

# The Florida Bibliophile

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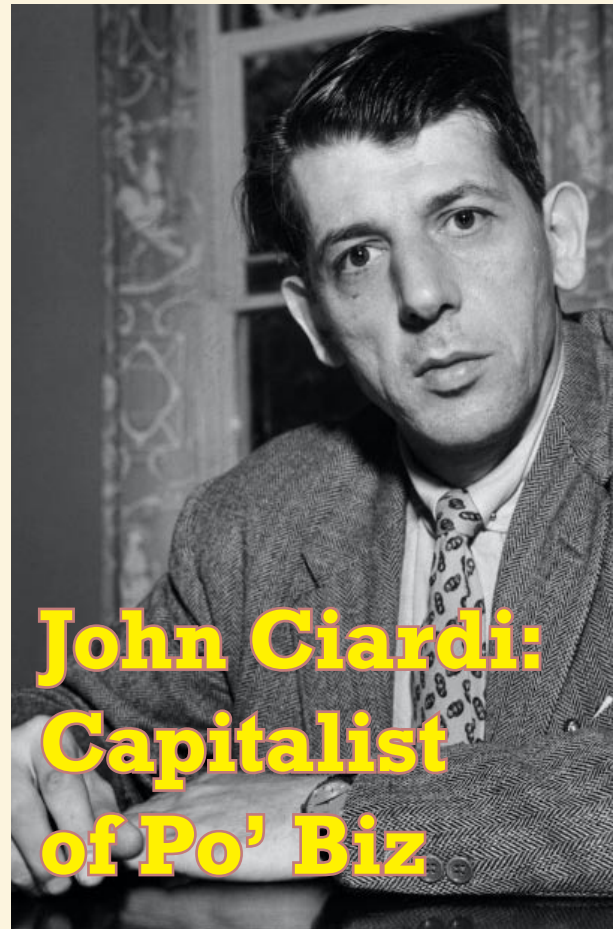


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Deadline for the December newsletter is November 30, 2021.  
See page 25 for details.

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 Spring 2021 FABS Journal [here](#).



**ANNUAL DUES** for the 2021–2022 FBS Season are due by **December 31, 2021!**

Membership is \$50 U.S. per household per year. Send inquiries and payments to treasurer Linda Morris at 13013 Willoughby Lane, Bayonet Point, FL 34667. Dues may also be paid using our PayPal account: [floridabibliophiles@gmail.com](mailto:floridabibliophiles@gmail.com).



Florida Bibliophile Society  
A community of book lovers

## Minutes of the October 2021 Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society

by Gary Simons, FBS Secretary

**This meeting was special in several ways, in addition to the excellence of our speaker!**

It was our first real-time face-to-face gathering since the start of the Covid epidemic. Further, rather than meeting at one of our standard library meeting rooms, we were meeting, as President Charles Brown intoned, “together among the books at Lighthouse Books.” We all give special thanks to our hosts Mike Slicker and Sarah Smith. And lastly, thanks to the efforts of Vice President Jerry Morris, we opened the door to the future with FBS’s first mixed-mode meeting, as our presentation was directed to both in-person attendees as well as remote Zoom participants.

Ben Wiley introduced our speaker, fellow FBSer Edward Cifelli. Ben and Ed have some rather special common bonds: both were long-term community college English teachers, both are interested in 19<sup>th</sup>-century American poetry, both were adjuncts at the University of South Florida, both at times have been film reviewers, and both are passionate fans of the Tampa Bay Rays!

As Ben told us, Ed is still in the midst of a distinguished career in American letters. He has written biographies

of three American poets, contributed commentaries to editions of works by prominent literary figures, including John Milton, and is now working on a book about the 1997 presidential inauguration poet, Miller Williams. Previously, Ed had presented to the Florida Bibliophile Society, drawing upon his biography of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow *Longfellow in Love: Passion and Tragedy in the Life of the Poet* (2018). Today, Ed drew upon another of his books, *John Ciardi: A Biography*, for his presentation. The *Library Journal* has called Ed “the preeminent expert on Ciardi’s work” because, in addition to the biography, he has also edited volumes of Ciardi’s writings and contributed an afterword to an edition of Ciardi’s translation of *The Divine Comedy*.

Ed’s talk was entitled “The Capitalist of Po’ Biz; or, John Ciardi: America’s Millionaire Poet.”

Ed began by noting that October is National Book Month and urged his audience to take advantage of the many book-buying opportunities offered by Lighthouse Books!

Turning to his subject, Ed cited two preliminaries:



Ed set out a selection of books by or about John Ciardi. Ed contributed to, compiled, or wrote many of the latter.



*Minutes, continued*

*Boston's Little Italy in the early 1900s, decorated for a saint's day (Boston Public Library).*

(1) the poet's name is pronounced *char-dee*, and (2) the moniker "The Capitalist of Po Biz" comes from a letter Ciardi wrote in 1958 in which he wrote "... I am practically the Capitalist of Po' Biz, milking the lecture platform of \$1 million a syllable." Ciardi's self-mocking comment reflects his own awareness of the lucrative aspect of his rising from anonymity and becoming an institution. During the 1950s and 1960s, Ciardi became a bona fide celebrity and unashamedly capitalized on his fame.

Ed explained that throughout his life, Ciardi identified himself as a poet. Born in Boston's Little Italy, he studied poetry at Tufts University in the 1930s. Ciardi then went to the University of Michigan, where his master's thesis, a manuscript for a book of poems, won a \$1,200 prize, and he began publishing in magazines.

During WW II, Ciardi had a last moment failure at the Army Air Force navigator school – possibly due to the local presence of his girlfriend – but served instead as a B-29 gunner. After flying sixteen missions over Saipan, he got a staff position as a writer. His wartime experiences led to two books: *Other Skies*,

a volume of wartime poems, and the posthumously published *Saipan: the War Diary of John Ciardi*. Ed noted that while Ciardi may or may not be included in anthologies of 20<sup>th</sup>-century American poets, some of his work is always included in anthologies of American WW II poetry.

To illustrate Ciardi's war poetry Ed read a few stanzas from Ciardi's poem "Elegy Just in Case":

Here lie Ciardi's pearly bones  
In their ripe organic mess  
Jungle blown, his chromosomes  
Breed to a new address.

Was it bullets or a wind  
Or a rip cord fouled on chance?  
Artifacts the natives find  
Decorate them when they dance.

. . . . .

Darling, darling, just in case  
Rivets fail or engines burn  
I forget the time and place  
But your flesh was sweet to learn.

After the war, Ciardi taught at Harvard and rather

*Minutes, continued*

presciently selected poets who were to become famous later for inclusion in a book of 1940s poetry. In the early 1950s, he moved to Rutgers University, where he started and led a creative writing and poetry program. As a teacher at Harvard and at Rutgers he developed for pedagogical purposes his own translation of Dante's *The Divine Comedy* – even though, as Ed told us, “Ciardi wasn’t a Dante guy,” and really wasn’t even an Italian expert. The first volume of the Ciardi edition of *The Divine Comedy* was published in 1954, and the three-volume work became a standard which “cornered the market for fifty years.” Going to the beginning of Ciardi’s translation of *The Inferno*, Ed read to us:

Midway in our life’s journey, I went astray  
from the straight road and woke to find myself  
alone in a dark wood. How shall I say

what wood that was! I never saw so drear,  
so rank, so arduous a wilderness!  
Its very memory gives a shape to fear.

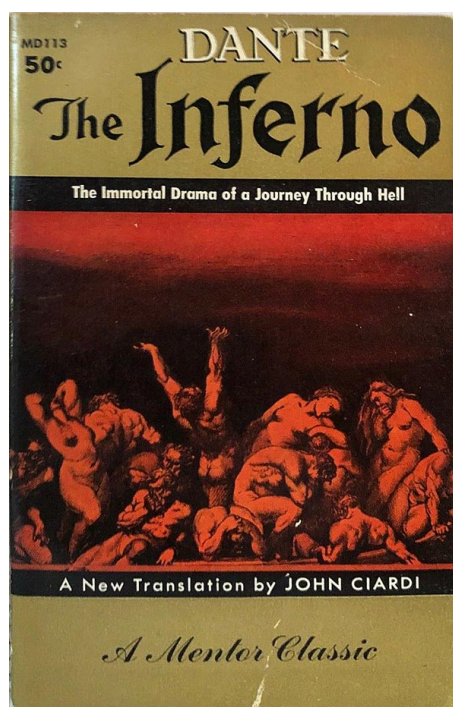
Death could scarce be more bitter than that place!  
But since it came to good, I will recount  
all that I found revealed there by God’s grace.

How I came to it I cannot rightly say,  
so drugged and loose with sleep had I become  
when I first wandered there from the true way.

A famous *New York Times* critic called this translation “a shining event in a bad age.” At the same time, Ciardi was publishing in every major poetry venue. *The New Yorker* even sent him a right-of-first-refusal contract for his poetry. And soon, with critical and commercial success, Ciardi branched out into the then unfashionable world of children’s poetry.

In 1958, Ciardi wrote *I Marry You*, a book he called “a sheath of love poems,” some of which Ed told us are still read in wedding ceremonies today. In one poem, Ciardi imagined a marriage as an arch, in which the two parts of the arch come together to form a strength. He wrote, “Till we kiss, I am no more than upright and unset.”

Starting in the mid-1950s, Ciardi began accepting national platforms, including becoming director of the prestigious Bread Loaf Writers Conference and becoming the Poetry Editor of the *Saturday Review*.



The first edition of Ciardi’s translation of Dante’s *Inferno* was issued as a Mentor paperback in 1950 at 50 cents, ideal for students on a limited budget. It remained the standard American translation for 50 years, and served generations of college students. It was praised by Archibald MacLeish as “a spectacular achievement” for its blend of the clarity of prose with a poetic form that echoes the original.



Poster announcing the publication of *The Inferno*, translated by John Ciardi (Edward Cifelli John Ciardi Collection, Special Collections and University Archives, Stony Brook University)

*Minutes, continued*

By 1961, he was writing a regular column, "Manner of Speaking," for that periodical. Also in 1961, he had his own television news magazine program, *Accent*. As a nationally recognized poet and personality, he appeared on the *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson in March 1964. He gave lectures all over the country. Ed summarized this phase of Ciardi's career by noting that "everywhere you looked, John Ciardi was there."

