the more advanced and specialized courses that followed in the department's two year curriculum. My way of viewing the book as a whole cultural object was consonant with this, offering the wide latitude of approach that could interest students according to their varying inclinations.

My co-teacher was in full agreement, and without him I would never have figured out how to teach this, to the extent that I did figure it out. We established a battery of activities to fill our three hour session once a week and much else of our students' time:

- Required reading: first Fevre & Martin, then the abridged Eisenstein, then Gaskell.
- A photocopied packet of readings, to be read according to our schedule, full of an unusually wide range of articles.
- Forty-five minutes of lecture at the beginning of each session, followed by

- Forty-five minutes of discussion of the readings, followed by
- An hour looking at books in the Department of Special Collections.
- Three papers in the course of the term. In the first, students were to report on a book we assigned them (according to subject interests or background stated in a questionnaire we gave them), pointing out whatever seemed interesting or striking about the book as physical and cultural object; in the second, they were to do the same for a book of their own choice; and in the third, they were to describe a group of books they chose on the basis of relationships among the books, from the physical to the cultural, to the allusive.

Our intention had been not to teach directly such technical matters as collation, but primarily to motivate students to want to learn these things in later courses and secondarily to impart it bit by bit and therefore more easily as subjects arose. We found that they felt adrift when unprepared for new things. Steve Tabor, of the Clark Library, helped all of us by offering a half-day's demonstration of collation and format at the Clark, and we also showed a Book Arts Press film. In future editions of the course, we will more directly and formally teach this and do it early in the term, using more videos and other techniques.

I gave all the lectures but one, which Dan presented. He also led all the discussions of the readings. We found that readings were not as effective as they could have been because students fell well behind in them when real life intervened, especially in the brief span of a ten-week academic quarter: besides work for other courses, many had families and jobs.

We graded papers harshly. I do believe that we were the first college teachers many of them had who read papers for grammar and who expected organized paragraphs.

The confrontation with actual books was in some ways the most successful

part of the course. We tried to do a few books thoroughly in an hour or so, unfolding their physical and cultural aspects and the relations of the two. They were absolutely magnetized to the books they saw. This taught me that people hunger for objects in the midst of a digital world. I have made sure to show real books in every presentation I have made since then.

The lectures were my principal interest and contribution. While not a history of the book, they did move chronologically. In each one, for each period, I tried to throw at my listeners every link I could think of between books and the history of thought, culture, and society. I tried to establish the place of printing in history and to indicate how the study of its products informs us about the wide world printers reported. The students were given a picture of a whole other dimension and a whole other cast of characters in the history of our civilization than they had been, or should have been, taught. Indeed, it was their lack of general knowledge that hindered them.

Dan and I were like chiropractors: we grabbed firm hold of their heads and wrenched them sharply around to a new point of view. We tried to bring them to look differently at objects they had used all their lives. The sudden newness of the familiar was shocking. The sense of the depth into which they might fall pursuing this, combined with their ignorance of a technical basis on the one hand and the utterly thrilling charge they had from looking at and handling books on the other, produced a general atmosphere in the class of electric excitement intertwined with stark terror. This was the general mood of the class. It created a division between those who fought the fear because they were drawn to the material and those who could not get their minds around it. But I am satisfied that this strange, confusing, expectant environment was a good one in which to charge those most disposed to the subject with a keen and eager desire to pursue it. ■

# Weinstein

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net, but I think electronic book selling presents an entirely different scenario. I would agree with a vast majority of other booksellers that the Internet is not a passing craze. It is a new paradigm that will alter (for better or for worse) the nature of the book business.

My brother-in-law Alan Siegel, owner of Book City in Hollywood, called the Internet the perfect medium for selling used and out-of-print books. He felt its greatest asset is that, unlike in other electronic retail operations, thousands of book dealers do not compete with each other to sell the same "widget." My brother Jerry Weinstein, owner of Emerald City Fine Books, said his business wouldn't survive without the Internet. He has a wonderful store in Eugene, Oregon, a college town where his primary customers are students who are lucky to have enough disposable income to buy a slightly worn paperback. He has calculated that for every one thousand titles he lists on the Internet, he will sell one title a day. My brother Bob Weinstein, who owns two shops in Anaheim called the Book Baron, has 60,000 titles listed and agrees with Jerry's estimate.

My niece Donna Davidson, owner of Bay Books (two book stores in the San Francisco area), felt she must be doing something wrong because she is only selling about one book a day for every three thousand she lists and has not yet found the Internet profitable. Donna suspected that maybe she should be more selective and not list every book in her stock. That made good sense to the rest of us. My nephew Danny Weinstein, owner of Iliad Book Shop in North Hollywood, and my brother Sam Weinstein, owner of Weinstein Fine Books in Glendale, have not yet begun the process of making their stock available on the Internet, but I could tell from their questions and enthusiasm that it is only a matter of time before they do.

Lou and I have found that we sell everyday about one book for every three thousand we list. But given the experi-

ence of everyone else, one might *expect* to sell one to three books for every three thousand books listed. If this number holds true for the majority of us, the Internet will certainly be a vital force for the book trade, but it may also have a downside.

At the family reunion, our conversation gradually drifted towards what a wonderful tool for pricing the Internet has become, though it does have some pitfalls. Out-of-print and used book dealers have an opportunity to ascertain what the competition is asking for a similar copy and can authenticate the state or edition of their own copies by having almost instantaneous access to a bibliographic description. Based on information found through most search engines, a used book dealer can decide what to price a given copy and determine if it should be less expensive so that it will be the first to sell. If a dealer decides to make a given book the least expensive copy available, he or she runs the risk of a price war. And at any point a new player might step in and undercut everyone again. We decided that the best course may well be to set the price at what we believe it should be and trust our own judgments based on years of experience, knowing that the less expensive copies are indeed too cheap and will be bought up quickly. Presently, the most expensive copy will become the cheapest. Of course, there is always the option to simply buy up bargains and sit on them for a while.

As we all pondered the advantages of having access to price information, Lou said he didn't think that rare books will present the same pricing problems as out-of-print books. We all agreed that truly common books will appear even more common when fifty of them show up on the computer screen at once. Everyone will inevitably want to unload his copy at almost any price. As for rare books and first editions, I agree with Lou that the same pricing problems will not apply. It will become obvious to any collector browsing for books with any regularity how infrequently he or she can expect to find certain titles of rare books, and if more than one copy does

show up it is almost always in a different binding and condition. I would venture a guess that even if the same rare book is listed by three or more dealers on the Internet, all things being equal, the cheapest copy is not necessarily the copy that will sell first.

In the used and out-of-print book business, price is almost always the primary determining factor in a purchase because the book is usually bought for content, as opposed to collectability. In the rare book trade, every copy is usually unique. Early printed books, in particular, present a number of options to a collector. Since each early book is bound differently and found in various states of condition, collectors must develop their own standards and priorities when making a purchase. When considering buying a rebound copy, the collector has to determine if it has been washed or cut down, if it is important that the advertisements and half title are lacking, if the foxing or browning is too severe, and whether it is okay to settle for a copy without a plate at a fraction of what a complete copy might cost.

Similarly, a collector of modern first editions must determine the exact condition of the dust jacket. Unless it is mint, every dust jacket is unique. The collector must also wrestle with issues like the state of the text, the rubbing on the spine, the staining on the cover, and the value of anything extra added to the price of the book, like a morocco slipcase. Given the finer distinctions the collector must consider when buying an early book or modern first edition, it is safe to say that price is not necessarily the primary determining factor in a purchase. There is more to book buying than finding the cheapest copy.

Let's put aside for the moment what it is about rare books that prompts a collector or dealer to buy one copy over another and consider, instead, some of the other pitfalls of buying rare books on the Internet. A bookseller with a long history and a good reputation has a sizable lead over his competitors with shorter histories and lesser reputations.

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## Weinstein

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The number one concern for most buyers is that the dealer to whom they are handing their credit card information is reputable. The number two concern is that the book description and information on condition are accurate. "Very good" should mean more than that all the pages are still intact, but not every non-ABAA bookseller subscribes to the same standards of bibliographic description and condition. Even if the book is returnable, no one relishes the thought of reporting the bad news to the dealer that the copy is not satisfactory, nor does one look forward to repacking and shipping the book, then waiting for his or her money to be refunded. Collectors might buy a book that is more expensive simply because they are familiar with a bookseller, trust the dealer's bibliographical information, and know he or she is reputable.

In spite of differences in standards of bibliographical description, price wars, and the threat of losing a potential sale to less expensive copies, listing a book on the Internet is unquestionably more cost effective than publishing a catalogue. Catalogues have traditionally been our most aggressive form of advertising and a major expense for our shop. Printing and photography have become extremely expensive, and postage has certainly gotten out of hand. Our last catalogue cost \$11.40 to send by air to Europe (we've found that when our catalogues are sent by surface, they get very little respect). Like most booksellers, I mail one to three thousand copies of each catalogue. When a catalogue is received, it might be viewed, discarded, or simply filed away for future reference and almost never referred to again. Most of our catalogues have a life of two or three weeks. On the third week, we usually hear from librarians who need a consensus before making a decision. Once this window of opportunity has closed, unless our catalogue has sparked some enduring interest in a particular book or the customer

has the phenomenal ability to remember which catalogue out of the hundreds received over the course of the year contains the item he is now looking for (and was it really at the price and condition he remembered?), that catalogue will be stacked up collecting dust on a desk or wherever else the recipient's catalogue morgue may be.

