

The essays are much more subtle than this simple listing implies; but the “menu” does suggest the wealth of matter contained in the slender, easy to read, and handily indexed volume. More of a call to arms than a battle plan, the book nevertheless does give concrete examples and suggestions that will be helpful to a variety of readers. The reports of what other institutions are doing across the globe offer not just benchmarks against which to measure our institutions, but examples we may want to research and duplicate. The volume promises much and delivers impressively. — *Harlan Greene, College of Charleston.*

The History of the Book in the West: A Library of Critical Essays. Farnham, U.K. & Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2010. Vol. I: 400AD–1455, eds. Jane Roberts and Pamela Robertson, xxxii + 515p. \$275.00 (ISBN 9780754627739); Vol. II: 1455–1700, ed. Ian Gadd, xlii + 526p. \$275.00 (ISBN 9780754627715). LC2009-921962.

On May 4, 1515, Pope Leo X issued a peculiar and remarkable decree, the *Super impressione librorum* (On the printing of books). In it, the Pope acknowledges a deep-seated sociocultural anxiety about the new technology of printing, stating that, although the reading of books can be a profitable pursuit for those seeking knowledge and the invention of printing has helped spread truth and learning more widely and inexpensively than ever before, the very same technology that enables the dissemination of truth also facilitates the transmission and perpetuation of pernicious error that corrupts rather than edifies the reader. Despite any benefits it might offer, in the Pope’s opinion—which for all intents and purposes was supposed to reflect the official, ideal view for the entirety of the Christian West—the technology of printing was a new force that, in spite of its many benefits, needed to be assiduously monitored and controlled.

Pope Leo’s decree stands at a decisive moment in the history of the book. On

the one hand, this declaration invokes a medieval past in which books and the knowledge they contained were created slowly by hand and disseminated among a smaller, more restricted body of readers. Although literacy rates and the spread of reading increased steadily throughout the Middle Ages, accelerating more and more up to the years immediately prior to the invention of printing, the medieval reading public was still comparatively small and both the prescription and proscriptio of manuscript texts were easier to manage. At the same time, however, the decree also anticipates the explosion in literacy and the spread of reading that would occur throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in response to major social and religious movements and intellectual developments such as the Protestant Reformation, Renaissance humanism, New World colonization, the development of “modern” science, the emergence of more powerful centralized nation-states, and the growing popularity of Europe’s various vernaculars as appropriate and authorized vehicles for printed expression. In the face of a rapidly growing and demanding reading public and the quick spread of the new technology that could feed its ravenous appetite for text, both authorities and readers confronted an unfamiliar environment in which books—and the truth or errors they contained—were more widespread and less controllable than ever before.

The first two volumes of Ashgate’s new series, *The History of the Book in the West*, represent a necessary attempt to define the history of the book, a relatively new scholarly field, at a critical moment in its development. The thirty-five articles included in these volumes embody something akin to a “greatest hits” collection of relevant scholarship produced during the past forty years. Taken together, they provide readers with a firm foundation of authoritative research upon which to build future investigations into the complex history of books, their producers and readers, and their collective cultural

impact within their wider medieval and Renaissance historical, literary, political, religious, economic, artistic, and social contexts. Volume I covers manuscript book production between the years 400 and 1455 CE, while Volume II considers the first two hundred and fifty years of printing, 1455–1700 CE. Although each of these respective periods encompasses a wide range of differences between, and developments in, the way books were manufactured, distributed, and consumed, both volumes prioritize the same basic themes: the physical production of books; their “look” and textual layout and how these factors affected their use; the cultural impact of books—whether manuscript or printed—as material objects; economic processes of textual dissemination; and, finally, processes and practices of book consumption.