In 1957, Ciardi took the heat, however, when he wrote a devastating review of *The Unicorn and Other Poems*, a book of poetry by Anne Morrow Lindberg. As the wife of aviation pioneer Charles Lindberg, the mother who suffered from the loss of a child in a notorious kidnapping, and the writer of several well-received books, including the best-selling *Gift from the Sea* (1955), she had become something of a national "saint," and Ciardi's scornful review was widely regarded as ungentlemanly and even offensive. In the face of adverse public reaction, *Saturday Review* editor Norman Cousins described reader reaction to the review as "the biggest storm of reader protest in [our] 33-year history." In the subsequent issue of the *Saturday Review*, Cousins critiqued Ciardi's critique and offered Ciardi an opportunity to respond, which Ciardi did in fiery language. Lindbergh made no comment, and Ciardi would soon clarify that he meant no offense to Lindberg, "a distinguished lady and a great lady indeed," but only to her poems. Ciardi remained poetry editor for the *Saturday Review*, and in 1960, when Cousins's book *In Place of Folly* was published, he inscribed a copy to Ciardi:

For John, who frequently has the courage of my convictions, and who always has my admiration.  
Devotedly, Norman. Dec., 1960.

By the 1960s, with the emergence of Allen Ginsberg and Beat poetry and the growing prominence of confessional poetry, Ciardi's more traditional poetry



Robert Frost and John Ciardi chat with students at the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference in 1958 (Middlebury College Archives)

began to seem old-fashioned and out of touch. He lost his job at Bread Loaf because he lost rapport with younger poets, whom he called "the measley generation." As his poetic reputation faded, Ciardi moved to etymology, the study of the origin of words, or, as he called it, "felonious footnotery." He wrote three books on word histories, all of which were successful.

Once again moving to a new medium, and once again becoming known to a large audience, for the last nine years of his life Ciardi regularly commented on word histories for National Public Radio.

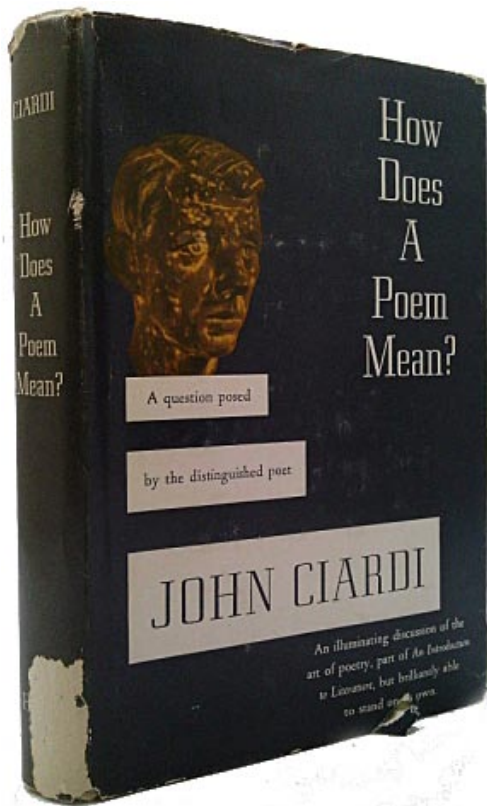
He died unexpectedly on Easter in 1986.

Ed summarized that Ciardi's reputation today is minor, but that there was a time when it looked like "America was going to adopt him and his kind of poetry as the premier or most important phase of poetry in the last half of the twentieth century."



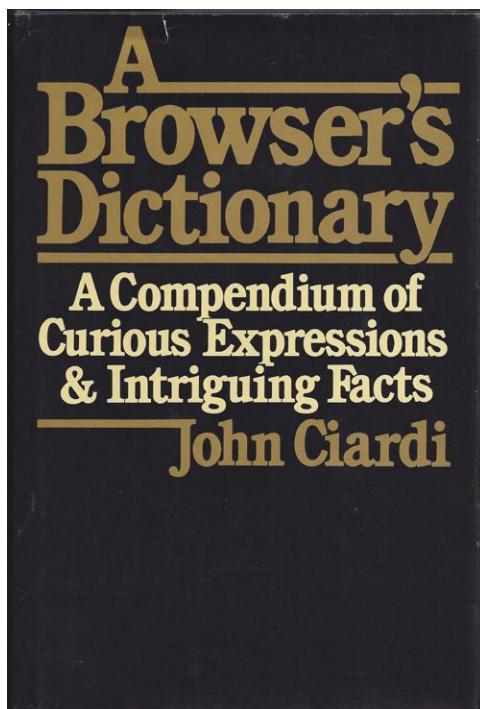
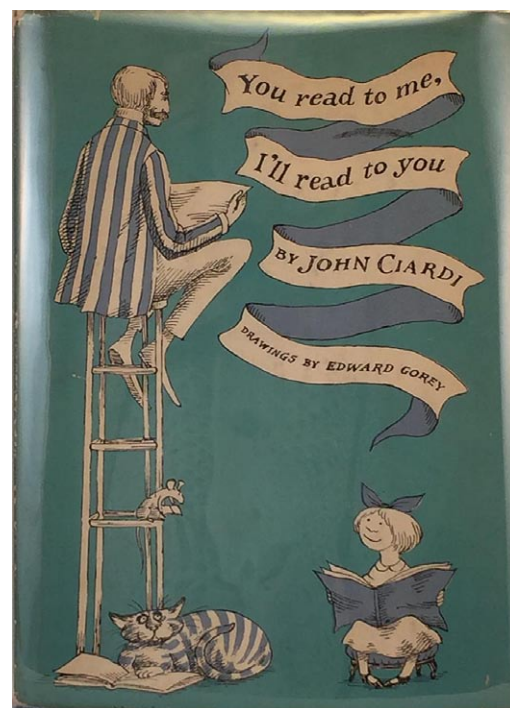
*Minutes, continued*

## A Ciardi Sampler



*How Does a Poem Mean?* (1959) – Ciardi states in this book that the more frequently asked question, “What does this poem mean?” is a destructive approach to poetry. His title is meant to suggest that readers should examine other aspects of a poem – images, ideas, rhythms – as part of what gives a poem its meaning. He provides numerous examples of poems, some good and some not so good, to show these principles in action. The book became a standard text for high school and college classes, and it remains an excellent introduction to reading poetry.

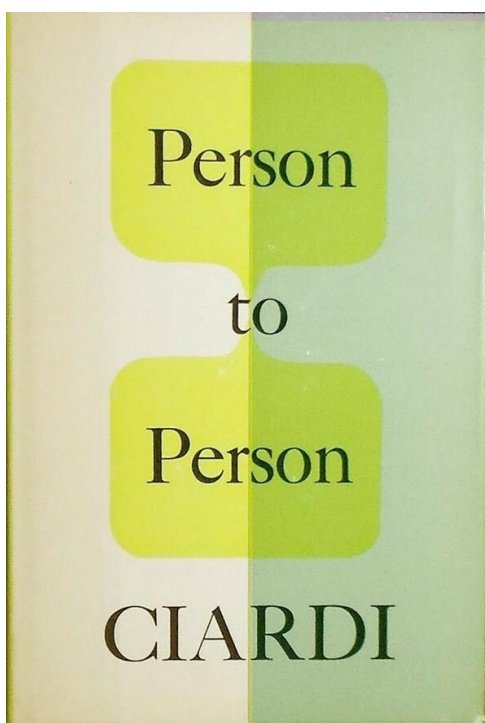
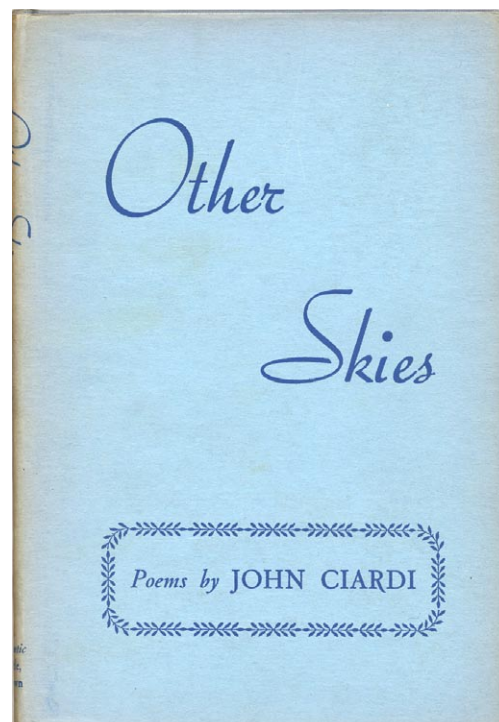
*You Read To Me, I'll Read to You?* (1962) – Ciardi wrote a number of books of poems for children at a time when “serious” poets did not do so. These are some of his best remembered works, as many books that delight us as children stay with us throughout the years. This and several others of Ciardi’s children’s books were illustrated by Edward Gorey, a very original illustrator who is much appreciated in his own right.



*A Browser's Dictionary* (1980) – Ciardi mined words for their meanings as part of his poetic practice. He turned this into a new line of work that found new audiences, notably through broadcasts on National Public Radio called “Word in Your Ear.” *A Browser's Dictionary* was the first of three such books about language and etymology, which included *The Second Browser's Dictionary* (1983) and *Good Words to You* (1987).

*Minutes, concluded*

*Other Skies* (1947) – Ciardi published over 40 books of poetry. They were often praised for their honesty. Based on his experiences in World War II, *Other Skies* was his second published book of poems. In a copy inscribed to a friend, Ciardi wrote, “This is an uneven book – some of the poems were written at a time when I wasn’t sure I’d live to finish them, and many still need revising ....” Where Ciardi’s first book of poems was built on youthful lyricism, one critic described Ciardi’s *Other Skies* as going “directly into the tough, complicated, unlyrical experiences of the adult consciousness.”

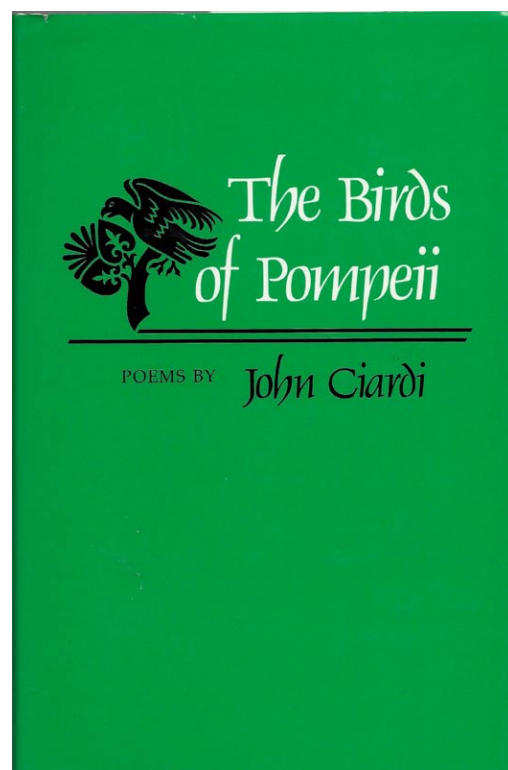


*Person to Person* (1964) – When Ciardi published *Person to Person*, he was a well-established and well-known poet. William Dickey, writing in the *Hudson Review*\* said, “The quality that I find most notable in Mr. Ciardi is that of observation: he sees things with an intensity and accuracy that no conventional language can wholly contain .... “Hunchback bees in pirate pants,” for example, is a phrase wholly determined by what its object looks like, rather than by a kind of language that is felt to be appropriate to the discussion of objects in general.”