It is a given that the Internet reaches far more than the one to three thousand people a catalogue reaches and that book listings on the Net have a much longer shelf life. Moreover, with catalogues, it is up to the dealer to find one to three thousand customers; but with the Internet, the prospective buyers, possibly numbering in the millions, seek out the bookseller.

The Internet has created many new collectors who might have thought about collecting but were too intimidated to get started. Novice collectors often don't have an idea about the cost of rare books or first editions and are uncomfortable entering a rare bookshop to ask about a title or author that they have thought of collecting. Without the experience necessary to determine a fair price, in the event that a dealer happens to have just what they were looking for, a collector might feel wary of being "ripped off." With access to rare books on the Internet, the prospective buyer arms himself with the knowledge to make a decision based on what is presently available in the current market.

So will bookstores become the "Telex" of the past? Are we fast becoming the custodians of virtual bookstores—large warehouses storing millions of books with legions of cataloguers constantly entering data so that we can sell our one to three books per three thousand daily? Will the familiar catalogue become obsolete? I don't believe so. I remember, as a child, right after World War II, everyone was talking about the demise of radio and the movies as a result of the advent of television. Now we see them thriving side by side. I think we will still need bookstores to satisfy the needs of collectors who would like to feel and see the books they are considering and perhaps

serendipitously discover books they never knew existed. Many collectors use the bookstore as a meeting place to discuss their latest acquisitions and perhaps solicit advice from the dealer about new directions that their collections should take.

It remains to be seen how electronic book selling will evolve and whether it will be a win-win situation. This may be a case where too much knowledge can be a dangerous thing. I do see a couple of obstacles booksellers may need to overcome. First, it is just a matter of time before some smart entrepreneur (if he or she is not already doing this) discovers the value in information derived from what is no longer listed on the Internet. This of course means that an item has been sold and a retail price has been established. An established price would be more accurate than an auction price, which is often what a dealer has paid, before he has included his profit margin. This information, along with a full description (an extremely costly cataloguing process for booksellers), would be a record readily available to the public and may be an unfortunate thing for booksellers despite its obvious benefits. In order to replenish our inventory and compete for a purchase, we will have two choices: reduce our profit margin or raise our price considerably on the next copy. This can't be good for business.

The second obstacle may be the electronic auction business. Everyone seems to be starting an auction company on line, and for good reason. It is a great way to reduce inventory. They certainly sell more than the one to three books per three thousand. Eventually, one of the new auction sites will cut a deal with booksellers to download dead material for auction. This might discourage clients from buying directly from a dealer because they believe the book can be purchased at a more favorable price set at auction. In spite of these and other negative factors, however, the consensus is that the pros far outnumber the cons, and the Internet will be an ever-evolving and thriving force in the book business. ■

# Gregory

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threat from these awkward, limited, and preliminary devices. At the same time, it is now commonplace for manuscripts to be sent via disk, or for new material to have its first "printing" on the Internet. The first digital book catalogues were text files on floppy diskettes, mailed out on request by adventurous dealers. A few years ago it might have been only a matter of time before we began to see elaborate CD-ROM catalogues with high-quality illustrations and a plethora of interactive features. Now, the long-term future of the computer disk is debatable. Up until the mid-1990s the most powerful force in the computer industry, Microsoft, was still backing the CD-ROM or some iteration of it as the future of information storage and retrieval. However, there is no use in sending someone a disk unless they have the computer to read it, and if they have the computer to read it, they are now likely to also have access to the Internet.

For those who have been hiding in a sunless, temperature and humidity controlled rare book room for the last five years, the Internet is the hottest toy to come down the pike in some time, putting even the Tickle-Me-Elmo craze to shame. But unlike the Christmas gadgets of years past, the Internet evolves, and does so rapidly. A communication network that had its direct origins in military and academic networks of the 1960s and '70s, the Internet is the extension of the work of Morse, Marconi, Bell, and other pioneering scientists who reasoned that information could be transferred electronically, globally, and immediately. So long as two computers are using the same protocol, speaking the same screeching language, the distance between them becomes virtually immaterial. Speculation that the Internet will ultimately have as significant an impact on the world as the invention of the printing press is, in fact, realistic, though not necessarily of any practical use from day to day. While this new technology could, in theory, change the lives of bil-

lions by bringing new forms of government, it is having its most immediate effect on entertainment (or what passes for it) and commerce. The selling of books, in fact, has been very close to the heart of Internet commerce for several years, with perhaps no other market changing so much and so rapidly.

Currently, almost all rare book sales on the Internet fall into two categories: those via a search service and those via an on-line auction. Though these have been a great boon to both buyers and sellers, it is nevertheless unfortunate that neither sales model fulfils the role of book catalogues. Search services allow customers to find in minutes a title or edition that may have taken them years of searching through more traditional channels. Search services also have had a leveling effect on some of the most aggressively inflated prices in the rare book industry, as it has more clearly defined the commonplace from the genuinely rare. Or rather, it is adding accessibility to the notion of scarcity (there might only be five copies of a particular book for sale in the United States, but an individual who might have spent years of searching before coming upon any one of those five copies can now buy one or all in a matter of minutes). However, individuals can just as quickly offer their books for sale, regardless of whether they actually know anything about identifying, describing, or selling rare books. It is not particularly difficult to parrot the language of veteran book dealers or to copy the citation of specific references without actually having those references at hand or understanding how to use them. With so many new dealers who do not understand the nuances of condition grading or comprehend genuine scarcity, the Internet has also become a misleading price guide. However, my greatest concern about the on-line search services is not the mis-identification or mis-description of books (both commonplace, but not rampant, occurrences) or the appropriation of intellectual property, but rather the concept that book buyers can and should build their libraries strictly by searching by author, title, or keyword, limiting

their collections to the safe, the cheapest, and the known.

While Internet book search services have depressed the price or marketability of certain books, on-line auctions, like their real-world counterparts, can often see items realize higher prices than they actually merit. On-line auctions, though fun to bid in, are mired by the sheer volume of junk being offered. Here misleading descriptions are essential ("RARE RARE Mary Higgins Clark Paperback 1st Ed. 27th Prtng L@@K!!!!") because so much is for sale at one time with relatively little categorization or prioritization. Also, because Ebay, Amazon, and other sites end auctions at a set time, serious bidders wait until the last minute, and quality items often fail to realize their potential. (Thankfully, some newer on-line auctions, notably Sotheby's much-anticipated auction site, will operate like phone auctions, where the lot remains for sale until new bids cease to come in.)

The problems of book search services and on-line auctions mirror the problems of the Internet in general. Information or opinions publicly posted on the Internet can be read by anyone, anywhere. Unfortunately, free speech is alive and thriving in the areas of the world that need it least, while the masses of humanity whose lives would actually benefit from the ability to communicate globally have no more access to computers now than their ancestors did centuries ago. The fact that some undistinguished boob somewhere (who ranks below even your run-of-the-mill boob) can share with the world his lack of intelligence or good taste is scary enough. The fact that he can amass hundreds of "hits" because his web site has for its meta-tags the pseudonyms of professional wrestlers or Playboy Playmates is infinitely more frightening. The Internet is currently a massive cacophony, and only the smallest fraction of what passes for information on the World Wide Web deserves a shelf-life longer than the nanosecond it takes for it to get from New York to Tokyo over intercontinental fiber-optic

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cable. The alternative is to be spoon-fed content by commercially driven Internet service providers like America Online, where the information is (presumably) previewed by staff. There are no easy answers as to what the future of the Internet holds, though if the histories of other markets and human nature are any indicators, consolidation, simplification, and marketing savvy tend to win out over quality and freedom of choice (i.e. invest in spoons). For how long will industry giants like Amazon and Barnes and Noble be able to find and sell out-of-print books at a mark-up, though they are using exactly the same resources as those available to the ordinary on-line consumer? Probably a long time.

Rare book dealers can participate in this homogenization and simplification as well. Hopefully the Internet marketplace will mature to the point where there is a role for on-line book catalogues, where professional book dealers can present carefully selected stock at prices informed by their personal experience. Many dealers are already sending catalogues via email or emailing clients when new catalogues are posted to their web sites. When sending catalogues via email, it is helpful to send them in a format the recipient's computer can understand. Choosing to save the catalogue as plain text (\*.txt) does the trick, though it is somewhat limiting. A better option is to save as Rich Text (\*.rtf), a universally accepted style where most formatting (italics, bold, etc.) will be retained.

While it helps to know a bit of computer coding if you want to present your catalogues on-line, there are many programs available to guide the non-techie through making a web site (though not necessarily a good one). In fact, anyone with a relatively recent version of Microsoft Word can convert text to web pages instantly (simply choose Save As HTML Document). Thus, posting new catalogues on-line, unless you are adding particular features, should be a relatively easy and achieved with little or no cost.

Similarly, adding pictures of books, an expensive option in printed book catalogues, is comparatively simple and almost free. Pictures taken with digital cameras are generally saved in the Joint Photographic Experts Group format (\*.jpg), which transfers quickly over the Internet, though the quality of the pictures, particularly those of stationary objects, often leaves something to be desired. But creating an attractive web site is only half the battle; there is no assurance that if you build it, they will come. Successful web sites also require high placement on Web searches, links from other frequently visited sites, and good non-Internet promotion. Naturally, all these require either time or capital—the Internet is free only in theory.

