



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



The Open University

## *RED Letter*

The Newsletter of the Reading Experience Database



AUTUMN 2008

Edited by Rosalind Crone and Katie Halsey

Summer 2008 proved to be an extremely busy season for the RED team: we have achieved many things and enjoyed invigorating discussions on the subject of reading at a large number of conferences. Foremost, we were proud to host a very rewarding conference at the Institute of English Studies in London on the evidence of reading. It was extremely well-attended, and, we think, successful – thanks to the efforts of all those who participated. We are especially pleased to be able to publish in REDLetter two conference reports prepared by graduate students – these can be found below. At the conference, we were also delighted to be able to launch RED Version 2, which features an updated search page with new search functions. As the contents of RED continue to grow at a rapid rate, we hope that users will be able to pinpoint entries of interest with much greater ease. More search functions will continue to be added to the Advanced Search page over the course of this final year of AHRC funding, and we plan to release a further update, RED Version 3, during summer 2009. We would also like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to a questionnaire we have posted on the home page of our project website which we hope will help us identify priorities for the design of Version 3. If you are a regular user of RED, we would be very grateful if you could find the time to complete the survey and return it to us, either electronically or by mail to the addresses provided. The questionnaire can be found here: [www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED](http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/RED).

The focus of the conference, and indeed RED, has firmly been on the evidence of reading. As many of you are aware, we collect evidence of reading experiences, that is, recorded engagements with specific texts by identifiable individuals. However, in her thought-provoking conclusion to the

conference, Leah Price challenged this particular focus in the field of the history of reading, suggesting that we need to widen our notions of engagement with texts and become more sensitive to the materiality of forms of print and manuscript. So few readers deliberately leave any trace of their encounter with the text behind. But might we be able to find a way to assess the significance of a stain from a coffee mug on an old newspaper, or even dirty fingerprints on the margins of a book? I am a little embarrassed to admit that in my own teaching career I have been guilty of returning essays to students with faint smudges of jam on the paper from marking their work at the breakfast table that morning. Yet, my past experiences as an undergraduate confirm that many others commit like offences.

Similarly, it is worth considering how we might incorporate rather different engagements with various forms of text into our general conceptions of the history of reading. My recent research into reading in the nineteenth-century prison has illuminated the wide range of uses books and other forms of print can be put to, especially in situations of desperation. I will provide just two very brief examples. Confined in Millbank at the end of the century, ‘No. 7’ remembered that a fellow prisoner had taken to supplementing his food rations with paper. As he wrote,

For some time there had been complaints made to the chaplain and governor that the library books were in a sad state, owing to many leaves being found missing. One day the great mystery was solved. An inspection of all the books in the possession of every prisoner was ordered – prayer-books, hymn-books, Bibles and educational works – was ordered, and when the searchers examined the cell of my friend on the opposite side of the landing, they found that every book in his cell had leaves missing. One book, indeed the cell Bible, had lost more than fifty pages!

The ‘Ticket of Leave Man’, sentenced to penal servitude several decades earlier and serving his sentence at Portland, described in his memoirs how wives of soldiers stationed nearby would throw treats over the prison walls for the inmates. ‘I did not care for the tobacco’, the ex-convict wrote, ‘but I must plead to having once found a jam tart carefully wrapped in a London evening paper of the previous day.’ Finally, it might be worth noting that marginalia (notes made in books) might not always prove an engagement with that particular text. Modern prison officials and former inmates have at times alluded to the use of prison library books for sending coded messages between prisoners, often by underlining specific letters or phrases.

These alternative forms of evidence and interpretative strategies at present fall beyond the remit of RED. But we hope that the evidence in RED, and especially the discussion it has generated, will help to push the field forward in these exciting directions.