\* Quoted in *The Collected Poems of John Ciardi*, E. Cifelli, ed.

*The Birds of Pompeii* (1983) – This would be the last book of poems Ciardi would publish before his death in 1986, and happily, it was a final affirmation of his work. As Cifelli writes\*, “there was much to celebrate, for *The Birds of Pompeii* proved that Ciardi was still, regardless of family problems, poor health, and failing reputation, writing well. ... In all, the book represented a late-in-life reaffirmation of Ciardi’s faith, not in God or religion of course, but in art.”

\* E. Cifelli, *John Ciardi: A Biography* (1997), pp. 463–464.





## Live from Gainesville! The Alachua County Friends of the Library Book Sale Returns

The spring of 2020, the season of shutdowns, saw the cancellation of the semiannual Alachua County Friends of the Library (FOL) Book Sale (“Gainesville Book Sale”). Two subsequent sales were cancelled, but this fall, the sale returned, and the book buyers, who come from all over the Southeast, were ready!

According to book sale volunteers, the first buyers showed up late Friday night, determined to be the first to enter on Saturday morning. At 8 a.m. Saturday, volunteers passed out tickets to the first 200 people in line, and for the rest of the day, allowed a new buyer in for each one that left.

We at FBS had considered making a field trip to the Gainesville Book Sale as we have several times in the past, a day trip that involves books, lunch together, and more books before the ride home – it’s always great fun! Like many other groups, we’ve made decisions about gathering carefully and perhaps more conservatively than many groups in consideration of our older members. The limited occupancy and potential for long waits convinced us that we should skip this sale [but at least one of us made it there! Ed.].

The sale was started in 1954 at a local elementary school. It grew over the years and moved



*The Alachua County Bookhouse, site of the Alachua County Friends of the Library Book Sale since 1989.*

successively into larger, but temporary, venues, until 1989 when FOL and the Junior League purchased the current “Bookhouse,” a disused building originally built in 1940 with over 13,000 square feet under one roof. Twice a year, FOL holds a book sale at this location with over half a million items. The sale is five days, Saturday to Wednesday. Tuesday is half-price day, and on Wednesday, everything that is left is ten cents an item. More valuable items are removed before the Wednesday sellout.

Dedicated volunteers continuously restock



LITERATURE/CLASSICS



*Gainesville Book Sale, concluded*

throughout the sale because the shelves cannot hold all the donations, so one may find new treasures on Sunday or Monday as well as the first day of the sale.

For this first public sale of the Covid era, FOL reorganized the Bookhouse by spreading out the tables and shelves to expand the aisles, limited the number of patrons in the Bookhouse at any one time to 200, and required masks. The Bookhouse is divided into the large warehouse where the sale has normally taken place and a small showroom area at the front. To help accommodate the changes in the warehouse area, FOL moved its art, music, comics, and related sections into the showroom at the front.



*By Monday afternoon, the sale has calmed quite a bit; nevertheless, these volunteers are waiting to ring up your purchases in the Collector's Corner.*

A change in the bookhouse that will be exciting for bibliophiles is the expansion of the “Collector’s Corner.” It has been almost doubled in size.

The next Gainesville Book Sale will be in April 2022. Maybe we’ll see you there!



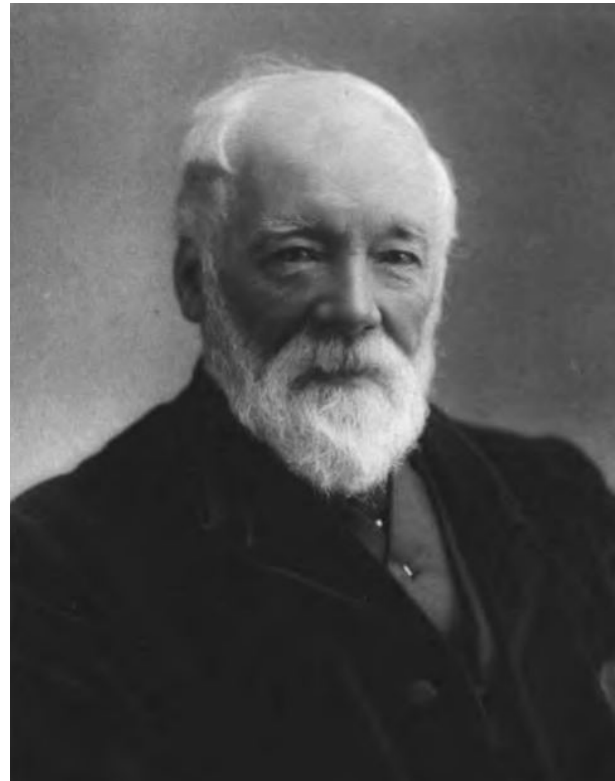
*A large room at the front of the Bookhouse has been converted to an “art annex” — and it’s air conditioned.*



## The Self-Help Book That Helped Itself

**S**amuel Smiles (1812–1904) is not a familiar name today, but for decades in the 19<sup>th</sup> century he was one of Britain’s most famous authors. Smiles was trained as a doctor, but his main interest was political reform. In the late 1830s, he began writing for the *Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle* and *Leeds Times*, focusing on many reform topics, including parliamentary reform, universal suffrage for men over the age of 21, electoral districting reform, and the secret ballot. He believed that wealth was not a value in itself – called by an acquaintance “an ardent opponent of privilege” – and promoted a more egalitarian society. Yet, by the 1850s, he had come to the conclusion that “mere political reform” was not sufficient to repair society’s ills and began to visualize a direct intervention by which individuals were empowered to improve themselves. Smiles began speaking on the subject, and as often happens, his lectures evolved into a manuscript.

In 1855, Smiles approached the new publishing house of George Routledge with his manuscript entitled *Self-Help, with Illustrations of Character and Conduct*. Routledge rejected the book, and Smiles

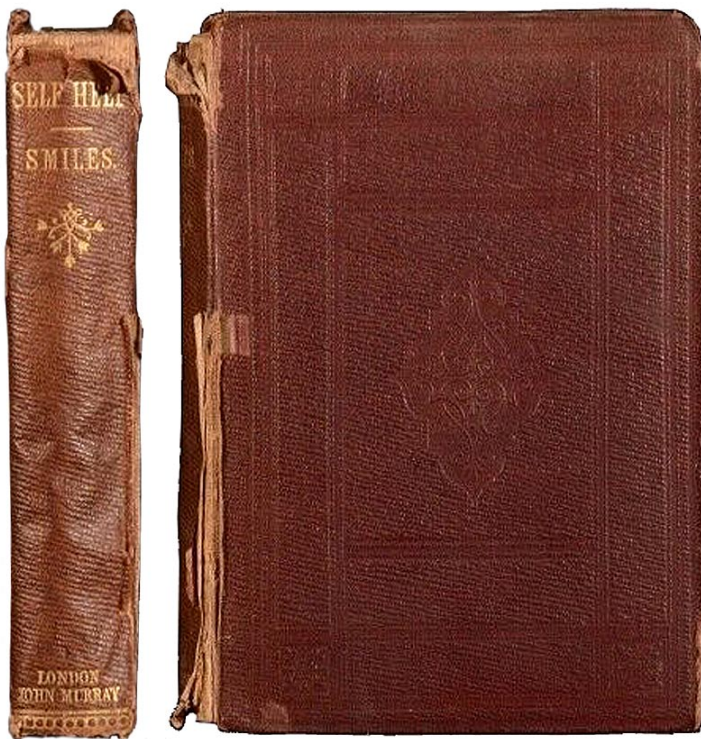


Samuel Smiles, from the frontispiece of his autobiography, published in 1905.

approached the publisher John Murray, but he found Murray’s terms unacceptable.

In 1859, Smiles self-published *Self-Help* – the same year as Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* and John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty*. The book was successful beyond anyone’s expectations. In the first year, 20,000 copies were sold, and by the time of Smiles’s death in 1904, over a quarter million copies of the book had been sold in Britain alone. For comparison, Charles Dickens’s *Great Expectations* (1860) sold fewer than 4,000 copies in its first year. The only better-selling book was the Bible. *Self-Help* was also reportedly second only to the Bible in the number stolen from libraries – an act perhaps not much in tune with either text.

*Self-Help* and its author became overnight sensations. The book was translated around the world into the languages of Europe, the Near East, India, and the Far East. In Japan, samurai reportedly “waited in line all night for a copy.” Sakichi Toyoda (1867–1903), founder in 1926 of



A well-worn copy of the first edition (1859) of *Self-Help*



## Self-Help, *continued*

the manufacturing company that still bears the name Toyota, was strongly influenced by *Self-Help*, and his copy is kept under glass at the corporate headquarters. The book was widely praised and imitated.

Asa Briggs, a British historian, summarized *Self-Help*'s appeal:

Self-help was one of the favorite mid-Victorian virtues. Relying on yourself was preferred morally – and economically – to depending on others. It was an expression of character even when it did not endure....The progressive development of society ultimately depended, it was argued, not on collective action or on parliamentary legislation but on the prevalence of practices of self-help.

Chapters covered topics such as “Self-Help—National and Individual,” “Leaders of Industry—Inventors and Producers,” and “Application and Perseverance.” Examples from contemporaneous culture were given. In one story after another, Smiles illustrated how individuals raised themselves to prominence in their field through application of the principles he promotes. The variety of examples was intended to provide readers with appropriate models for their own development.

Texts about how to live and proper conduct have existed for millennia, including many examples from ancient Egypt and classical Greece. However, Beth Blum, in her recent book *The Self-Help Compulsion*, argues that what is known as self-help today has its roots in the political and philosophical movements of

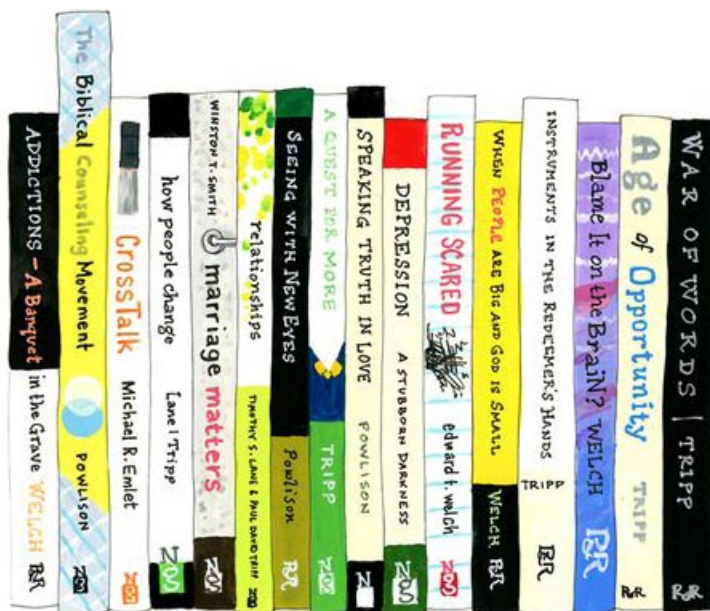
19<sup>th</sup>-century England. The term “self-help” itself is believed to have originated with British writer Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) in 1837. Smiles's *Self-Help* can be seen as the most successful work in a genre developing in response to a new awareness of the relationship between the individual and the state and a response to the personal economic challenges of a technological revolution.

