

The Florida Bibliophile

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IN THIS ISSUE

*Minutes of the February 2022 Meeting of
the Florida Bibliophile Society –
Reid Byers: The Private Library*..... p. 2

*Walt Whitman Leaves of Grass: Still
Relevant to Modern Times, Largo
Public Library, March 31* p. 8

*Arrest Made in Theft of 5,000 comics from
FSU Special Collections* p. 9

*Making the Biggest Book in the World
– The Klencke Atlas, 1660* p. 12

Collecting Feminism p. 15

Books in Brief p. 20

Upcoming Events p. 24

Book Events and Podcasts p. 25

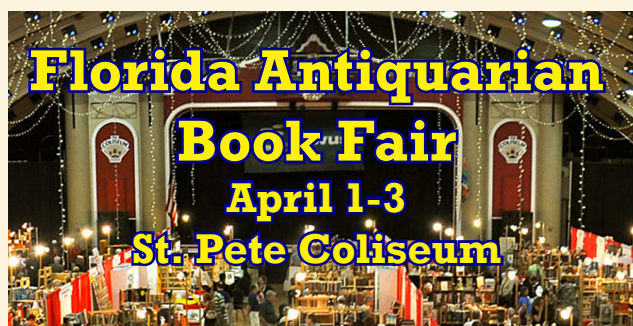
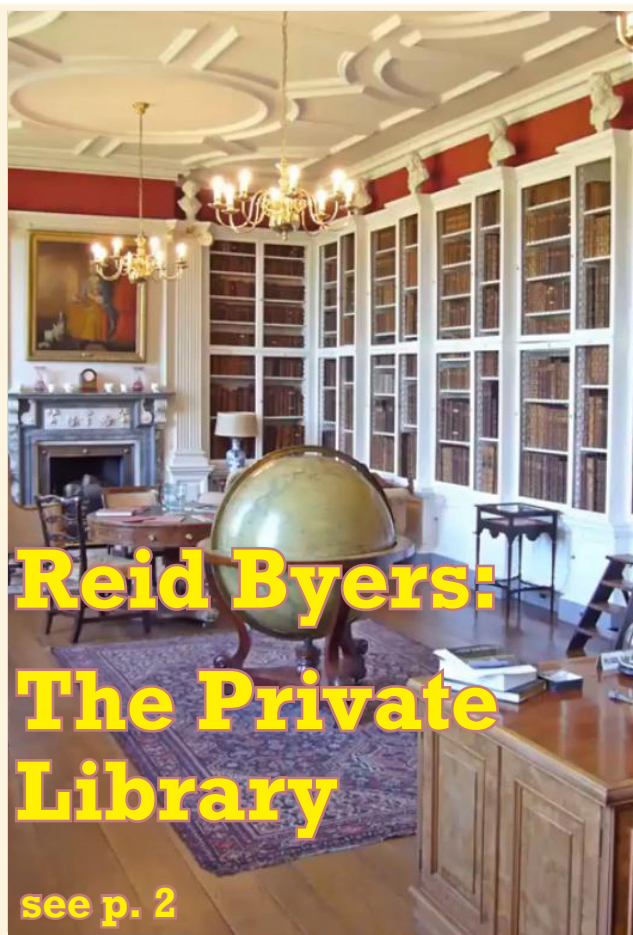
...and More p. 28

FBS 2021–2022 Season p. 29

Endpaper • I'll never be the same p. 30

*Deadline for the April newsletter is March 31, 2022.
See page 23 for details.*

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Florida Bibliophile Society
A community of book lovers

Minutes of the February 2022 Meeting of the Florida Bibliophile Society

by Gary Simons, FBS Secretary

In February, some FBS members gathered together at one of our regular haunts, the Macdonald-Kelce Library at the University of Tampa, to mingle and participate in our monthly meeting, while other FBS members and a goodly number of visitors attended the meeting via Zoom. All of us got to hear and see a Zoom presentation by one of the currently most in-demand speakers in the book club world, Reid Byers. Reid's widely-hailed 2021 book, *The Private Library: the History of the Architecture and Furnishing of the Domestic Bookroom*, is already in its third printing!

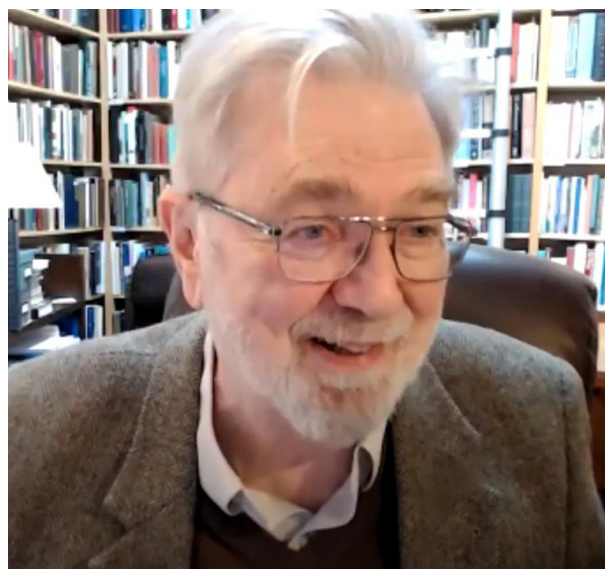
After President Charles Brown opened the meeting, Vice President Jerry Morris introduced Reid, who is a Renaissance man if there ever was one. Reid has at various times been a Presbyterian minister, a C language programmer, a Master IT Architect at IBM, a journalist, a welder, a TV newscaster, a choral director, and a Navy sailor. He has directed or curated eighteen book exhibitions and published on varied topics, including harpsichord organology and software performance testing. And, with all that, for the last twenty years he has been working on his great book, *The Private Library*. He has also been active on the book club circuit, giving presentations to the Baxter Society, the Grolier Club, and the Baltimore Bibliophiles among other organizations.

Displaying his love of books and book spaces, as well as his flair for language and presentation, Reid began his "More of Less Compendious Disquisition" by reading from the introduction to his book. Some excerpts from this reading are shown below:



A whistful young Reid in his first domestic bookroom

My first room was a library, my parents' living room having once been my grandparents' library, in the years before the big house was divided up. There were enormous walnut bookcases on either side of the fireplace, with high mullioned doors



From his own "book-wrapt" space Reid Byers joined the Florida Bibliophile Society via Zoom for a fascinating journey through space and time with the development of the domestic bookroom.

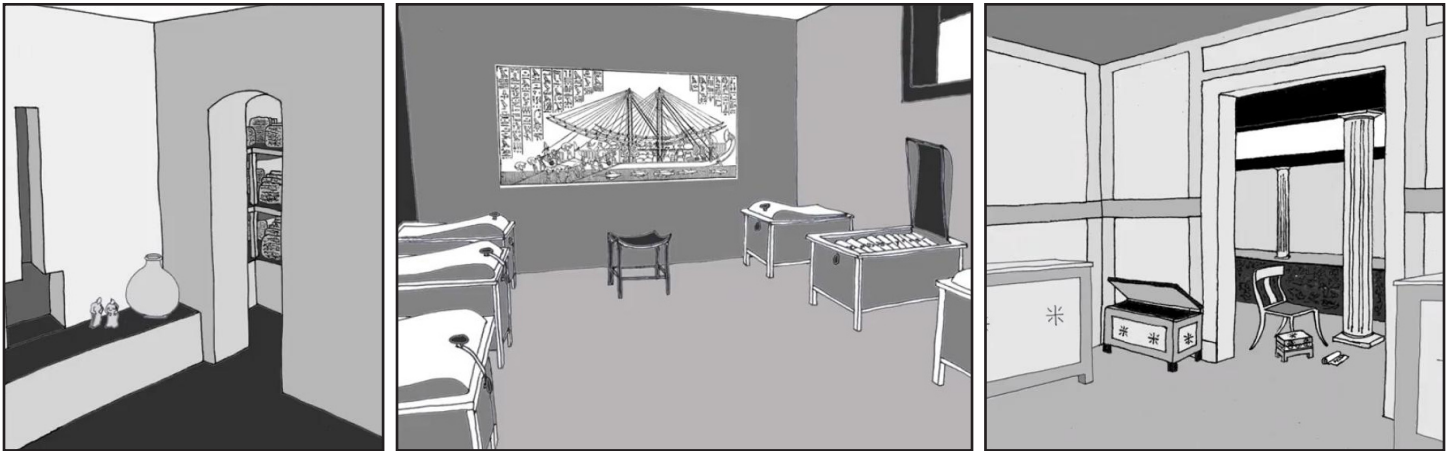
that I could not at first puzzle out how to open. There were tall windows facing down to the southeast, and a solemnly thick Oriental carpet on which to belly down: it was clearly a magical room. All libraries are magical rooms. All their windows look out onto Faërie, and all their carpets can fly...

This book is about a particular feeling . . . engendered by a bookroom that nothing else in the world provides. It is the reason the private library will last, and it is the true subject of this book, that beneficent feeling of being . . . let me settle on book-wrapt . . . It implies the traditional library wrapped in shelves of books, and the condition of wrapt attention to a particular volume, and the rapture of being transported into the wood beyond the world. . . .

The history of the private library is properly the story of this feeling . . .

Was there ever a more eloquent statement of the spirit and sensibility produced by a bibliophilic space?

Reid went on to enumerate some of the varied uses of libraries over time besides that of book storage, and his lengthy list covered virtually all human

Minutes, continued

Three ancient book rooms: (Left) In ancient Sumer, clay tablets bearing religious or literary texts were stored on shelves in a small room adjacent to a person devotional space. (Center) In ancient Egypt, papyrus scrolls were stored in large boxes, typical of Byers's Type 1 book room. (Right) In an ancient Greek home, the scrolls are stored in boxes that are smaller than the Egyptian boxes, and the room is adjacent to a space convenient for reading (Type 2 book room), in this case, a colonnade where an opening in the roof provides light for reading.

activity. As elaborated in his book, the needs of these associated activities at different periods of time often influenced the architecture of libraries.

Reid displayed part of the elaborate table of contents of his book, a listing which reminds one of the tables of contents of 18th-century works like *Tom Jones* in its level of purposeful detail. Most of Reid's talk consisted of a brisk but delightfully illustrated tour of his book.

Our tour began with the libraries in Sumer and Babylon, for which Reid showed and described a diagram of an approximately 5' by 7' library in ancient Ur. This room, located at the back of a house with a stone bench and heavy shelving, would have been able to handle the twelve heavy clay tablets of Gilgamesh or similar tablets of other ancient writings.