While many aspects of the future of the Internet are debatable, two developments are certain. First, the on-line population, which rose from just a few thousand to approximately thirty million during the last decade, will continue to grow at a high rate. The Internet is currently where television was in the mid-1950s or where VCRs were in the mid-1980s: far from its market potential. Secondly, within the next five to ten years high-speed access via cable, satellites, or alternative technologies will become ubiquitous and inexpensive. When fast connections are commonplace, the “bells and whistles” features they allow will become commonplace as well. For example, the web site of The Sharper Image, a company which has perfected the art of selling over-priced, semi-useless gadgets (God bless them), features selected objects in 3-D (you can rotate the object on the screen to be viewed from any angle). While currently cutting edge and painfully slow on anything but today's newest machines, within the next decade presentations like this will be common and even expected. The ability to present rare books on-line in this manner, if it could be done economically, is an intriguing possibility. At the same time, until and unless such presentations become quick and easy through new software, seldom will the book being offered be rare enough to justify such attention. A couple of years ago

there was a very attractive web site by a dealer in modern first editions that featured multiple pictures of every book he offered. However, since the average selling price of his books was around \$100, his impressive experiments in bringing the future to the present could not be supported for very long. Whereas The Sharper Image might sell 10,000 “units” for all their hard work, he was still selling just one book as a time.

Bookselling has very strong ties to the short history of the young industry of electronic commerce. Booksellers Amazon.com, with considerable investment capital, low overhead, and a well-planned and marketed concept, paved the path for Internet businesses. The general business of selling rare and out-of-print books has changed more in just a few years than it had for many previous decades. The challenges the Internet presents to the rare book dealer, to stay ahead or to stay afloat, are as complex as the possibilities it presents. So long as there are book collectors willing to build collections based on quality, assurance, and the willingness to learn, search services and on-line auctions will not suffice. Whether on-line catalogues will find their place in this new market and justifiably replace most printed and mailed catalogues, or simply sit on web servers largely unvisited, has yet to be seen. ■

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you'll pardon an egregious example at the far end of psychopathology, to the mounting tension and feelings of inadequacy and incompleteness of the serial killer denied his next victim. In short, the nativist collector's identity entails and depends upon collecting. Those who began collecting after childhood, whom I shall term habitual collectors, have acquired the habit of collecting as one among many other interests.

There are, of course, many good reasons for collecting, even if one is not ineluctably driven to do so. To cite a principal reason: assemblages of objects related through possession of shared attributes are themselves distinct objects knowable only through the assemblages themselves. No collection, no object to know. So, collecting provides a means of learning about the world that can not be accomplished any other way. Collecting imposes an order upon the world—objects collected are by definition gathered according to some ordering principle rather than randomly. Collecting also guarantees that the world is an orderly place. In times and places of upheaval and revolution one finds little if any collecting. It's what we do after we feel safe and have enough to eat and, like library budgets for antiquarian books, is the first thing to go when trouble looms. The collector refracts his or—increasingly often—her experience through collecting. Its corresponding mental structures allow one to experience the world as non-chaotic, or at least as a place where chaos can be transformed into order through a set of rules.

In my lifetime as a bookseller I have seen one revolution in collecting worth commenting about. A for thirty-one years, I can document a vast increase in women collectors in the last two decades, which is obviously a consequence of the accession of women in postindustrial societies to full legal and social personhood. For centuries women have collected in object domains defined as female (for example, flowers, art, chil-

dren's books). Increasingly we now find women collecting in areas hitherto defined as bastions of male privilege, such as science and medicine. Book collecting strikes me as more empowering than most forms of collecting. Women—for so long the objects of desire—*qua* book collectors become desirers rather than desireds, transform into subjects rather than objects. Closely associated with masculine power, book-forms are artifacts displaying the creativity, capital, and know-how required to produce material objects, while books as texts symbolize and represent a culture's complex mental patterns—both of which radically depart from the traditional rooting of feminine creativity in the female body with the production of children. Hitherto a mostly male preoccupation, book collecting, through ownership and control, asserts power over the objects encoding power.

Psychoanalytically, collecting has typically been construed as anal-retentive, compulsive behavior. When I first began seriously contemplating the topic of collecting some twenty-three years ago, I rejected the psychoanalytic model in favor of semiotic and structuralist ways of thinking, for the analytic model explains too little by explaining too much. The problem with reducing book-collecting to its infantile origins is that the reduction does nothing to explain object choice: why books instead of stamps or art nouveau posters or whatever other object domain you can think of that might be collectable? This is an issue to which I shall presently return.

Dealers, many of whom began as collectors, are a particularly interesting bunch. Rob Wozniak, a psychologist-collector friend at Bryn Mawr, succinctly described the difference between collectors and dealers this way: the collector needs both the moment of acquisition and the moment of possession, while the dealer lives for the moment of acquisition. Well, yes, but let us not forget the importance to dealers of parting with their objects. Dealers—if they are any good at what they do—are those who have mastered the complex connections between collectors as classes of desirers

and covetable objects as classes of desireds, the relationship between the two domains being the dealer's price. Once a dealer has bought a book—and I mean one for which a significant sum of money has been paid—he or she really wants to sell it. Selling a book for a profit confirms the dealer's judgment, both putting some always-useful funds in the bank account and bolstering the dealer's self-esteem. Though we don't broadcast the fact to our customers, we dealers make mistakes all the time—how else does one learn? Since I regard my prices as formulae relating desirers to desireds, if someone convinces me that I've priced a book incorrectly—that is, that I have miscalibrated the relationship—I'll change the price either up or down. I learned long ago that in this business a modicum of humility is a useful asset. Since one's prices are probabilistic assessments guaranteed to change over time, one must be prepared to change them in the light of new knowledge. Please note that this is an entirely distinct issue from discounts, for what is at stake here is a dealer's subjective judgement about an objectively existing relationship.

Collecting entails learning rules for identifying what count as objects and what characteristics make some objects better than others—in short, how to rank them into hierarchies of desireds. This is true of both kinds of collectors. Why do some people collect books rather than art or postcards or cigar labels? Typically, book collectors were already readers, by which I mean prodigious readers for whom reading became their principal means for learning about the world. Just as there are two kinds of collecting, which I have termed “nativist” and “habitual,” there seem to me to be two kinds of readers: those like myself who need psychologically to read, and those who read for pragmatic reasons only—for school, because they are writing a paper, or to acquire expertise in a particular domain of knowledge. Members of the first group, those who cannot imagine themselves not reading and whose very identity entails reading, are already pre-

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disposed to collect books, should they be the kinds of persons driven to collect. Reading means loving the texts, book collecting means loving the physical objects that present the texts.

Let me offer a brief example to illustrate object choice in collecting. A psychiatrist-customer had acquired from me in the 1980s and early 1990s a half dozen or so significant psychiatric books, ranging in condition from pleasing to exemplary. He recently consigned them back to me, explaining that collecting books just didn't give him the same pleasure as collecting art. He needs to collect—but not books.

Those physical objects, books—or, to use my preferred term, deliberately meant to call to mind Plato, book-forms—reek of humanity. They have tactile and visual properties and individual histories that establish each existing book-form, once it has been in the world a while, as unique. Few people not intimately involved in book collecting understand quite the extent to which we relate to books as individual beings. As a bookseller who has handled hundreds of thousands of books in just a few specialties, I can affirm that very few books other than the new books that we sell appear to me as identical. Even members of the same narrow subclass of edition and printing exhibit differences. Any book is potentially interesting, and if one waits long enough, it will almost certainly be desirable to some person for some reason.

## Desire, Desiring, Desirers, Desireds

I've used the term "desire" and its permutations several times already without specifying either what desire is or what makes a book desirable. Desire is the "oomph," the push or impulsion that drives us to an action, the completion of which (to borrow from Freud) diminishes our state of tension. In the case of collecting this typically means the acquisition of an object, the idea of the possession of which excites us and the

lack of which (with a nod to Lacan) impels us to fill the lack. Note firstly, though, that it is the idea of possession rather than the actual possession that excites; and, secondly, that while collecting designates not just the act of acquisition with its consequent (and temporary) tension reduction, it also entails the entire system of desiring, which includes coveting, acquisition, and possession as elements.

So, we are talking about a kind of tumescence and detumescence. And before the detumescence—the tension reduction, or in Freud's terms the diminution of unpleasure ("Unlust")—comes a "rush" with opioids pouring into the brain's pleasure center. Whence this "rush" we all have experienced? It can come from several sources. Finding a book that one never dreamed one would find, or finding it in a condition or binding that is nonpareil—either can induce the collector's "rush." I might add that finding it at a bargain price does nothing to diminish the flow of endorphins. In order for this to happen, though, you already have to know a lot about the object domains to which the book belongs.

