

The Florida Bibliophile

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Deadline for the January newsletter is January 29, 2021.
See page 24 for details.

Membership in the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies is included with your FBS membership. The FABS newsletter is now electronic as well as in print. Access a PDF of the Fall 2020 FABS Journal [here](#).



*The Florida Bibliophile Society
wishes you a happy and prosperous
New Year!*



Florida Bibliophile Society
A community of book lovers

Minutes of the December Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society; or, Santa Is a Bibliophile!

by Gary Simons, FBS Secretary

Fifteen FBS members got together on Zoom to exchange holiday greetings, to enjoy each other's company as best we could during this pandemic, and to share the books we had received from Santa (or, for those with Scroogist leanings, purchased for ourselves).

Those of us who entered the Zoom session early were able to admire Jerry Morris's Christmas hat, Sue Tihansky's Florida Christmas Tree (made of sea shells!), Carl Nudi's home-made fruit cake, and Linda Morris's gnome wine glass. We welcomed our newest FBS member, Roxanne Rhodes. Ben Wiley told us that FBS member Camilla Luckey was moving to Asheville, North Carolina – with about seventy boxes of books in tow! And we learned that FBS founding member Lee Harrer, recovering from a broken arm in an assisted living facility, was welcoming phone calls at 727-742-4559: if you know Lee, please give him a call during this holiday season.

After we all shared a merry Christmas toast, we moved on to the meat of the meeting – our books!



Upper left: Jerry in Santa hat.

Upper right: Sue presents the shell tree.

Lower left: Carl with homemade fruitcake.

Lower right: Linda with gnome glass.

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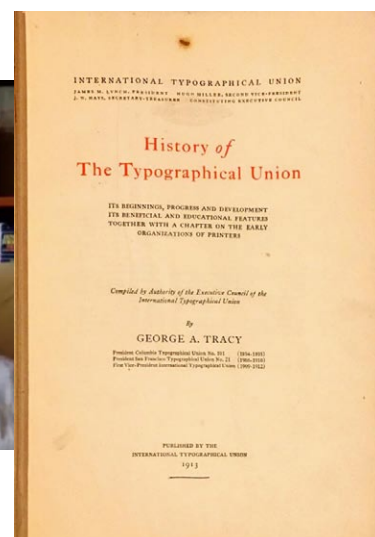
Charles Brown started us off by going to his door, taking a gift from Santa, and shaking off the snow. His present was a giant book, *The Visual History of Type* by Paul McNeil, a comprehensive, detailed survey of the major typefaces produced since the advent of printing with movable type in the mid-fifteenth century to the present day. He found the book while browsing on Amazon. As Charles lovingly showed the book to us, Carl Nudi chimed in (maybe for the holiday season it should be “chimneyed” in), echoing Charles's enthusiasm.

Carl Nudi was even more enthusiastic about his own present, a 1913 *History of the International Typographic Union*. This book resonates with Carl's deep beliefs and his personal history: Carl is a dedicated union man and has himself been a member

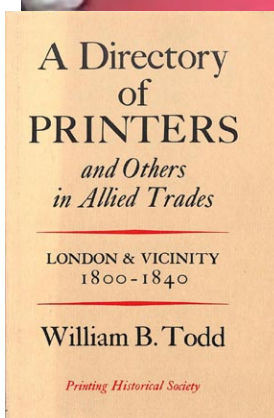


Minutes, continued

of the International Typographic Union since 1956! The International Typographic Union has an impressive history: it is one of the oldest unions, the first American union to negotiate the same pay for women as for men (back in the 1890s), the first to get an eight-hour work day, and a prime mover in the formation of both the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Carl purchased the unbound book inexpensively – about \$10 – but plans to bind it when he has the time. Make the time, Carl, you will love reading that bound book!



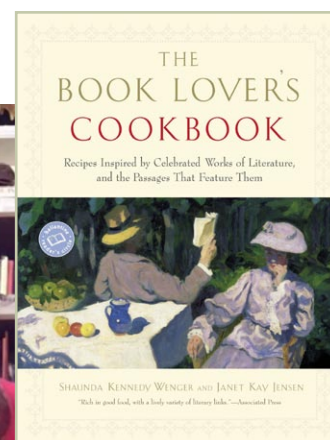
Gary Simons was up next, and asked the group's permission to present two books. The first, *A Directory of Printers active in London 1800–1840*, is the sort of book that maybe only a bibliographer could love. Gary is trying to establish the publication dates of a number of undated books issued during this time period, and this directory, with the names and addresses of printers for each year, is just the thing. His second book, a massive red volume (12" x 15" x 3") issued in 1902, is a biography of the English painter, printmaker, pictorial satirist, and social critic William Hogarth. The work was written by the noted man-of-letters Austin Dobson and is heavily illustrated with Hogarth's prints. Gary's parting comment was that the greatest challenge with this book was finding an appropriate bookshelf.



Irene Pavese showed the group a copy of the *Book Lovers Cook Book*, which she had received as a gift. The book combines recipes and literary mentions. To illustrate, she read the quote associated with the entry for mixed lentil soup – the quote was from Frank McCord's famous *Angela's Ashes*, a book she also loves:

What's bowls, Mrs. Leibowitz?

Oh, Frankie. You don't know bowl? For the soup, darlink. You don' have a bowl? So get cups for the soup. I mix pea soup and lentil soup. No ham. Irish like the ham. No ham, Frankie. Drink, missus. Drink you soup.



Minutes, continued

She spoons the soup into my mother's mouth, wipes the dribble from her chin. Malachy and I sit on the floor drinking from mugs. We spoon the soup into the twins' mouths. It is lovely and hot and tasty. My mother never makes soup like this and I wonder if there's any chance Mrs. Leibowitz could ever be my mother.

Irene has also been a long-time avid collector of Margaret Armstrong covers. During the pandemic, Irene has spent more time at home, which has given her more time for online book searches, and she showed us three of her new Margaret Armstrong finds: *Out to Old Aunt Mary's* by James Whitcomb Riley, *The Yoke* by Elizabeth Miller, and *Old Creole Days* by George W. Cable.



Next, we all watched “silent **Ed Cifelli**” doggedly try to get his audio to work on Zoom without success. He later wrote in:

The book I was going to share is *Some Jazz a While, New and Collected Poems* by Miller Williams (1999). Miller died five years ago at age 85. As a poet, he is soft-spoken and personal, the sort of poet who invites you in to share quiet thoughts about the wonderful people he imagines into life. A typical example is the guy who stands up in the Blue Star Cafe and speaks out his frustrations over the passing of a bird into extinction. That sounds like a standard conservation poem (if there is such a thing) by a liberal tree-hugger. Except the guy in the Blue Star Cafe is a redneck. And by the way, it's a perfect Shakespearean sonnet.

The book is full of surprises and people you feel you know. By the way, you might recall Williams as the Inauguration Poet at Bill Clinton's second inauguration. The poem was called “Of History and Hope.”

To which we all may say congratulations to both ‘silent Ed’ and to William Miller – what a beautifully written poem and book sharing.



Folding His USA Today
He Makes His Point in the Blue Star Cafe

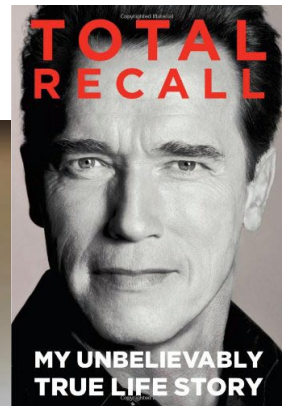
MILLER
WILLIAMS

There's this bird I saw in the paper, they said
was a long time on that endangered list
but isn't now because they're all dead.
It didn't have a place to put its nest.
So what we're out is, we're out a bird.
It never weighed an ounce, and what I read,
the thing was hardly seen or even heard
by much of anyone. So now it's spread
across a half a page. Do-gooders, they'll
undo us yet. If it was, say, a deer,
that did some good. Or bass. OK. Or quail.
We are talking about a sparrow here.
Maybe there's something I don't understand.
Anyone's cooked a sparrow, raise your hand.

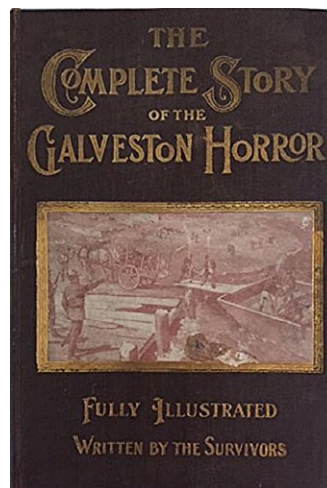
Some
Jazz
a
While

Minutes, continued

Joan Sackheim was next, and she told the group about her latest read, *Total Recall: My Unbelievably True Life Story*, a 660-page biography of Arnold Schwarzenegger. The book is too heavy to carry around, and it is quite different from her normal favorites, books such as *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Moby Dick*, and Jane Austen's *Emma*. Unfortunately, Joan has recently had a fall and hurt her shoulder. She is now working with a personal trainer to regain her mobility. But, she assured us, "I'll be back!"