In contrast, Reid's diagram of an Egyptian library (which he categorized as being Type 1) had a series of light boxes or chests, each of which contained papyrus scrolls. In ancient Greece, the Type 1 library was slightly different, as the book storage room, still without seating, faced a colonnade on the west side of a peristyle, where it would get the morning light. The owner of the library would enter the book room to get a scroll but then read it outside in the colonnade. Reid designated the libraries of

Hellenistic Greece (Greece after Alexander) and in the Roman Republic as Type 2; book storage rooms had advanced to the point of having shelving and associated furniture and decorations.

By the time of the Roman Empire, codices (i.e., books) had come into use, but for a long time, scrolls remained in use as well. Interestingly, Reid noted that Christian materials often were in the form of codices while pagan materials remained scrolls. Book storage rooms became larger and more elegant – people could now read where their books were stored. In Roman Empire Type 3 libraries, the books themselves were stored in armaria, wooden cabinets with hinged doors, which were placed in niches built into the walls. The shelves in the armaria were slanted and books were placed face up. The book-lined room where one could read and be book-wrapt had come into being.

But then Rome fell, and the Type 3 private library disappeared for a thousand years. To illustrate the "darkness" of the early part of this period, Reid asserted that between the years 600 and 800 in England there is absolutely no evidence at all of any literary activity. Not until Charlemagne is there evidence of the use of books. During the High and Late Medieval ages, libraries had fallen back to Type 1, i.e., books stored in chests. Books had become terribly expensive: they were now written on

Minutes, continued

parchment, and it took a scribe a full year to copy a bible. These medieval book chests had lids, which could be propped up, and which eventually morphed into combination chest-desks or reading desks, which in turn eventually became lecterns. Books were stored lying down on the slanted top of a lectern. By the time of the mid-Renaissance, the lectern system was in full bloom as a way to store books, but the system was inherently inefficient because it took large areas to store many books. Reid showed a picture of a late-1400s beautiful, but costly, Flemish library which used lecterns. At Oxford, joiners developed the stall system, which essentially placed an armarium on top of a lectern. This allowed the storage of many books at each seat.

Reid briefly noted that indigenous libraries in China, Japan, India, and Islam are described in his book but that for reasons of time and focus, he wouldn't discuss them that day. Instead, he moved his focus to the "English Country House and Its Library." In his view, this sort of library is now seen as the model for a great library.

Three kinds of significant private libraries were developed in England: the 17th-century scholar's library, the 18th-century family library, and the 19th-century social library.

The scholar's library was almost always upstairs, frequently connected to the master's bedroom and intended for his solitary use, with book shelves covering the walls. In the 18th century, the library was a family space. In the 19th century, advances in technology made travel much easier and quicker and facilitated the development of the weekend house party. The principal venue of social activity was typically a social library used by family and guests. Social libraries had extensive furniture and related resources, so that they could be flexibly rearranged as necessary.

Reid briefly mentioned display libraries, which could be "jaw-droppingly, heart-breakingly beautiful" while in practice housing few books.

Reid moved on to contemporary private libraries.



The Type 3 book room appears during Roman Empire. The codex, our familiar bound book, begins to appear, and it is stored along with scrolls in wooden cabinets set into niches in the wall. These rooms had furniture for reading and study.



(Left) A replica of a Roman armarium in which books were stored. (Right) This image of the medieval scholar Cassiodorus shows him at work next to an armarium.



The scholar's library developed during the 17th century. It was usually upstairs, a private retreat for reading, study, reflection, and writing.

Minutes, continued

The luminous display library at Kenwood House, built for the Earls of Mansfield in the 1600s and restored in the 1760s.

In a sense, however, he argued that the term “contemporary” is a misnomer, because in their architecture, “libraries always look back at earlier libraries,” and “most contemporary libraries are wholeheartedly traditional.” Reid spent some time presenting and expounding upon the Manhattan library of the late Donald Oresman, a two-story library with eight bays, a lovely spiral staircase, magnificent cabinetry, and a coffered ceiling. As a point of comparison, Reid similarly dwelt on the postmodern library owned by Jay and Eileen Walker, with its blue cut glass designs of images of advances in human imagination and its five different levels.

To complete the journey from ancient to classical to medieval to early modern to contemporary, Reid speculated on the library of the future. He presented an image of the Nam June Paik Library located in Nam June Paik Art Center, in Yong-In, South Korea. The library holds the artist’s archives as well as other rare materials. Paik (1932– 2006) was a Korean



Annie Schlechter/New York Magazine

A contemporary library built in traditional style for Patricia and Donald Oresman in their Manhattan apartment. The library uses the bay system, used in less than 10% of domestic libraries according to Reid Byers. The large north-facing window at left looks onto Central Park. Mr. Oresman was an avid reader but not a book collector. Rather, the couple collected many fine art works, auctioned by Doyle in 2018 and described as “all related to reading.”

Minutes, continued

A corner of the library at the Nam June Paik Art Center in South Korea. It was designed by New York-based firm N H D M. Is this the library of the future – a fusion of digital and physical media?

American artist who worked in many media but is considered to be the founder of video art.

As to the library of the future, Reid perhaps hyperbolically argued that even if and when everything is digital, “including many humans,” the library of the future will look like the library shown in the television show *Downton Abbey*. He believes that the English Country House Library has become the general image of the ideal library, in literature, in video games, and in real life.

Reid returned his focus to the development of English Country House 18th-century family library. He posed a question: what forces moved the formation of this library from the upstairs library of the 17th-century? And his first response was the restoration of Charles II to the throne of England in 1660. The restoration period unleashed a dramatic increase in the publication of books, lower book prices, and a broad popularization of reading, particularly

reading by women. The rise of circulating rental libraries early in the 18th century further broadened the nature of readership and range of books that were read. Wealthy young men who had gone off on the traditional Grand Tour of Europe often came home and built great homes and libraries to display their booty, but now their wives and daughters also wanted libraries they could use. So the upstairs scholar’s library for the use of the master became the downstairs, comfortable, well-furnished and able to seat more than one or two, family-friendly library.

Reid also noted the long-term impact of Palladio’s *Four Books of Architecture* and Colen Campbell’s *Vitruvius Britannicus* on changing British library taste. He added “it is really nice that books are the engines that change libraries.” The Palladian villa, with its echoes of Horace, and appropriately adapted for England, greatly influenced the development of the great English country houses. The classical order even became the model for library shelving.

Minutes, continued

The library of Highclere Castle, the filming location of Downton Abbey may provide the model for domestic libraries of the future. Despite the electronics that are more and more a part of our lives, Reid argues that our ideal of the library will always hearken back to its most prominent historical expression, the English Country House Library.

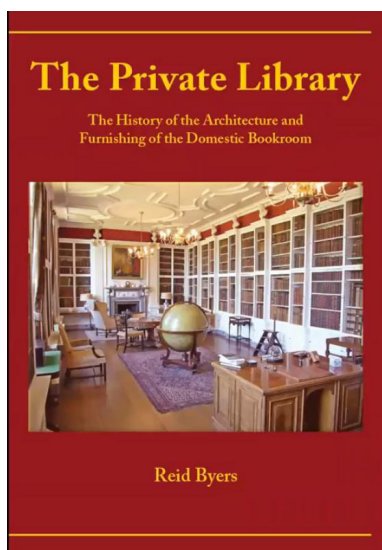
Reid showed us pictures from his visit to the main library at the country house at Holkham, “which has been described as the most sophisticated room in Britain,” with its ceiling divided into sixteen vaults, four main book cases (each painted white, with gilt trim, with a cornice and pediment. He also showed us pictures of the library at Lamport Hall [one of these pictures is on the front of the dust cover of Reid’s book – when I first saw it, I told my wife I wanted that!] This room includes a “jib door,” a false door with painted book spines designed to look like a section of library shelf, busts above the white bookcases, and a library stair that folds into a library table.

Reid next discussed the Washburn family library at Norlands, Maine. He presented a picture of the Washburn library showing a separate

bay for each of the children. Reid called this bringing together of personal space and family space “a clever, beneficent, and much treasured arrangement.” He

continued with a picture of Earl Spencer’s library at Althorp House, a place where Princess Diane grew up, which has been called the most beautiful room in Europe.

Reid concluded with the sentiment that “the book-wrap room creates a place of great delight.” Certainly his talk, with his clear explanations, heart-felt sense of appreciation for the aesthetics of book rooms, and superb pictures and diagrams created great delight among all of us fortunate enough to be in his audience.



Walt Whitman *Leaves of Grass*: Still Relevant to Modern Times, Largo Public Library, March 31

On March 31, the Florida Bibliophile Society will sponsor a special event at the Largo Public Library from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Whitman collector Ed S. Centeno will present *Walt Whitman Leaves of Grass: Still Relevant to Modern Times*.

Ed's collection of items related to Walt Whitman runs the gamut from fine editions to match books and from theater programs to compact discs. The collection shows the many aspects of Whitman's impact on American and International culture as well as the many ways that the Great Gray Poets image – both figurative and literal – have been appropriated over the more than 165 years since he published the groundbreaking classic *Leaves of Grass*.

In addition to commercial items, some quite rare, Ed's collection contains many works of art that express ideas in Whitman's writings. Over the past few years, Ed has commissioned some of these works, including sculptural works, book arts, and paintings.

If you missed last month's *The Florida Bibliophile*, we invite you open the February issue and read Ben Wiley's essay about Ed, Walt, and the collection.

This essay, items included in the presentation, and additional material will be included in the book *"I Contain Multitudes....": Selections from the Ed S. Centeno Walt Whitman Collection* being produced for the occasion. Look for it at the March 31st event and at the Florida Bibliophile Society booth at the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair, April 1–3, at the St. Petersburg Coliseum.

For more information call the Largo Library at 727-587-6715, or to register to attend the special event visit the library website at

<https://largo.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?eventId=14774&backTo=Calendar&startDate=2022/03/09>



Walt-Whitman
Leaves
of
Grass.

STILL RELEVANT TO MODERN TIMES

FLORIDA BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY
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WHEN:
THURSDAY
MARCH 31, 2022
6:30PM - 8:00PM

PLEASE REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT ON THE LIBRARY WEBSITE.