Similar work was appearing in other countries, and one at least, Nikolai Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done?*, published in Russia in 1863, while not as far-ranging in its influence or publication as *Self-Help*, was very influential in Russia. It was read by generations of Russians, and its advice ranged from recommendations on political strategy and tactics for revolutionaries to conducting romantic relationships or starting small cooperatives. *Self-Help* was in many ways an antidote to cautionary literature like Thackeray's *The Luck of Barry Lyndon* (1844) or Dickens's *Great Expectations* that showed the consequences of reaching above one's station.

Asa Briggs commented that *Self-Help* was distinguished from similar books by “neatness of phrase, wide range of illustration, the variety of experiences of its author and his remarkable ability to say something of interest and importance to generations of ‘ordinary’ men and women.”

The success of *Self-Help* led to celebrity status for Smiles. He was elevated to the level of pundit, often called upon for advice and lectures, and received honors at home and abroad. He was invited to perform official functions, such as dedicating foundation stones.

He built steadily on this reputation



Ideal Bookshelf 266 (2011) by Jane Mount, gouache and ink on paper

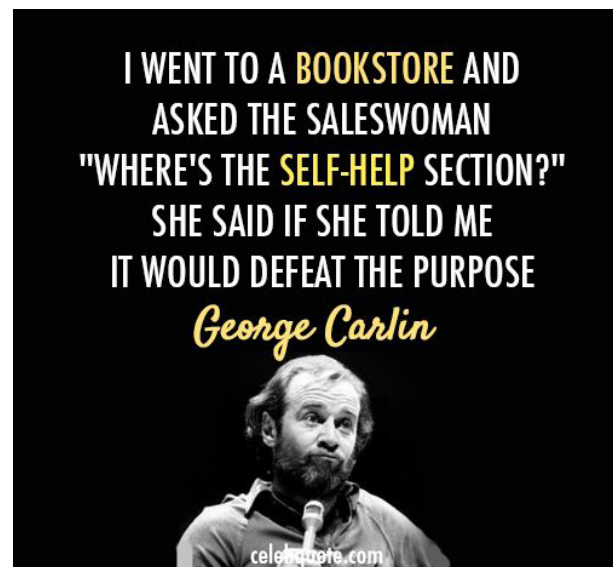
## Self-Help, concluded

with additional books that focused on specific themes in *Self-Help: Character* (1871), *Thrift* (1875), *Duty* (1880), and *Life and Labour* (1887). Smiles was prolific in prose, frequently contributing to the journals of the day and writing many other books. All the books were biographical to some degree, such as *George Stephenson* (1857), *Lives of the Engineers* (5 vols., 1862), *Josiah Wedgwood, His Personal History* (1894). His autobiography was published in 1905, edited and with an introduction by Thomas Mackay, a fellow Scot and classical liberal.

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, *Self-Help*'s positive statements about capitalism provoked increasing socialist criticism of Smiles' writings. From the opposite side, Smiles drew criticism from the famous classical liberal economist Friedrich Hayek, who felt Smiles was not sufficiently laissez faire.

Despite the critiques, books by Smiles continued to sell briskly through the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and its many movements related to personal empowerment,

Smiles' approach had created a market that others sought to fill. Today, self-help is a top-selling nonfiction genre, part of the \$11 billion a year self-help industry, with multiple titles in this category often appearing in the nonfiction Top 10. To paraphrase one writer, the self-help book is no longer an embarrassment: it has moved from the



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## “Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here”

**B**aghdad once conjured the mysteries and exoticism of the Middle East. What is perhaps the best-known work of Arabic literature, *Alf Layla wa Layla* (*Thousand and One Nights*), was compiled in Baghdad over a thousand years ago.

Based on a Persian original which has not survived, the Baghdadi compiler added many stories based on historical characters of the period. Over the centuries, the Iraqi compilation has fascinated and entertained Western audiences as it was translated into European languages. Along the way, editors added other tales they had gathered from Middle Eastern sources, most famously the stories of Aladdin and Ali Baba.

Coupled with this centuries-old literary tradition, Baghdad has an equally old tradition of bookselling. In the Scribes' Quarter, bookshops line the famous Al-Mutanabbi Street as it winds its way for four or five blocks down to the Tigris River. Like many other streets of bookshops, such as Charing Cross Road in London or the stalls that line the Seine in Paris, Al-Mutanabbi Street is more than a convenient gathering of shops for the bookish, it is a

gathering place for writers, artists, and intellectuals and a symbol of its nation's literary heritage and freedom of thought and inquiry. The street is named for a 10<sup>th</sup>-century Iraqi poet, who through his life and work in publishing and selling both approved and banned books, became a symbol of intellectual freedom and one of the most prominent and influential poets in the Arabic language.

On March 5, 2007, four years into the American war in Iraq, a wave of car bombings aimed at civilian targets in Baghdad reached Al-Mutanabbi Street. The explosion took place around noon, when people were idling with glasses of tea at cafés and browsing at book stalls. Thirty people were killed, and over 100 were injured. The effect of the bomb was repeated as piles of books and papers caught fire, reigniting the flames over and over even as firefighters poured streams of water onto the flames. The Shahbandar Café, founded over 100 years ago, fittingly in a former print shop and a hub for Baghdad's intellectual life, was destroyed. Shahbandar's owner, Mohammed Al-Khashali, lost four sons and a grandson that day.

A report, “Baghdad Car Bomb Kills 20 on



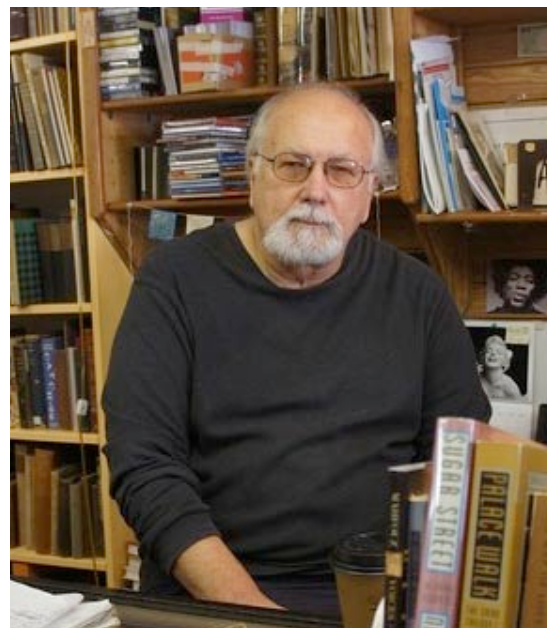
*The figure of the poet Al-Mutanabbi stands above the crowded street that bears his name.*

*Al-Mutanabbi Street, continued*

Bookseller's Row," appeared in the *New York Times* on the day following the bombing. But for most people outside the Middle East, perhaps dully following the events of a distant war, the bombing of Al-Mutanabbi Street would not stand out from any other of the many urban bombings in that period. However, for the people of Iraq, the bombing was a deeply symbolic attack, similar to burning a national library or looting a national museum.

One person who understood the significance of this attack was San Francisco poet and bookseller Beau Beausoleil. What he read in the *New York Times* on March 6 galvanized him into action. The war in Iraq with its casualties and atrocities had become a source of anger and frustration. Beausoleil said that he did not know what to do until he read about the Al-Mutanabbi bombing. As an activist and bookseller and one who sees these activities as callings, this attack gave him a personal connection to the war. Beausoleil called upon letterpress printers to produce personal responses to the bombing. Printer and professor Kathleen Walkup coordinated that first call, and 40 printers responded.

For several years, another call was issued on the anniversary of the bombing through a succession of coordinators. Their collective effort was called the Al-Mutanabbi Street Coalition. Each year, more printers responded from around the world, making their statements in letterpress broadsides. In all, 133 broadsides were produced in those years. In addition, over 262 artist's books were created. Selections from the broadsides and the artist's books have been exhibited in galleries, museums, and libraries around the world. Writers and poets also responded to the call. The first memorial presentation of these works was in August



Poet and bookseller Beau Beausoleil at his home away from home, his bookshop, the Great Overland Book Company of San Francisco



Khalid Mohammed/AP

In the aftermath of the bombing on Al-Mutanabbi Street, an Iraqi surveys the destruction.



*Al-Mutanabbi Street, continued*

2007, where the last line of a poem gave the collective effort its slogan:

We are among the pages of every book that was shredded and burned and covered with flesh and blood that day.

And to those who would manufacture hate with the tools of language . . .

Those who would take away the rights and dignity of a people with the very same words that guarantee them . . .

And to anyone who would view the bodies on Mutanabbi Street as a way to narrow the future into one book . . .

We say, as poets, writers, artists, booksellers, printers and readers,

That Mutanabbi Street starts here.

In the article “A Day That Lingers with Us Still: Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here,” another poet, Persis Karim, described the experience of many artists and writers in the profound effect that the bombing had on her, ramified by the response of so many others in the Al-Mutanabbi Street Coalition. She provided an example of how the deep bonds were

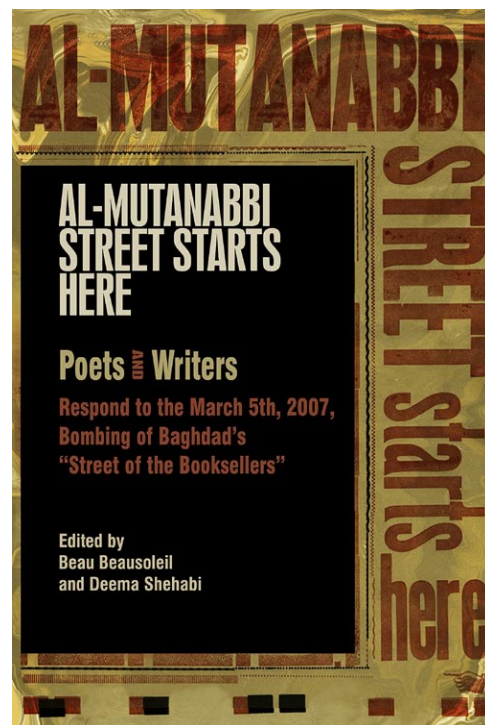
forged among the members of the coalition.

Karim had been invited by Beausoleil to contribute a poem, which led to the writing of “Ways to Count the Dead.” Via the coalition, the poem found its way from California to Florida, where letterpress

printer Jill Hearne set it as the text for a broadside.