As it has been such a busy summer, we have accumulated large debts of gratitude and have many people to thank for their help, support and kindness. First, we would like to thank all those who participated in the ‘Evidence of Reading’ conference in London in July, and in particular, those who helped with the organisation of the event: Jon Millington, Valerie Hall, Karen Attar, and Yvonne Reynolds; those who helped over the three days of the conference: Wim Van Mierlo, Amy Flanders, Mary Hammond, Jonathan Arnold, Jenny MacAuley, and Chrissie Lees. We are grateful to everyone who chaired a panel or panels. We would also like to extend a special thank you to our keynote speakers and roundtable participants: Kate Flint, Jonathan Rose, David Vincent, Mary Hammond, Leah Price, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor. And, of course, thanks to all those who gave papers and participated in the discussions after each panel. The RED Team have been very fortunate to have been delegates at a number of conferences during the summer, and we would like to thank the organisers of those events for their hospitality and for providing us with air time to publicise our research project: Ian Gadd, Kate Longworth, Jane Potter and Claire Squires (organisers of SHARP Oxford); Bethan Benwell, James Procter and Gemma Robinson (organisers of ‘Reading After Empire’); Simon Frost and the organising committee of SHARP Copenhagen; Juliet John and Mark Llewellyn (organisers of ‘Victorians and Heritage’); the organisers of the Anglo-American ‘Communications’ conference, and Gillian Dow, Hilary Brown and Kate Astbury (organisers of ‘Readers, Writers Salonnières: Female Networks in Europe, 1700-1900’).

Generous assistance in terms of publicity and contributions of material has continued to be provided by a large number of supporters. We would like to welcome and thank new volunteers who have very kindly entered material from a wide range of sources: Ruth Roger Facer, Gillian Bingham, Dewi Evans, Shauna Barrett, Jennifer Johnston, Stephanie Munro, and Nicola Wilson. Your efforts are greatly appreciated and ensure that the contents of RED continue to be diverse and useful on many different levels. And thank you to those volunteers who are not new! We are, as always, grateful to you also. It is never too late to become a volunteer: if you would like to work on the reading of a particular individual, if you have some private family papers that record reading experiences, or if you can draw our attention to especially rich sources that are not yet in RED, please do get in touch – we would love to hear from you. Finally, we would like to extend a special thank you to Bob Patten, Leslie Howsam and Sydney Shep, who have been helping us to form closer links with SHARP, and to Mark Towsey, Toni Weller, Mike Esbester and Daniel Allington, all of whom have been enthusiastically spreading the word about RED.

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## **REVIEWS OF THE RED CONFERENCE, ‘EVIDENCE OF READING, READING THE EVIDENCE’**

### **Postgraduate Perspective on ‘Evidence of Reading, Reading the Evidence’**

By Clare Gill, Queen’s University Belfast.

When I first clicked my way through the online programme for this year’s “Evidence of Reading, Reading the Evidence” conference, I can now admit to being utterly overcome by an unexpected wave of nausea. Compiled of some one hundred-plus delegates and thirty-three panels over three days, this gargantuan programme made me fear that I would be sucked into the conference vortex, never to be seen again. Were my thesis supervisor not also giving a paper at this very event, I probably would have feigned a mystery illness to release myself from proceedings. For, despite being a bona fide bookworm who is writing a PhD about nineteenth-century readerships, I could not help but contemplate the all too obvious pink elephant in the room here: how much talk about reading can a person really take? Three full days and not-a-panel-skipped later, and I could truthfully answer (with an unhealthy dose of self-satisfied conviction): quite a lot, actually.

The conference, themed around the central issue of reading, brought together a diverse range of papers that together transcended the usual constraints of scholarly discipline, time period, geographical location and critical approach, to provide a wealth of new information and ideas for its participants. Delegates were fortunate enough to hear from a host of scholars at various stages in their careers, presenting research on topics ranging from 15th century readers and resisting readers in revolutionary America, to aspects of reading in nineteenth-century fiction and digital resources for the history of reading. I shall here offer a few of my own conference highlights, some of which betray my literature department training, and one or two that removed me from my comfort zone, yet affected me nonetheless, thus honouring the truly interdisciplinary spirit of this event.