WE INVITE YOU TO "SING AND CELEBRATE" WALT WHITMAN AND "LEAVES OF GRASS" IN A FUN, INTERACTIVE PROGRAM BY COLLECTOR-BIBLIOPHILE ED S. CENTENO. HIS 37 YEARS OF COLLECTING FOCUSES ON THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF WHITMAN'S NAME, IMAGE AND POETRY IN ADVERTISEMENT, NATIONAL BRAND PRODUCTS, MEMORABILIA, EPHEMERA, FINE ART AND DIGITAL MEDIA. THIS PRESENTATION-EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS THE POET'S CONTINUING INFLUENCE ON CULTURE AND COMMERCE AND HIS RENOWN AMONG PRIVATE AND INSTITUTIONAL COLLECTIONS.

"I Contain Multitudes...."



Selections from the
Ed S. Centeno Walt Whitman Collection



Arrest Made in Theft of 5,000 Comics from FSU Special Collections

In September 2021, Florida State University Libraries confirmed the theft of almost 5,000 comic books from the Robert M. Ervin Jr. Collection housed by FSU Special Collections & Archives at Strozier Library. The university announced the theft by notifying the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America and then online in *The New Antiquarian*, the ABAA blog. A complete list of the missing titles was also published. The library determined that the theft occurred between March 17, 2020, and February 10, 2021. According to an FSU spokesperson, quoted in the *Tallahassee Democrat*, "Procedures in place at the time of the theft resulted in quick response and turnaround times on information to aid the investigation. FSU Libraries is conducting an additional internal audit (based on professional practices for Special Collections and Archives) of security protocols and practices to improve the integrity of collections areas and help protect against future theft."

The books are part of a collection that was donated in 1981 by a prominent Tallahassee attorney and his wife, Robert M. Ervin, Sr., and Frances Anne Ervin. The collection was named for their son, Robert M. Ervin, Jr. Ervin expressed that although he no longer owned to collection, he felt a "devastating" loss and deeply regretted the loss to



Robert Manning Strozier Library at Florida State University. Special collections and the Robert M. Ervin, Jr., Collection is housed here.

students and researchers.

The Robert M. Ervin Jr. Collection, comprising 150 linear shelf feet of material, is described on the FSU library website as consisting of "monographs and serials related to science fiction, fantasy, horror, and comic books, including both original publications and secondary works offering commentary and critique. Original publications include those by Marvel Comics, DC Comics, underground comix publishers, foreign language titles, pulp magazines, and Big Little Books. Over 1,200 serial titles are represented, predominantly from the 1950s through the 1970s. Secondary



These four issues, Batman #150, Conan the Barbarian #2, Detective Comics #207, and Fantastic Four #73, are among the issues stolen from FSU Special Collections (not the actual books in the collection).

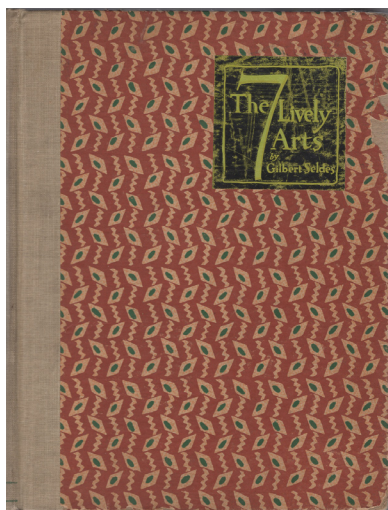
Sources: Tallahassee Democrat; FSU Library; Penn State University Library; Rare Book Hub

FSU theft, continued

works include monographs and serials related to comic book collecting, history, and criticism as well as posters and prints featuring from comic book characters and art.”

The library was unable to place a value on the theft, and stated only that they assumed the books were worth considerably more than they were when they were donated over 40 years ago. Value must be determined on a book-by-book basis – comic books do not necessarily appreciate significantly in value, but many of the books in the Ervin collection are in categories that are highly desirable and likely to have appreciated.

Perhaps more importantly, in the 40 years since the Ervin collection was donated to FSU, comics have become a subject of serious study. As early as



1924, comics, as carried in newspapers, were included in Gilbert Seldes's *The Seven Lively Arts*. Seldes was an important cultural critic and sought in that book, probably his most important work, to “treat popular culture with the intelligent criticism that was usually applied only to highbrow culture.” His seven lively arts were

“Slapstick Moving Pictures, Comic Strips, Revues, Musical Comedy, Columns, Slang Humor, Popular Songs, and Vaudeville.”

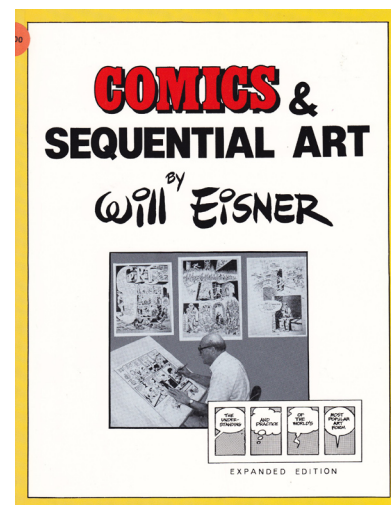
Though scholars trace its origins further back, the comic book as we know it was born in the 1930s, and like much pulp literature, it was very popular. Superman first appeared in *Action Comics* #1 in 1938 and *Captain America* in 1940. These characters were embraced by the young men heading off to war and other youth and young

adults looking for a counterpoint to harsh headlines during the war years. The possibility of using the comic book as an educational medium was also being discussed, and the U.S military produced comics for its troops and other readers. Educational uses brought serious consideration to creating comics, but not serious analysis of them.

Comic book readers and thus production increased significantly during the 1940s, which put the industry on a sound footing. This made possible many new genres in humor, horror, and even classics during the 1950s. During the 1960s, when another war was dominant in U.S. headlines, comic sales continued to increase.

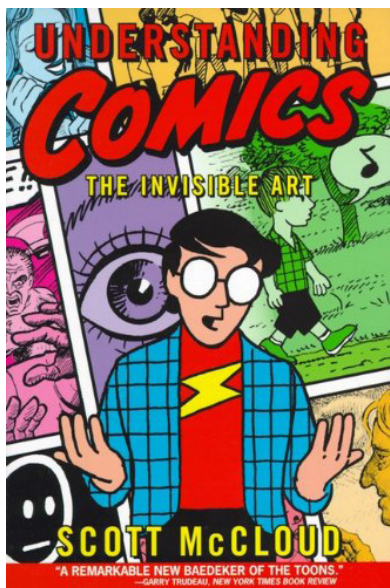
The occasional work was written about this medium, but the breakthrough is usually credited to the publication in 1985 of Will Eisner's *Comics and Sequential Art*. Eisner had been a cartoonist and writer since the 1930s, and in his book he brought together existing ideas and his own to create a foundational framework for comics scholarship. Eisner is credited also with coining the term graphic novel.

In the same time frame, *The Comics Journal*, which had been since its founding in 1976 a venue for comics reviews, announcement, and interviews, increasingly drew on this framework. Numerous scholarly journals on comics, comic art, and sequential narrative are now published, including the *International Journal of Comic Art* (est. 1999), *ImageTEXT: Interdisciplinary Comics Studies* (est. 2008), *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (est. 2009), and more.



FSU theft, concluded

The release in 1993 of Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics* also advanced the serious study of comics (by then more often considered as a form of sequential narrative). Many scholarly



studies were being produced, but McCloud's book explained the basis for the scholarship in McCloud's trademark graphic format. It remains an excellent introduction to the subject.

Many universities now hold significant collections of comic strips, comic books, and related media.

For example, the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum at Ohio State University holds approximately half a million items, including comic books, daily strips, Sunday strips, editorial cartoons, graphic novels, magazine cartoons, and sports cartoons. The Comic Art Collection at Michigan State University holds about 200,000 items. Florida State University and

the University of Florida both have substantial collections as well as scholars and academic study programs related to sequential narrative.

Comic books, manga, and graphic novels now represent a multibillion-dollar industry worldwide. When extended to the film versions, video games, and other product tie-ins, the impact of comics on world culture is significant. Comics have always been a commentator on society and industry, but they are increasingly becoming an important site for the promotion of social values, especially diversity and the acceptance of difference, which have long been important themes in comics.

Returning to the FSU theft, in early February, an arrest was made: Todd Peak, the library's head of security and one of only four individuals with a key to the Ervin collection, was arrested. Over a two-year period, Peak stole the 4,996 comics and sold them to individuals and comic book stores in the area. Some buyers became suspicious about the number of rare comics in Peak's possession, for example, a rare German copy of Mickey Mouse and several rare issues of Batman, and they began to notice the correspondence with the list of stolen books published by FSU. Over 2,800 comics have been recovered.



Why it's time to read comic books again — <https://www.soulveda.com/happiness/why-its-time-to-read-comic-books-again/>