A few months later, Karim received a box:

When I opened the box, [I] found the most beautiful and visual representation of my poem, which had become an homage to the incalculable loss of life – with hatch marks embossed on the paper – I was moved to



*A prospective book buyer enters one of the many bookstores that line Al-Mutanabbi Street.*

*Al-Mutanabbi Street, continued*

tears. When I called up Hearne to thank her for her beautiful work, for returning my poem to me and making it her own, she told me how working on the broadside had affected her. She described the painstaking process by which each of the hundred broadsides was printed five separate times to achieve each of the colors, textures, and fonts. “Working on making your poem come alive on the broadside,” she told me, “over and over, each time moving it through the press, was like a meditation for me. I became intimate with the poem’s language and form, its quiet recognition of loss. I felt the poem in a new way. I felt a connection to Iraq.”

Karim’s work is gathered with work by other coalition writers in the 2012 anthology *Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here: Poets and Writers Respond to the March 5th, 2007, Bombing of Baghdad’s “Street of the Booksellers,”* edited by Beau Beausoleil and Deema Shehabi. The book was published by PM Press of Oakland, Calif., “an independent, radical publisher of books and media to educate, entertain, and inspire.” (Coincidentally, PM Press was founded in 2007.)

*Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here* includes the work of writers from many countries:

This book seeks to show where al-Mutanabbi Street starts in all of us: personally, in our communities, and in our nations. It seeks to show the commonality between this small street in Baghdad and our own cultural centers, and why this attack was an attack on us all. This anthology sees al-Mutanabbi Street as a place for the free exchange of ideas; a place that has long offered its sanctuary to the complete spectrum of Iraqi voices. This is where the roots of democracy (in the best sense of that word) took hold many hundreds of years ago. This anthology looks toward al-Mutanabbi Street as an affirmation of all that we hope for in a more just society.

Just as the bombing of Al-Mutanabbi Street was symbolic, so was the rebuilding: a country and a culture once caught in the crossfire of other nations’ policies recovering its soul, that part of it which endures through all attacks. Today, Al-Mutanabbi Street is filled with bookshops and stalls. Avid readers and idle passers by thumb through



Works by the Al-Mutanabbi Street Coalition exhibited at the Smithsonian Museum, one of several such exhibitions in the Washington, D.C., area in 2016



*Al-Mutanabbi Street, continued*

books, chat with the booksellers, relax with friends in the cafés, and chat about the day's events, the country's futures, or nothing very important at all.

To paraphrase a common sentiment among the

coalition, Al-Mutanabbi Street starts wherever one finds the repression of this freedom; thus "Mutanabbi Street starts here" becomes a call to action.

### Where does Al-Mutanabbi Street start for you?



Thaier al-Sudani/REUTERS

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## Al-Mutanabbi Street Broadsides at the Jaffe Center for Book Arts



**T**he Arthur & Mata Jaffe Center for Book Arts at Florida International University in Miami was the vision of Arthur Jaffe and the culmination of a lifelong love of books and reading. Arthur and Mata became interested in artist's books many years ago, eventually amassing a collection of 2,800 of these unique works of art. In 1998, they donated the entire collection to the Florida International University Libraries and the Jaffe Center for Book Arts was born. In the years since its founding, the collection has grown to over 12,000 works, one of the largest such collections in the world.

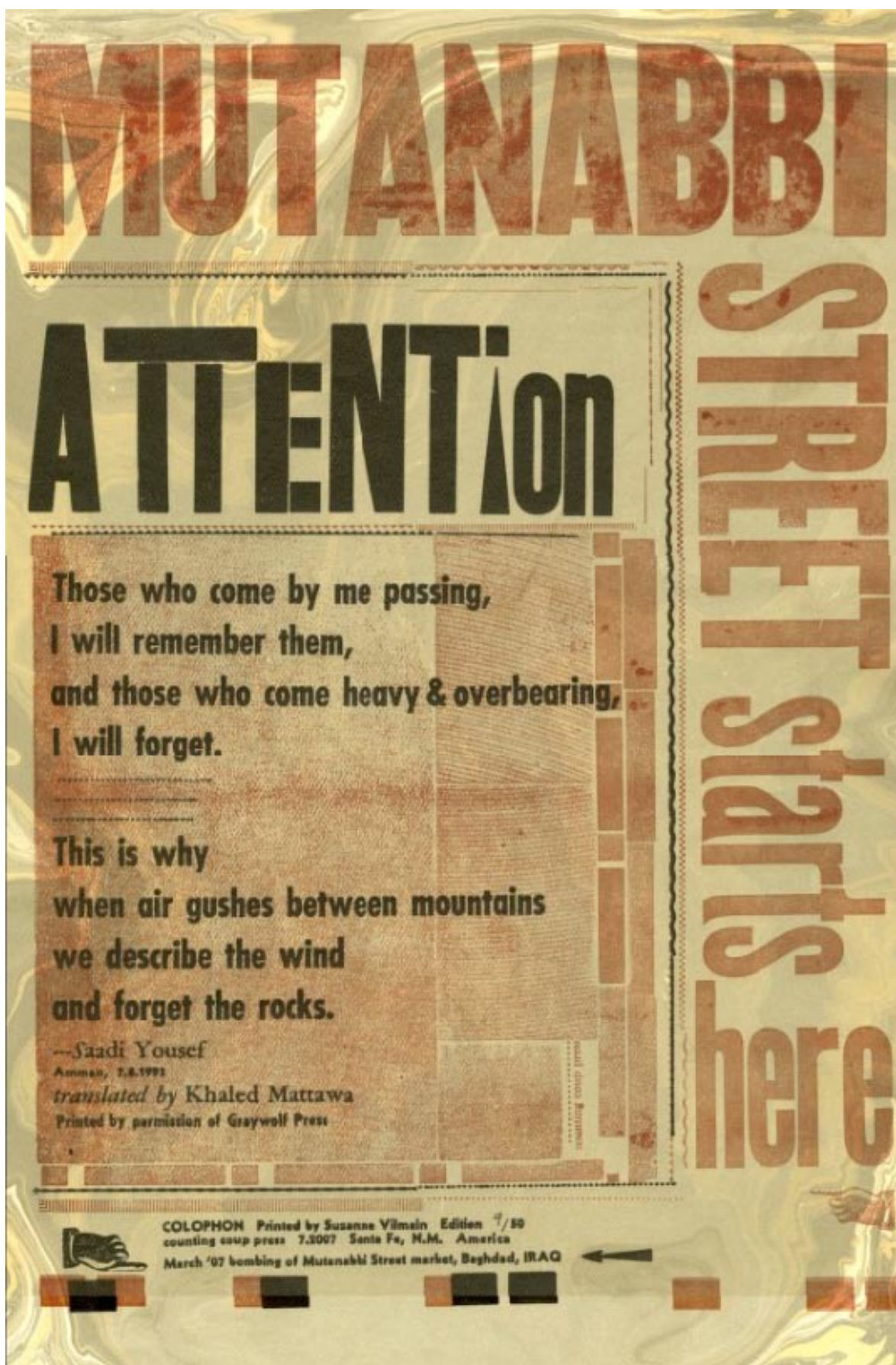
Among these works is a complete set of the 133 broadsides created in response to calls made by the Al-Mutanabbi Street Coalition. The founder of the coalition, Beau Beausoleil, said that when he saw the report of the bombing of Al-Mutanabbi Street the day after it occurred, his connection as a poet and bookseller to the war in Iraq became

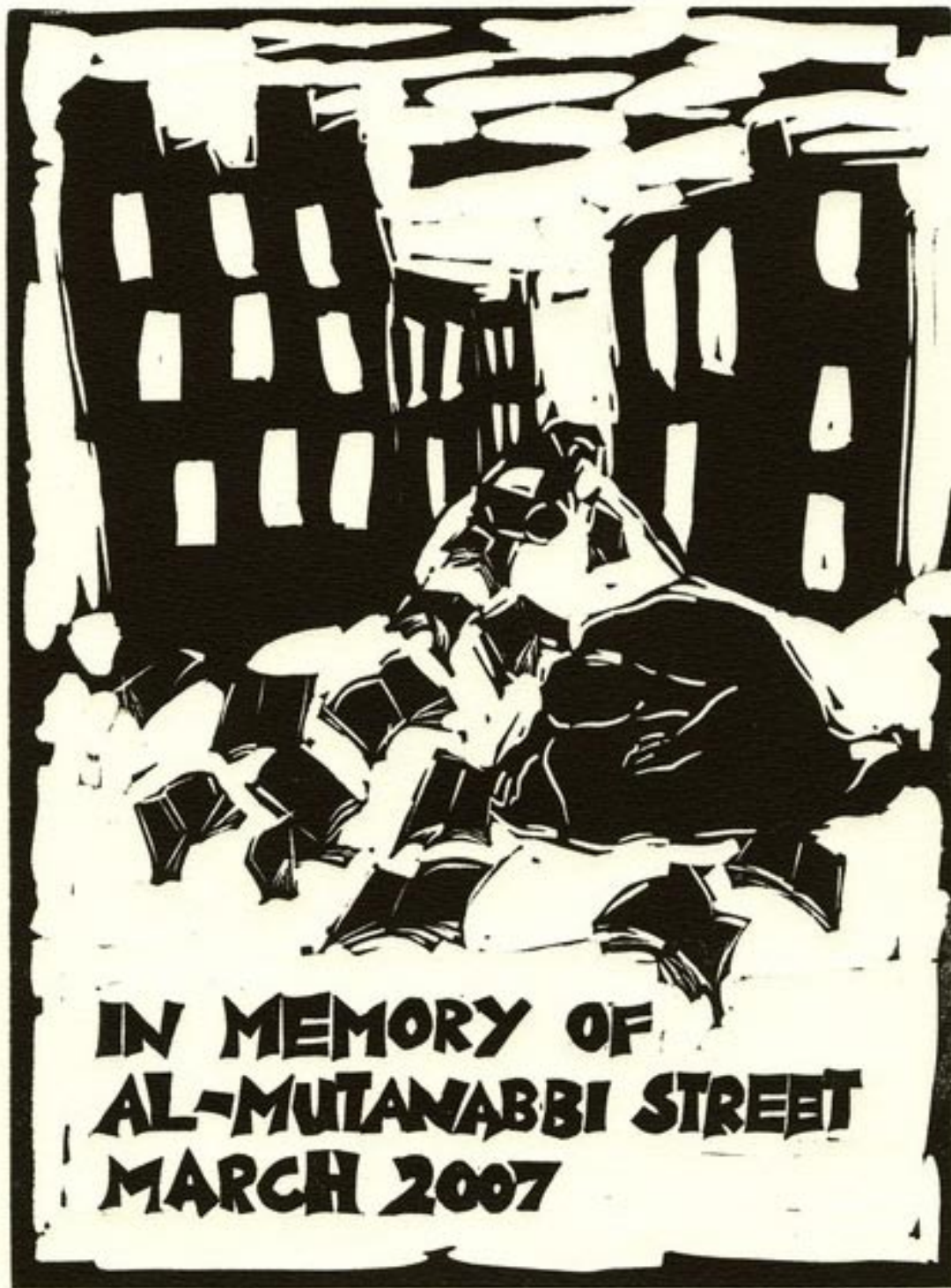
immediate and personal. He conceived that day of calling on letterpress printers to create broadsides. His thought was that many times in history, printers have been "first responders," reacting to important events with the production of broadsides, which were distributed and posted as quickly as they could be printed.