In particular, I enjoyed Shih-Wen Sue Chen's paper on William Dalton's *The Wolf Boy of China* (1857), from which I gleaned new insights into the ways nineteenth-century fictional texts can themselves be scouted for internally held evidence of reading practices. Using the text itself as the point of origin, Shih-Wen illuminated a "chain" of texts that can be traced outwards from Dalton's work as a means of identifying evidence of his reading. So too, Lizet Duyvendak's paper on a community of late nineteenth-century readers clustered around the 'Damesleesmuseum' in the Netherlands introduced me to previously unexplored terrain. A fascinating account of a women's-only reading community that developed throughout the first wave of feminism to meet the recreational and educative needs of upper middle-class women, Lizet's canny use of library records (including catalogues, reader's reports and lending records) forced me to seriously rethink some of the archival methods implemented to date in my own doctoral research.

These papers withstanding, looking back on the conference now from a distance of some weeks, two moments stand out particularly for me. First, the intellectual squabble that occurred between Professors Kate Flint and Jonathan Rose after the latter's illuminating keynote speech, introduced a frisson of debate to proceedings after two days of spirited yet largely congratulatory panels. Flint claimed to "bristle" throughout Rose's speech, which traced the rise of history of reading scholarship since the publication of Richard Altick's opus, *The English Common Reader* (1957), chastising Rose for his disparaging account of the role played by theories of reading in the field. As one who works with notions of implied readers in nineteenth-century periodicals, yet also excavates historical reading experiences in my own research on Olive Schreiner's readerships, Flint's words held particular resonance and rang particularly true for me.

Secondly, and no less importantly, the conversation I had with Anna Vaninskaya about "Uncle Archie", the inimitable Socialist Sunday School leader we have both encountered in our individual research of fin-de-siècle socialism, will stay with me for a long time to come. The chance to have an impassioned conversation about this most minor player in socialist history with a postdoctoral researcher my own age is an opportunity not likely to present itself again any time soon. Anna also alerted me to a hidden gem of an archive that I plan to visit next month, underscoring the importance of these kinds of events for the creation of scholarly networks where ideas and information can be exchanged.

Overall, "Evidence of Reading, Reading the Evidence" was a triumph, and the organisers of this well-executed, stimulating event should step up and take a well-deserved bow. Attending every panel possible, I managed to ignore the call of Oxford Street for three whole days -- I for one read that as evidence of this conference's colossal success!

### **Conference Report: 'Evidence of Reading, Reading the Evidence', 21st-23rd July, 2008**

By Richard Šípek, Library of the National Museum, Prague

In spite of initial inconveniences with my continental notebook plug and "island" socket I succeeded in getting the corrected version of my paper in time, wherefore – happily enough – the audience was not tortured by my eastern pidgin English.

The conference and all the papers, at least those I had the pleasure of listening to, were highly interesting and a good many of them brought fresh new ideas to my research. The papers dealing with the reading culture of the 19th and 20th century were of special interest to me as they presented the readers' habits through the background of their handwritten notes in books or actual private remarks in their notebooks and diaries in a rather later period than that of my own research. They allowed me to compare reading perceptions 200 to 300 years younger than my actual period of interest and partly to confirm my assumption that readers and their customs do not change as fast as literary genres and their representations. The papers of Bridget Carrington, Mats Dalström, Matthew Bradley, Mark Nixon and Michael Ledger-Lomas should be mentioned in this context.

The papers by Bridget Carrington, Rachel Falconer and Matthew Grenby on books for children as well as on the books read by children during the last three hundred years dealt with different aspects of the matter. Rachel Falconer's paper provided a great deal of justification to all of us who like to read children literature even though we are advanced in age! Matthew Grenby presented his statistical research on children's reading in the context of the social background, sex and locality of the young readers. The results and information he achieved were highly interesting and surprisingly extensive and descriptive compared to the limited sources.

