

homosexuality across time and place. The bulk of the book consists of 200 pages of alphabetical entries that range from key figures (Radclyffe Hall, Michel Foucault), organizations (Mattachine Society, Log Cabin Republicans), and moments (Stonewall, the passage of Don't Ask, Don't Tell) in LGBT history, as well as more general references tied by Pickett to the subject. For example, Pickett includes entries for individual countries, including China and Great Britain, and briefly sketches the historical trajectory of LGBT lives, laws, and rights in each. Entries are brief but substantial enough to provide useful framing for students seeking brief introductions to topics in this field.

Pickett's supplementary materials are perhaps as valuable as the entries themselves. The front of the book features a list of relevant acronyms and a useful chronology that indicates the author's emphasis on legal milestones and progressive history in six brief pages. A bibliography follows the entries. Pickett helpfully organizes his list of references by subject, and while his selection of key texts would certainly spark debate among scholars (Pickett's references are overwhelmingly drawn from U.S. theorists and historians, for example), they will provide beginners with a solid orientation to many of the touchstone publications in this rapidly expanding field. Print bibliographies quickly become obsolete, of course, but Pickett's culling of texts to 2008 will itself constitute a useful historical document.

In an era when print reference texts are a hard sell in any context, the real value of a subject dictionary like this one is the access it gives researchers to authoritative, objective snapshots of a field of study. And perhaps this is why many reference texts are produced not by single authors but by editors who seek contributions from a cross-section of scholars and researchers. The need for multiple perspectives is particularly acute for a field as interdisciplinary and evolving as lesbian and gay history. Written by a political scientist writing in a U.S. context, this dictionary unavoidably bears

the marks of its author's position: International histories are told in comparison to a progressive political narrative particular to U.S. gay history, and coverage of literary, cultural, and theoretical issues suffers from what some might see as an overemphasis on key people and organizations involved in political struggles for equal rights. The *Historical Dictionary of Homosexuality* presents a fairly narrow perspective that is best supplemented by a broader work like Marc Stein's three-volume *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered History in America* (Cengage, 2003) or David Gerstner's *International Encyclopedia of Queer Culture* (Routledge, 2006).—Emily Drabinski, Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus.

James Kearney. *The Incarnate Text: Imagining the Book in Reformation England.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009. 328p. alk. paper, \$65 (ISBN 9780812241587). LC 2008-050863.

After finishing James Kearney's *The Incarnate Text*, several powerful passages linger, but one more than the rest. Laying the groundwork for the idea of the "incarnate text," Kearney expounds on a sermon preached by the Bishop of Rochester, John Fisher, around 1531–1534. In dramatic fashion, Fisher likens the crucifixion of Christ to a vellum manuscript book. The boards, or covers of the books, comprise the cross. The vellum leaves, the "blessid body of Christ" (5). The ink strokes of the text, the lashes on Christ's skin. The red ink used for capital letters, the blood from Christ's wounds. The comparison is startling. As Kearney notes, modern readers live in a time when the book is viewed as "a vehicle for the transmission of text" not "an instrument and not an icon," not "a part of the world of bodies and things" (6).

The audience for Fisher's sermon, whether hearing his words or reading them in print, would have understood the comparison, but perhaps would not have known how to act on it. At that time, the Protestant Reformation was boiling on the Continent and simmering in England. The idea of "sola scripture" or "scripture alone"

was redefining the Christian relationship to books. Dismissing what they believed was Catholic idolatry, Protestants eschewed the veneration of material things. Iconoclasm was the order of the day, but how did books fit into the program? What was the right way for a reader to interact with the material text? As Kearney notes, "Different camps agree in principle that the word of God alone can bring one to salvation, but they cannot agree where to *find* the word of God" (31–32). Despite the best efforts of its most eloquent and polemic thinkers, there was no black or white in the post-Reformation era, just shades of gray.

Kearney deftly navigates the gray. The first chapter, "'Relics of the Mind': Erasmian Humanism and Textual Presence," is most impressive. Kearney examines the writings of some of the most influential thinkers of the Reformation, particularly in England: Erasmus, William Tyndale, and Thomas More. While there is no chapter specifically devoted to Martin Luther, his presence is felt throughout this chapter and beyond, along with Catholic Church fathers such as Saint Augustine. Erasmus "flirts with logolatry," (53) but his "veneration of the word" is profoundly influential. Luther and Tyndale both believe "that word and church are indivisible" (73). But for Luther, taking in the word of God is an act of hearing. For Tyndale, it is an "act of reading" (83). Thomas More believes that the Church gives authority to scripture. Tyndale counters with biting sarcasm. Each of these thinkers "imagines" the post-Reformation book differently. As Kearney presents it, it's all an invigorating intellectual mess.