I have, sadly, seen pathological cases of book-desiring, by which I mean not the buying of more or more costly books than one can afford—traits that we booksellers find piquant and most endearing—but the buying of books as though they were desirable objects when they in fact are not. I have one passingly odd psychoanalytic customer who knows nothing about antiquarian books but reacts to secondhand books with the kind of aesthetic sensitivity properly belonging to antiquarian books. He buys books only to read, but is fetishistic about condition: the books he buys must be nearly perfect. A bumped corner nearly throws him into a panic. He must have an anxiety attack every time he reads one of his books. I'm sure we have all had similar reactions—but to a different class of books. For example, not too many years ago I had a perfect copy in dust jacket of H. A. Prichard's 1909 first book on Kant. The book, while not overly common, isn't particularly rare—except in dust jacket. One seldom sees a book from

1909 in the dust jacket, and almost never in a perfect jacket. Its acquisition and transient possession gave me great aesthetic pleasure until one day I noticed that someone (probably me) had by swiveling a handcart crushed the spine and created a hole in both jacket and spine. For several years I couldn't bear to look at this formerly perfect exemplar, now forever despoiled. Eventually I had it recased and sold it, so at least I no longer have to look at it and feel distressed.

I shall mention only *en passant* the obvious connection between the distress the ruined Prichard induced in me and patriarchal notions of virginity and despoilation. Though I haven't investigated the issue yet, it strikes me as quite possible that women-as-desired-objects may well be the foundation for the cultural construction of typologies of desireds.

## Books as Desireds

I called my pleasure from perceiving the formerly perfect 1909 book in dust jacket "aesthetic." Why? We here approach the heart of my argument as well as, I think, the ultimate secret to desirability. Within collectordom books *qua* desireds are concrete universals, by which I mean that collectors experience the abstract features of books, their relatednesses and class memberships, through their appearance as physical beings. It is precisely this that induces tremendous pleasure. In order to explain why, I need to tell you both something about how books are perceived as belonging to valuational hierarchies and how emotion and affect work.

Books exist within a complex nexus of class memberships. To label a book "literary" or "psychoanalytic" or "medical" is already to have said a great deal about it, for one has labeled the supervenient category within which the book is construed to exist *qua* text. Such an attribute is a universal. Calling a book "literary" posits a universal attribute in the same, or at least a closely similar, way as describing it as being "red" or "blue." A great deal of what we know about book-forms arises from their possession of such universal attributes. It is the objective (that is, consensually validatable) possession

of such attributes that renders books potential desireds—objects that we wish to possess and have in our presence on demand, whenever we so will it. I shall not explore here the very complicated set of relations of books to each other by dint of class memberships and to persons, each sortable into hierarchies of desirers and desired objects connected to each other in various ways, for it would take too long and lead us too far astray. I need note only that most of what we perceive an individual book to be reduces to a set of universal attributes.

But I've already said that book-forms are amazingly different, almost no matter how closely related they are. A contradiction? No, for what makes books unique or nearly so is the precise concatenation of universals, the conjunction of which a particular book-form expresses. It is in fact the pattern of universals we ascribe to book-forms (including facts of ownership and condition) that differentiates them to the telling eye. Thus, to know one book in its particularity requires that one already know much about books in general. To know one book in its particularity is to know something, in a faint sense, about all books, to know at least a fair amount about many other books connected to the one book because of shared universal attributes.

### Books and Emotion

We are evolutionarily programmed to react to the world through affect and emotion. For most creatures it is vital to know three characteristics about objects in the environment: Can I eat it? Can it eat me? Can it injure me? Highfalutin' creatures with lots of extra brain capacity like humans (and probably cetaceans and elephants) have the ability to represent the world conceptually, to build mental models and maps. Most creatures, including certainly most of our phylogenetic ancestors, cannot do so—they just don't have the neural equipment. So how do they cope with this who can eat or hurt whom problem, certainly a serious issue for, say, worms or rodents? Through affects and emotions, which I regard as the biologically earliest kind of cognition. Or, I should add, through the proto-

types for what would become affect and, later, emotion. Affects allow the experiencer to make instantaneous, global judgements about the goodness or badness of classes of objects. Affects happen to one without one's willing them. They globally dispose the experiencing individual—worm as well as human—to feeling good or bad. Things that make one feel good—originally probably things you could eat—induce the perceiving individual to move towards them; things that make the percipient feel badly induce either immobility or flight, the former being a way of hiding from the bad guys by becoming invisible. Such global feelings do not have objects. As Spinoza so well understood, the experiencer suffers them, is involuntarily affected by them—thus affects, from Latin *affectus*, to be affected or touched.

Emotions, on the other hand, do have objects, and thus a kind of outer-oriented gradient. Most, perhaps all, affects have corresponding emotions. Rage is an example of an affect, while its corresponding emotion is hate. Joy is an affect, love an emotion. Disgust, which is probably what I felt whenever I glanced at the despoiled 1909 Prichard book, is an affect, contempt its corresponding emotion.

Affects are judgments, expressions of a relation between the perceiving individual and its world. But they are very different kinds of judgments than those resulting from typical cognitive processes such as deduction, induction, and abduction. In cognitive judgments concepts are related through the rules of logic as expressed through a conventional system for manipulating signs, whether it be the syntax of a natural language or mathematics. Thus, reality is mediated through abstract representations. With affects perceivers experience directly through their bodies a connection between themselves as unitary organisms and categories of experience. Since a worm has no neural equipment to speak of, it is useless for it to learn about particulars that it can eat or that can eat or harm it. Rather, it must learn how to recognize categories, kinds, universals. If most Xs are good (edible, say), then it

only needs to know how to recognize Xs in their environment (that is, members of the class "X"). Ditto with all Ys that are bad. These are the full equivalent of cognitive judgements made by far more sophisticated creatures (like us), but made more parsimoniously and efficiently. I can't, of course, say anything about the subjective experience, if any, of worms, but I can say that we humans do something quite similar. In short, affects put us in direct, unmediated relationship with universals.

Books and book-forms can both induce joy, a blissful state *sans* object, while books and book-forms can, in quite different ways, be loved. Love requires an object, while joy cannot have an object, for it is an intransitive feeling-state. Languages express the relationship between affect and emotion in different and quite enlightening ways. Indo-European languages often express affect by putting the experiencer into a non-nominative grammatical case. German and the Romance languages typically put the experiencer in the dative in clauses or sentences referring to subjective sensation and feeling—he or she is not the agent but the patient or, in Spinoza's sense, sufferer, the one to or for whom something happens. English, now virtually without a dative, occasionally puts the experiencer in the accusative case, as in "X makes me feel good," but does so less easily and frequently. Such modes of expression are, I think, clearly modeled on the shared human experience of subjectless and objectless affect, on the notion of feeling as something that just happens to one rather than as something that one initiates. It is the Zen of syntax, the dative of fake politesse.

I said both that affects put the experiencer in relation to universals and that, as Indo-European grammar strongly suggests, they have no objects. The universals—the classes or categories being related to—are the subjects while the experiencers are the indirect, dative rather than accusative, objects.

Affects are evolutionarily older while emotions are a kind of later affective fine tuning requiring more sophisticated neu-

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rophysiological apparatus, and having clear social and communicative functions as well. They are often closely connected: objects (persons as well as things) that induce joy or pleasure in us are the very objects we tend to love. Persons can love you back, while things such as books cannot. But books can, through their possession of appropriate attributes, induce positive affects in perceivers. This, of course, makes one want to be in their presence so one can have the good feelings. Books also, unlike people, have the delightful inability to reject one's love. Books utterly signify human beings, without whom they can neither exist nor mean anything,

## Books as Concrete Universals

It is our sensory experience of books that makes them concrete universals. Concrete because we know them through the senses (and all collectors know how important touch and smell are, though the latter is rarely discussed in the literature about book collecting) and universals because what it is that we know is actually abstract. In aesthetic pleasure we experience a book-form as an individual being-in-the-world irreducible to any subsets of attributes—in other words, as something like a person with its own right to be in the world, with its own integrity and dignity and uniqueness independent of us. This is—I can tell you as someone who does it all the time—intensely and repeatedly pleasurable. It is, I believe, identical with or closely similar to the rapture we can experience seeing a painting or hearing music. As with paintings, simulacra, copies, and reproductions, being entirely different objects, simply cannot induce the same affective and emotional states. Though it is beyond the ambit of my discussion, I can mention that music differs fundamentally from visuospatial aesthetic objects, for it occurs in time rather than space. Thus, in music there are no copies—I refer here to musical performances not to manuscripts and printed

texts, which of course occur in space—only presentations, each to be judged on its own merits.

One might at this point counter that surely a good enough copy could produce an effect identical to that of the original. To which I should answer that it could do so only so long as one did not know it was a copy, for that knowledge is itself a defining attribute for the being of the perceived object. I have defined aesthetic objects as conjunctions or unions of universals—being a copy counts as a pretty important universal characteristic, one that definitively changes the nature of the object.

It is just here, with the issue of aesthetic pleasure derived from the presence of book-forms, that reductive psychological analyses such as the psychoanalyst Werner Muensterberger's in his 1994 *Collecting: An Unruly Passion* completely miss the point. Analyses like Muensterberger's, which reduce collecting to something that it is not, fail—and must fail—to comprehend the entirely adult level pleasures entailed by collecting. Yes, arrays of collectable desireds may palliate infantile object loss (in the psychoanalytic sense), but the pleasures adults experience from collecting are not the same as those that children experience from their relation to desired primary objects. The network of knowledge defining both the realm of the desireds and the relation of the desirer to the desireds occurs in childhood only in inchoate form. That said, I still much recommend Muensterberger's book as by far the best description of the pathological aspects of nativist collecting. But you'd never divine from his book that collecting is a normal, regular part of human experience, for he emphasizes only the bizarre end of the collecting spectrum. I don't believe I've encountered any collectors who call to mind the extreme psychopathologies of Sir Thomas Phillipps and Balzac, two star pathobiographies in Muensterberger's book.