"The Reading Experience Database 1450-1945", introduced as the closing point of the second day of the conference, is an admirable project which, I hope, will be followed by similar projects set up in other European countries so as to provide the possibility of studying mutual influences in reading cultures and the adoption of foreign reading habits.

The discussions following every block of three papers were perhaps even more valuable than the papers themselves. The discussions were very lively and all the participants posed questions which provoked new questions, all of them going deep and uncovering the very core of the issues under discussion. New methods of researching and new ways of conceptualising old problems were canvassed in these discussions. Unfortunately, the time for discussion could not grant enough space for such fundamental and profound changes. However, we must be grateful even for the initial stimulus and impulses and hope the discussions will continue not only in the conferences and meetings to come but also in journals and in e-mail exchanges.

It would be useful to set up an Internet conference on the topic. Understanding the act of "reading" and its hyponymic and/or hyperonymic relations to the definition of "use of books" could be re-thought anew by the Internet conference participants in intentions outlined during this year's conference.

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND CALLS FOR PAPERS**

### **SYMPOSIUM**

The RED team is organising a symposium on **Women's Reading in the Nineteenth Century**, which will take place on Thursday, 26 March 2009 at the Institute of English Studies, London. Confirmed speakers include Rosalind Crone, Katie Halsey, Gill Sutherland and David Finkelstein, and papers will focus on the different ways in which nineteenth-century female readers reacted to the many and various texts that they encountered. The day will end with a visit to the Women's Library in Whitechapel, including a guided tour of the collections, and a look at the exhibition *Between the Covers: the Politics and Pleasure of Women's Magazines*.

For further information, please contact Shafquat Towheed ([S.S.Towheed@open.ac.uk](mailto:S.S.Towheed@open.ac.uk)), Rosalind Crone ([R.H.Crone@open.ac.uk](mailto:R.H.Crone@open.ac.uk)) or Katie Halsey ([Katie.Halsey@sas.ac.uk](mailto:Katie.Halsey@sas.ac.uk))

### **SEMINAR SERIES**

#### ***Seminars in Book History and Bibliography***

Organised by the Book History Research Group, the Open University, and the Institute of English Studies, University of London.

Organiser: Dr Shafquat Towheed, Open University.

#### **2008-2009: Transatlantic Publishing**

Wednesdays, 17:30-19:00

Venue: Room ST273 (2nd Floor, Stewart House), Senate House, Malet St, London, WC1E 7HU. Tel: 0207 8628675

- 22 October 2008 – Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen (University College London), ‘“Our Time is Time of Fairly Tales”’: Hans Christian Andersen’s Tales across the media and the Atlantic’
- 19 November 2008 – Amy Flanders (IES, University of London), ‘Sharing the World: how British and American publishers negotiated the international Anglophone book trade, 1940-1960.’
- 3 December 2008 – Eric White (Anglia Ruskin University), ‘Modernist Journals, Transatlantic Print Culture, and the Rise of the American Avant-Garde’
- 28 January 2009 – Kate Macdonald (University of Ghent), ‘The American editions of John Buchan, 1875-1940’
- 11 February 2009 – Claire Parfait (Université Paris 13), ‘Transatlantic Publishing and the Anti-Slavery Debate, 1840s-1850s’
- 25 February 2009 – Caroline Copeland (Napier University, Edinburgh), ‘Writing for her life: Katherine Cecil Thurston’s exploitation of celebrity’
- 11 March 2009 – Sara Haslam (The Open University), ‘Publishing Parade’s End’

The theme for the 2009-2010 seminar series will be 'The History of Reading'. If you are interested in giving a paper please contact Dr Shafquat Towheed ([S.S.Towheed@open.ac.uk](mailto:S.S.Towheed@open.ac.uk))