Vicki Entreken told us she has been studying the history of Galveston, Texas. Her mother had lived there, and as an adult Vicki found and stayed overnight in her mother's former house, which is now an Airbnb; telling her story, Vicki hinted at a "maybe haunted" incident. She showed us a book about the 1900 Galveston hurricane entitled *The Complete Story of the Galveston Horrors* which she had bought at a Florida Antiquarian Book Fair. The book was written "by the survivors" rather soon after the event itself, and Vicki showed us pictures from the book of people saved by floating on box cars and of vandals robbing the dead.



Elenora Sabin held up to the camera a volume of Homer's *Odyssey* published under the auspices of the Loeb Classical Library. She had ordered the book in November, but didn't expect to receive it until January. However, it arrived early, before Christmas, and thus was a surprise Christmas present. This book features alternate pages in classical Greek and in English translation, and is part of her ambitious (and, to this minutes-taker, at least, certainly inspirational) program to learn classical Greek. She has been studying Greek using the Great Courses set of DVDs. She has also been reading African science fiction, which is often based on African history and myth, and held up to the camera a copy of *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi, which she strongly recommended.



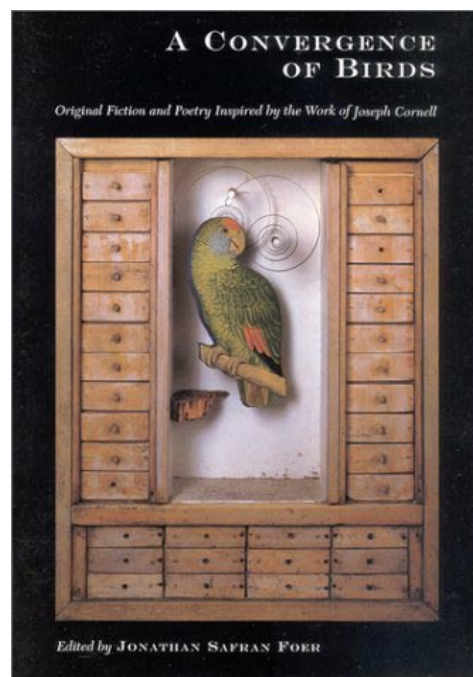
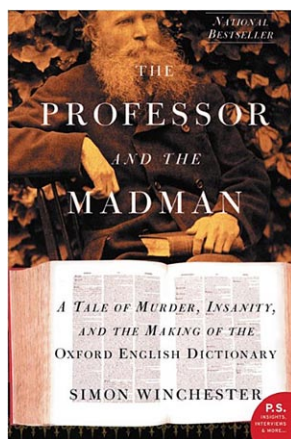
Minutes, continued

Ben Wiley began by recommending to the group a new true-story film on Netflix, *The Professor and the Madman*, which is based on a book by Simon Winchester. The film concerns Professor James Murray, the linguist-developer of the OED, Oxford English Dictionary. Sean Penn plays the madman, and Mel Gibson is the professor. Ben's assessment was that "the film is entertaining and moving as you look at the effort it took to bring the OED to fruition, and heartbreaking when you see the impact schizophrenia can have on so many lives."

Ben shared comments on two books, and later submitted his comments in writing:

A friend asked me if I had copy of Donna Tartt's *The Secret History*, a novel of a young man at a small Vermont college who develops a lifelong circle of friends with ultimate crimes and recriminations. A charismatic professor of classics either leads them all to truth and beauty, or leads them all astray, or both. It's a compulsively readable novel, and my friend's 15-year-old granddaughter wanted a hardback copy to read and collect. Anytime the young want to read and collect, I'll do everything to help that happen. I did have a copy on my shelf, a 1992 First Edition no less, in immaculate condition, with a clear acetate dust jacket across a classical bust on the cover. The book is hers!

My gift to myself is *A Convergence of Birds: Original Fiction and Poetry Inspired by the Work of Joseph Cornell*, edited by Jonathan Safran Foer. Three of my interests (birds, books, Joseph Cornell boxes) converge in this, and when I saw it on the Collector's Shelf at Mojo Books in Tampa, I had to have it. Joseph Cornell, a 20th century American assemblage artist, created what are known as Cornell Boxes, self-contained miniature box-worlds assembled from wood, wire, drawers, found items, and often avian-themed. Foer solicited short fiction and essays from a remarkable array of writers and poets, including Lydia Davis, Diane Ackerman, Joyce Carol Oates,



Minutes, continued

Barry Lopez, Robert Pinsky, Dale Peck, and many more, who are similarly inspired by Joseph Cornell and his bird boxes. The book has numerous tipped-in plates of Cornell boxes. It's a 2001 First Edition and signed by Jonathan Safran Foer.

Emma Gregory called in from Bloomington, Indiana, where she is now living, far from home. Always living an interesting life, she now has two jobs, one as a medical illustrator, and one running social media for a Chinese terrarium company. She is applying to the MFA program in creative writing at Indiana University; she exclaimed that she loved college and loves writing.

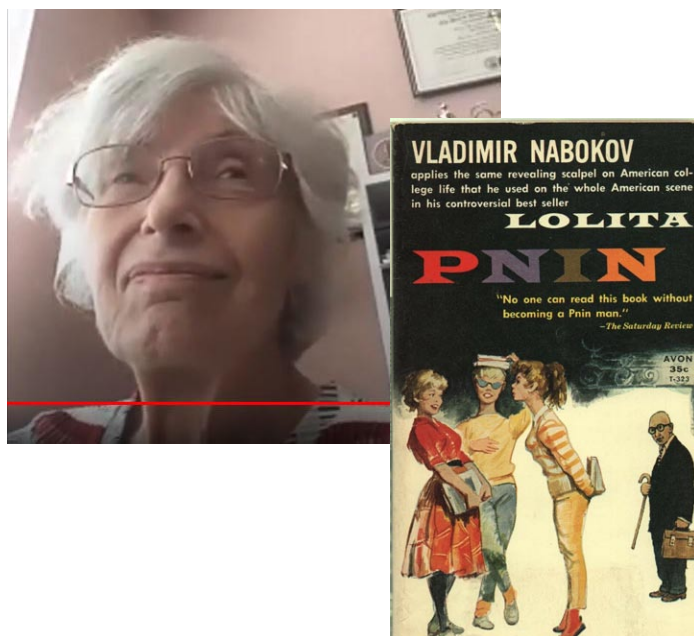
She shared two books. The first was Ali Smith's *Autumn*. She purchased two copies, one for herself and one for her Mom, so they could have a long distance book club. And she purchased two copies of *Supersized Sunday NY Times Crossword Puzzles*, one for herself and one for her Dad. They always used to do the crossword puzzles together – in fact, he has been mailing her copies of the puzzles. Now, with each having the same book, they can do them together on Zoom.

Linda Morris said she was more of a book reader than a book collector, but she did show us some recent finds purchased at the Little Red School House, which is the Friends of the Library Book Store in Spring Hill. She is looking forward to reading Joseph Finder's *Buried Secrets* and multiple books by Lee Childs. She also showed us a recently purchased squishy stress ball gnome, an essential tool for dealing with stressful Covid times.



Minutes, concluded

Roxanne Rhodes prefaced her comments by also noting that she was for the most part not a collector (but in fact, she seems to have a marvelous collection of Vladimir Nabokov books back in Virginia, which she hasn't been able to access for a long time). To fill the gap, she recently found and purchased a first edition 1957 Avon paperback (originally priced at 35 cents) of Nabokov's *Pnin*, a semi-autobiographical account of Nabokov's early years in America, teaching at Cornell University. One of the book's great charms was its typical-for-the-period illustrated cover — Roxanne described it as almost of the “smoking cigarettes in a slip” genre of book covers.



Jerry Morris spoke about his book and later sent in this blurb:

Here's info and a photo of the book I bought for myself.

A Little Bit of Luck: The Making of an Adventurous Scholar by Richard D. Altick (Xlibris Corporation, 2002). This is Altick's memoir. He was a writer and an academic at Ohio State University. He wrote books about Victorian literature and about researching and finding books (e.g., Boswell's Papers at Malahide). Two books in the latter area that I have are *The Scholar Adventurers* and *The Art of Literary Research*.



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Our holiday conversations ended with a discussion of the “elf on the shelf” phenomena, including the elf reading a book which Linda had gotten for Jerry, and a toast by Charles that we all have a new year “full of books.”

John le Carré, October 19, 1931 - December 12, 2020

The life of David Cornwell, who wrote for 60 years as John le Carré, can be divided neatly into two phases: before international fame and after. The dividing line is 1963: the year he published *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*.

It was Cornwell's third novel, released in England in September 1963, and it gained momentum fast. Within months, it had been optioned by Paramount, and within a year, Richard Burton and Claire Bloom, two top movie stars of the era, had been signed to lead the production.