Firstly—and I think all-importantly—the adult collector-desirer profoundly comprehends the distinction between him- or herself and his or her desired. The desirer perceives desired objects as beings separate from himself, with the

full right to exist as enduring material beings quite apart from the existence of the desirer. The desire is subjective but the desirability and being of the coveted object is objective, for *qua* desired it is defined by the possibility that other human beings may also find it desirable—by which, of course, I mean that the desire of any one individual exists within a matrix of social mores, *eine Gemeinschaft*, a community of desirers and desireds consensually defined. It is the situating of the desirer within such a community that marks desire as objective and subject to socially defined rules.

The adult desirer-collector stands in a kind of humility before coveted objects, which possess the dignity of beings with a right to exist quite apart from his or her own existence and desire for them. This is the root of the exquisite aesthetic pleasure folks like us feel in the presence of such objects. The pleasure is certainly subjective and individual but the cause of it is not. The objects that induce aesthetic pleasure in us do not need us as individual desirers in order to deserve to be, though they may need us to explain why they are worthwhile beings in their own right. To collect rationally means to respect the dignity of the desireds. One covets them because they are covetable. By coveting one participates in an axiological universe of objective valuation. Not just objects are ordered and orderly but oneself, as one who desires them, is ordered and orderly as well.

As I've said, *qua* desired objects, book-forms are concrete universals, objects that, by dint of being what they are, exemplify the classes to which they are consensually construed to belong. To put it another way, they denote the truth of their being just by existing. At this level of abstract analysis paintings, books, buildings, campaign posters, and sheet music all have the same kind of being, so long as they are construed as desireds. One must, of course, know a great deal about the object domains in which any particular object exists in order even to begin to appreciate the dignity of its being as an object-in-the-world.

It was in 1973 that I learned that books were actually concrete universals. Since I

think the tale has both charm and heuristic value, I'll share it with you. At the time, we lived on University Parkway, around the corner from my old shop on Greenmount Avenue. In the entrance foyer we had a breakfront, which I naturally used as—what else—a bookcase, on the bottom shelf of which I had a set of the fourteenth edition of the *Britannica*, fairly heavy quarto volumes. The door to the breakfront was open and several guests and I were sitting in the living room, perhaps 20 feet from the breakfront bookcase. My youngest daughter, then a toddler about a year and a half old, walked over to the bookcase, pulled out one of the *Britannica* volumes, and trundled over to me with it, saying as she handed it to me, "Book, daddy." I realized instantly, in one of those all-too-rare aperçus, that the underlying sentence she was expressing was: "Daddy, this object is an instance of the class 'books.'" "Book" to her did not name a thing, a particular, though to us stupid adults it seemed to do so. At eighteen months of age it was the highest level class that she was recognizing—not an individual book-form in its particularity and individuality, but simply the class itself. Assuming she developed as a normally functioning member of our society, she would spend many years learning to subdivide the category into finer and finer subclasses. For Reetta at eighteen months there were no "literary" or "medical" books or even "children's" and "adult" books, nor "English" and "Spanish" books, nor "rare books" and "reading copies"—all these were distinctions to be learned later, if at all. It was the high level class "books" that she perceived by identifying one of its members. In a flash of insight I realized that barely verbal children relate to particulars in much the same way as worms.

When I said earlier that books reeked of humanity, I meant not that they smell like us, but that their existence entails humans: as creators, producers, authors, readers, and aesthetic evaluators. Like works of art, book-forms exist entirely within the world of culture. As material artifacts, they imply the society that produced them and encode implicitly its aes-

thetic canon along with much technical and technological knowledge. As presentations of texts, they imply a given society's entire cognitive universe. From any particular book-form one can potentially reconstruct much of the culture that produced it. Though book-forms rarely look alike, they do have family resemblances. French books from the 1830s, say, have a style of their own such that one can pretty reasonably date a book from that period even if it bears no date. Just so with American books from the 1920s, German books from the teens, and so on. What makes for these differences in appearance are the myriad factors I've already alluded to: factors of production, available and favored materials for binding, typography, aesthetic notions about what makes for visually pleasing forms, and so on. Though no one of these attributes suffices to typify a book-form within a country and period, in conjunction they do so regularly and predictably.

#### **Books as Members of Classes**

Each book-form, in addition to all the other classes it belongs to, which as a set define its object being, belongs to the class of material objects produced as intended equivalent objects, meant to be construed by readers as identical. I refer here, of course, to editions and printings. Barring the ever-present possibility of production defects in printing and binding, the book-forms at birth are perfect and as close to identical siblings as it is possible to be. As soon as they are thrown into the world, they begin acquiring histories. They get used and abused, rebound, highlighted, thrown at caterwauling cats, waterstained, even read or collected. What we most covet within the realm of antiquarian bookdom, wherein books are always comprehended as individuals (which, please remember, means concrete universals), is either the perfect exemplar of that original birth-class or a significant association copy. Best, of course, is an object that is simultaneously both: the Holy Grail of book collecting. One never forgets missing such exemplary books. Around 1974, only several years after I had first started dealing in psychoanalytic books, I tried to buy from

Walter Alicke in Lichtenstein a mint, unopened copy in original wrappers of Freud's *Traumdeutung* inscribed to Jung—a perfect example of a perfect example. Since he had drastically underpriced it (the equivalent of about \$3,000 in Swiss Francs), I naturally didn't get it. Those of you familiar with Alicke's catalogues will know that this must be one of the few times in his illustrious book-selling career that he underpriced a book. The reason, by the way, that Jung's copy was perfect—how, after all, could he not have read the book?—was, as I knew, that Freud had sent him this copy after they had met. Jung already owned his own copy, so presumably he just put this one on the shelf without bothering to bind it.

So, if we have learned to play the game by the proper rules, we are driven to acquire perfect and association copies. I should say a few words about the latter. The first thing to say about association copies is that they create new connections. By dint of their very existence they create knowledge about the world that we didn't have before. One might guess that X must have given a copy to Y, or that Z must have owned a copy of a particular book, but lacking an actual copy, one simply can't be sure. Secondly, the physical object, which through its appearance in the world signifies the connection both represents and presents the union of donor and donee. It is that most coveted of universals: a class with (probably) only one member and, thus, the most perfect form of concrete universal in bookdom. There can, after all, be multiple perfect exemplars in original condition of a book, but there will most likely be only one copy that X gave to Y or that Z owned, though I know of a few instances of multiple presentations by an author to the same recipient. Even in those cases the actual presentation inscriptions usually differ, and the physical book-forms inevitably differ with respect to accidents of condition, binding, etc.

Now, classes with only one or just a small number of members differ fundamentally from classes with indefinitely many members, such as those named by

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# Gach

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terms such as “book” or “table.” Thinly populated classes (logically, classes with limited extension) are typically those to which we give proper names like “Susan” or “Stuttgart.” Texts, of course, are such objects; and so we know them by proper names like “Moby Dck” or “The Interpretation of Dreams.” Though we give the name of the text-class to the physical objects bearing the text denominated by the name, book-forms actually belong to common name classes, for, though there is a finite limit to the number of copies produced within any printing, there is no logical limit to the number of different editions, printings, or translations of a text that can be produced. Association copies promote book-forms from common name classes to proper name classes—that is, they leap into the realm of individuality, approach a kind of personhood.

Then there are all the books we don’t collect, by which I don’t mean books outside our own collecting interests, but rather books within the domain of our interest and collecting competence that we deem undesirable—the shiftless creatures we barely notice in bookshops. In a way, what we don’t want defines what we do want. What is it we don’t want and why? We don’t want the common. Books that are ubiquitous bore us. The only “rush” they provide is in the speed with which we move away from them. Where book-forms with interesting attributes have the capacity to delight us whenever our eyes glance at them, or even when we just think about them, common books elicit not a glimmer of affect or emotion. In a shop or at a book sale, for example, I don’t really “see” such books. My eye scans shelves without anything really registering in consciousness until I spot something different or a book worth looking at. If you asked me what other books I had seen, I usually wouldn’t know.

Secondly, books in bad condition—a relative notion, of course—induce in us feelings of displeasure. Since it is the

state of aesthetic pleasance we seek, we avoid these, too. The more desirable the book would otherwise have been, the more distressing it becomes in poor condition. All the attributes that move a book away from its original condition tend to make us want to move away from the book, the major exception to this rule being truly fine or interesting bindings and association copies, either of which transforms the objects into a different kind.

Thirdly, the pseudo-fancy tends to induce displeasure. Books like the mass-produced leather-bound editions of classics, designed to provide the appearance of collectable books for those who know nothing about collecting, are a kind of pretend-collectible. Even so, there can be reasons for collectors buying them. For instance, when I was collecting Freud in English I bought the Franklin Press leatherbound edition of Freud’s *Basic Works*. It belonged in my collection, since I was aiming for an assemblage of one instance of every variant of each incarnation in English of a Freud text in book-form. Such books themselves are rarely interesting to collectors except as part of an assemblage where the whole has a significance separate from its constituent parts. With the passage of enough time, of course, such pseudo-fancies can themselves become interesting and collected, for they too encode information about the culture that produced and bought them. I think here, for example, of the half leather Darwins published by Appleton in the 1890s, which are, I think, on the verge of being collected objects in their own right.