Each of the broadsides in this collection is a work of art: urgent testimony to what happened that day in Baghdad and a call to all of us to fight for the freedom of information that helps ensure our freedom of action.

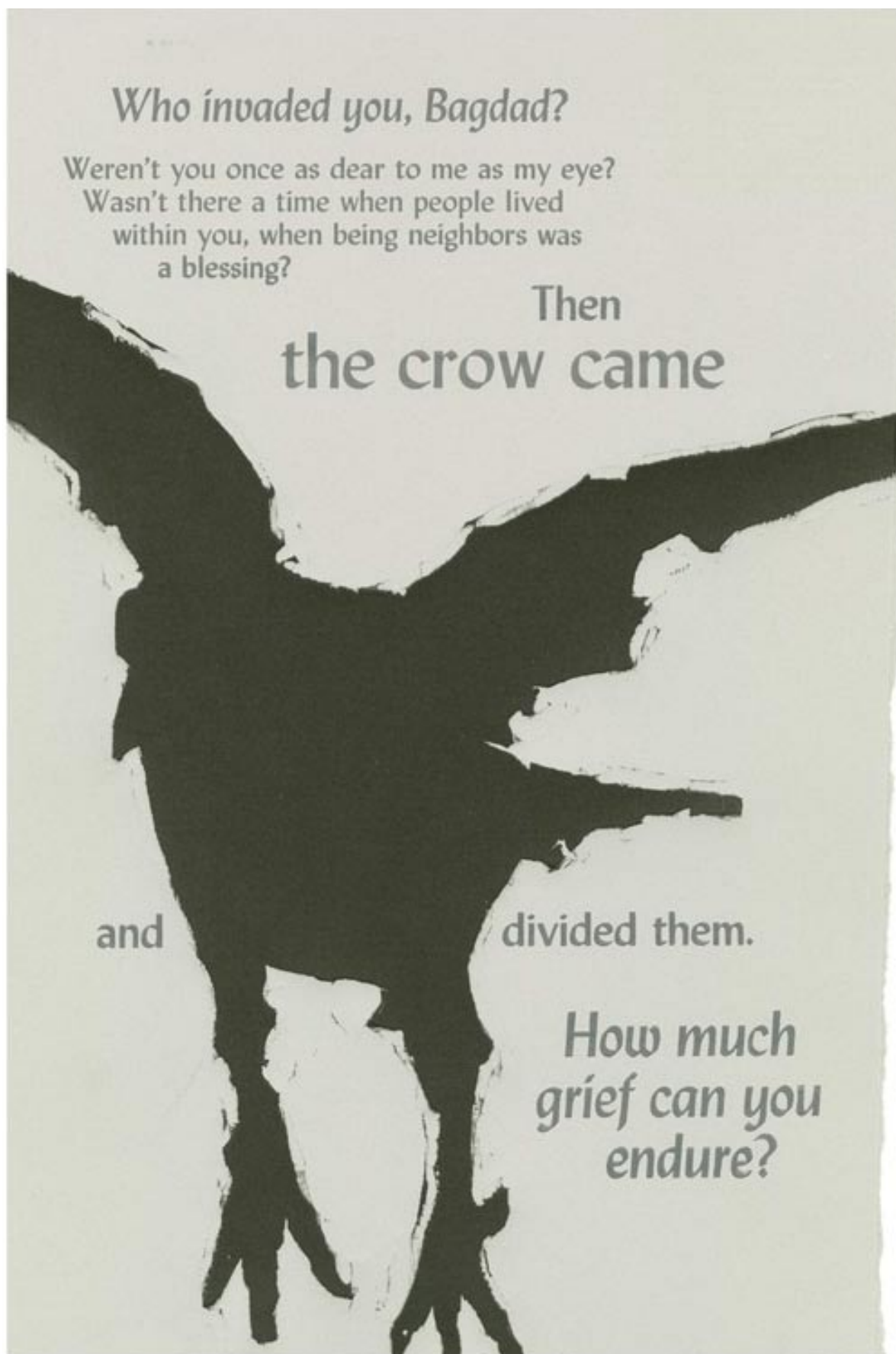
The broadsides are limited editions, many of which were sold to benefit Doctors Without Borders. Only ten complete sets exist – one of them at the Jaffe Center. The center has scanned all of the broadsides and made them available for viewing on their website, again, as a testimony and as inspiration. A few of these posters are presented on the following pages.











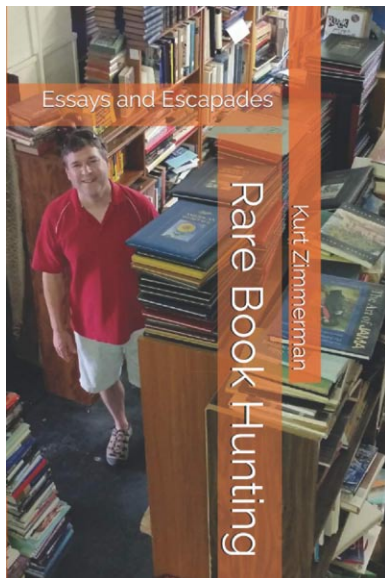
## Books in Brief

### Rare Book Hunting: Essays and Escapades

Kurt W. Zimmerman

Book Hunters Club of Houston

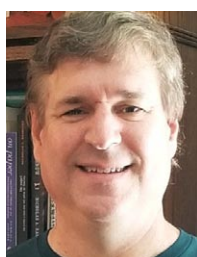
232 pp., 2020



Zimmerman has had a thorough experience of the rare book world as antiquarian bookseller, rare book librarian, bibliographer, and appraiser. These “essays and escapades” span over 30 years of his exciting and ongoing journey as a collector. With stops along the way such as a three-year internship at the Harry Ransom Humanities

Research Center in Austin, Texas, or Zimmerman’s directorship in rare books and maps at the Butterfield & Butterfield auction house in San Francisco, Zimmerman has encountered many special books and special people that have become the subjects of this book. His own collecting focuses on association items related to book collecting history and first editions of Latin American literature have added many other layers of quests, titles, and personalities enriching his experiences and this book. Many of the writings in the book are taken from Zimmerman’s well-respected blog, *American Book Collecting*, and the contents list is a journey in itself through many of the great names in American rare books – some familiar and some less so. *Rare Book Hunting* will be fascinating reading for accomplished collectors and a great introduction for those just getting started.

**Kurt Zimmerman** is a co-founder of the Book Hunters Club of Houston. He established his popular blog [bookcollectinghistory.com](http://bookcollectinghistory.com) in 2011.



Source: *Rare Book Hunting*; *Fine Books and Collections*

### The Bookseller of Florence: The Story of the Manuscripts That Illuminated the Renaissance

Ross King

Atlantic Monthly Press

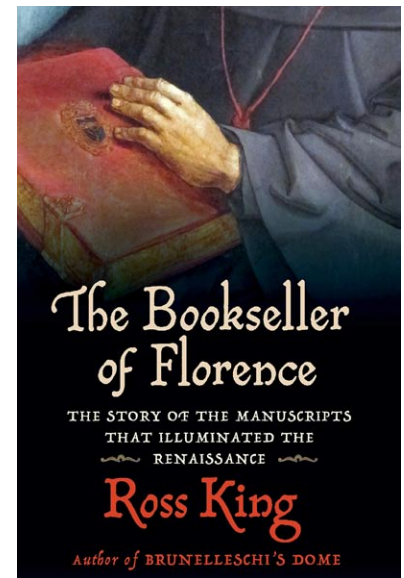
496 pp., 2021

For over four decades, Vespasiano da Bisticci, “the king of the world’s booksellers,” produced and sold many hundreds of volumes from his bookshop, which also became a gathering spot for debate and discussion. Besides repositories of ancient wisdom by the likes of Plato, Aristotle, and Quintilian, his books were works of art in their own right, copied by talented scribes and illuminated by the finest miniaturists. His clients included a roll-call of popes, kings, and princes across Europe who wished to burnish their reputations by founding magnificent libraries.

Vespasiano had reached the summit of his powers as Europe’s most prolific merchant of knowledge when a new invention appeared: the printing press. This new technology’s ability to produce multiple copies of books quickly and cheaply, making them available to many who would never have been able to afford Vespasiano’s handmade artworks, changed the bookselling landscape in Renaissance Florence, one of Europe’s most literate cities, and throughout Europe. In response, Vespasiano retired from the book trade in 1480, leaving a legacy of exquisite books, fine libraries, and his own writing – a series of biographies that help document the awakening of Renaissance Florence.

**Ross King** is the author of the bestselling *Brunelleschi’s Dome* and *Michelangelo & the Pope’s Ceiling*, as well as the novels *Ex-Libris* and *Domino*.

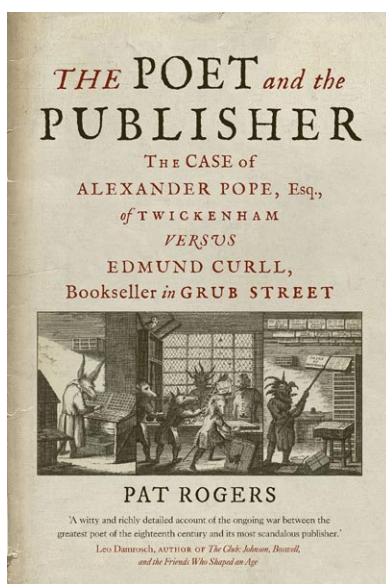
Source: Atlantic Monthly Press, *The Bookseller of Florence*





*Books in Brief, continued***The Poet and the Publisher: The Case of Alexander Pope, Esq., of Twickenham versus Edmund Curll, Bookseller in Grub Street**

Pat Rogers  
Reaktion Books  
448 pp., 2021



**The quarrel between the poet Alexander Pope and the publisher Edmund Curll has long been a notorious episode in the history of the book – two remarkable figures with a gift for comedy and an immoderate dislike of each other clashed publicly and without restraint. However, it has never, until now, been chronicled in**

full. Ripe with the sights and smells of Hanoverian London, *The Poet and the Publisher* details their vitriolic exchanges, drawing on previously unearthed pamphlets, newspaper articles, and advertisements, court and government records, and personal letters. The story of their battles in and out of print includes a poisoning, the pillory, numerous instances of fraud, and a landmark case in the history of copyright. The book is a forensic account of events both momentous and farcical, and it is indecently entertaining.