Making the Biggest Book in the World – The Klencke Atlas, 1660

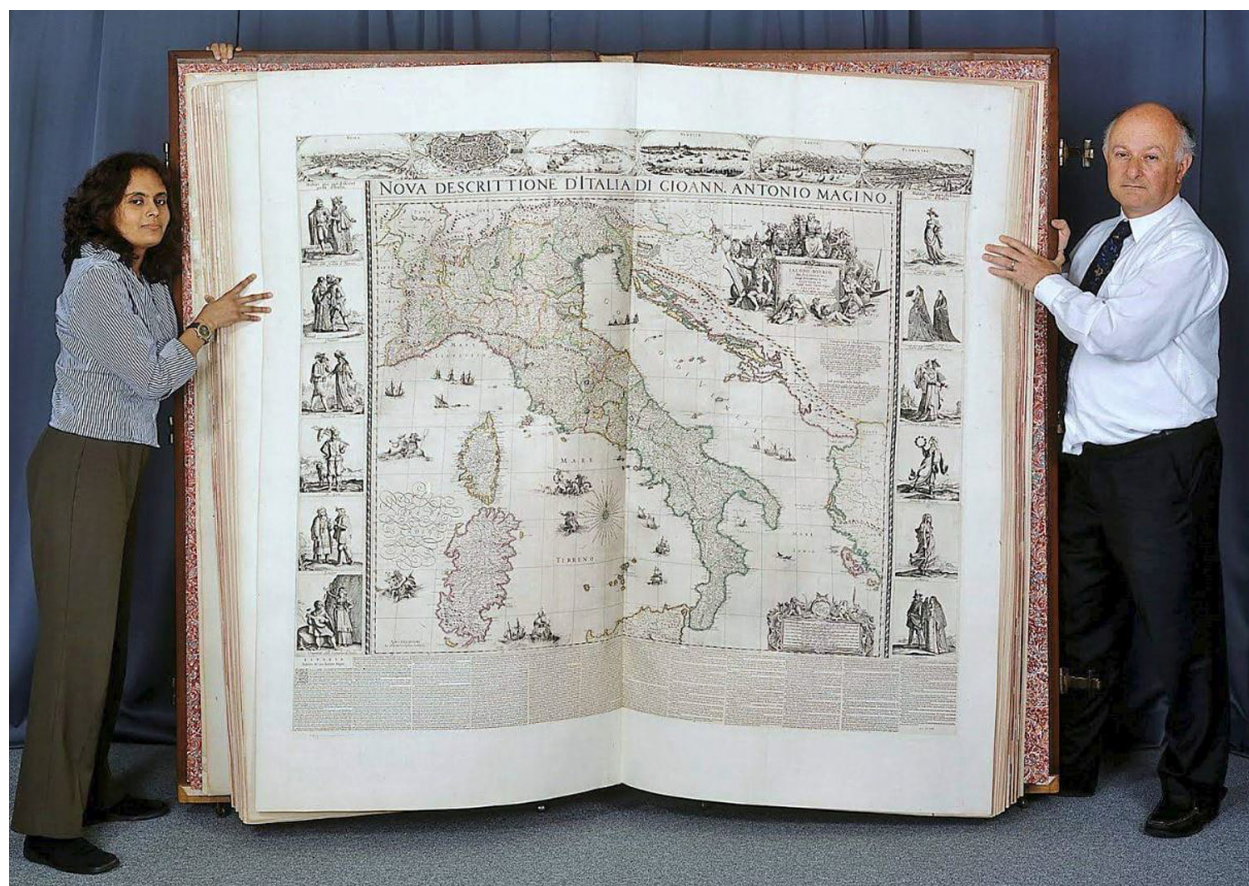
by Charles Brown

In 1660, a book larger than any other ever known was produced in the Netherlands. An atlas 5 feet 9 inches tall by 6 feet 3 inches wide when open, with a weight of 133 pounds, it was a present to the England's King Charles II from a consortium of Dutch sugar merchants on the occasion of Charles's restoration to the throne. This book is the Klencke Atlas, named for Johannes Klencke (c. 1620–1672), who led the effort to produce the atlas, hoping to gain the favor of the king when considering trade agreements.

The Klencke Atlas contains 41 wall maps of the continents and regions including Britain and other European states, as well as Brazil, South Asia, and the Holy Land. Despite its height and width, it is only about 4 inches thick. The leather covering is embossed in gold emblems representing the regions under Charles's control. Similarly, the maps are

ordered to reflect the king's interests. Special treatment is given to the Netherlands, but this is not unreasonable, as Charles spent much of his nine years in exile in the Netherlands, another special connection that the merchants might have hoped to capitalize on.

Klencke led the effort, but the project was conceived by Count Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen (1604–1679), "one of the most enlightened patrons of art and science in Counter Reformation Europe," according to Tom Harper, curator of Maps at the British Library. Maurits was responsible for other large atlases as well, e.g., the Great Elector's Atlas, presented to the Elector of Brandenburg in 1664. Maurits had been governor general of the Dutch West India Company in Brazil, where he became engaged in many artistic and scientific efforts, notably map making.



The Klencke Atlas opened to a map of Italy, original from 1617 by Giovanni Antonio Magini (1555–1617)

Klencke Atlas, continued

The king was delighted. He knighted Klencke and placed the atlas in his cabinet of curiosities, a room (not a piece of furniture) devoted to the king's most prized possessions.

The gift may not have influenced the king as the Dutch hoped. The 1600s saw a series of wars among the English, the Dutch, the Spanish, and the Portuguese for control of New World territories and the sugar trade, which had become the most "important internationally traded commodity... responsible for a third of the whole European economy." After the restoration, Charles II moved quickly against the Dutch to secure territory on the Eastern coast of America, for example, displacing the Dutch in the north and changing the name of their colony from New Netherland to New York in 1664 and founding the largest port on the East Coast at Charles Town in South Carolina in 1670.

The size and scope of the maps in the Klencke Atlas were intended to suggest a gathering of all geographical knowledge of the world at the time. The maps are perhaps the highest achievement of the map maker's art in the Netherlands at that time. Harper writes, "As an object, its scale and conception followed Renaissance ideas relating to the symbolic power of a book which contained the entire knowledge of the World."



Charles II, detail from the coronation portrait by John Michael Wright (1617–1694)

The atlas left royal ownership in 1828 when the geographic collections of George III (1738–1820) were donated by George IV to the British Museum.

The King George III Topographical and Maritime Collections contain the geographical materials donated in 1828 and the maritime materials donated by George IV to the Admiralty, who then gave them to the British Museum in 1844. Altogether, the collections contain over 40,000 maps, plans, views, charts and atlases of all parts of the world, dating from 1540 to 1824. The museum lists the following among the highlights of the collection:

- Some of the earliest European printed maps, such as the copperplate maps included in so-called Italian made-to-order atlases produced in the mid-16th century
- The complete range of British county maps dating from 1579 to the early 19th century
- Presentation maps, such as the 'Duke's Plan' of New York', made to celebrate its capture by the English from the Dutch in 1664
- Estate maps and maps of Royal palaces
- Architectural drawings, including a large archive of working drawings by Nicholas Hawksmoor, the architect of Christ Church, Spitalfields in London
- A large archive of maps and plans of Hannover and Northern Germany.



This map is the Duke's Plan of New York. It is labeled "New Amsterdam," but it celebrates the Charles II's acquisition of the Dutch property, which he then gave to his brother (and future king), James Duke of York, for whom the city was renamed.

Klencke Atlas, concluded

But the crown jewel of the collection is the Klencke Atlas.

In the mid-2010s, the British Museum included the “50,000 maps and plans” in the King George III Topographical and Maritime Collections in its digitization program. To date, many thousands of maps and plans have been digitized, including 50,000 images of George III’s maps and ephemera and 2,000 military maps and related items. The former are owned by the British Museum and are freely available through their Flickr pages, and the latter, which are housed in the Royal Library in Windsor Castle, are available through the Royal Collection Trust site.

The scale of many maps presented challenges to the digitizers, not least the massive Klencke Atlas. Despite its imposing size and appearance, the Klencke Atlas, one the most treasured items in the

British Library, is quite fragile. It is displayed closed behind a glass door. Because of its size and weight, the atlas is fitted with two wheels, which allowed it to be moved from its display case to photographic suite by two librarians.

The digitizing group created an easel over six feet tall and six feet wide to accommodate the atlas. The book was held at an angle of about 45 degrees and lit from the side, with reflectors strategically placed to even out the lighting across the large pages. The entire set of 49 images is available on the British Library website [<https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/the-klencke-atlas>]. The images are presented at a scale of about 1/16, zoomable to ¼. This does not allow a close inspection of the highly detailed maps, but it does allow an excellent overview of the maps, and they are available to all “commoner and king” for the first time.



The Klencke Atlas, opened to the title page, set on the large easel made to hold it for photography.

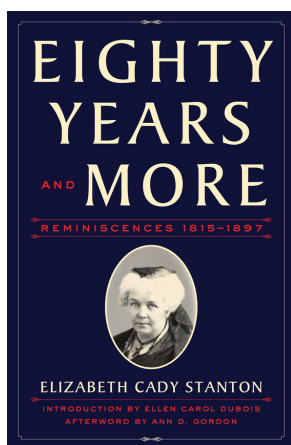


Collecting Feminism

It would be near-sighted to think that the lives and roles of women have not been considered throughout history, and certainly, we can go back through history and name women and men who have spoken out. But it is not until the late 19th century that ideas about women, their lives and roles, and social equity become systematic beliefs motivating organization for social and political change, or in a word, feminism. Even then, it is possible to debate starting points. Certainly, the movement for women's voting rights in the 19th century gives us a starting point for the organization for feminist ideas.

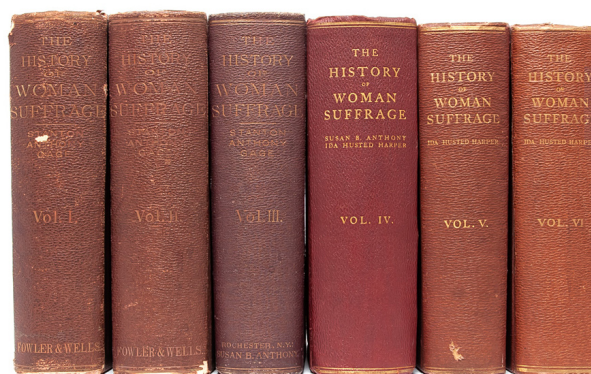
As the Women's Suffrage Movement gained momentum through the end of the 19th century, cities and states and eventually nations gave women full voting rights, a process that continues to unfold because there are still many places where the right to vote is less meaningful when, for example, there are no elections or access to polls is restricted. As suffrage goals were achieved, the consciousness and solidarity that had been created was available to identify further goals and organize to achieve them.

In a 2020 article, "How the Battle for Women's Suffrage Played Out in the Pages of the Book Review," the *New York Times* listed several books from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, both fiction and nonfiction, that advanced the general concept of women's equity in society and what prevented it.



The first of the books listed is *Eighty Years and More: Reminiscences 1815-1897* by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She was a pioneer of the suffrage movement in the U.S., organizing with others in 1848, at age 33, the Seneca Falls Convention, the first major women's rights meeting in American history. With Susan B. Anthony, she would lead the

campaign for women's legal rights and women's suffrage for the rest of the century. Simon and Schuster, publisher of the centennial edition of this book, writes: "There is really no other American woman's autobiography in the nineteenth century that comes near it in relevance, excellence, and historical significance." Yet, even in the earliest paragraphs, the book reveals a dilemma that feminism would continue to confront for many decades: balancing identities as a free political and economic agent with the continuing traditional expectations for a woman's life.



The next book cited is *The History of Woman Suffrage*, in six volumes comprising 5,700 pages, published from 1881 to 1922. It is the work of some of the most prominent women in the movement, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Elizabeth Joslyn Gage, and Ida Husted Harper. Stanton's daughter Harriet also contributed to some volumes. The work has a very real sense of living history. In the introduction, the authors wrote:

"We hope the contribution we have made may enable some other hand in the future to write a more complete history of 'the most momentous reform that has yet been launched on the world – the first organized protest against the injustice which has brooded over the character and destiny of one-half the human race.'"