Fourthly, there are classes of books that simply don’t, at a given time and place, interest anybody, such as—to pick an example off the top of my head—recent textbooks in any field. From this class of undesirables, however, may come future domains of collectable books—after all, William James’s *Principles of Psychology*, still the greatest psychological work authored by an American, started life as a textbook. Name the collecting field, and there was a time when no one collected the books.

Any area is potentially collectable; it doesn’t take much to stimulate interest. The publication of one or more bibliographies, an auction that gets some attention, a shifting of academic attention—any can stimulate collecting interest where before there was none.

These categories of undesirable books provide the ground from which the desirables emerge as figure. They are actually quite necessary for collecting, for it is only in comparison to them that desirable books are valued. In order to have “good” books we need “bad” books, though for the reasons I’ve just outlined we don’t want to be around them, and we certainly don’t want to be surrounded by them.

The phenomenology and psychology of collecting are almost entirely unexplored territories. The literature about which I know—and there isn’t much—strikes me as largely junk and not very useful for comprehending collecting. Why that should be the case is itself an interesting question—after all a lot of smart people collect. My best guess as to why collecting in general and book collecting in particular have remained so uncomprehended is this: the only people interested in the activity are the people who do it, and the people who do it are usually entirely uninterested in exploring why. Firstly, they are busy deriving all the satisfactions involved from actually collecting, and, secondly, they would rather not destroy the romance of collecting. As a prime instance of the latter point, Freud—a passionate collector of antiquarian figurines and a less passionate collector of books—wrote, so far as I know, not a word about collecting. Though I shouldn’t think my words will dissuade anyone from collecting, I do hope that I’ve helped you to understand some of the cognitive and emotional patterns expressed through book-collecting, that—to use terms made famous by Gilbert Ryle in his 1949 *Concept of Mind*—I’ve succeeded in converting some formerly implicit “knowledge-how” into a more explicit “knowledge-that.” ■

# Obituaries

## Edgar Franco

### Utrecht, The Netherlands

On April 24, 1999, Edgar Franco, Member of Merit of the ILAB, passed away in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Edgar was born in 1915 in Smyrna (now Izmir in Turkey). After the conquest of Izmir by Moestafa Kemal in 1922, the Franco family moved to France. In 1931 Edgar went to London to follow university courses, but in 1933 he returned to France and, when eighteen years old, started to deal in books. In 1936 he opened a small shop in the Rue d'Assas in Paris.

Because the Francos were of Spanish-Portuguese Jewish decent, they were wise enough to leave France before the Germans came in, and took refuge in the United Kingdom. Edgar started to work for Foyle's, but since he held a British passport, he soon had to join the British army. He served in Madras, Bombay, and Singapore.

After the war he started a mail order business. Following the early death of his first wife, Edgar had the good luck of meeting Nel Schinkel, who worked at the time at J.L. Beijers in Utrecht. She followed Edgar to London, where they married and started a business in Park Street (not open to the public). But in 1963, L. Gumbert, proprietor of J. L. Beijers, offered Edgar Franco a share in company. Edgar and Nel moved to the house and antiquarian bookshop of J. L. Beijers Ltd.

Fluent in both French and English, Edgar served the ILAB as interpreter during presidents' meetings and congresses for many years. In the Dutch antiquarian booksellers' association, he was always helpful when international meetings were being prepared.

Edgar was a perfectionist. For many years he had noted down all kinds of errors and omissions he had found in Menno Hertzberger's eight-language

dictionary of terms and expressions commonly used in the antiquarian book trade. In 1994 he decided to make public an entirely new dictionary of French, English, German, and Italian terms, and this was published by the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers.

Edgar loved to tell stories of the past and you could hardly mention an incident in the trade without his coming up with details of similar incidents of many, many years ago. He showed a constant and deep interest in the activities of the Dutch Association, was always ready to give good advice, and always enjoyed immensely the success of colleagues. We have lost a dear friend, a capable antiquarian bookman and an internationally-minded book dealer.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Nel, and his son, Pascal.

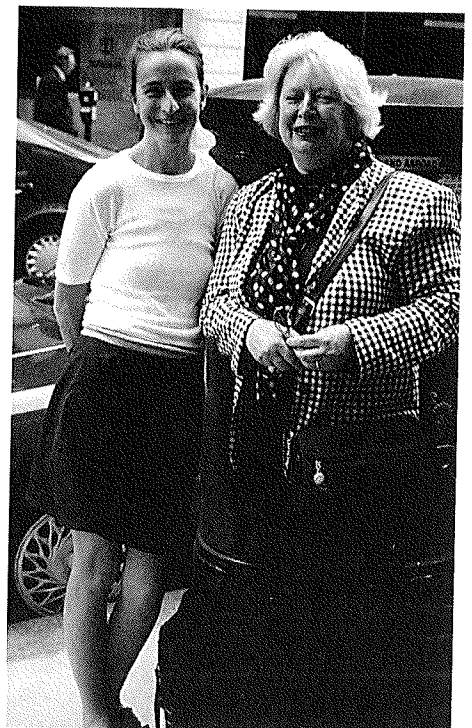
*Anton Gerits*

A contribution to the ABAA Benevolent Fund or to the Elisabeth Woodburn Memorial Fund is a meaningful way to honor the memory of a departed colleague. A contribution can also be a thoughtful celebration of an important event in the life of an antiquarian bookseller—a birthday, an anniversary, or a retirement.

The Antiquarian Booksellers' Benevolent Fund is a non-profit charity fund established by the ABAA in 1952 to benefit any antiquarian bookseller—ABAA member or not—in time of personal need.

The Elisabeth Woodburn Memorial Fund offers financial assistance for education and scholarly research relevant to the antiquarian book trade.

*Direct your contributions and inquiries to:*  
Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America  
20 West 44th Street  
Fourth Floor  
New York, NY 10036



*Photograph courtesy of Liane Wade*

Liane Wade, Executive Director of the ABAA (R) and Philippa Gibson (L) of the ABA (Int'l) during Ms. Wade's recent trip to London.

## Sam Weller's Zion Bookstore Marks Seventieth Anniversary

ABAA member Sam Weller's Zion Bookstore of Salt Lake City, Utah, feted seventy years in the rare book trade with a gala public celebration on August 11, 1999. Customers at the book store were treated to refreshments, hourly drawings for specially-designed anniversary T-shirts and book bags, gift certificates, and a commemorative chapbook, and music from The Salt Lake City Good Times Dixieland Jazz Band.

The commemorative anniversary chapbook contains essays and reminiscences contributed by Debby Bull, Brigham Madsen, Thomas Monson, Helen Papanikolas, Zeese Papanikolas, Barry Scholl, Gibbs Smith, and Marcus Theodore, all authors who know the book store well.

Gustav (Gus) Weller opened Zion Bookstore on August 11, 1929. Gus's second oldest son, Sam, took over the bookstore when he returned from military service at the end of World War II, in January of 1946. Sam's son, Tony Weller, assumed control of the bookstore in January of 1997.

The Zion Bookstore was opened right before the onset of the Great Depression, a small shop, stocking mostly second-hand Latter Day Saints books. Since its inception as a small hole-in-the-wall specialty shop, Sam Weller's Books has grown to be a large general book store occupying three floors and some 30,000 square feet containing hundreds of thousands of new, used, and rare books.

## Hertzog Award Competition Open

Book designers, printers, and publishers throughout the United States are encouraged to submit books printed in 1998 or 1999 for the seventh annual competition for the Carl Hertzog Book Design Awards. Sponsored by the Friends of the University Library of the University of Texas at El Paso, this national award honors the lifework of one of this country's most accomplished book designers and printers, the late Carl Hertzog (1902-1984).

J. Carl Hertzog was responsible for the design and production of some of the most important works of history, folklore, art, and literature ever conceived in the American Southwest. More than a printer and publisher, he was a highly-regarded creative artist whose reputation extended nationwide. He made printing a performing art. Over 250 books and pamphlets appeared under his own name or that of other publishing houses such as Alfred A. Knopf of New York and Little, Brown & Co. of Boston.

The competition is open to presses and publishers of all types and sizes. The winner and runners-up will receive national publicity and will be exhibited in the University Library of the University of Texas at El Paso for two months after the announcement of the award on February 6, 2000.

The winner will receive a \$1,000 cash prize, a framed certificate, and a specially struck bronze medal designed by Hertzog's long-time associate, Tom Lea.

The Friends of the University Library (formerly called Associates of the University Library) was established in 1987 as the support group of the University Library of the University of Texas at El Paso. Its purposes are to inform the El Paso community of Library programs and accomplishments; to involve the community in Library activities; and to encourage gifts to the Library.

By creating and sponsoring the Hertzog Award, the Friends of the University Library endeavor to underscore the importance of fine printing as an art, to encourage work by new and established artisans, and to annually recognize out-

standing accomplishments in the field. Questions regarding the competition should be directed to the University Librarian by phone: 915-747-5683 or via email: pphillip@libr.utep.edu.