*Publishers Weekly* said, “What sets Rogers’s history apart is his ability to combine fastidious research with lucid, unpretentious prose. History buffs and literary-minded readers alike are in for a punchy, drama-filled treat.”

**Pat Rogers** has established himself in 18th-century studies, especially Pope, Johnson, and their circles, through posts at the universities of Cambridge, London, and Wales. He is Professor Emeritus at the University of South Florida.

Sources: Reaktion Books; USF website

**White Spines: Confessions of a Book Collector**

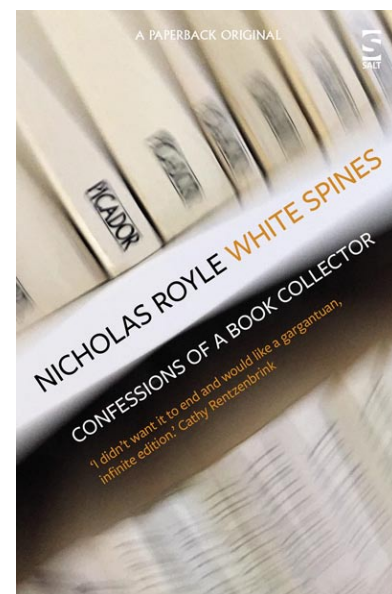
Nicholas Royle  
Salt Publishing  
256 pp., 2021

Picador was launched in the U.K. in 1972 by renowned publisher Sonny Mehta as a literary imprint of Pan Books with the aim of publishing outstanding international writing in paperback editions only. Nicholas Royle undertook to collect Picador’s fiction titles, eventually amassing 1,000 books, all with Picador’s trademark white spines. In *White Spines*, “there’s a history of Picador and a quest to collect books, but really it is a relaxed saunter around second-hand bookshops.” Royle revels, as many collectors do, in the individuality that mass-produced books acquire through ownership, trade, and resale. In *White Spines*, he lingers over “the names and dedications written in books” as well as the letters, tickets, and other ephemera left in them by previous owners.

The book has a bonus for Anglophiles as Royle visits bookshops and bookish venues across the U.K., such as Goldmark Books in Uppingham, George Kelsall Booksellers in Littleborough, Southend, Coventry, or Wigtown in Scotland.

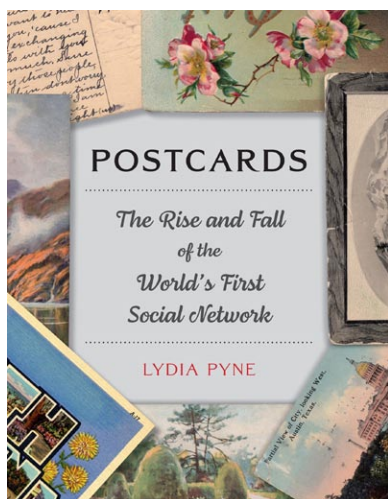
**Nicholas Royle**, is a novelist, short story writer and anthologist. A native of Manchester, U.K., he is a reader in creative writing at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Sources: Salt Publishing; Amazon



*Books in Brief, concluded***Postcards: The Rise and Fall of the World's First Social Network**

Lydia Pyne  
Reaktion Books  
232 pp., 2021



The postcard, a stiff piece of paper mailed without an envelope, emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, rising to a “golden age” from about 1890 to 1920. By the latter date, the postcard was facing a technological challenge to its role as a deliverer of short messages and spontaneous greetings: the telephone. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed, and new color

printing technologies emerged, postcards found other markets as quintessential souvenirs – to be sent or collected – featuring photographs or drawings of even the most remote locations.

Postcards are usually associated with banal holiday pleasantries, but they are made possible by sophisticated industries and institutions, from printers to postal services. When they were invented, postcards established what is now taken for granted in modern times: the ability to send and receive messages around the world easily and inexpensively. Fundamentally they are about creating personal connections – links between people, places, and beliefs. Lydia Pyne examines postcards on a global scale, to understand them as artifacts that are at the intersection of history, science, technology, art, and culture. In doing so, she shows how postcards were the first global social

network and also, here in the twenty-first century, how postcards are not yet extinct.

**Lydia Pyne** is a writer and historian, interested in the history of science and material culture applied to work in South Africa, Ethiopia, and Uzbekistan, as well as the American Southwest.

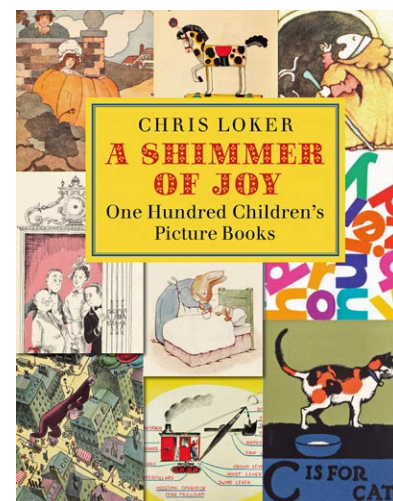


Sources: Reaktion Books; Wikipedia

**A Shimmer of Joy: One Hundred Children's Picture Books**

Chris Loker  
David R. Godine  
256 pp., 2020

How do simple words and images make a children's picture book so magical that one reading can create a cherished memory for life? Here are 100 books that amply prove the picture book is an art form. *A Shimmer of Joy* features many childhood wonders, from classics like *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1901) to



modern favorites like *Last Stop on Market Street* (2015). Each of the 100 books is presented with a cover and inside spread as author Chris Loker explains the qualities that combine to make a successful picture book: the interplay between words and images, the dynamic pulse of picture and narrative that compels us to turn the page and follow the story, the sometimes quirky elements that appeal to both children and adults alike.

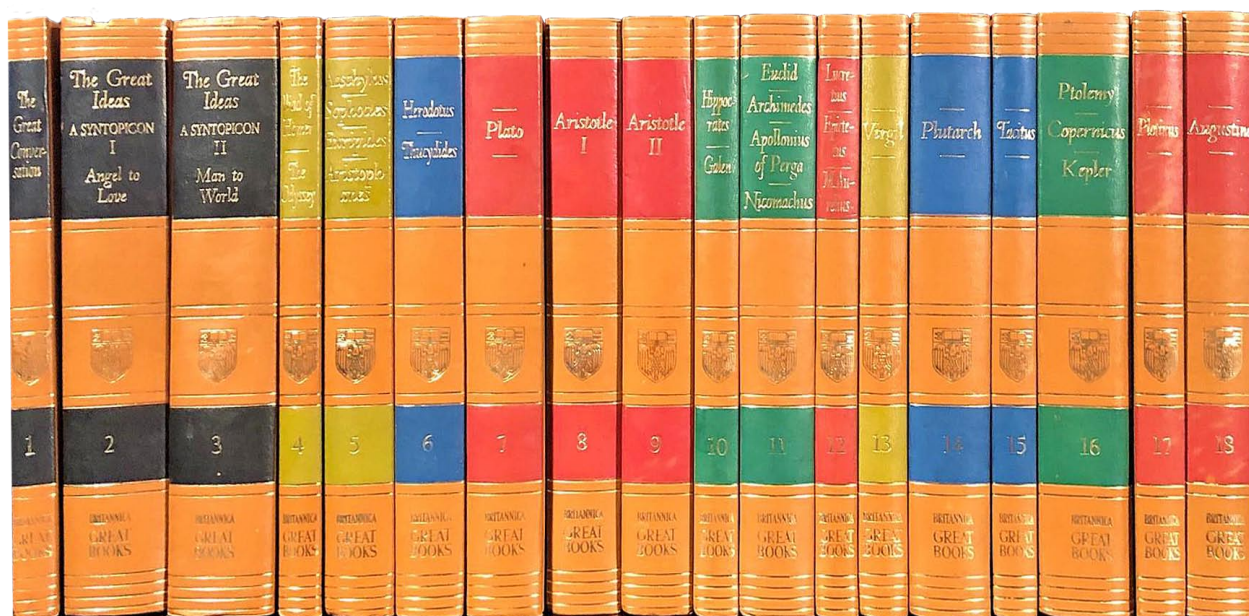
In addition to its beautiful display, *A Shimmer of Joy* provides an array of information about authors, artists, publishers, and designers. The reader thus gains insight into the evolution of children's literature and book publishing in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, with fascinating stories of its publication history and biographies of the creators.

**Chris Loker** is an antiquarian bookseller in San Francisco, specializing in antique children's books from 1750 to 1950. She serves on the boards of the Grolier Club, the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Rare Book School at the University of Virginia, and Bring Me a Book.

Sources: David R. Godine, Publisher, Inc.







The image above shows the first 18 of 54 volumes that comprise *The Great Books of the Western World* (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952), largely the brainchild of Mortimer Adler, a philosopher and prolific author. The books were presented to the public on April, 15, 1952, in a ceremony at the Waldorf-Astoria, with the first two sets given to Queen Elizabeth II and President Harry S. Truman. Thousands of sets were sold in the U.S., leading to extensions such as *Gateway to the Great Books* and *The Great Ideas Today* (annual; 1961–1998).

kingdoms. When I go  
I shall bear **thanks** of you,  
we speak your name below.”

### This Month's Writers and Contributors

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

David Hall  
Jerry Morris  
Linda Morris  
Maureen E. Mulvihill  
Carl Mario Nudi  
Gary Simons  
Ben Wiley

Have an idea for an article for *The Florida Bibliophile*?  
Contact Charles Brown, [cmbrown@atlantic.net](mailto:cmbrown@atlantic.net),  
[atlantic.net](http://atlantic.net), to submit or for assistance in preparing your  
article.

## Join FBS!

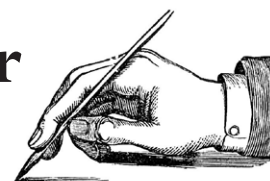
If you love books, take your interest to the next level by joining a group of dedicated book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars, and readers, and you will discover a lively, enjoyable group. You will find contact emails on the last page of this newsletter.



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

### November 2021



### Kurt Zimmerman: Some Rare Book Hunting Escapades

Seminole Community Library  
9200 113<sup>th</sup> St. N., Seminole, FL

November 21, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

Rare Book Hunting is something that Kurt Zimmerman has enjoyed doing for over 30 years. For the past ten years, he has been writing about his discoveries on his popular blog, *American Book Collecting*. Kurt is co-founder and current president of the Book Hunters Club of Houston. Earlier this year, the club published a book of his essays and escapades, aptly titled *Rare Book Hunting*. Books about Books is what Kurt collects, more specifically, association copies, books about books inscribed by their authors to other noted bibliophiles. *Rare Book Hunting* is one of the seven current favorite Books about Books that Michael Dirda recommended in the Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> issue of *The Washington Post*. Dirda defined Books about Books as “a wide-ranging category that could easily be relabeled ‘the stuff that dreams are made of.’” Kurt will tell us some of this “stuff” that he has recently found: stuff that we could only dream about!