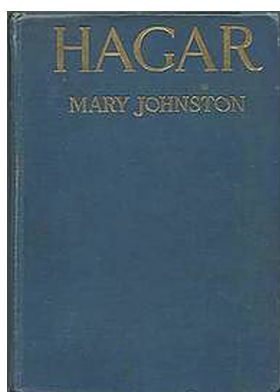
The book contains much philosophy of the movement and analysis of historical forces such as



Collecting Feminism, continued

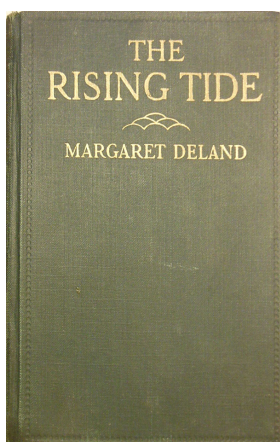
Christianity as well as activities and their results.

The Concise History of Woman Suffrage by Mari Jo Buhle and Paul Buhle (1976; revised 2005) condenses the most important parts of the multivolume set into a book of less than 500 pages.



Hagar, a 1913 novel by Mary Johnston, was described in its *New York Times* review as “a feminist novel.” Johnston was a suffragist and among the most popular female writers of history and historical novels in early 20th-century America. *Hagar* was her argument for the emancipation of women. The book describes Hagar’s path from

a Virginia mansion where she is scolded for reading Darwin to literary success and like-minded friends working for the vote in New York. The book was controversial, and for many of Johnston’s readers, it was too progressive.

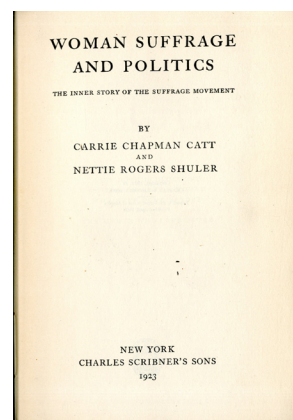


The Rising Tide by Margaret Deland, was first serialized in *Harper’s Monthly* before its publication in 1916. In a fictional Ohio town that stands for Deland’s hometown of Pittsburgh, Penn., Deland’s heroine Payton confronts many of the issues women faced in the years before suffrage. The contemporary reviewer did not appreciate the realism in the novel and regretted

Payton’s “scandalous behavior,” including smoking, sitting on tables and desks, using slang, and talking with men and women in the same tone. The reviewer also felt that Deland had violated one of the most time-honored traditions of fiction: her heroine is a plain-looking woman.

The names Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler are not as well-known as they once were. Catt and Rogers were prominent in the suffrage movement and among the most famous

women in America in the early 20th century. Their history of the movement, *Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement* (1923), is more focused on the politics of suffrage than Stanton et al.’s history. They examine why change took so long in the U.S., arguing that the liquor lobby played a key role in delaying the cause. The book takes a dim view of anti-Suffragist women, which some felt might be a source of division in women’s groups.

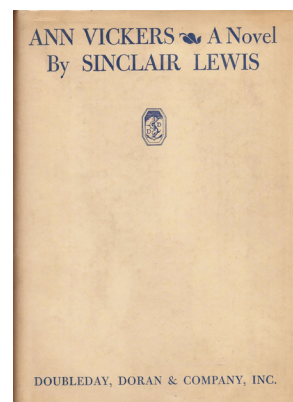


Returning to fiction, we have the work of Nobel laureate Sinclair Lewis, *Ann Vickers*

(1933). Lewis wrote many insightful novels about American culture, often exploring the consequences of individuals who for very human reasons, violate tradition or morality, challenging both in the process. In this book, we follow Ann’s growth from Midwestern tomboy to suffragist to social worker. In the process, she becomes pregnant, has an abortion, successfully runs a progressive women’s prison, and seeks love outside her marriage.

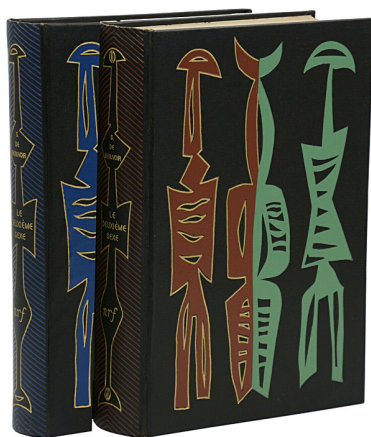
The list in the *New York Times* article documents what is now called first-wave feminism. In terms of years, it brings us up to the mid-1920s, but in events, it brings us to Prohibition, the Depression, and the Second World War, all of which had profound impacts on women’s lives, working for and against their equity in society in different ways. The Depression and the Second World War were shared by much of the world, and the world emerged from them chastened and thoughtful.

Our second list, taken from *The Guardian’s* 100 political classics that shaped the modern era, starts in the postwar years and brings us up through the recent times.



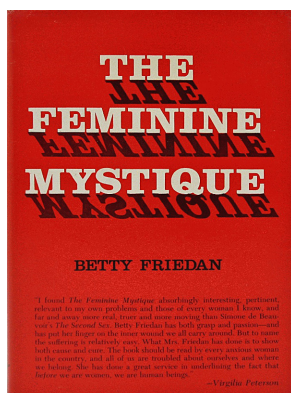
Collecting Feminism, continued

The realities of the Second World War – the deaths of tens of millions, the Holocaust, the Atomic Bomb – led to questioning the systems and beliefs that had led to such vast destruction and cruelty.



It was in this environment that *The Second Sex* by French existentialist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir (1949) appeared. Beauvoir began research and writing for the book in 1946. It was published in two volumes: *Facts and Myths* (*Les faits et les*

mythes) and *Lived Experience* (*L'expérience vécue*). In these volumes, Beauvoir reviews the treatment of women throughout history, finding that in most cases, the lives and beliefs of men are taken as the standard for human behavior, leaving women in the position of the “Other.” Her profound and thorough analysis provided the systematic foundation needed to launch the next wave of feminism and take a deeper look at both women’s lives and the systems which shaped them. For many, the thinking in *The Second Sex* defined modern feminism.

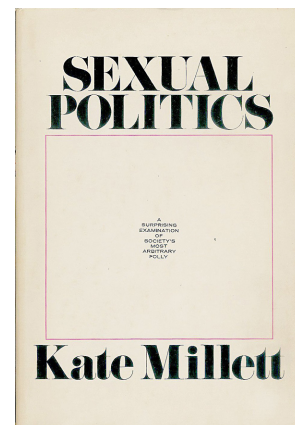


Another lightning bolt struck with Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). Where Beauvoir examined pathology and origins, the writer and activist Friedan described the symptoms, allowing millions of women to connect the theory and the effect in a practical way. Friedan took a close look at the lives of

American women and gave them tools to examine the idealized middle class lives they lived and the consequences that once again relegated their needs and goals to those of men. Friedan was outspoken and courageous and came onto the scene as television broadcasting was coming its own and as

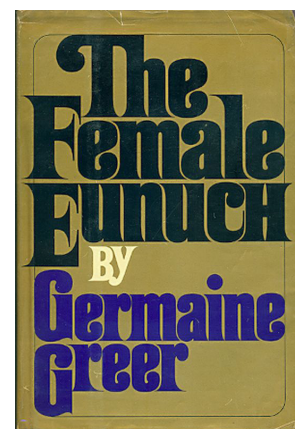
the U.S. was about to be rocked with the upheavals of the 1960s.

In 1970, writer, educator, artist, and activist Kate Millett published *Sexual Politics*. Based on her doctoral dissertation, the book critiques Western patriarchy, further particularizing the work of Friedan. Millett showed that the women were confronting sexism as what we now call a systemic issue, one that is baked into the system at every level, in ways that are sometimes obvious but overlooked and sometimes quite subtle. As an artist, Millett was able to take her critique beyond politics and sociology to the representation of women and men in art and popular culture. To continue the analogy, it was a dissection of Western patriarchy and how it was exhibited and sustained.



Also in 1970, Germaine Greer’s *The Female Eunuch* was published in London.

Its central thesis was that the “traditional” suburban, consumerist, nuclear family – again, the middle class ideal – represses women sexually, stripping them of vital power, effectively turning them into eunuchs. The book received mixed reviews, but within a year, it had been translated into eleven languages and sold out a second printing. It was an international bestseller. To restore vitality, Greer advised throwing off all the trappings and behaviors prescribed for women by the male-dominated culture. Greer’s approach gave second-wave feminism an even more personal view, examining the sources of a woman’s self-perception and forces that frustrated her emotional and physical fulfillment.

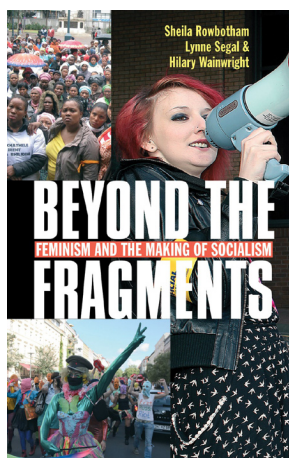


Collecting Feminism, continued



In 1975, Susan Brownmiller, a journalist, author, and feminist activist, awakened readers to a reality about rape: it was another aspect of systemic sexism. Her book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* gave us the critical insight that rape is a crime “not of lust, but of violence and power.” In this book, she began an awareness about how power relationships that not

only enable rape but frustrate its identification, reporting, and prosecution and made women victims over and over. The power of this single insight is hard to estimate, but it resulted in a transformation in public perception of rape, in women’s empowerment, in police, prosecutorial, and judicial practice, and in the law itself.



Just as feminism was searching out sexism in even more intimate settings, the political and economic aspects of feminism were not left behind. *Beyond the Fragments* (1979) by “socialist feminists” Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, and Hilary Wainwright began as a pamphlet which became a conference and then a book. Written in Thatcher’s England, the book

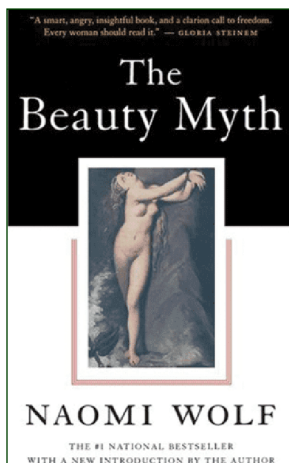
brought together ideas about the way forward for feminism on the political and economic fronts. It has been updated and republished three times, most recently in 2012 (shown here), and its ideas remain relevant because inequity supported by governmental policies and practices still needs to be addressed. The authors advocate more solidarity among left-leaning groups and overcoming a narrow focus that can prevent achieving common goals.

bell hooks’s 1981 book *Ain’t I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* took an important step, “examining the impact of sexism on black women during slavery, the devaluation of black womanhood, black male sexism, racism among feminists, and the black woman’s involvement with feminism.” hooks expanded feminism by *narrowing* her focus to specific issues faced by black women. *Ain’t I a Woman* brought forward hooks’s thinking on how feminism applied to poor and marginalized women. her approach has applied far beyond its specific subject and informs many modern movements. hooks shows us the beginnings of third-wave feminism that draws upon deconstruction and postcolonial theory, extending the reach of important movements to marginalized groups.