## CONFERENCE

### *Reading and the Age of Gladstone*

23-25 January 2009

St Deiniol’s Library

Several recent and ongoing projects have sought to provide new histories of the book and examine the role and position of readers within that history. This conference not only aims to explore the issues that surround reading in the period c1830-1901, it also seeks to explore the ways in which the Victorian period is read today. Increased literacy, unprecedented developments in publishing, the widespread availability of texts through periodicals and a new library culture: all mark out the nineteenth century as one of the most active in terms of the ‘reading experience’. But how did readers of the time set about their task, and how should the modern critic or teacher set about theirs? What engagement did readers in the period have with the whole machinery of producing and disseminating books, with publishing houses, with libraries, with periodicals, and how do such material considerations affect our reading of the Victorians today? What did the act of reading mean for them – and what does it mean for us?

The conference will take place at St Deiniol’s Library, which was founded by the Victorian statesman and polymath William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898). The Library is the National Memorial to Gladstone and is both the only residential library and purpose-built prime ministerial library in the United Kingdom. Part of the programme will consist of the official launch of the Gladstone’s Reading Database. The research for this project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (2006-09), has been conducted at St Deiniol’s, and database represents a virtual recreation of Gladstone’s library, and a unique and comprehensive record of his reading of each item. For further details about the database, please contact [m.d.bradley@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:m.d.bradley@liverpool.ac.uk).

A Gladstone Centre for Victorian Studies in Wales and the North West Conference in partnership with the University of Liverpool’s Centre for Victorian Studies.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

*Romantic Circulations: The 11th biennial International conference of the British Association for Romantic Studies (BARS)*

23-26 July 2009

Roehampton University, London, UK

Some of the most productive recent work on the literature and culture of the Romantic period has explored ideas of circulation. The range of scholarship influenced by this approach includes studies of sociability, reading, publishing, anthologizing, conversation, visual and verbal cultures, the history of affect, medicine and disease, and colonialism and slavery. This aim of 'Romantic Circulations' is to investigate the transmission of Romantic ideas, knowledge, cultural forms and literary discourses in the context of changing relations between artist and audience, writer and reader, producer and consumer, elite and popular, national and trans-national.

Topics might include, but not be limited by the following:

- The circulation of sympathy: models of the social as a system of circulation.
- The circulation and transformation of ideas: Conversation and sociability; lectures and debating clubs; education, Sunday schools.
- Reading, reception and audiences: studies of the transmission and reception of visual and verbal texts in the period.
- Visual Circulation: the dissemination of paintings and prints; extra-illustration, marginalia and Grangerization; public spectacle and galleries.
- Circulation of print: Anthologies, pamphlets, publishing, libraries, lending and borrowing; circulation through translation.
- Economies of circulation: money as a material object; economic theory and political economy; the circulation of objects.
- Travel and Technologies of circulation: Transport by road, river, canal, balloon; the post.
- Metaphors of circulation: water, fountains and light.
- Circulation and the body: Blood and medical circulation; contamination and disease; sexual circulation: libertinism and prostitution.
- Trade, commerce and empire: Romantic colonialism; utopias; slavery; orientalism.

Please send 200-word proposals for 20-minute papers and brief affiliation details to:

[I.Haywood@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:I.Haywood@roehampton.ac.uk). Deadline for submission: 31 October 2008.

Conference organisers: Ian Haywood, Susan Matthews

Conference website: <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/romanticcirculations/>

## CONFERENCE

### *CaSTA 2008 New Directions in Text Analysis*

University of Saskatchewan

16 October 2008 – 18 October 2008

CaSTA 2008 (Canadian Symposium on Text Analysis) will be held at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon from 16-18 October 2008 and will feature two main components: a pre-conference workshop on "Digitizing Material Culture" and the conference proper on the theme of "New Directions in Text Analysis." This combination of interests is intended to foster connections between scholars working in textual analysis and those working in other areas of humanities computing.

CaSTA 2008 especially wants to encourage the participation of graduate students, whose work is even now incubating many of the new directions that this conference will begin to explore. We are including



sessions that would be of particular interest to graduate students and to projects that involve significant student training and participation, and will offer grants to students who travel to attend the conference.