Both volumes begin with an informative introductory essay outlining and contextualizing the main arguments discussed throughout their respective contents. These introductions stress the importance of considering a multiplicity of interdisciplinary approaches when investigating the history of the book, including paying careful attention to the “archaeology of the book”: in other words, the analysis of a book’s textual and physical layers to better understand the cultural context within which it was created and used. Each volume features essays on technical aspects of book production, such as G.S. Ivy’s classic description of the codicology and production of manuscript books; T. Julian Brown’s broad but extremely useful overview of the evolution of handwriting from the late-antique to late-medieval periods; Graham Pollard’s explanation of the various forms and techniques of bookbinding in the Middle Ages; and Blaise Agüera y Arcas’ and Nicolas Barker’s close studies of elements of Gutenberg’s DK-Type and the origin of the Aldine italic type. Although occasionally highly technical, these essays provide readers with an extremely important material under-

standing of the packaging of books in the Middle Ages and Renaissance that helps lay the groundwork for each volume’s later discussions of scribal processes, print production, textual dissemination, and reader consumption.

The actual production and distribution of books, from accounts of scriptorium and printing house practices to descriptions of particular manufacturers and booksellers and their commercial strategies, form the basis for many of the articles included in each volume. In Volume I, the production, transmission, and selling of manuscript books during the Middle Ages features largely in many essays, including Christopher de Hamel’s discussion of the circulation of glossed books of the Bible during the eleventh and twelfth centuries; Michael Gullick’s analysis of the rate of speed at which scribes could write their texts depending on a variety of factors such as the time of year, weather conditions, the quality of scriptorium facilities, and whether the scribe worked in a monastic or commercial setting; R.H. and M.A. Rouse’s account of the University of Paris’ domination of the Parisian book market during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the experiences of the bookselling family of Guillaume de Sens within this environment; A.I. Doyle and M.B. Parkes’ discussion of the production of manuscript copies of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower within London’s early fifteenth-century community of commercial scribes; and A.C. de la Mare’s exceptional overview of the professional life and associations of Italy’s fifteenth-century prince of booksellers, Vespasiano da Bisticci.

Moving forward into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Volume II offers several compelling articles dealing with the production and selling of printed books, such as Natalie Zemon Davis’ fascinating account of the activities and concerns of the Company of the Griffarins, a Lyonese trade union of journeymen compositors and pressmen; Clive Griffin’s revealing description of

the usefulness of Inquisitorial records as sources for insight into the itinerant lives of printers in sixteenth-century Spain; John L. Flood's look at the rise and decline of the Frankfurt Fair and its impact on the commercial distribution of books across Europe during the Early Modern period; and Ian Maclean's informative analysis of the market for scholarly books in northern Europe between 1570 and 1630. Also included is D.F. McKenzie's article, "Printers of the Mind," an absolutely essential study of the ways English printing houses and the men who ran them actually worked during the hand-press period. In addition to discussions of the raw materials and processes of book production and the selling and distribution of books, each volume also presents various articles dealing with the interrelationship between the diverse ways text is arranged on the page and how these different layouts shaped styles of reading and interpretation. Volume I, for instance, features Neil Ker's account of how simple changes in scribal practice such as the transition from writing "above top line" to writing "below top line" on ruled manuscript pages during the early thirteenth century changed the way manuscript texts were packaged and presented. Related essays include M.B. Parkes' discussion of how *ordinatio*—the organization of discrete portions of text into chapters, sections,

and distinctions—and the practice of *compilatio*—the systematic compilation of diverse authoritative writings to form new, composite texts—not only transformed the way readers interacted with their books but also influenced what they expected and demanded of them; David Ganz's account of how careless scribal habits and a profusion of competing scripts in the late-eighth century led to the attempt during Charlemagne's reign to promulgate laws facilitating the development and ensuring the use of a new scriptural form—Caroline miniscule—that would simplify and regularize scribal practice and production; Laura Light's analysis of the emergence between 1200 and 1230 of the "Paris Bible," a new packaging of the biblical text that exerted a major influence on the way medieval people read and interpreted the Bible; Erik Kwakkel's investigation into how the emergence of paper as an economically viable writing support led to the emergence of new types of readers and reading in late-medieval Netherlands; and Charles F. Briggs' wide-ranging and extremely valuable synthesis of international scholarship on medieval literacy, reading, and textual production. Rounding out the first volume is a short piece revealing details about the institutional use of books in the Middle Ages that should be particularly pleasing to librarians: a translation of Humbert of Romans' description of the office and duties of librarians within the Dominican Order. Covering topics such as acquisitions, cataloguing, preservation and conservation, budgets, circulation, and interlibrary loans, this brief piece provides remarkable insight into practices of information science and management during the thirteenth century.