In 1987, Andrea Dworkin wrote *Intercourse*. Like her previous analyses of the lives of women, such as *Woman Hating* and *Pornography*, Dworkin takes an unconventional and incisive look at how a common cultural feature drives the subordination of women. As the blurb says, “The power of her writing, the passion of her ideals, and the ferocity of her intellect have spurred the arguments and activism of two generations of feminists.” In this book, Dworkin examines how the very common human interaction of intercourse can become a method of subjugating women. It’s strong stuff, and Dworkin’s position may be too strong for some, but it would be a mistake to let that dissuade readers from taking in her point.



Collecting Feminism, concluded

Naomi Wolf takes on the Beauty-Industrial Complex in her 1990 book *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women*.

Wolf shows how the increasing power and prominence of women, a positive result of feminism, has led to higher expectations and pressures for their appearance. As she puts it, "The more legal and material hindrances women have broken

through, the more strictly and heavily and cruelly images of female beauty have come to weigh upon us...." These images and the pressure they create permeate our culture. Wolf's message is challenging, but it remains timely.

Finally, we reach a book that brings us close to the present and introduces the fourth wave of feminism. With each wave of feminism, there have been extraordinary successes, which always forces the question "What next?" The advances in feminism have not taken place in a vacuum; the world continues to change, and part of the change is due to work of feminists. Feminism

will continue to adapt and build upon its successes and understandings. Brilliant and bold thinkers will continue to produce books that revive stalled momentum and guide the way.

Our last book is ironically titled *Bad Feminist* (2014), by Roxane Gay. If a ten-year-old movement can have a classic, then this book is already viewed as such for feminism's fourth wave, which is characterized by a focus on empowering women, using the new communication tools of the Internet, and intersectionality.

If you tripped over that last one, it hearkens back to bell hooks. Intersectionality says that women are not all the same, and it is important to consider the many cultural identities, including gender, ethnicity, class, etc., that can create a unique situation for a particular woman. Gay's book examines race, weight, sex, gender, violence, and popular culture. She both observes the culture and shares her own painful experiences. It's a powerful combination delivered in a deceptively low key.

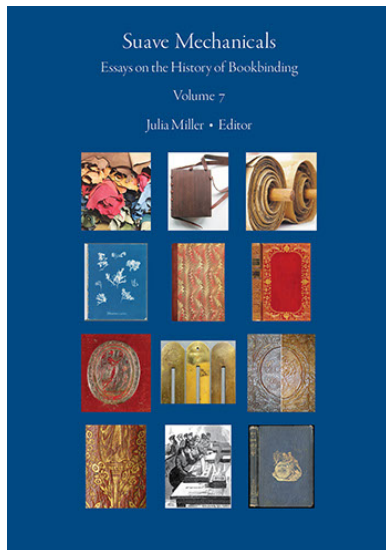
**Bad
Feminist**
Essays
**Roxane
Gay**



Books in Brief

Suave Mechanicals: Essays on the History of Bookbinding, Vol. 7

Julia Miller, ed.
Legacy Press
620 pp., 2022



“**Suave Mechanicals**” was a 2003 exhibition curated by Julia Miller at the University of Michigan. In 2010, Miller’s investigations of bindings produced *Books Will Speak Plain: A Handbook for Identifying and Describing Historical Bindings*, described by one reviewer as “a truly monumental work ... packed with rich details on the history of the book

... Its scope is massive, yet well presented by the author.”

Miller’s scholarship on bindings next led to 2013’s *Suave Mechanicals: Essays on the History of Bookbinding*. This became first in a series on the history of bookbinding now numbering seven volumes which “elevate bookbinding and the study of book structures as an increasingly rich area of scholarly inquiry, and offers an important venue for the presentation of emerging research.

Volume seven continues this work with essays and illustrations for twelve projects such as “Unveiling Secrets of the Trade: Owen Jones and the Relievo Art of *The Psalms of David*,” “A Lineage of Finishing Tool Makers in Georgian Dublin,” and “Female Labor and Industrial Growth in Nineteenth-Century American Bookbinding.”

Julia Miller has been involved with bindings and their history for over 40 years, including ten years in the Conservation Department at the University of Michigan Library.



Sources: Legacy Press; *Rare Book Monthly*; Oak Knoll Books

Hidden Hands: The Lives of Manuscripts and Their Makers

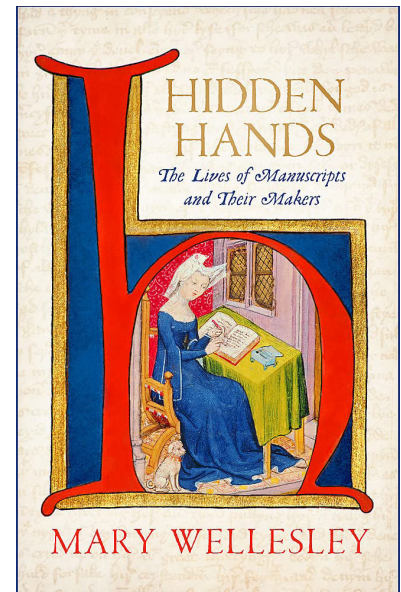
Mary Wellesley
RiverRun
368 pp., 2021

Art of the Middle Ages, from cathedrals to manuscripts is characterized by anonymity, but even when a name is not known, workers leave traces that begin to create an identity. A manuscript page holds many such traces for the trained observer. In *Hidden Hands*, Mary Wellesley, who is such an observer, tells the stories of the artisans, artists, scribes and readers, patrons and collectors who made and kept the beautiful, fragile objects that have survived the ravages of fire, water and deliberate destruction to form a picture of both English culture and the wider European culture of which it is part.

Without manuscripts, many historical figures would be lost, as well as those of lower social status, women and people of colour – their stories erased; the remnants of their labours destroyed. From the Cuthbert Bible, the Beowulf poet, and Margery Kempe to Sir Thomas Malory, Chaucer, the Paston Letters and Shakespeare, Wellesley describes the production and preservation of these priceless objects. With an emphasis on the early role of women as authors and artists and illustrated with over fifty colour plates, *Hidden Hands* is an important

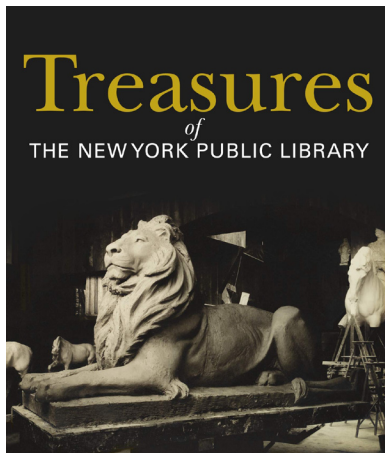
Mary Wellesley is a scholar of medieval manuscripts who now works as a full-time free-lance writer. Her work appears regularly in *The London Review of Books* and *The Times Literary Supplement*, among others.

Sources: Blackwells; Historical Novel Society



*Books in Brief, continued***Treasures of the New York Public Library**

New York Public Library
St. Martin's Press
352 pp., 2021



The New York Public Library is a palace of wonders containing diverse collections of over 46 million objects, including rare books, maps, paintings, prints, sculpture, photographs, films, recorded sound, furniture, ephemera, rare and important historical documents, and more.

In September 2021, the New York Public Library honored its 125th anniversary, with the opening of its first ever permanent exhibition, the Polonsky Exhibition of the New York Public Library's Treasures, in the exquisite Gottesman Hall on the first floor of its iconic 42nd Street Building.

Treasures is the official book to accompany the exhibition: a sumptuous four-color volume that showcases the depth and breadth of the library's holdings. Spanning 4000 years and filled with the creations of history-makers and influencers who changed the world, *Treasures* includes such diverse items from NYPL's collections as the Declaration of Independence written in Thomas Jefferson's hand; the original Bill of Rights; Charles Dickens's desk; George Washington's handwritten farewell address; manuscript material from authors such as Maya Angelou, Charles Dickens, T. S. Eliot, Jack Kerouac, Vladimir Nabokov, Mary Shelley, Virginia Woolf, and many others; a Gutenberg Bible; Malcolm X's briefcase; the original Winnie-The-Pooh dolls; the only existing letter from Christopher Columbus to King Ferdinand regarding his discovery, and a Sumerian cuneiform tablet ca. 2300 BC.

Sources: Macmillan; New York Public Library

Stalin's Library: A Dictator and his Books

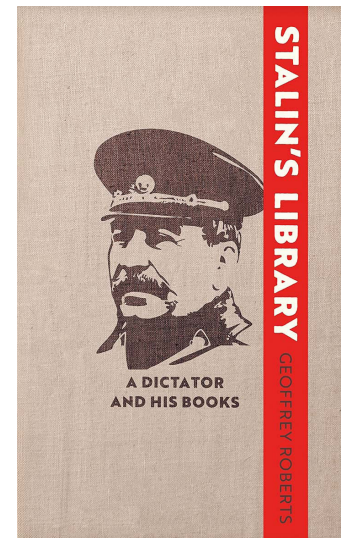
Geoffrey Roberts
Yale University Press
272 pp., 2022

Ioseb Besarionis dze Jughashvili, better known by his revolutionary pseudonym, Josef Stalin, was an avid reader from an early age. He amassed a surprisingly diverse personal collection of thousands of books, many of which he marked and annotated revealing his intimate thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. Based on his wide-ranging research in Russian archives, Roberts tells the story of the creation, fragmentation, and resurrection of Stalin's personal library. As a true believer in communist ideology, Stalin was a fanatical idealist who hated his enemies – the bourgeoisie, kulaks, capitalists, imperialists, reactionaries, counter-revolutionaries, traitors – but detested their ideas even more.