Our exciting roster of speakers for CaSTA 2008 includes:

David Hoover, Professor of English at New York University (keynote)

Hoyt Duggan, Professor Emeritus in English at University of Virginia

Geoffrey Rockwell, Associate Professor in Humanities Computing at University of Alberta

Cara Leitch, PhD candidate in English at University of Victoria

And for the seminar on Digitizing Early Material Culture:

Meg Twycross, Professor Emeritus of English, Lancaster University, and Executive Editor of Medieval English Theatre (replacing Melissa Terras). Professor Twycross will be talking about her work on digital restoration of medieval manuscripts

Lisa Snyder, Associate Director of the Experiential Technologies Centre, University of California Los Angeles. Dr. Snyder will be talking about her work on 3D modelling and reconstruction of ancient city sites

For further information, please visit <https://ocs.usask.ca/ocs/index.php/casta/casta08/index/>

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### ***What Did Mr Miniver Read? The Fears and Aspirations of the "Masculine Middlebrow" Writer, 1880-1950***

A two-day conference hosted by the Institute of English Studies, London  
13-14 March 2009

Writers of the feminine middlebrow have been studied with increasing discernment and energy since the publication of many forgotten titles by women novelists by Virago from 1977, and by Persephone Books from 1999. Increasingly research has sought to link texts by both male and female writers associated with middlebrow tastes and to identify the kinds of cultural status they were afforded or denied. This conference focuses on the masculine middlebrow: texts aimed at Mr rather than Mrs Miniver. We aim to look in the den, and on his side of the bed, rather than on her bedside table.

'Middlebrow' was a pejorative term by 1925, and can be traced as an increasingly complex social indicator until after the Second World War. The cultural tastes of the 'middling sorts' became increasingly difficult to police and categorise. Though the cultural distinctions reflected in the use of the term persist to this day, we wish to encourage examination of the texts produced during the period when the culture wars were fiercest: the period 1880-1950.

In rereading texts, some forgotten and long disregarded, we also revisit works which are unfashionable and morally repugnant to many in our own time. For a better understanding of middlebrow we need to be open to these aspects, and to understand what the 'ordinary' reader of the day was absorbing from the texts of the 'masculine middlebrow'.

We invite abstracts for papers which consider the fears and aspirations expressed in middlebrow texts by masculine authors and which were associated with a 'middlebrow' readership. We are particularly interested in issues arising from the list of suggestions below:

- Which periodicals were associated with a masculine middlebrow audience?
- Did certain genres, such as travel, biographies, and whodunits, address a specifically masculine rather than a feminine readership?
- Can 'masculine middlebrow' reading be associated with different social classes? Which cultural zones can be securely identified with class strata?



- Did club libraries have the same reading and borrowing patterns as municipal libraries, works libraries, or army libraries?
- Who was 'safe'? Why were some novelists associated with 'the ageing intellectual'? Why was Shakespeare 'nasty ranting stuff'? What role did anti-intellectualism play?
- Was John Buchan read for his historical novels or his thrillers? What happened to the masculine middlebrow texts that crossed the borders of cultural classification?
- What role did texts about the occult play in middlebrow reading? We are interested in papers which relate the esoterica of Charles Williams, Aleister Crowley and Arthur Machen to their readers' lives and wishes.
- How did society deal with 'problem' novelists, such as Warwick Deeping, Gilbert Frankau, and A S M Hutchinson?
- Who were the taste formers of the 'masculine middlebrow'? How influential were Arnold Bennett and J.B. Priestley, for example, as novelists and journalists?