Volume II's discussions of the impact of printing on textual production and consumption between 1455 and 1700 begin with Elizabeth Eisenstein's early conjectural article about printing's broad impact on western society, followed immediately by Anthony Grafton's thoughtful, incisive, and cogent review of her

Index to advertisers

| | |
|---|---------|
| ACRL Publications | 275 |
| Amer. Meteorological Society | 235 |
| Annual Reviews | 200 |
| CHOICE Reviews Online | 295 |
| EBSCO | 203 |
| ISTE | cover 4 |
| Lincoln Inst. for Land Policy | 306 |
| Mathematical Assoc. of America | 199 |
| Modern Language Assoc. | cover 3 |
| Palgrave Macmillan | 207 |
| Philosophy Documentation Ctr. | 208 |
| RBMS | 252 |
| Society of Industrial and Applied Mathematics | cover 2 |

later book, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*. These two foundational essays set the stage for the volume's other articles covering printing's impact on the practices of textual production and reception, including Paul F. Grendler's account of the Roman Inquisition's repressive influence on the Venetian printing industry; Jean-Francois Gilmont's discussion of the technical constraints that printing imposed on "the book" and how these restrictions affected the development of new reading practices in the early sixteenth century; Andrew Pettegree's and Matthew Hall's eye-opening reassessment of the Protestant Reformation's impact on the development and spread of printing; Roger Chartier's description of the competing, yet sometimes cooperative, cultures of reading/writing and orality during the Renaissance, and how these different methods of expression represented different modalities of performance necessitating different forms of reception; Paul Saenger's fascinating look at how, in contrast to the presentation of manuscript text, typography and the layout of printed text fundamentally changed the way readers interacted with their books; and Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton's insightful analysis of how one particular sixteenth-century reader interpreted and used his copy of Livy's history in his own social, literary, and political dealings. Volume II concludes with David Cressy's article on the nonliterary fetishistic use of books as symbolic objects of talismanic power; even for the illiterate, Cressy argues, books embodied knowledge and authority.

As informative and wide-ranging as the contents of these two volumes may be, in the end they can only be a representative sample of the many different approaches to book history that scholars have undertaken over the past several decades. The editors of each respective volume are to be praised for executing well a very difficult job. They have conveniently assembled in one place many of the most influential — and in some cases extremely

hard to find — articles in the field, while at the same time limiting their selections to a manageable size and quantity. — Eric J. Johnson, *The Ohio State University*.

Elena S. Danielson. *The Ethical Archivist*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2010. 440p. alk. paper, \$49.00 (ISBN 978-1-931666-34-2). LC2010-026680.

In 2003, the Society of American Archivists published *Ethics and the Archival Profession* by Karen Benedict. The bulk of her very useful monograph consists of forty fictionalized case studies that represent challenging situations often encountered by archivists. Benedict is frequently cited in Elena Danielson's new book; however, although Danielson also employs case studies, these two works are not interchangeable. Benedict's case studies are aimed at providing groups such as classroom students and workshop attendees with vehicles for developing a deeper understanding of professional archivists' ethical responsibilities through analytical group discussions. By contrast, Danielson offers extended consideration of the processes and principles that archivists should follow in making ethical judgments, using real-life cases to show how rarely such decisions are simple and straightforward. While Benedict suggests solutions to her case studies (being careful to emphasize there may be alternative solutions as good or better), Danielson is more inclined to limit her prescriptions to steps that archivists might take to avoid the dilemmas under consideration or at least to minimize the difficulties that may ensue. The reader cannot help but come away from both books impressed with how deeply entangled is the archival profession in ethical dilemmas.

After a lengthy introduction in which the author provides an historical and conceptual background, Danielson examines in her first chapter the deontological and teleological approaches to ethical thinking, with emphasis on their shortcomings when not used together. Throughout