The *New York Times* reviewed the book on January 10, 1964, including these words:

Graham Greene, who has written several of the best spy stories of modern times, says that this is the best spy story he has ever read. It may be the best anybody has ever read. The verdict, of course, depends on one's taste in these matters. Those who enjoy glamour, sex, impudent daring and masterful heroics in their spy stories may not care for "The Spy Who Came in From the Cold."

But this cold-blooded tale's harsh emphasis on the ruthlessness, treachery and deliberate frightfulness of contemporary espionage should fascinate and appall hordes of admiring readers. And while they shudder over the double and triple crosses of Mr. le Carré's superbly intricate plot they will find that its slow start, accelerating pace and final explosive denouement leave them limp from excitement.

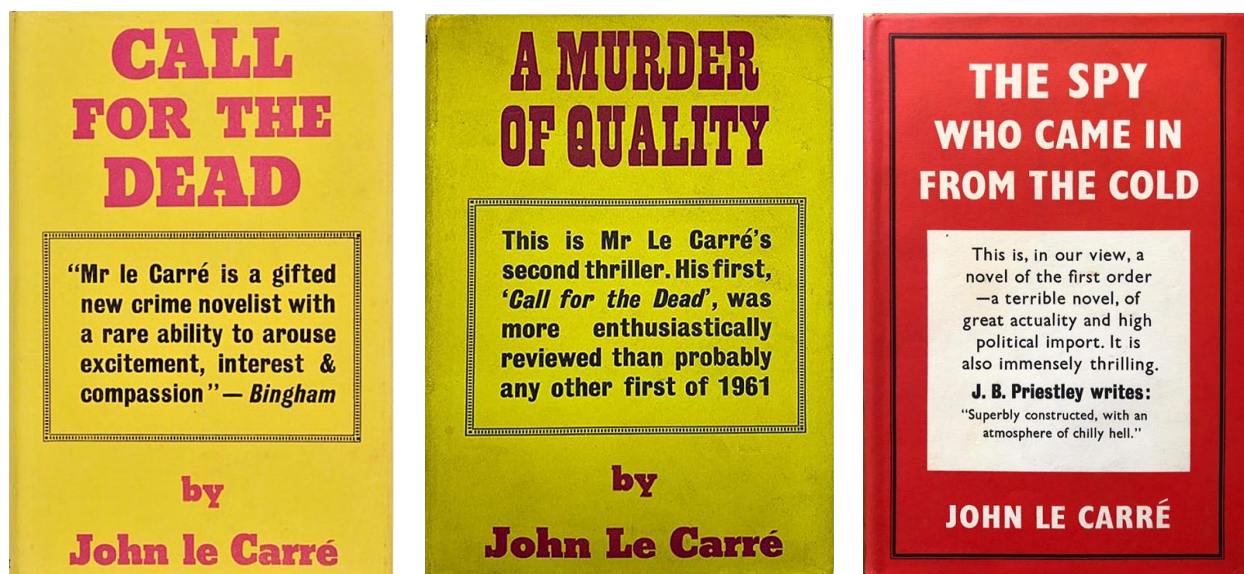
The book entered the world at a propitious moment. The Cold War, a contest between postwar democratic governments and communist expansion, had been intensifying since the end of World War II. The stakes were raised in 1959 when the Cuban Revolution was completed, and the communist Fidel Castro assumed absolute authority over Cuba, a mere 90 miles from the U.S. coast. When John Kennedy became president in January 1961, he was briefed on plans by a Cuban counter-revolutionary group to



invade Cuba and begin the overthrow of the Castro regime. Plans proceeded with Kennedy's approval, and preparatory operations began in April 1961. The invasion itself began on April 17, but collapsed when Kennedy withdrew support in the following days. It was a stunning foreign policy failure and embarrassment. In August 1961, the Russians made the next move in this game: they laid 30 miles of barbed wire across the center of Berlin, which was soon followed by the construction of the Berlin Wall. Tensions continued to rise, and in October 1962, President Kennedy was made aware of Russian missiles being placed in Cuba. The confrontation between Kennedy and his Russian counterpart Khrushchev lasted a month, with the threat of nuclear conflict hanging over the entire affair.

It was in this environment that Cornwell, a ten-year veteran of the British domestic intelligence service MI5, began working for the British foreign intelligence service, MI6. His first cover identity was at the British Embassy in Bonn as Second Secretary and, later at Hamburg, as a political consul.

It was during this time that he began writing — on the train while commuting to MI5's London headquarters. This first book was *Call for the Dead* (Gollancz, 1961), a story about East German spies inside Great Britain. In this book, he would establish

John le Carré, continued

First editions of le Carré's first three novels: *Call for the Dead* (1961), *A Murder of Quality* (1962), and *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1963)

the character, George Smiley, and the Circus, a thinly disguised combination of MI5 and MI6 – they would reappear in many of his novels. As a member of MI6, he was not allowed to publish under his real name, and he chose the pseudonym John le Carré. When asked why he chose this name in a 1989 interview on French television, Cornwell explained that he had needed a pseudonym quickly but could not remember how he chose it.

Call for the Dead was well received. An early review was placed on the cover of the first UK edition:

"Mr le Carré is a gifted new crime novelist with a rare ability to arouse excitement, interest & compassion -- Bingham"

"Bingham" is John Bingham, 7th Baron Clanmorris (1908–1988), who was also an MI5 spy who published thrillers, detective novels, and spy novels. Cornwell confirmed that Bingham was an important part of the Smiley character and that it was Bingham who had encouraged him to write *Call for the Dead*.

The first impression sold out quickly, and a second impression carried new endorsements:

"Brilliant" – *Observer*

"A find" – *Sunday Times*

Cornwell's true career had begun.

He fulfilled expectations created in *Call for the Dead* with his second book, *A Murder of Quality* (Gollancz, 1962). This book involves his spy character George Smiley, now retired, who is drawn into solving a murder in a small English town. It is Cornwell's only book not set among spies. *A Murder of Quality* also received very positive reviews.

Then, in 1963, Cornwell published *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (Victor Gollancz & Pan, 1963). It became an international bestseller.

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The 1950s and 1960s were a tense period in international relations – the Cold War, the nuclear arms race, the rise of Chinese communism, the space race – broadly, East and West were locked in a battle for cultural, ideological, economic, and military supremacy.

This was the backdrop for many books and films. Among the most sensational were the spy novels and subsequent films of Ian Fleming and his famous alter ego, James Bond. The first of the Fleming-Bond novels, *Casino Royale*, was published in 1953 in the aftermath of some stunning defections of British agents to the Soviet Union. Bond was a working class

John le Carré, continued

First film portrayals: Richard Burton as George Smiley, 1965 (left); Sean Connery as James Bond, 1963 (right)

hero, and Fleming used him as a representative of the British character as opposed to the extravagance and ruthlessness of England's enemies. A series of novels followed at the rate of one a year (two in 1957) until Fleming's death in 1964. A further novel (1965) and a short story collection (1966) were released to complete the Fleming canon.

The books first appeared as films in the early 1960s, in parallel to the appearance of Cornwell's novels. Bond was transformed in the films from working class hero to international playboy. Bond and the Bond films were more heroic and nationalistic than the books and helped to solidify the modern action hero and the action-adventure movie. As the Bond series developed, it quickly became more fantastic and ideological, to the point of self-parody. The films nevertheless served as a metaphor for the ultimate victory of Western values, both positive and negative. The Bond films were enormously popular. Now in its 60th year, the series became the most lucrative film franchise of all time – only to be displaced by the even greater levels of fantasy in the Marvel Universe, Star Wars, and Harry Potter.

In contrast to Fleming's Bond and the even more vigorous, sophisticated, and heroic film Bond, George Smiley is already middle-aged in the first book, a heavy-set man who Cornwell intended to reflect the reality of espionage not a romantic fiction of it. Far from becoming more fantastic, Cornwell's

books became more realistic and more morally ambiguous. Cornwell's books were so firmly rooted in spy-craft that their language found its way into the language of real spies.

Cornwell's characters see both the absurdity and necessity of their roles. They are often world-weary people who must carry on as webs of intrigue and betrayal force them to more plotting and action. The brutal environment, intricate plots, and untriumphant endings of many of Cornwell's novels have been used to explain why relatively few of them – eight films out of 23 books – have made it to the screen despite the books' huge audiences and dedicated readers. Thus, Smiley and Cornwell's other characters have not become embodied by a particular actor as did Bond, "M," and Moneypenny, and they remain fundamentally literary characters, and the more potent for it.

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Cornwell's work for the intelligence services was not the only biographical element that contributed to his worldview and his writing.