### December 2021



### FBS Holiday Party

December 19, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

Plans are being made for the FBS Holiday Party. Details in the December newsletter.

Watch this space!



## Book Events, Podcasts, and More

Know of any events of interest to book lovers? Send corrections and additions to Charles Brown, [cmbrown@atlantic.net](mailto:cmbrown@atlantic.net).

### Florida Book Events – Nov.–Dec. 2021

November 1–18

#### JCA Jewish Literary, Film, and Arts Festival

Jacksonville, FL ([jcjax.org/jcafest/](http://jcjax.org/jcafest/))

November 6

#### Sanibel Island Writers Conference

Sanibel Island, FL ([www.fgcu.edu/siwc/](http://www.fgcu.edu/siwc/))

November 8–14

#### Tampa Bay Times Festival of Reading

USF St. Petersburg

([www.tampabay.com/expos/festival-of-reading/](http://www.tampabay.com/expos/festival-of-reading/))

November 14–21

#### Miami Book Fair International

Miami Dade College Wolfson Campus, Miami, FL

([www.miamibookfair.com/](http://www.miamibookfair.com/))

November 17–19

#### Cracker Storytelling Festival, Homeland, FL

(<http://crackerstorytellingfestival.com/>)

November 19, 10 a.m.

#### Ringling Literati Book Club, Sarasota, FL

Featured Book: *Plunder: Napoleon's Theft of Veronese's Feast* by Cynthia Saltzman

December 1–5

#### INK Miami: Modern and Contemporary Works on Paper

([www.inkartfair.com](http://www.inkartfair.com))

December 2–4

#### Art | Basel, Miami

(<https://www.artbasel.com/miami-beach>)

December 10, 10:30 a.m.

#### Ringling Literati Book Club, Sarasota, FL

Featured Book: *The Lost Painting: The Quest for a Caravaggio Masterpiece* by Jonathan Harr

### Behind the Bookshelves, the AbeBooks Podcast

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

Oct. 25 – *Grapes of Wrath* Manuscript

Oct. 22 – The Haunted Bookshop

Sept. 17 – Hammonds Books

### Rare Book Cafe

Rare Book Cafe, now in its sixth season, covers all aspects of books in “the only live-streamed program about antiquarian books, ephemera, and more....”

Produced by St. Pete journalist (just one of his many talents!) T. Allan Smith, RBC streams on most Saturdays. View episodes on the [Rare Book Cafe website \(on Facebook\)](#), on YouTube, and in audio, *Rare Book Cafe Raw*, on podcast sites.

**Oct. 16 (\$6 E37):** Host Lee Linn (Ridge Books, GA) welcomes special guest Sarah Smith, manager of the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair, which returns April 1-3, 2022, in St. Pete, Florida, after a two-year pause with the theme The Children’s Hour, celebrating books for young readers and the people who love them. Also on RBC, regulars Richard Mori (Mori Books, NH) and David Hess, with his feature Things Found in Old Books, and co-host of Lee Linn’s visit to Finster Fest, an art and craft show at Paradise Garden, an art park in Summerville, Georgia, created by the late outsider artist Howard

### The Biblio File, with Nigel Beale

[THE BIBLIO FILE](#) is one of the world’s leading podcasts about “the book” and book culture. Host Nigel Beale fosters wide-ranging conversations with authors, poets, publishers, booksellers, editors, collectors, book makers, scholars, critics, designers, publicists, literary agents, and others who just plain love books. The website provides podcasts back to 2006, lists of reading, links, etc.

#### Recent episodes:

**Oct. 25** – Author and publisher **Jordi Nadal** reflects on a career that has included work for Spanish publisher EDHASA and Random House.

**Oct. 19** – **Paul Delaney** on life of prominent Victorian Charles Ricketts, who worked in fine press book design and production, stage design, typography, painting, sculpture, and art criticism.

**Oct. 11** – **Andrew Coyne**, who is well known for his column in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, discusses his father’s historic tenure at the Bank of Canada.

**Oct. 5** – Nigel interviews **Andrew Steeves**, co-founder of Gaspereau Press. The interview focuses on book design and Andrew’s many awards for it.

**Sept. 27** – **Michele Troy** on her book *The Albatross Press and the Third Reich* about the publisher’s fight to keep publishing in Nazi Germany.

*Book 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. Past talks are archived on the PHBAC website.

### *Upcoming episodes:*

**Nov. 18, 2 p.m. – Elizabeth McHenry: *To Make Negro Literature: Writing, Literary Practice, and African American Authorship*.** McHenry traces African American authorship in the 10 years after the 1896 legalization of segregation. Focusing on unfamiliar practitioners whose works reflect the unsettledness of African American letters in this period, she analyzes the unpublished, unsuccessful, or only partially achieved and recovers a hidden genealogy of Black literature as having emerged tentatively, laboriously, and unevenly.

**Dec. 2, 2 p.m. – Mark Rifkin: *Speaking for the People: Native Writing and the Question of Political Form*.** Rifkin’s book examines 19<sup>th</sup>-century Native writings to reframe Indigenous recognition, refusal, and resurgence. Works by Native authors (William Apess, Elias Boudinot and Zitkala-Ša) illustrate the challenge of representing Indigenous political identity and placemaking, highlighting the complexity in negotiating the character, contours, and scope of Indigenous sovereignties under ongoing colonial occupation. This examination sheds light on Indigenous governance then and now.

## The Book Collector Podcast

In 1952, James Bond author Ian Fleming created *The Book Collector*, a “unique periodical for bibliophiles,” which featured a wide range of articles pertaining to book collecting, modern first editions, typography, national libraries, and numerous matters of interest to book collectors. 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 [51 podcasts](#) available on SoundCloud. Recent additions include:

- Portrait of a Bibliophile XIV: Marx and Engels
- My Uncle Ian, by James Fleming
- Collecting Ian Fleming, by Jon Gilbert

## 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.

[Persian Arts of the Book Conference, July 13–14, 2021](#) – Scholars from around the world reflect on the Persian manuscript tradition

## Grolier Club of New York Videos

The Grolier Club of New York has posted over [230 videos on Vimeo](#), including many virtual exhibition openings, tours, and show-and-tell episodes.

### *Recent episodes:*

[16<sup>th</sup>- & 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Portolan Charts of the Mediterranean in the Hispanic Society Library, by Mitchell Coddington](#)

[Highlights of Spanish Printmaking, by Patrick Lenaghan](#)

[The Hispanic Society’s Collection of \*Comedias Seltas\*, by Szilvia Szmuk-Tanenbaum](#)





## Florida Bibliophile Society 2021–2022 Season



David Hall

**FBS meetings may be in-person or via Zoom as conditions warrant. Check the Upcoming Events page for details.**

**September 19 • FBS Members—September Show and Tell:** Covid can't stop the collectors! Attendees shared recent additions to their collections.

**October 17 • Ed Cifelli – “The Capitalist of Po’ Biz” or, John Ciardi: America’s Millionaire Poet:** Ed is the author of two books about the poet John Ciardi. Not only one of the most important 20th-century American poets, Ciardi had a fascinating life story and was a media personality in his day.

**November 21 • Kurt Zimmerman – Some Rare Book Hunting Escapades:** Join us as Kurt, founder and president of the Book Hunters Club of Houston, shares some of the quests that led to his recent book *Rare Book Hunting: Essays and Escapades* (2020). For several years, Kurt was director of rare books and maps for Butterfield and Butterfield Auctions, San Francisco.

**December 19 • FBS Holiday Party:** Details forthcoming.

**January 16 • Elaine Togneri – TBA:** Elaine has published fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, but she is best known for her mystery stories, which have been published on the Web, in anthologies, and in major magazines.

**February 20 • Reid Byers – TBA:** Reid’s varied career has included minister, welder, and computer programmer, among others. He is author of *Private Library: The History of the Architecture and Furnishing of the Domestic Bookroom* (Oak Knoll Press, 2021).

**March 20 • Boštjan Petrič – Book Collecting in Slovenia:** Boštjan describes himself as a “book

collector, bibliomaniac, and book enthusiast.” Through his [Fate of Books](#) blog, he provides a Slovenian perspective on book collecting and on his special interest, libricide, i.e., the destruction of books. His blog comes with a moral: no matter how obscure the book, there is a collector somewhere who would love to possess it.

**March 31 • Special Event at Largo Public Library – Ed Centeno.** Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* Still Relevant to Modern Times. Ed will share his insights as well as selections from his outstanding Whitman collection.

**April 1–3 • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair.** Planning is underway for one of the largest book fairs in the U.S., which happens each year, right in our backyard, at the Coliseum in downtown St. Pete. Each year, FBS hosts a table at the entrance to the Book Fair where we answer questions and hold parcels for visitors. Many visitors sign up for our newsletter, and some join FBS. A highlight occurs on Sunday when FBS collectors provide free book evaluations.

**April 17 • Ray Betzner – Studies in Starrett:** Betzner became addicted to Sherlock Holmes at an early age, which led him to the Holmes scholar Charles Vincent Emerson Starrett. “Studies in Starrett” is Ray’s blog in which he explores “Starrett’s work, his connections with other writers, and his influence, especially in the world of Sherlock Holmes.”

**May 15 • Banquet:** We will be watching carefully to see if a May banquet is possible and advisable. Stay tuned!

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



## Endpaper • Together Again!



First, many thanks to Jerry Morris for mastering one layer of technology after another to ensure that all us bibliophiles would stay connected during the pandemic... and adding even to that to manage our first hybrid event, part in-person and part on Zoom. I was both happy to be at Lighthouse Books live and to know that our excellent presentation by Ed Cifelli was being enjoyed by an even wider circle at home.

Thanks to Mike Slicker and Sarah Smith of Lighthouse Books for hosting us. It could not be more fitting to enjoy an FBS meeting than among the books... and unlike our other very fitting meeting places, the Seminole Community Library and the University of Tampa Library, these books are for sale! Enticing!

The “year” of Covid (however long it ends up being) seemed like a fog – we were in touch, but

not in touch. Almost everyone in our lives, fellow bibliophiles, coworkers, friends, and family was virtual. All our conversations were at the mercy of a technology that, while amazing, has its own limitations. The past year has nevertheless opened doors as well. We can make our meetings available to remote viewers who are unable to attend in person for one reason or another. We’ve been able to share these meetings with other bibliophile clubs and remote speakers, developing even more bibliophilic bonds.

All in all, it can’t be said enough how good it was to be together and enjoy the meeting as well as the hospitality of Dade City after the meeting and laugh with friends over a meal.

Hoping to . . .

See you at the bookstore!

— Charles

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