So how do writers that emerge out of this "crisis of the book" imagine the material book (2)? Kearney searches for clues in Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, concluding with a compelling epilogue on Francis Bacon's *Instauratio Magna* (1620). The use of books in the first three works is well-trod territory. Yet, Kearney's informed close-reading remains fresh throughout.

That's what's most impressive about *The Incarnate Text*. Kearney successfully challenges the reader to rethink familiar passages from three of the most famous early modern English works.

Kearney's discussion of the use of a girdle book in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* is indicative of the way he skillfully connects the imagined book to a material object. A girdle book is a portable book wrapped in leather that can hang from one's belt. Practicality aside, in Protestant works such as John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, illustration of monks made to look grotesque and villainous as they interrogate and execute Protestant martyrs are frequently depicted wearing a girdle book on their belts. Wearing is the key word. Protestant martyrs often have books, too, but they hold them in their hands, suggesting an active engagement with scripture that contrasts with the passive wearing of the Bible as a token. One use of the book is holy, the other idolatrous.

Kearney's examination of girdle books is prompted by a scene from Book I of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The Redcrosse Knight encounters an evil magician called Archimago, who appears dressed as a humble monk, complete with a girdle book. Redcrosse Knight misreads Archimago: The girdle book hanging from his belt is actually not a Bible, but rather a book of magic. This encounter is among the most frequently discussed passages in *The Faerie Queene*. Yet, Kearney offers an innovative reading. Elaborating on his discussion of the girdle book to show how Spenser's Protestant epic is full of Catholic elements that are often treated in contradictory ways, Kearney demonstrates how Spenser does not seek simply to condemn Catholic traditions but to reform them.

Literary scholars should take away a great deal from Kearney's *Incarnate Text*. So, too, should those in the library field. Intelligent studies in history of the book should inform librarians about their own collections and perhaps even the field of librarianship. Early modern texts remain incarnate because artifacts survive and are

made accessible. Fisher's early modern audience recognizes the metaphysical comparison of Christ to a book because of their familiarity with contemporary books and the materials from which they are made. The metaphor endures centuries past the days of wood boards and vellum leaves because early modern manuscript books have been preserved as historical artifacts. Discussions of girdle books come to life when an example that survives in the collections at Yale University is available for the scholar to study and reproduced for the reader to view. We do live in a time when the book is typically viewed as "a vehicle for the transmission of text" not "an instrument and not an icon," not "a part of the world of bodies and things" (6). But scholars will continue to study how writers and readers imagined books, if physical examples of the books they imagined are preserved as artifacts. — *Steven K. Galbraith, Folger Shakespeare Library.*

Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams.

Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006. xvi + 367p. \$18.95 (ISBN 9780674023147). LC 2007-273343.

Modern readers often take for granted that the book as we now know it—the traditional assembly of printed (or manuscript) sheets folded and assembled into quires and bound together between two covers—has always been with us. We have become so inured to its form and function that we overlook the significance of the codex's development to the evolution of how information has been packaged, organized, processed, disseminated, and accessed throughout history. While the possibilities and advantages promised by digital technologies excite us today, the late-antique Hellenistic and Roman world was caught up in its own exciting information (r)evolution as the first several hundred years of the first millennium witnessed a struggle for supremacy between a variety of media designed

for the transmission of texts. Media for recording and housing the written word such as metal or wood sheets, wax tablets, and ostraca, to name only a few writing supports, were appropriate for working with shorter, more ephemeral texts, but proved unsuitable for transmitting longer and more complex works such as the theological, philosophical, and historical writings that were emerging at the time. The relatively small size and irregularity of ostraca, while useful for recording brief lists or school lessons, could not accommodate longer texts. Wood and metal sheets could be hard to inscribe and harder still to handle and transport once individual sheets were bound together. And wax tablets, although water-resistant, easy to write on, and reusable, were not suitable for long-term storage or easy manipulation of larger texts. All of these media also greatly restricted a scribe's ability to lay text out in efficient, easy-to-use ways.

The most popular writing support of the day was the papyrus scroll. But while scrolls allowed for the creation of longer texts and were relatively cost-effective and portable, the form had a number of fundamental weaknesses necessitating the creation of a new physical format that would facilitate scribal innovations and reader interactions with more complex texts. As a rule, scribes wrote only on a single side of the scroll, wasting potentially usable space on its verso. The act of reading required constant rolling and unrolling of the scroll, a problem that forced scribes to write only in regularly-spaced columns rather than experiment with and develop potentially more useful and efficient textual layouts. It was also impossible for readers to jump easily from one portion of the text to another; and, unless they used weights to restrain the scroll's ends, readers had to hold the text open themselves, making it difficult to consult other works or make notes while reading. And when rolled and stored, it was difficult to differentiate one scroll from another. All of these restrictions encouraged scribes and consumers to look