Cornwell's mother left the family when he was five – he was told she had died. When as an adult he learned the truth, he sought his mother and met her again when he was 21. Cornwell later revealed in his autobiography *The Pigeon Tunnel* (Viking, 2016) that his mother was forced to leave because of his father's beatings. He also revealed that his father had beat him too but "without much conviction." He was left in the company of this father and an older brother.

His father was a con man associated with prominent criminals of London's East End and who went to jail for insurance fraud. His older brother became a surrogate parent. On many occasions, Cornwell and his brother had to help his father avoid arrest in what Cornwell called a "clandestine survival." According to Cornwell, the only source of affection he knew in his childhood was his brother. When they were at separate schools as teenagers, they would take trains to a common meeting place where they could hold each other.

John le Carré, continued

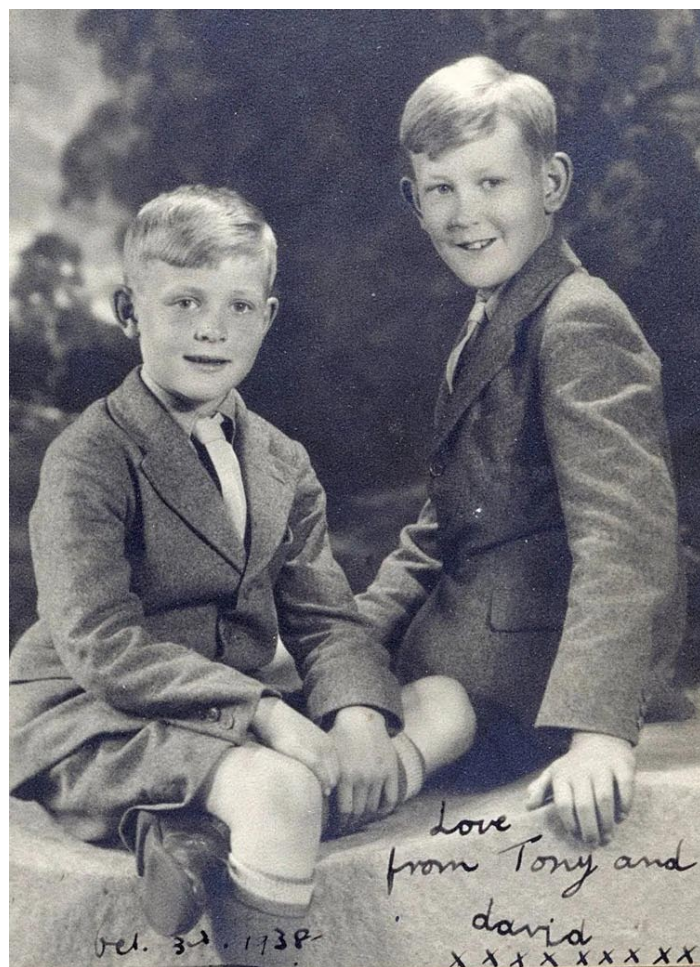
Cornwell in 1950

Cornwell's father was obsessed with assuring that the boys would be accepted by the British upper classes, and during cycles of affluence and bankruptcy, his father made it possible for them to have a fine education. Cornwell attended the prestigious St. Andrew's Preparatory School and continued at Sherborne School. The harsh regimentation and a

particularly severe housemaster drove him to leave, and he pursued his education in foreign languages at the University of Bern in Switzerland. He attended from 1948 to 1949, but in 1950, as his national service, he joined the Intelligence Corps of the British Army in Allied-occupied Austria. He worked as a German language interrogator of people who crossed the Iron Curtain to the West. In 1952, he returned to Oxford's Lincoln College, where he worked covertly for MI5, spying on far-left groups for information about possible Soviet agents.

In 1954, Cornwell's father became bankrupt, and Cornwell left Oxford to teach at Millfield Preparatory School in southwest England. In 1955, he was able to return to Oxford and graduated in 1956 with a first class degree (high honors) in modern languages. He taught French and German at Eton College for two years and joined MI5 full-time in 1958. He participated in all the classic operations of espionage: running agents and interrogations, tapping telephones, and conducting break-ins.

Cornwell had worked for MI5 from 1950 to 1960. He then transferred to MI6. He left the service in 1964 after his affiliation with MI6 was revealed along with hundreds of other agents by the defection of British agent Kim Philby, who would become a model for a similar character in *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (1974). With the success of *The Spy That Came in from the Cold*, it was time for him to become a full-time writer.



David Cornwell in 1938, age 7 (right), and his brother, Tony, age 9 (left)

Cornwell considered himself a writer who had been a spy rather than a spy who became an author. He found many commonalities between his childhood experiences and his work with the intelligence services, giving him a "masterly understanding of the subtleties and psychology of deception and betrayal," themes that would deeply contribute to his writing.

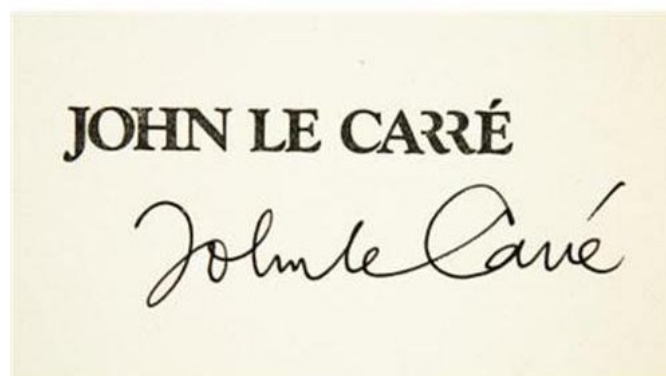
As the years progressed, Cornwell became increasingly concerned and outspoken with politics, especially the Iraq War, which he saw as based upon lies agreed between the Bush and Blair administrations aimed at the accomplishment of dubious – and ultimately failed – goals. Some commentators have seen these concerns as occasional drains on the quality of his fiction.



John le Carré, continued*Cornwell in 1965***As an author, Cornwell focused on his craft rather than the occupation of “writer.”**

He declined most interview requests and avoided literary festivals. He did not allow his novels to be entered in competitions. Nonetheless, the quality of his work has earned it high praise from other writers. For example, Philip Roth called *A Perfect Spy* – often regarded as his finest book – “the best English novel since the war”. Stephen King described Cornwell as “a literary giant and a humanitarian spirit”. The Scottish crime author Ian Rankin praised Cornwell for taking spy fiction “into the realm of literature”.

Time will tell whether “literature” agrees with these and similar assessments. Cornwell saw his work as part of larger literary tradition. He described his novels as influenced by the *Bildungsroman*, a coming-of-age novel, identified in the 19th century. This genre includes *Jane Eyre*, *Great Expectations*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Kite Runner*, and many others. It is typified by the innocent who, through a mixture of hard experience and good fortune, finds his way in the world – whether or not a description of David Cornwell’s work, this certainly describes his life.



1984 Meets 2021

On January 21, 1950, Eric Arthur Blair succumbed to a three-year battle with tuberculosis. He had always been susceptible to respiratory illness, and his heavy smoking did not help. A series of shocks, not least of which was the suffering of the war years, included the sudden death of his wife Eileen during routine surgery in 1945 and a disastrous boating accident in 1947 that led to illness diagnosed as tuberculosis.

Blair had been writing under the name George Orwell since 1932, and he had achieved a degree of success. His book *Animal Farm* was finally being appreciated, and he was in great demand. In response, he was highly productive. Requests for commissions, interviews, and appearances were pouring in. He expressed to friends that he very much wanted “time to think.”

That time was provided by David Astor, publisher of *The Observer*, for which he written so much. Astor’s family had an estate on the remote Scottish island of Jura in the Hebrides, and he suggested to Orwell that he stay in the residence there to work on his new project, which would eventually be known by the simple title *1984*. Orwell left for Jura in spring 1946 and was joined there by his young son, a nanny, and his sister Avril.

Jura was idyllic for Orwell in 1946. The setting provided a wonderful playground for his son Richard, and it provided opportunities for the two of them to spend time together. Avril provided the essential



organization and support that made it all possible.

Orwell returned to London for the winter of 1946–1947, one of the coldest in memory and made more brutal because of shortages. Orwell was forced to burn much of his furniture and many of Richard’s toys to stave off the relentless freezing weather.

The following spring, Orwell went back to Jura. Avril and her family came for a visit, and Orwell took his son and his sister’s two children out in the boat. While returning, Orwell miscalculated the tide and was confronted by a whirlpool. Orwell managed to get to land, but in the process, the boat capsized, and they could have all been dragged out to sea by the heavy currents. They escaped, but Orwell became ill



The Astor residence, Barnhill, on Jura island in Scotland, where Orwell wrote 1984.