In this engaging life of the twentieth century's most self-consciously learned dictator, Geoffrey Roberts, author of *Stalin's Wars* (2007), *Stalin's General* (2012), and *Victory at Stalingrad* (2016), explores the books Stalin read, how he read them, and what they taught him. Stalin firmly believed in the transformative potential of words and his voracious appetite for reading guided him throughout his years. A biography as well as an intellectual portrait, this book explores all aspects of Stalin's tumultuous life and politics.

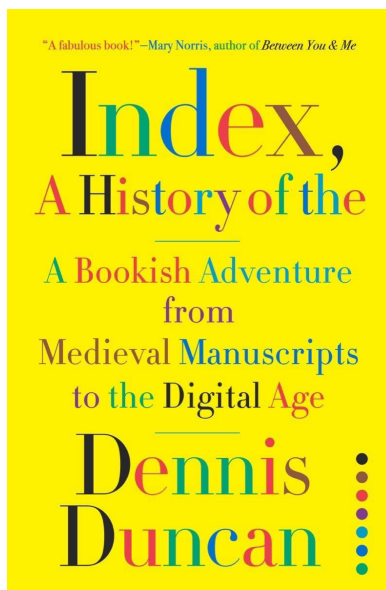
Geoffrey Roberts is emeritus professor of history at University College Cork and a member of the Royal Irish Academy. A leading Soviet history expert, he has written extensively on Josef Stalin and his era in Soviet history.

Source: Yale University Press



*Books in Brief, concluded***Index, A History of the: A Bookish Adventure from Medieval Manuscripts to the Digital Age**

Dennis Duncan
W. W. Norton & Co.
352 pp., 2022



This playful history of the humble index and its outsized effect on our reading lives is a New York Times Editors' Choice Book and a Most Anticipated Book of 2022 by Literary Hub and Goodreads. All this attention to something most of us have given little thought to – the humble index at the back of the book?

But as Dennis Duncan

reveals in this delightful and witty history, hiding in plain sight is an unlikely realm of ambition and obsession, sparring and politicking, pleasure and play. In the pages of the index, we might find Butchers, to be avoided, or Cows that sh-te Fire, or even catch Calvin in his chamber with a Nonne. Here, for the first time, is the secret world of the index: an unsung but extraordinary everyday tool, with an illustrious but little-known past.

Charting its curious path from the monasteries and universities of thirteenth-century Europe to Silicon Valley in the twenty-first, Duncan uncovers how it has saved heretics from the stake, kept politicians from high office, and made us all into the readers we are today. We follow it through German print shops and Enlightenment coffee houses, novelists'

living rooms and university laboratories, **Dennis Duncan** is a lecturer in English at University College London. His has written for the *Guardian*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, and the *London Review of Books*, and he is the coeditor of *Book Parts*.



Source: W. W. Norton & Co.

Godine at Fifty: A Retrospective of Five Decades in the Life of an Independent Publisher

David R. Godine
David R. Godine
292 pp., 2021

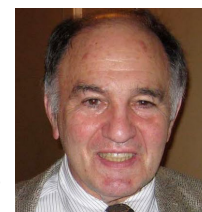
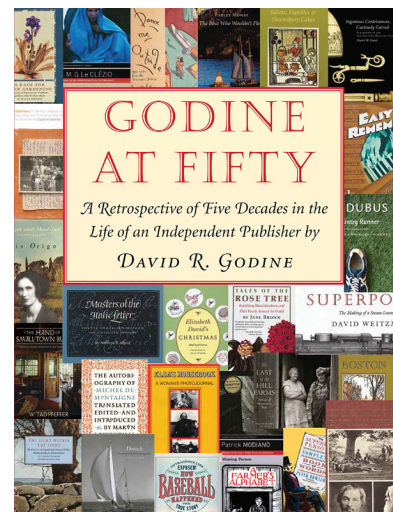
Since it was established in 1970, David R. Godine Press has become a respected name in the book business.

In 1980, Godine was described as a “respected, adventurous, outspoken publisher and a soi-disant cultural elitist” working with a staff of ten “from the basement of a shabby genteel, back-bay Boston mansion, organized, as he puts it, as a ‘participatory dictatorship’” producing books distinguished by an “unflinching commitment to the highest standards, with respect to content and production.”

In *Godine at Fifty*, founder David Godine conducts a personal tour of the most memorable books he published during his 50-year career. From his earliest days as a letterpress printer to the present digital era, and guided by the slogan “Publish books that matter for people who care,” Godine managed to survive, and sporadically thrive, against all odds and challenges. In the process, creating a remarkable catalog of authors and titles.

Divided into twenty-four chapters and describing almost 300 titles, it remains primarily a personal story – the record, told through the books themselves, of a staunchly independent publisher who pursued his own interests, expanded on his own passions, and took the unconventional position that somewhere out there were probably enough readers that shared his peculiar obsessions to insure his survival.

Sources: David R. Godine; *Granta*



David R. Godine





Penguin released the volumes in its Drop Cap series from December 2021 to May 2014. From A (Jane Austen) to Z (Carlos Luis Zafon), the cover of each book in this series has an elaborate capital letter designed by Jessica Hische, a Brooklyn-based "lettering artist and author with a tendency to overshare and a penchant for procrastinating". Elements of the design, unique for each book, is carried inside. Hische is a New York Times bestselling author for her children's book *Tomorrow I'll be Brave*. Apropos of the FBS-sponsored Whitman event on March 31 at Largo Public Library, *W* is the Drop Cap Series is Walt Whitman with *Leaves of Grass and Selected Poems and Prose*.



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
Ben Wiley
Gary Simons

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

Join FBS!

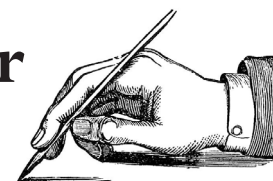
If you love books, take your interest to the next level by joining a group of dedicated book lovers (i.e., bibliophiles). You will meet serious collectors, dealers, scholars, and readers, and you will discover a lively, enjoyable group. You will find contact emails on the last page of this newsletter.



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

March 2022



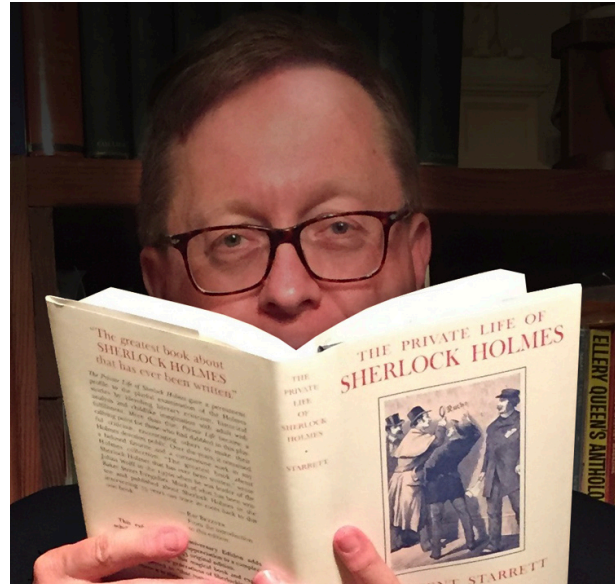
Boštjan Petrič: Book Collecting in Slovenia

Macdonald-Kelce Library
401 W. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL
(also available on Zoom)

March 20, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

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. Boštjan will present the history of the book in Slovenia, especially the main similarities and the main differences between collecting Slovenica and Americana. Then he will present Slovene-American publishing, both in the U.S. and in the old homeland, and how to recognize the more desirable books in this category. You never know: you may already have one!

April 2022



Ray Betzner: Studies in Starrett Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

Sherlock Holmes is a name we all know; Vincent Starrett perhaps less so. But we should know about Starrett as a fascinating author and bibliophile in his own right and as the writer who laid the foundation for serious Sherlock Holmes studies and who kicked Sherlock mania into high gear.

Starrett (1886–1974) was fated to be a bibliophile – he was born in the rooms above his grandfather’s bookshop. He became a Chicago newspaper reporter in the early 20th century and then began to write mysteries for various pulps in the 1920s and 1930s. He even wrote a Sherlock Holmes adventure. But his most famous work was *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (1933), which combined his investigative nature as a reporter and his love of Holmes and mysteries. Ray Betzner became a Holmes addict at an early age and from there discovered Starrett, which has become a subject of long-term study and the fascinating blog, *Studies in Starrett*.



Book Events and Podcasts

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

Florida Book Events – March–April 2022

– March 3 –

World Book Day

(www.worldbookday.com/)

– March 5 –

Southwest Florida Reading Festival

Fort Myers Regional Library Campus
Fort Myers, FL (www.readfest.org/)

– March 12 –

Palm Beach Book Festival

West Palm Beach, FL
(www.palmbeachbookfestival.com/)

– March 18, 10:30 a.m. –

Ringling Literati Book Club, Sarasota, FL

Book: *Scoundrels, Cads, and Other Great Artists* by
Jeffrey Smith

– March 25–26 –

Venice Book Fair and Writers Festival

Venice, FL (venicebookfair.com/)

– March 31, 6:30–8:00 p.m. –

FBS Walt Whitman: Still Relevant to Modern

Times, Speaker: Ed S. Centeno

Largo Public Library, Largo, Fla.
Sponsored by the Florida Bibliophile Society
Free, [requires registration](#)

– April 1–3 –

FBS Florida Antiquarian Book Fair

St. Petersburg, Fla.
(www.floridaantiquarianbookfair.com/)

– April 2 –

BookMania! (est. 1994)

Jensen Beach, FL (www.libraryfoundationmc.org/programs-/bookmania-festival/)

Look for our booth!

– April 6, 6:30 p.m. (virtual) –

Tampa-Hillsborough Storytelling Festival:

Next Steps (est. 1980) (tampastory.org/)

– April 22, 6–9 p.m. –

Oxford Exchange Book Fair (est. 2015)

420 West Kennedy Blvd.
Tampa (bookstore.oxfordexchange.com/programming/oe-book-fair/)

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:

Feb. 3 – Gwendolyn Brooks at the Morgan

In 1950, poet Gwendolyn Brooks became the first Black person to win a Pulitzer Prize, for her second book, *Annie Allen*. Nic Caldwell from the Morgan Library & Museum in New York tells about their latest exhibition, *Gwendolyn Brooks: A Poet's Work in Community*, the poet's Chicago roots, her passion for mentoring, and the importance of her poetry.

Feb. 8 – Heartbreak

Our guest is journalist Florence Williams who has written a book called *Heartbreak: A Personal and Scientific Journey*. Sadly, Florence's marriage unexpectedly collapsed after 25 years, and she decided to investigate the science behind a broken heart and turned her learning into a book.