1. Only books and pamphlets, both finely printed and trade items, may be submitted; minimum length is 16 pages.
2. Privately published volumes with a minimum print run of 25 copies are eligible.
3. Entries must be published and entirely produced (designed, typeset or composed, printed, bound, etc.) in the United States.
4. There is a maximum number of five entries allowed, and all must have been printed in 1998 or 1999.
5. Books previously entered are not eligible.
6. Only one copy need be submitted.
7. There is no entry or handling fee.
8. The winning entry will become the property of the University of Texas at El Paso Library and will be placed in the Carl Hertzog Collection. Other entries will be kept by the Library at the option of the contestants.
9. While a printer, publisher, or designer can submit an entry, only the designer is eligible to receive the award.
10. All entries must be postmarked by October 1, 1999.
11. Submissions and entry forms should be sent first-class, insured mail to:  
Hertzog Award Competition  
c/o University Librarian  
UTEP Library  
El Paso, TX 79968-0582

Previous winners of the Hertzog Book Design Award are: Gerald W. Lange, USC Fine Arts Press, 1991; Patrick Reagh, Patrick Reagh Printers, Inc., 1992; W. Thomas Taylor, for Chama Press, 1993; Richard Eckersley, University of Nebraska Press, 1994; James Linden, 1995; and Mark Argetsinger, Hull Printing Co., 1997. ■



# Reese Company Inaugurates Fellowship Program

The William Reese Company, New Haven, CT, has inaugurated a program of fellowships for students of the history of the book in the Americas. The Reese Fellowships in American Bibliography and the History of the Book in the Americas will support individuals pursuing research on materials printed in or related to the Americas at six institutions participating in the program: The American Antiquarian Society, The Bibliographical Society of America, John Carter Brown Library, The Library of Congress, The Book Arts Press at the University of Virginia, and Yale University.

The Reese Fellowship Program will support any research work relating to either systematic bibliography of any part of the Western Hemisphere, or any investigation of the history of the book in the Americas. Preference will be given to projects in materials printed prior to 1920. Projects may investigate any printed genre (e.g. books, prints, pamphlets, photographs intended for publication, broadsides, etc.) They may be purely bibliographical, or they may address issues of ownership, readership, or the use of printed materials. Support for work in manuscript collections will be limited to projects related to printed materials (e.g. annotations in books, publishers' business archives, etc.). They are not intended to support the editing of an author's papers.

The fellowship offered by the Book Arts Press at the University of Virginia differs in scope. It will support a graduate student or beginning antiquarian bookseller during four weeks at the Rare Book School summer session in a position combining staff duties with the opportunity to take an RBS course focusing on Americana themes.

The Reese Fellowships are designed to support qualified researchers regardless of academic degree. Some participants, however, may have degree restrictions.

All awards are made by the fellowship committees of participating institutions or organizations. No awards are made directly by William Reese Company. Applicants should contact directly the institution where they seek a fellowship. All application and awards will be made within the framework of the existing fellowship programs of the participating institutions. Each award-giving institution must be applied to separately for a research topic at that institution. If applying for a Reese fellowship at more than one institution in one year, this should be clearly stated in the application.

The size of available awards varies, but is generally equivalent to what each institution typically awards for a month of study. Awards may be used to defray travel expenses, living expenses, or research costs. It is assumed that the recipient of the award will be in resi-

dence for whatever term is set by the awarding institution.

All recipients will be asked to write a brief report on their research for The Reese Company. This may be a copy of any report written for the awarding institution.

**American Antiquarian Society**, Academic Fellowships, Room 100, 185 Salisbury Street, Room 125, Worcester, MA 01609-1634; 508-755-5221; cfs@mwa.org

**University of Virginia**, The Book Arts Press, 114 Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903-2498; 804-924-8851; biblio@virginia.edu

**Yale University**, Director of Fellowship Programs, The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, PO Box 208240, New Haven, CT 06520-8240; 203-432-2977; robert.babcock@yale.edu

**Bibliographical Society of America**, Executive Secretary, Bibliographical Society of America, PO Box 397 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163-0397; 212-657-9171; bsa@bibsocamer.org

**John Carter Brown Library**, Director, John Carter Brown Library, Box 1894, Providence, RI 02912; 401-863-2725; JCBL\_fellowships@brown.edu

**The Library of Congress**, Chief, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, The Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20540; 202-707-2025; mdim@loc.gov ■

## BSA Offers Fellowships

The Bibliographical Society of America (BSA) invites applications for its annual short-term fellowship program, which supports bibliographical inquiry as well as research in the history of the book trades and in publishing history. Eligible topics may concentrate on books and documents in any field, but should focus on the book or manuscript (the physical object) as historical evidence. Such topics may include establishing a text or studying the history of book production, publication, distribution, collecting, or reading. Enumerative listings do not fall within the scope of this program.

BSA fellowships may be held for one or two months. The program is open to applicants of any nationality. Fellows will be paid a stipend of up to \$1500 per month in support of travel, living, and research expenses. The BSA Fellowship Committee evaluates applications on the basis of whether the project makes sense in terms of existing scholarship, whether the applicant is qualified to undertake the proposed project, and whether a BSA stipend would make a significant difference to the completion of the project.

In 1999 the BSA awarded eleven months of support to nine scholars.

Applications, including three letters of reference, are due on December 1, 1999. Applicants will be notified by the Society by February 28, 2000, and fellowships will be tenable after May 1, 2000.

Prospective applicants are invited to download an application directly from our Web site at [www.bibsocamer.org](http://www.bibsocamer.org) or to contact the BSA Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 1537, Lenox Hill Station, New York, NY 10021, for application forms and additional information about the program. ■

# Former Librarian of Congress 'Reinaugurates' Maury A. Bromsen Lecture Series

Former Librarian of Congress Daniel J. Boorstin spoke on "The Need for Biography Today" at this year's Maury A. Bromsen Lecture in Humanistic Bibliography, held at the Boston Public Library (BPL) on May 22, 1999.

The annual invitational lecture series was endowed by ABAA member Maury Bromsen in 1970 as a memorial to his mother, Rose Elisenberg Bromsen (1885-1968). An honored authority in the history and bibliography of the Americas, Dr. Bromsen established in 1954 the rare book, manuscript, and historical art firm that bears his name.

The Bromsen lectureship stipulates that the speaker "emphasize the humanistic rather than the descriptive character of his subject" and that the appointment be made by a committee of five "representing the greater Boston academic community."

The first Bromsen Lecture was held in 1973, and the series continued annually through 1983. The roster of speakers was international in scope, including Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, Frederick R. Goff, James D. Hart, Jacques Barzun, John Parker, Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., Beaumont Newhall, Herman Liebaers, and Pedro Grases. The texts of the lectures were handsomely published by The

Stinehour Press and The Meriden Gravure Company.

In 1984 the lectures were suspended. Dr. Bromsen, encouraged by BPL President Bernard Margolis, reinstated the annual series this year, with Dr. Boorstin's lecture marking its return to Boston's calendar of important scholarly events.

Dr. Boorstin, a distinguished historian, is the author of nearly forty books and hundreds of articles in social, political, legal, and intellectual history, and a Pulitzer Prize winner, in 1974, for his *The Americans: The Democratic Experience*. He was appointed Librarian of Congress by President Ford in 1975 and held that post until 1987.

Dr. Boorstin drew a distinguished audience of more than 300 people to Raab Lecture Hall, filling it to capacity. "The audience who heard the lecture was a gala one in every sense," Dr. Bromsen reported. "It drew university presidents, deans, professors, historians, jurists, bibliographers, and librarians, including several Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winners.

"There was an unusually large number of ABAA members present," Dr. Bromsen continued, "including Bernard Gordon (The Book & Tackle Shop), Thomas Boss, Helen Kelly and Charles Vilnis (Boston Book Company), Anne and

David Bromer, John Wronoski (Lame Duck Books), Diana Rendell, Peter Stern, and Charles Wood."

Because of his extraordinary familiarity with biography as a prime source for history, Dr. Boorstin chose to devote his lecture to this field of writing. Tracing the field of biography from classical times until the twentieth century, he revealed that the word "biography" first appeared in the sixteenth century and maintained that early manuscripts and printed works were not truly biographies as we understand them today. Dr. Boorstin explained how the emphasis of biography has continually changed down to the present century. No biography, he insisted, is definitive. Moreover, revisionism is an ever on-going process, reflecting new historical perceptions.

The current committee of five, which is charged with appointing the annual Bromsen lecturer, currently consists of Dr. William Fowler (Director, Massachusetts Historical Society); Dr. Ellen S. Dunlap (President, American Antiquarian Society); Dr. Richard Wendorf (Director, Boston Athenaeum); Dr. Norman Fiering (Director, John Carter Brown Library); and Roberta Zonghi (Keeper, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Boston Public Library). ■

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## Books, Briefly Noted

*Salts of Silver, Toned with Gold. The Harrison D. Horblit Collection of Early Photography.* By Anne Anninger and Julie Mellby. Edited by Victoria Alexander. The Houghton Library, Harvard University, 1999. Illustrated, xiii, 173pp. Indexed. Pictorial wrappers. \$25

Destined to sit on the shelf next to the standard references, "The New York Public Library Check-List" by Julia Van Haften (*Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, Spring, 1977), *The Truthful Lens* (Grolier Club, 1980), and *To*

*Delight the Eye: Original Photographic Book Illustrations of the American West*, catalogued by ABAA member David Margolis (DeGolyer Library, 1995), *Salts of Silver* will be a regularly cited source for nineteenth-century photographically illustrated books. This select catalogue contains over 150 entries about books on the origin of photography, books with original photographs, ephemera, daguerreotypes, and individual prints by various processes, all meticulously described and placed within their historical context.