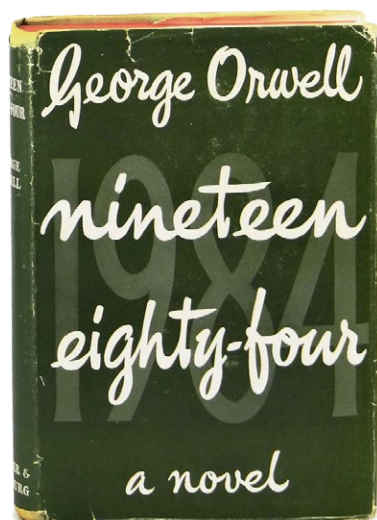
Sources: *The Guardian*; *The Daily Record*; george-orwell.org

1984, *continued*

with what would be diagnosed as tuberculosis.

From that time, Orwell was in and out of hospitals and sanatoriums. Antibiotics helped, and Orwell was able to continue his work, returning to Jura in 1948. By the end of the year, he had completed *1984*.

Orwell's health, however, had seriously deteriorated, and in January 1949, he entered a sanatorium. His friends were concerned about his health and the quality of his care. Another round of treatment with antibiotics led to an improvement in time for the publication of *1984* in June 1949. The new book received immediate popular and critical acclaim. It is now regarded as one of the most important novels



1984, First edition, 1949

of the 20th century. It gave us the terms Big Brother, Thought Police, doublethink, and newspeak. The title itself has come to refer to any system that operates through surveillance, propaganda, and distortion.

In October 1949, Orwell married Sonia Bronwell. She was a source of joy to Orwell, and she attended him during his illness. She

is often regarded as the model for Julia, the heroine of *1984*.

In January 1950, Orwell died at the age of 46.

January 2021 marks the end of the 70th year since Orwell's death, and under British copyright law, his work will fall into public domain – or at least it begins to. U.S. copyright on Orwell's work will begin to lapse in 2030 when *Burmese Days* will hit 95 years since the first U.S. edition. Houghton Mifflin currently holds U.S. publication rights to Orwell's work. (In 2009, Amazon was forced to delete its 99-cent Kindle copies of *Animal Farm* and *1984* when they learned that the contributor did not have publishing rights.)

Critical editions of Orwell's work, such as the editions produced by Orwell scholar Peter Davison in the 1980s, will continue to be protected. Publishers taking advantage of the arrival of Orwell's work in the public domain will have to use the editions produced in the 1940s.

Protection will also continue for Orwell material discovered after 1950, assembled by Peter Davison in *George Orwell: The Complete Works* (1998). This includes *Such, Such Were the Joys*, first published in the U.S. in 1952, but not published in the U.K. until 1968. The title is ironic. The book is actually a long autobiographical essay in which Orwell details his experiences from age eight to thirteen in English residential schools, the memory of which "haunted" him. It is brutally honest and was not published in the U.K. for fear of libel.

Also still protected are, for example, the letters of Orwell's first wife Eileen, included by Davison in *The Lost Orwell* (2006) and numerous Orwell letters revealed in 2018 which Orwell's son Richard Blair contributed to the Orwell Archive at University College London.

D. J. Taylor, writing in *The Guardian* points out the restrictions are themselves restricted – they apply to print: "any dramatist or film-maker or computer-gamer or 'Wit and wisdom of ...' compiler who wants to set about *Animal Farm* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four* can, effectively, do what they like." (Taylor mentions a particular highlight: David Bowie's early 1970s effort to create a musical of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Sonia Orwell vetoed the project, but parts of it survive on the Bowie 1974 album *Diamond Dogs*.)

Meanwhile, U.K. publishers are hard at work. Taylor reports that "Oxford University Press is producing World's Classics versions of the major books and there are several bulky compendia about to hit the shelves – see, for example, the Flame Tree Press's *George Orwell: Visions of Dystopia*. Taylor himself is preparing a biography of Orwell scheduled for release in 2023. In the intervening years, his annotated versions of six of Orwell's novels will be issued two a year until then.

1984, *concluded*

Such, Such Were the Joys, by George Orwell – the opening paragraphs

Soon after I arrived at Crossgates (not immediately, but after a week or two, just when I seemed to be settling into routine of school life) I began wetting my bed. I was now aged eight, so that this was a reversion to a habit which I must have grown out of at least four years earlier.

Nowadays, I believe, bed-wetting in such circumstances is taken for granted. It is a normal reaction in children who have been removed from their homes to a strange place. In those days, however, it was looked on as a disgusting crime which the child committed on purpose and for which the proper cure was a beating. For my part I did not need to be told it was a crime. Night after night I prayed, with a fervor never previously attained in my prayers, ‘Please God, do not let me wet my bed! Oh, please God, do not let me wet my bed!’ but it made remarkably little difference. Some nights the thing happened, others not. There was no volition about it, no consciousness. You did not properly speaking do the deed: you were merely woke up in the morning and found that the sheets were wringing wet.

After the second or third offense I was warned that I should be beaten next time, but I received the warning in a curiously roundabout way. One afternoon, as we were filing out from tea, Mrs. Simpson, the headmaster’s wife, was sitting at

the head of one of the tables, chatting with a lady of whom I know nothing, except that she was on an afternoon’s visit to the school. She was an intimidating, masculine-looking person wearing a riding habit, or something that I took to be a riding habit. I was just leaving the room when Mrs. Simpson called me back, as though to introduce me to the visitor.

Mrs. Simpson was nicknamed Bingo, and I shall call her by that name for I seldom think of her by any other. (Officially, however, she was addressed as Mum, probably a corruption of the ‘Ma’am’ used by public school boys to their housemasters’ wives.) She was a stocky square-built woman with hard red cheeks, a flat top to her head, prominent brows and deepset, suspicious eyes. Although a great deal of the time she was full of false heartiness, jolly one along with mannish slang (‘Buck up, old chap!’ and so forth), and even using one’s Christian name, her eyes never lost their anxious, accusing look. It was very difficult to look her in the face without feeling guilty, even at moments when one was not guilty of anything in particular.

‘Here is a little boy,’ said Bingo, indicating me to the strange lady, ‘who wets his bed every night. Do you know what I am going to do if you wet your bed again?’ she added, turning to me. ‘I am going to get the Sixth Form to beat you.’



St. Cyprian's, the model for Crossgates, burned in 1939 after 40 years of operation. The playing fields remain, now used by Eastbourne College.



Rare Book Market Remains Strong

Bloomberg reports that 2020 was a good year for the rare book business.

Luxury markets have hardly caught a cold during the Great Recession and the pandemic, but the demand for, and prices paid for, rare books surprised even the experts.

Kenneth Gloss, owner of Brattle Book Shop in Boston, said that the used book business has been off, but his antiquarian business has been steady. He described the situation as “people with spare funds are sitting home, bored and buying a lot of books.”

Darren Sutherland, a specialist in Bonham’s rare books department, described that market for rare books as “healthy for years.” A specialist at Christie’s said that “everything depends on the material.”

It’s the paradox of rare books that they are also a commodity that responds to supply and demand. One dealer said that “the problem for a lot of dealers is how do you replace stock.” But Sutherland saw the situation differently, explaining that once collectors see what buyers are willing to pay, they will make more material available.

Recent examples of significant sales help make the point. When Christie’s offered a First Folio last year, they had estimated the sale at between \$4 million and \$6 million, but a bidding war resulted in a sale of \$10 million. (See *The Florida Bibliophile*, Nov. 2020.)

James Gannon, director of rare books for Heritage Auctions, described an “uptick in participation and enthusiasm.” Heritage’s third auction of books from the library of editor and publisher Otto Penzler doubled its estimate.

A spokesperson for Christie’s said that “all of our online sales have surpassed their low estimates.” He speculated that with more time, people are studying catalogues more closely.

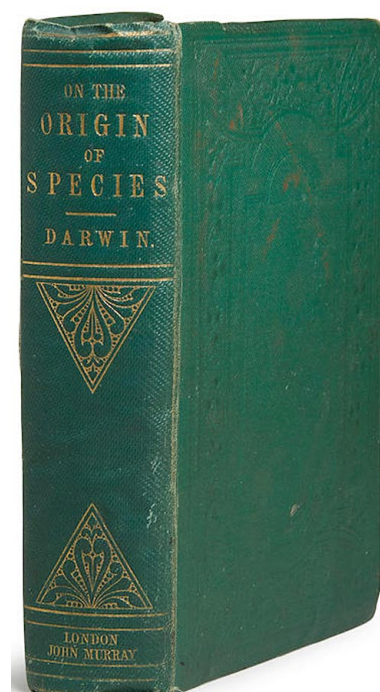
Buyers are also more comfortable with online buying and selling. In July, Christie’s live-streamed a sale of fine art that totaled \$421 million. One dealer observed that the online trend had been building, but Covid seriously accelerated it.

Several dealers expressed some surprise at the

amounts people are spending based solely on online examination and catalogue descriptions. One example from December: Christie’s offered a 15th century, five-folio compilation of works by Aristotle that was estimated from \$200,000 to \$300,000, and sold it to an online buyer, with buyer’s premium, for \$475,000 at Christie’s.