Feb. 22 – The First Kennedys

Author Neal Thompson discusses his latest book, *The First Kennedys: The Humble Roots of an American Dynasty*, which describes the early years of the family that gave us John F. Kennedy. We learn how two young Irish people arrived in Boston, met and married and created a family that shaped American politics.

Feb. 28 – On Gold Mountain

On Gold Mountain by Lisa See was published in 1995. It's a remarkable memoir that tells the story of one Chinese American family and their immigrant experience. The book is still making headlines today. It has been adapted into an opera with a new production planned for May, and it has also become a teaching resource. Lisa explains how the memoir has impacted her own family and influenced her career.

March 5 – David Ruggles Book Collecting Prize

We learn about the David Ruggles Prize, a book-collecting contest designed to encourage and support young collectors of color. Our guests are Sara Powell, who is one of the prize judges, and Pat Olson, who is Assistant to the Prize Jury.

*Book Events and Podcasts, continued***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:

March 4 – John Sargent on his career in book publishing. Until recently, John Sargent was CEO of Macmillan Publishers USA and Executive Vice President of Georg von Holtzbrinck Publishing Group, where he oversaw global trade operations; he was also responsible for Macmillan Learning, the company's U.S.-based higher education business.

Feb. 28 – Jerry Kelly on book and bookseller catalogue design. Jerry Kelly is a book designer, calligrapher and type designer. Before 1998, he was Vice President of The Stinehour Press and before that a designer at A. Colish. Jerry's work has been often honored; for example, his book designs have been selected more than thirty times for the AIGA "Fifty Books of the Year" Award. In 2015, he was presented with the 28th Goudy Award from RIT.

Feb. 22 – Andrew Wylie on being a Literary Agent. Andrew Wylie is an American literary agent. He grew up in Sudbury, Mass. and attended St. Paul's School in Concord, N. H. He studied Romance Languages & Literatures at Harvard University.

Feb. 18 – Richard Charkin on the measures required to succeed in publishing. Richard Charkin is a British publishing executive. Before founding Mensch Publishing in 2018, he has held positions, including executive director, at Bloomsbury, Pergamon Press, Oxford University Press, Reed International/Reed Elsevier, Macmillan Publishers Limited, and Verlagsgruppe Georg von Holtzbrinck.

Feb. 14 – Warren Kinsella on Political Books. Warren Kinsella is a lawyer and political consultant. He has written for most of Canada's major newspapers and is the founder of the Daisy Consulting Group, a Toronto-based firm that engages in paid political campaign strategy work, lobbying and communications crisis management. He has written ten books.

**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.

Recent and upcoming episodes:

Mar. 31, 2 p.m. – Hannah Farber: *Underwriters of the United States: How Insurance Shaped the American Founding*. Unassuming but formidable, American maritime insurers used their position at the pinnacle of global trade to shape the new nation. The international information they gathered and the capital they generated enabled them to play central roles in state building and economic development. During the Revolution, they helped the U.S. negotiate foreign loans, sell state debts, and establish a single national bank. Afterward, they increased their influence by lending money to the federal government and to its citizens. Deeply and imaginatively researched, *Underwriters of the U.S.* uses marine insurers to reveal a startlingly original story of risk, money, and power in the founding era.

Jan. 28, 2 p.m. – Matthew G. Kirschenbaum: *Bitstreams: The Future of Digital Literary Heritage*. What are the future prospects for literary knowledge now that literary texts – and the material remains of authorship, publishing, and reading – are reduced to strings of digital ones and zeros? What are the opportunities and obligations for book history, textual criticism, and bibliography when literary texts are distributed across digital platforms, devices, formats, and networks?

Book Events and Podcasts, concluded**Rare Book Cafe**

Rare Book Cafe covers all aspects of books in “the only live-streamed program about antiquarian books, ephemera, and more....” Produced by St. Pete journalist T. Allan Smith, RBC streams on most Saturdays. View on [Rare Book Cafe website \(on Facebook\)](#) or YouTube, or listen to *Rare Book Cafe Raw* on podcast sites.

Rare Book Cafe remains on hiatus until after the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair. Watch their Facebook page and these pages for new episodes when they are made.

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 [55 podcasts](#) available on SoundCloud. Recent additions include:

- Portrait of a Bibliophile XIV: Marx and Engels
- My Uncle Ian, by James Fleming
- Fred Bason’s Diary, Episodes 4 and 5
- Fred Bason’s Diary, Episodes 6
- Some Uncollected Authors XLIII: Gilbert White

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.

[The Bodleian Libraries \(BODcasts\)](#) – Hidden treasures of medieval illumination, finding the true texts of Christmas carols, and much more.

Grolier Club of New York Videos

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

Recent episodes:

Feb. 22 – Glen Miranker: On Arthur Conan Doyle

Feb. 7 – James J. Periconi: Developing a Website for Your Collection

Jan. 26 – William S. Peterson: Bibliography Week Lecture – The Daniel Press

Jan. 25 – Nicholas Basbanes in conversation with Glen Miranker: Collecting Sherlock Holmes

Jan. 12 – Meghan R. Constantinou: Exhibition Tour – The Daniel Press: Pioneer of the English Private Press Movement

Princeton University Library

Feb. 13 – [An Independent Publisher Turns 100, featuring W. Drake McFeely](#). Former chairman of W. W. Norton & Company, McFeely is working on a history of Norton to celebrate its centennial in 2023. McFeely speaks about the extraordinary nature of the company – the oldest and largest independent publishing house in the U.S. wholly-owned by its employees, with many distinguished literary contributions under McFeely’s leadership are many—11 Pulitzer Prizes, nine National Book Awards, and many bestsellers.

Dec. 6, 2021 – [Carolyn Yerkes: Piranesi on the Page](#). Carolyn Yerkes, co-curator of the “Piranesi on the Page” exhibition, and associate professor of Art & Archaeology at Princeton University, discusses the methodology of and items in this exhibition with the Friends of Princeton University Library. The exhibition features Princeton University Library’s collection of Piranesi works as well as many loan items.



...and More

Buckram – This stiff coarse weave of cotton (sometimes linen or even horsehair) is a preferred covering for library books. So common is buckram in libraries that from the above description alone, most people would recognize it.

What makes buckram special is the sizing. Generally, sizing is anything applied to fabric to give it additional stiffness, and if your first thought is starch, you would be right. Common starch is added to fabrics (or applied before ironing) to stiffen them. In fact, starch is added to paper when it is being made – the right amount of starch gives paper stiffness and weight, and it adds some water resistance.

In the case of buckram, a lot of starch is added, but in the 1980s, the starch was replaced with a synthetic material that is even more effective at strengthening the cloth and resisting water, making this type of buckram even more desirable for library books. The Library of Congress uses a lot of buckram and expects buckram book coverings to last 75 to 100 years.

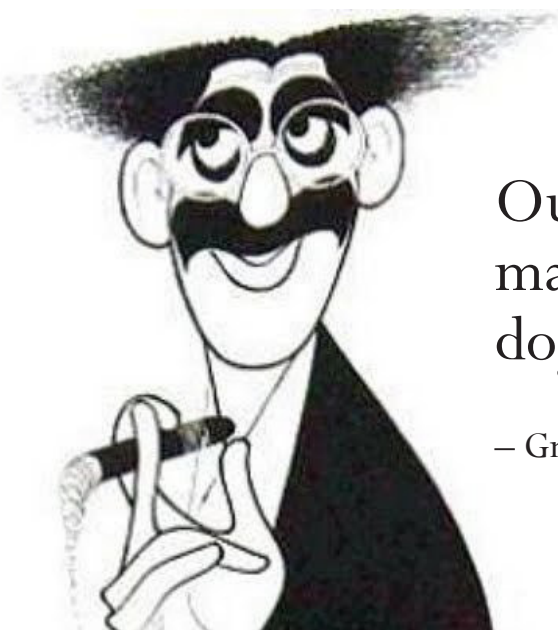
Many types of cloth are named after the cities that first produced them, for example, madras after

the city in India or denim after Nimes in France. Buckram has been said to come from Bokhara in Central Asia – an appealing but uncertain etymology.

**The
importance
of being
earnest?**



**I'm Wilde
about it!
Seriously.**



Outside of a dog, a book is
man's best friend. Inside of a
dog it's too dark to read.

– Groucho Marx (1890–1977)

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: Kurt, founder and president of the Book Hunters Club of Houston, shared 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: Another gala occasion was experienced at the home of Ben and Joyce Wiley. Out appetizers and cocktails were followed by a delicious buffet of members’ specialties, dessert, and coffee. We lingered over conversation, Christmas crackers, and a surprise gift exchange.

January 16 • Elaine Togneri – What if? Writing Short Fiction for Fun and Profit: 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 – The Private Library: 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 insights and selections from his outstanding Whitman collection.

April 1–3 • Florida Antiquarian Book Fair is one of the largest book fairs in the U.S. It will be held as usual at the St. Pete Coliseum. FBS hosts a table at the entrance 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 19 (Tues., 7 p.m.) • 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 • I'll never be the same



I hope you saw Reid Byers presentation. I can only say that I'll never be the same. It was book-rapturous! (I had to say that.)

First, it was so interesting to learn about the continuities and the changes in book storage and display over the past 4,000 years.

Second, it was also interesting to learn about the types of storage systems used over that time: stacks of clay tablets, book boxes, cabinets, and shelving. I feel like a part of this history because I use all four in my house! (And a couple Reid did not mention.)

Third, it was amazing to see the libraries. We've had a lot of fun in the Florida Bibliophile Society visiting home libraries, generally modest, but always ingenious – and surely, someone has coined a word for the irresistible desire to scan other people's bookshelves.

Fourth, and maybe the best, was the scholarship that has gone into this work. I am so happy for Reid that he was able to complete this amazing project and that it has been greeted with such success. Well deserved, fellow bibliophile!

We look forward to the book Reid has promised on imaginary books. If you are clever with Internet searches, you can find a presentation he did on this subject at Princeton (hint: search <Reid Byers Imaginary Books>).

Of course, we're very excited about our first international speaker, Boštjan Petrič, who will be joining us via Zoom on March 20 from Slovenia. Then, on March 31, Ed Centeno will be at the Largo Public Library, and then the Florida Antiquarian Book Fair is back!!

Be there! Aloha! See you at the bookstore! — Charles

The Florida Bibliophile Society

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