Also published in conjunction with this catalogue is *Six Exposures: Essays in Celebration of the Opening of the Harrison D. Horblit Collection of Early Photography*, priced at \$25.

Both titles may be ordered from The University of Washington Press, PO Box 50096, Seattle, WA 98145-5096; email: uwppord@u.washington.edu. Both are also available through the Houghton Library Shop, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138. ■

# Recent Books by Members

*Stamped with a National Character: Nineteenth Century American Color Plate Books. An Exhibition.* By William S. Reese. New York: The Grolier Club, 1999. Illustrated, 120pp. Indexed. Cloth and jacket. \$39.00

Reviewed by Rob Rulon-Miller

Exhibition catalogues have come a long way since the meager leaflets and stapled handouts I remember from a quarter century ago, and the softbound, wrapped versions that followed them. Today, many of these catalogues have morphed into a merchandiser's dream with visually appealing (read marketable) designs and a plethora of vibrant colors inside and out. They teem with striking and sometimes shocking photographs, and the papers, inks, and binding materials used are of the highest quality. On the surface, these catalogues are tangent with today's high profile auction catalogues and, to a lesser extent, with that ubiquitous bibliobeast of the twentieth century, the coffee-table book. It is difficult, then, to remember, even with Mr. Reese's book in hand, that *Stamped with a National Character* is an exhibition catalogue and nothing more, coming with all the limitations of the genre.

That said, Mr. Reese's production (and it is largely his production—not the Grolier Club's) must rank with the finest of its kind. The day will come when some future bibliographer (or more likely, biographer) will make parallels with Reese's famous series of rare book catalogues, of which this book seems—textually at least—something of a clone, and also with *Six Score: The 120 Best Books on the Range Cattle Industry* published in 1976, when he was twenty-one and still a student at Yale. But for the while, suffice it to say that the range cattle industry is a long way from American color plates, and Mr. Jenkins, his early publisher, a very long way from The Grolier Club, his latest.

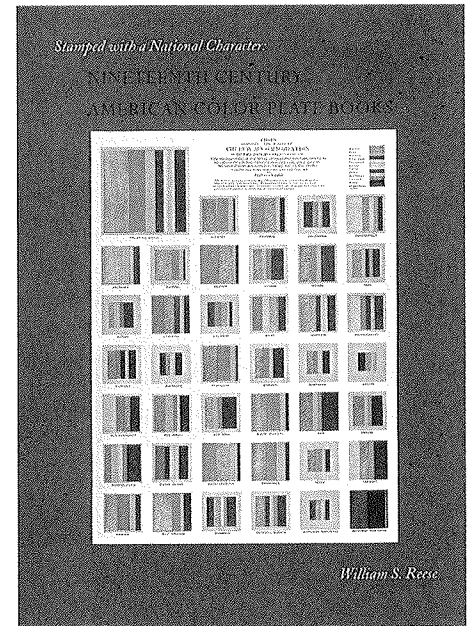
The book—and I use the word purposefully as it is so far beyond what I

think of as an exhibition catalogue—is at once flashy and smart. Not surprisingly, it drew the attention of both *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*, which helped swell attendance in the Grolier exhibition hall, and plans are now afoot for the show to travel in the early years of the next millennium.

For the exhibition, Mr. Reese drew upon his own collection of some 600 American color plate books, which he formed over the remarkably short period of five years. (For those who keep track, that's about one acquisition, on average, every three days.) Its scope is "the history and development of American color plate books in the nineteenth century," from the earliest hand-colored copper-plate engravings to the age of chromolithography, as shown in 114 exhibited books. His template is Whitman Bennett's durable but imperfect *A Practical Guide to American Nineteenth-Century Color Plate Books* (1949, with *Supplement*), which contains nearly 400 items. Reese's work does not supplant Bennett's work, but it is clearly a valuable tool to be used in conjunction with it—the best, in fact, since Bennett's groundbreaking work.

Reese's twenty-page introductory essay is lucid and informative, and should be required reading for anyone dealing in nineteenth-century American books, art, or printing technique—anyone, for that matter, interested in books at all, whether they be scholars, dealers, or dilettantes. In it, he provides a working definition of an American color plate book (not quite so obvious as one might suspect), a brief synopsis of American color printers and the types of plates they produced, and the themes represented in the illustrations themselves. Reese also indulges us with his selection of "ten notable works," from Audubon's *Birds of America* and the *Hudson River Portfolio* to the massively illustrated Pacific Railroad Surveys, which he singles out as exemplary.

The exhibition was laid out in ten cases, chronologically arranged, and the



catalogue reflects that design, with sections on Beginnings, The Study of Nature, Native Americans, The Audubons, Fashion and Sentiment, House and Home, Color in the Aid of Science, Exotica, The Golden Age of Chromolithography, and The End of the Century. His catalogue descriptions—ever Reeseian—abound with the curious and informative. Of the seventy-seven illustrations in the catalogue, all but one are in full, outrageous color. The book is handsomely designed by Thomas Whitridge at Ink, Inc.

Mr. Reese is currently working on a larger, more scholarly book on the most interesting and most representative American color plate books of the nineteenth century that he hopes to have done by the end of next year, and which he promises will be as colorful and flashy as the present.

The book—an absolute bargain for the price—is available from William Reese Co., 409 Temple St., New Haven, CT 06511; email: coreese@reese.co.com; and The Veatches, POB 328, Northampton, MA 01060-0328; email: veatches@veatches.com. Trade discounts apply. ■

## Membership Updates

**Antiquarian Book Mart** has a new area code: 210-828-7433 or 210-828-4885.

**Bert Babcock** has a new email and website: [contact@babcockbooks.com](mailto:contact@babcockbooks.com); [www.babcockbooks.com](http://www.babcockbooks.com)

**Catherine Barnes** has a new address, phone, and fax: PO Box 27782, Philadelphia, PA 19118; phone: 215-247-9240; fax: 215-247-4645.

**Books & Autographs** now has an email address: [booksautographs@earthlink.net](mailto:booksautographs@earthlink.net)

**Bowie & Company** has a new fax number: 603-954-2691.

**Caliban Book Shop** has a new mailing address: 6526 Dalzell Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

**Roy W. Clare** now has an email address: [clarebooks@adelphia.net](mailto:clarebooks@adelphia.net)

**James Dourgarian** has a new email: [jimbooks@earthlink.net](mailto:jimbooks@earthlink.net)

**John Gach Books** has a new address: 10514 Marriottsville Road, (Rear Building), Randallstown, MD 21133; phones and fax remain the same.

**Hackenbergs Booksellers** now has a website: [www.hackenbooks.com](http://www.hackenbooks.com)

**Robert G. Hayman** has a new address: 811 East Findlay, #31, Carey, OH 43316.

**Susan Heller** has an email correction: [hellersu@cyberdrive.net](mailto:hellersu@cyberdrive.net)

**David J. Holmes** has a new email address: [DHolmesAut@aol.com](mailto:DHolmesAut@aol.com)

**Pageant Book and Print** has a new address and email: Box 1081, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0867; email: [pageantbks@aol.com](mailto:pageantbks@aol.com)

**Albert J. Phiebig** has an email correction: [aipincfabaa@aol.com](mailto:aipincfabaa@aol.com)

**Richard C. Ramer** now has a website: [www.livroraro.com](http://www.livroraro.com)

**Robert H. Rubin** has a new zip code: PO Box 267, Brookline, MA 02446.

**David Schulson** has a new address, phone, and fax: 225 West 34th Street, Suite 1908, New York, NY 10122; phone: 212-629-3939; fax: 212-629-7695.

**Strand Bookstore** has a new email: [rbr@strandbooks.com](mailto:rbr@strandbooks.com)

**G. W. Stuart, Jr.** has a new address: 2424 West 5th Street, Yuma, AZ 85364; phone and fax remain the same.

**Michael Vinson** has a new address, phone, and email: PO Box 640, Afton, WY 83110; phone: 307-885-6600; email: [M\\_Vinson@silverstar.com](mailto:M_Vinson@silverstar.com)

**Jett W. Whitehead Rare Books** phone number was listed incorrectly in the last *Newsletter*; the correct phone number is: 517-892-0719.

**Roy Young Bookseller** has a new email address: [Royyoung@earthlink.net](mailto:Royyoung@earthlink.net) ■

**The deadline for submissions to the next Newsletter is**

**October 11, 1999**

**Send your contributions to:  
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## Errata: Board of Governors Committees

The following are corrections to the previously published list of ABAA committee members.

The Ethics Committee consists of John Crichton, chair; Ken Lopez, Andy Cahan, Tom Congalton, and Shelly Caney.

Ken Sanders is on the Membership Committee.

Taylor Bowie is a member of both the Publications Committee and the Membership Committee.