The strength of the market for very rare books contrasts with a weakening in the market for less rare books. James Gannon observed that the Internet “made a lot of books that seemed rare [feel] common now.” Online sources provide many alternatives to the in-store discovery of these important but less rare materials. The example was given of a first edition of William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*. A buyer might find it in a store for \$11,000, but checking online, finds copies ranging from \$1,500 to \$12,500. This undermines the sense of value in the \$11,000 volume, and possibly, the buyer postpones the purchase altogether. Thus the prices paid for very rare books have continued to escalate, while the prices for less rare books have generally declined.

The two categories of books appeal to two classes of buyers. It takes significant resources to purchase the very rare, and potential buyers usually have these resources. The less rare is likely to appeal to the fan or the specialist where the price and priority are more of an issue.



In December, Bonham’s Los Angeles sold a first edition of Charles Darwin’s On the Origin of Species; estimated between \$90,000 to \$120,000, it sold with premium for \$168,825.



Books in Brief

The Look of the Book: Jackets, Covers, and Art at the Edges of Literature

Peter Mendelsund; David J. Alworth

Ten Speed Press

292 pp., October 2020



The New York Times Book Review named *The Look of the Book* one of the Best Books of the Year for 2020.

Beginning with the words “A book jacket will do almost anything to get noticed,” cover design veteran Peter Mendelsund and media professor David Alworth have created a sumptuous

gallery of covers as well as a thoughtful analysis of the development, function, and design of book covers.

As the outward face of the text, the book cover makes an all-important first impression. *The Look of the Book* examines “art at the edges of literature” through notable covers and the stories behind them, galleries of the many different jackets of bestselling books, an overview of book cover trends throughout history, and insights from dozens of literary and design luminaries. This fascinating collaboration, featuring hundreds of covers, challenges our notions of what a book cover can and should be.



Peter Mendelsund, former art director at Knopf and creative director of *The Atlantic*, is author of both well-received fiction and nonfiction. His work has appeared in the *New York Times* and the *Paris Review*, among other venues.



David J. Alworth is John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. His focus is modern literature, media, art, and design. He has written for *Public Books*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and various scholarly journals. He is the author of *Site Reading: Fiction, Art, Social Form*.

Sources: Amazon; Ten Speed Press

Brand Luther: How an Unheralded Monk Turned His Small Town into a Center of Publishing, Made Himself the Most Famous Man in Europe—and Started the Protestant Reformation

Andrew Pettegree

Penguin Books

400 pp., October 2016

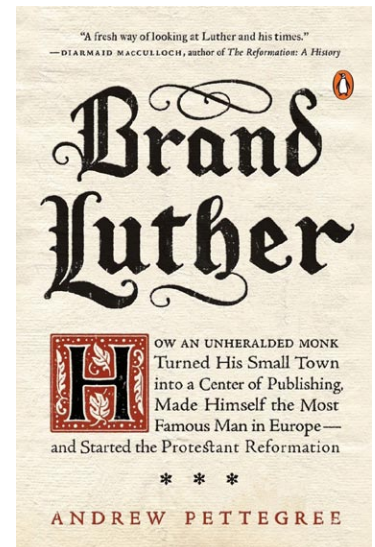
Martin Luther was virtually unknown when in 1517 he posted his “theses” on the door of the Wittenberg church to protest corrupt practices.

Within months, his ideas spread across Germany, then Europe. Within years, he was both famous and infamous for catalyzing the Protestant Reformation that engulfed Europe in decades of bloody war.

Luther was gifted theologian and communicator. He recognized in printing the power of pamphlets, written in the colloquial German of everyday people, to win the battle of ideas. Pettegree demonstrates that this confluence led to the world’s first brand. Luther’s partner, artist and businessman Lucas Cranach, helped created the distinctive look of Luther’s pamphlets, creating a product that spread like wildfire. It was both incredibly successful and widely imitated. Soon Wittenberg would be the center of a storm of pamphlets that fueled the Reformation for more than a hundred years.

Pettegree tells the fascinating story of this fusion of religion, printing, and capitalism — a literal marketplace of ideas — and revolutionizes our understanding of a pivotal figure and era in human history.

Andrew Pettegree is professor of modern history at the University of St. Andrews and director of the Universal Short Title Catalogue. He is the author of over a dozen books.



Source: Penguin Books

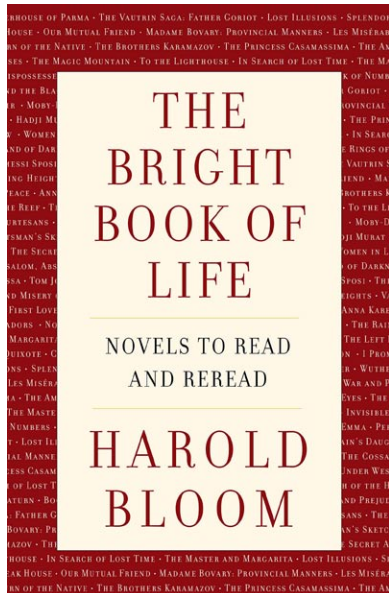


*Books in Brief, continued***The Bright Book of Life: Novels to Read and Reread**

Harold Bloom

Knopf

544 pp., November 2020

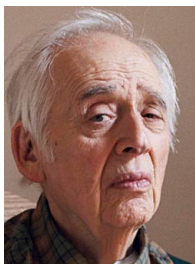


Harold Bloom (1930–2019) was one of America's most original and controversial literary critics. *The Bright Book of Life*, his last book, continues his investigation of the “canon” in a form readers and students of literature will appreciate. Bloom selects 52 classics from the last 200 years of narrative fiction to distill a list of essential reading in the Western tradition

to which he acts as guide, drawing on a lifetime of study and expressed with his characteristic insight.

The work ranges from Balzac and Fielding to Ellison and LeGuin, with stops at Proust, Flaubert, and Turgenev, among others. In these pages, we get a glimpse of what Bloom describes in the preface as “the enterprise of my long life”: the dream of reading your own way into secular revelation.

Harold Bloom was a Sterling Professor of



Humanities at Yale University, and before that, he was Charles Eliot Norton Professor at Harvard. Among the more than 40 books he produced in a remarkable and influential career are *Possessed by Memory*, *The Anxiety of Influence*, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, and *The Western Canon*. He was a MacArthur Fellow, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the recipient of many awards and honorary degrees.

Against Amazon: and Other Essays

Jorge Carrión

Biblioasis

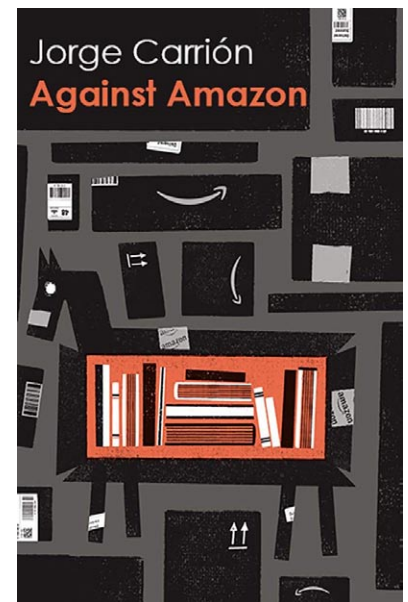
280 pp., November 2020

Featured in the *New York Times* in November 2020 as a New and Notable Book, *Against Amazon* is led by Carrión's eponymous essay. The remaining essays in the book revolve around Carrión's experiences in, and reflection on, libraries and bookstores in a dozen countries.

Against Amazon picks up where Carrión's widely praised *Bookshops: A Reader's History* (TFB, Jan. 2018) left off. *Against Amazon and Other Essays* explores the increasing pressures of Amazon and other new technologies on bookshops and libraries. The essays focus on these vital social, cultural, and intellectual spaces in London, Geneva, Miami's Little Havana, Argentina, and South Korea. Interviews with writers and librarians include Alberto Manguel, Iain Sinclair, Luigi Amara, and Han Kang, among others.

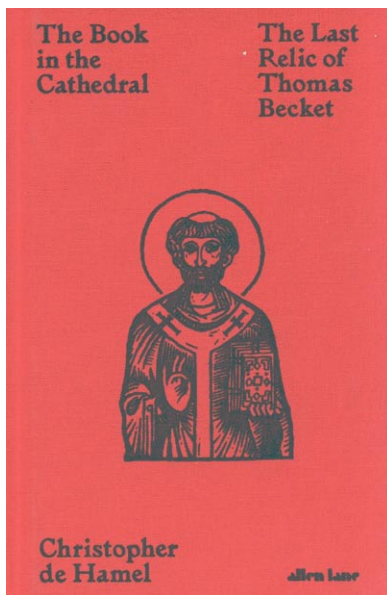
Carrión fashions a celebration of books and bookshops, an autobiography of a reader, a travelogue, a love letter, and most urgently, a manifesto against the corrosive influence of late capitalism.

Jorge Carrión is a writer and literary critic. He teaches literature and creative writing at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. He has published essays, novellas, novels, and travel writing in several books and many articles.



*Books in Brief, concluded***The Book in the Cathedral: The Last Relic of Thomas Becket**

Christopher de Hamel
Penguin Books
64 pp., June 2020



Eight hundred and fifty years ago, in 1170, Thomas Becket was assassinated in Canterbury Cathedral. Becket's act of faith brought sainthood and made Canterbury the destination of uncounted pilgrims throughout the Middle Ages, commemorated in works like *The Canterbury Tales* and, more recently, T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* and Anouilh's *Becket*.

In *The Book in the Cathedral*, de Hamel tells a story of bibliographic detection in his encounter with an Anglo-Saxon psalter in the Parker Library of Cambridge's Corpus Christi College. De Hamel sorts through traditions, histories, and previous identifications and marshals the evidence that this psalter was indeed the property of Thomas Becket and may even have accompanied him to his death.

De Hamel tells a story of rigorous bibliography with a light and appealing tone of devotional imagination.

Christopher de Hamel has probably handled and catalogued more illuminated manuscripts than anyone else alive in his career with Sotheby's, as a Fellow of

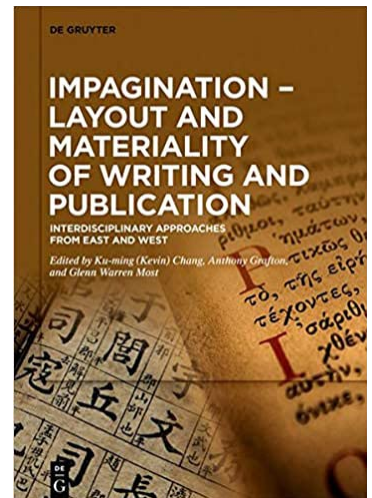
Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and as Librarian of the Parker Library. This career has produced numerous accolades and awards as well as several books, including the bestselling *Meetings with Remarkable Manuscripts* (2016).

Impagination: Layout and Materiality of Writing and Publication

Ku-ming (Kevin) Chang; Anthony Grafton; Glenn Warren Most
De Gruyter
400 pp., November 2020

Nothing is more essential to a book than the placement of text upon a page.

Impagination is the first comparative history of the act of placing and arranging textual and other information on a "page," whether papyrus, bamboo, palm leaf, parchment, paper, or screen. The inquiry is organized at three levels: what is the page; what is the text; and how is the text placed. Many elements are brought into play, including cultural and historical conventions, interlinguistic issues, editorial control, scribes, publishers, and others. This volume expands studies on layout first by including non-codex writings and its aspiration to adopt a globally comparative approach. Contributions rooted in local cultures of Europe, China, Tibet, Korea, Japan, and the Near East come together to address global, comparative themes significant for many disciplines, such as intellectual and cultural history of knowledge, global history, literary and media studies, aesthetics, and studies of material culture, among other fields.



K. Chang, Academia Sinica, Taiwan;
A. T. Grafton, Princeton University, USA;
G. W. Most, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, Italy.




The Morgan Library and Museum, New York, NY

This Month's Writers and Contributors

Many thanks to those who contributed words, pictures, and ideas to this month's newsletter!

Vicki Entreken
David Hall
Jerry Morris
Linda Morris
Maureen E. Mulvihill
Carl Mario Nudi
Irene Pavese
Terry Seymour
Gary Simons
Ben Wiley


Have an idea for an article for *The Florida Bibliophile*? Contact Charles Brown, cbrown@atlantic.net, to submit or for assistance in preparing your article. 

Join FBS!

If you love books, take your interest to the next level by joining a group of dedicated book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars, and readers, and you will discover a lively, enjoyable group. You will find contact emails on the last page of this newsletter.




Membership is \$50 per year. You can find a membership form on our website. It will give you the address to which to send your filled-out form and payment.

Joining FBS also makes you a member of our national organization, the Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies. 

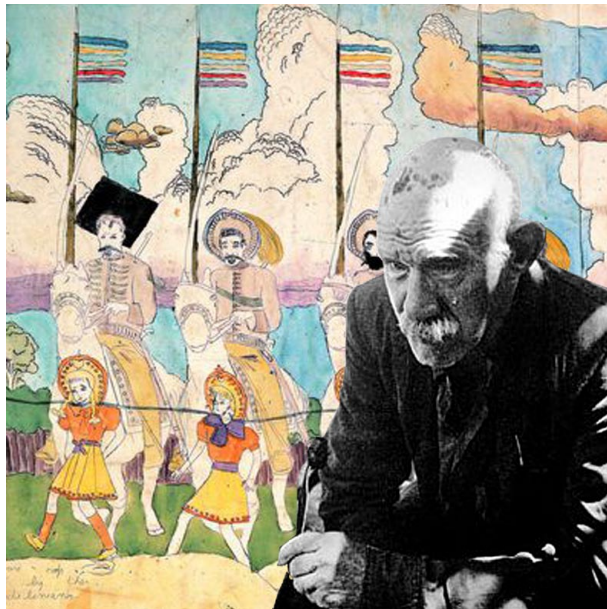
Write for Your Newsletter!



Your input and content are needed. FBS is about participation, about discoveries, about passionate interests, and sometimes the deliciously obscure. Why not write about it!? 

Upcoming Events

January 2021



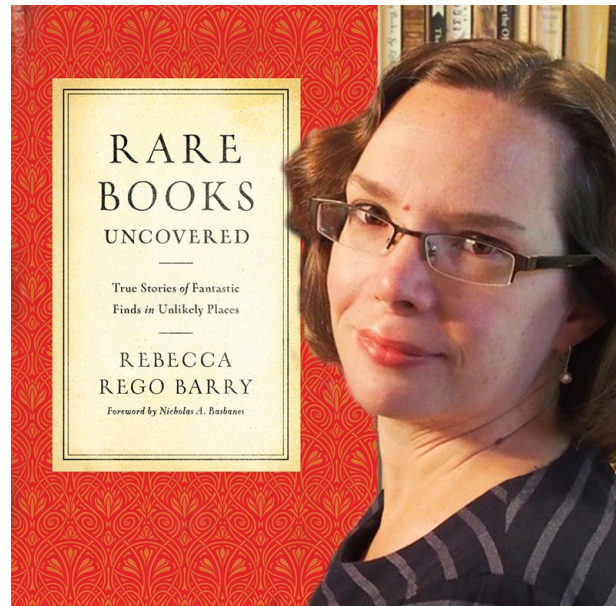
Charles Brown: Henry Darger, Author and Artist

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

January 17, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

In 1971, shortly before Henry Darger's death, his landlords Nathan and Kiyoko Lerner discovered in his apartment a vast collection of albums that contained tens of thousands of typed, handwritten, and illustrated pages compiled in three massive works of fiction produced over several decades. The main work and Darger's most famous, *The Story of the Vivian Girls, in What Is Known as the Realms of the Unreal, of the Glandeco-Angelinian War Storm, Caused by the Child Slave Rebellion*, which comprises 15,000 pages. For it, Darger created hundreds of illustrations, using images from newspaper comics and magazines and tracing them into his composition, which he then colored and decorated. Charles will present the life that led to a preoccupation with the protection of children and the work Darger produced as a result.

February 2021



Rebecca Rego Barry: author of *Rare Books Uncovered: True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places*

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

February 21, 2021, 1:30 pm

Rebecca's training in journalism and book history makes her a perfect fit for *Fine Books and Collections*, where she has been editor for several years. She presented her book *Rare Books Uncovered* to FBS members in a special event in 2015, soon after its release. It has since been published in paperback. Rebecca will share a few of the many insights and anecdotes she has acquired in her work that puts her at the center of the rare and antiquarian book world.

Book Events, Podcasts, and More

Know of any events of interest to book lovers? Send corrections and additions to Charles Brown, cmbrown@atlantic.net.

Florida Book Events – December 2020

JANUARY 2021

Postponed to January 2022

Annual Key West Literary Seminar: “A Seminar Named Desire”

Key West, FL (www.kwls.org/)

Events cancelled until further notice

Ringling Literati Book Club, Sarasota, FL

January 17–18, Virtual

Writers in Paradise (Eckerd College Writers Conference)

St. Petersburg, FL (writersinparadise.eckerd.edu/)

January 28–31, Virtual

Florida Storytelling Festival

(sponsored by The Florida Story Association)

Mount Dora, FL (<http://flstory.com/festival/>)

January 7–31, Virtual and In-person

32nd Annual Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts and Humanities

Eatonville, FL (www.zorafestival.org/)

University of Oxford Podcasts

Hundreds of podcasts are available in many series of interest to bibliophiles. Here are a few selections to get started:

[History of the Book](#) – Interactions between the history of the book and other areas of research.

[Fantasy Literature](#) – The roots of fantasy, the main writers and themes, and how to approach these texts.

Behind the Bookshelves, the AbeBooks Podcast

[Behind the Bookshelves](#) offers interviews with authors, collectors, and booksellers covering a wide range of topics.

Recent episodes:

- Nov. 17, 2020 – The Sifter Cookbook Database

Rare Book Cafe, with Steven and Edie Eisenstein

Florida book dealers and FBS members Steve and Edie Eisenstein started “Rare Book Cafe” several years ago to cover all aspects of books in “the only live-streamed program about antiquarian books, ephemera, and more....” Hosted by Thorne Donnelly.

This episode, new episodes, and many more are available to view from the [Rare Book Cafe website \(on Facebook\)](#).

Recent episodes (on hiatus until Jan. 9):

- Oct. 24, 2020 – Edie Eisenstein on miniature books from the Kingston Press. Felix O’Neil on detective fiction. Mike Slicker on Lafcadio Hearn (1850–1904). Steve Eisenstein on guns in detective fiction. Thorne Donnelly hosts.
- Oct. 17, 2020 – Henrik Sejerkilde, Danish rare book collector and author of a book on classic Danish book design. Also, thoughts on English author P. G. Wodehouse and a forgotten Irish-Greek writer with a Japanese name.

The BiblioFile, with Nigel Beale

[THE BIBLIOFILE](#) is one of the world’s leading podcasts about “the book” and the wider world of book culture. Hosted by Nigel Beale, it features wide-ranging conversations with authors, poets, publishers, booksellers, editors, collectors, book makers, scholars, critics, designers, publicists, literary agents, and others on Robert Darnton’s “communications circuit” who just plain love books. The website provides podcasts going back to 2006, lists of reading, links, etc.

Recent episodes:

- Dec. 25, 2020 – David Gilmour on Truman Capote’s slow descent into Hell
- Dec. 21, 2020 – Lennie Goodings on *Virago* & her new memoir *A Bite of the Apple*
- Dec. 13, 2020 – Martin Amis on his new novel *Inside Story*

Events, Podcasts, and More, concluded

American Antiquarian Society Virtual Book Talks

Founded in 1812 by Isaiah Thomas, a Revolutionary War patriot and printer, the American Antiquarian Society is the oldest history society in the U.S. It limits its interests to the period before 1876 and holds the “largest and most accessible collection of books, pamphlets, broadsides, newspapers, periodicals, music, and graphic arts material” printed up to that date.

The AAS’s Program in the History of the Book in American Culture (PHBAC) was established in 1983, responding to and promoting the then emerging field of book history. PHBAC sponsors **Virtual Book Talk**, which showcases “authors of recently published scholarly monographs, digital-equivalents, and creative works broadly related to book history and print culture.” Virtual Book Talk is free, but advance registration is required.

Upcoming in January:

Craig Dworkin on his newest book *Radium of the Word: A Poetics of Materiality*, Tues., Jan. 12, 2021, 2:00 p.m. EDT, Approx. 45 minutes

Previous episodes have included:

- **Dec. 3, 2020 – Brigitte Fielder on her book *Relative Races: Genealogies of Interracial Kinship in Nineteenth-Century America*.** Fielder explores a range of literatures, both personal and published, to examine how race was ascribed in 19th century America and how these ascriptions were transmitted across generations.
- **Nov. 12, 2020 – Rodrigo Lazo on his recent book *Letters from Filadelfia: Early Latino Literature and the Trans-American Elite*.** Early in the 19th century, Philadelphia was the most important print center in the U.S. and a voice for freedom in a hemisphere still largely dominated by Spanish colonialism.
- **Oct. 29, 2020 – Adam Gordon on his recent book *Prophets, Publicists, and Parasites*:**

Antebellum Print Culture and the Rise of the Critic. Gordon is Associate Professor of English at Whitman College, specializing in early and nineteenth-century American literature, print culture, and the history of American literary criticism.

The Book Collector Podcast

In 1952, James Bond author Ian Fleming created *The Book Collector*, a “unique periodical for bibliophiles,” which has featured a wide range of articles pertaining to book collecting, modern first editions, typography, national libraries, and numerous other matters of interest to book collectors and enthusiasts. Fleming died in 1964, as did the journal’s editor John Hayward. After a brief hiatus, the journal started up again in the hands of its new owner and editor, Nicolas Barker. In 2016, Fleming’s nephews, James and Fergus Fleming, assumed leadership of the journal, and in 2020 they created a podcast, which features readings from the journal’s archives. There are now 30 podcasts, including

- The Library of the Count de Fortsas, 1840, by William Blades (June 1952)
- Contemporary Collectors VI: The Hyde Collection (Aug. 1955)
- John Baskerville’s Books, by John Dreyfus (Summer 1959)
- Dashiell Hammett (Some Uncollected Authors XXXI), by Roger E. Stoddard (Spring 1962)

Friends of Goddard Library, Clark University

The Friends of Goddard Library (FGL) volunteers support the library and work with staff to plan programming, including Karen Sanchez-Eppler’s November 2020 talk “[‘Barbarous, Cruel Inhuman’: Nineteenth-Century Child Readers and Images of ‘Indians’](#).”



Florida Bibliophile Society 2020–2021 Season



David Hall

Until further notice, all FBS meetings will be virtual via Zoom.

September 20 • FBS Members – Introduction to Zoom and Members' Show and Tell: Meeting attendees connected to our virtual meeting through Zoom. We learned about some helpful features of this software, shared about some special summer acquisitions, and had a generally good chat.

October 18 • Nigel Beale – How to Talk to a Bibliophile. Nigel hosts and produces *The BiblioFile* podcast. He has interviewed over 400 novelists, poets, publishers, and critics. Nigel shared about starting *The BiblioFile*, the many interviews he's conducted, and his own book interests. His presentation was followed by a lively Q&A with attendees.

November 15 • Mark Samuels Lasner – British Literature in the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection. Mark created one of the most important collections of late 19th century British authors in the U.S. He donated the entire collection to the University of Delaware in 2016 – over 9,000 books, works of art, and ephemera. Mark talked about how he began collecting and the authors and important works in the collection.

December 20 • Happy Bibliophile Holiday Self-Gifting Party. A holiday party and gift exchange for the Covid era. Members were invited to buy themselves a special book and share it with the group. Delicious refreshments were self-served.

January 17 • Charles Brown – Henry Darger, Author and Artist. Charles will present the work of Henry Darger. When Darger died, writings and artworks amounting to thousands of pages were found

in his small Chicago apartment, including Darger's 15,000-page novel, illustrated with watercolors, tracings, and collage.

February 21 • Rebecca Rego Barry – Rebecca is the author of *Rare Books Uncovered: True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places* and the editor of *Fine Books & Collections*.

March 21 • Eric Steckler – The Jews in the American Civil War. Dr. Eric Steckler is a retired medical doctor and Jewish history scholar. In his presentation, Eric will discuss the fascinating role of Jews in the Civil War, their views on slavery and their divided loyalty between the Union and the Confederacy.

April 18 • Lola Haskins – A Reading of Selected Poems. Lola's presentations to FBS have been warmly received. She was scheduled to present from her newest collection *Asylum* in April 2020. The meeting was cancelled, but poems from *Asylum* appeared in *The Florida Bibliophile*. We immediately invited her back for Poetry Month 2021.

April 23–26 • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair. The 2021 Florida Antiquarian Book Fair has been scheduled!! Having missed a year for the first time in its history, the 2021 Fair will be at least twice as wonderful for bibliophiles!

May 16 • Annual FBS Banquet. Assuming that all pandemics are under control, we will be having our Annual Banquet on this date.

All meetings are held at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons unless otherwise announced.



Endpaper • Happy New Year of Books!



So many books, so little time!

Though we could not be together to share a sparkling glass of prosecco or a slice of holiday ham with all the trimmings and sides and desserts of our usual holiday party, our Zoom gathering was a pleasure!

While not all of us are planning to learn Greek in the new year (!), our projects and interests continue, and our “gift to ourselves” party gave a sampling of what might be ahead for our intrepid bibliophilic band.

These show-and-tell meetings are the best kind of book club – we learn a little more about each other and our interests, and we get an introduction to so many interesting books. The twenty or so books recorded by Gary in this month’s minutes are a sampling of so many interesting subjects as well as areas of collecting and reading. It’s like a series of mini-presentations – Carl’s five-minute history of

the International Typographical Union, Vicki’s story about Galveston, Gary’s great big book of Hogarth! And all the rest... fascinating!

I’m always impressed by the many areas of expertise and accomplishment that our society brings together. It really is a group of fascinating people!

In spite of the strangeness and disorientation of the past year (and to paraphrase the famous radio show “You were there!”), it’s a new year and a new year of books and all that implies for our interests, projects, and collections – and for our friendships and the times we look forward to sharing. We’ll be meeting digitally for a while, but at least we’ll be meeting.

Best wishes for the happiest new year!

Stay safe. Support your local bookstore!

— Charles

The Florida Bibliophile Society

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