You should expect your final conference presentation to last for 20 minutes. Please attach this information to your abstracts:

- name
- academic affiliation (not obligatory: we welcome contributions from independent scholars)
- contact email address
- any relevant publications
- a short account of how masculine middlebrow fits into your past or current research (this is without prejudice to your application: it will help us understand which authors or issues are being worked on, and where)
- whether you need an early decision on acceptance to enable an application for travel funding to be made
- whether you need particular facilities or equipment for your proposed presentation

Organisers: Dr Mary Grover, University of Sheffield Hallam ([mkg0401@aol.com](mailto:mkg0401@aol.com)) and Dr Kate Macdonald, University of Ghent ([kate.macdonald@ugent.be](mailto:kate.macdonald@ugent.be)). Please send abstracts to [kate.macdonald@ugent.be](mailto:kate.macdonald@ugent.be) by 28 September 2008.

Enquiries: Jon Millington, Events Officer, Institute of English Studies, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU; tel +44 (0) 207 664 4859; Email [jon.millington@sas.ac.uk](mailto:jon.millington@sas.ac.uk)

## CONFERENCE

### *Personal Writing and Textual Scholarship: Fifth International Conference of the European Society for Textual Scholarship*

20-22 November 2008

University of Lisbon

Private writings are texts specifically produced for the eyes of their author or another single person. They tend to materialize in certain genres such as Diaries and Letters, but include working documents – drafts, notebooks, aide-mémoires, and others – which may represent or contain preliminary stages of later published texts. Considering this intentionalist definition, several questions emerge, some which are more editorial in nature and others verging on the legal and moral territory:

- Do drafts and transient pre-publication versions have a value of their own or are they bound to be seen as superseded phases of a process? What about those more or less inchoate writings which were never published in the author's lifetime? Do they have the status of a pre-non-existent text?
- Do letters and diaries perform a role as potential indirect testimonies, conveying information that enables editors to correct or supplement passages that are absent or flawed in all extant manuscripts and copies when the whole of direct tradition is affected by one of these problems? Besides, how do the writings belonging to these types contribute to the perception of the process of constructing a different text?
- Do scholars act differently when editing private texts, i.e., changing their nature from an originally private status into a public one? If so, do these different proceedings include a more fully developed commentary in order to make otherwise lost references and allusions legible? Or are they geared, on the contrary, to produce in the readers the feeling of being lost, i.e., of making them realize that that piece of writing was not intended for their eyes? Should bibliographic code and transcription strategy play a role in rendering conspicuous the difference between an edition of private texts and an edition of public ones?
- Do the texts originally present in private documents gain a new identity when they are transformed into public ones, even if the process is carried out by their authors and the verbal changes are slight or inexistent?
- Given the context of the conflict between moral rights and those of readers, how does the law set out the publication of private texts?
- How is manipulation of private writings, from partial censorship and the introduction of changes to utter destruction, seen by textual scholars, literary archive heirs and jurists?
- Should those texts once published and later on excluded by authors from their work be included in a collected edition? Despite having been published, do these texts become private once the author states that they no longer pertain to his work?

Inquiries and proposals should be sent to: Burghard Dedner, Program Chair, [dednerb@staff.uni-marburg.de](mailto:dednerb@staff.uni-marburg.de).

All participants in the conference must be members of the European Society for Textual Scholarship. For information on membership, please contact: Herman Brinkman, [Herman.Brinkman@huygensinstituut.knaw.nl](mailto:Herman.Brinkman@huygensinstituut.knaw.nl).

Conference registration fee: 50 €

For further information, visit: <http://ests.lisbon.conference.difusa.eu/>

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### *RSS Conference on Reception Study*

Sept 12-13, 2009

Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.

Keynote Speakers:

- James Phelan, Humanities Distinguished Professor, Ohio State University
- Steven Zwicker, Stanley Elkin Professor in the Humanities, Washington University
- Barbara Klinger, Professor of Communication and Culture, Indiana University. Winner of the Katherine Singer Kovacs Award for best essay from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies
- Michael Bérubé, Paterno Family Professor in Literature at Pennsylvania State University

Suggestions for panels and papers in all areas of English, American, and other literatures, media, and book history are welcome. For a list of possible topics and panels, see the RSS website:

<http://English.udel.edu/RSSsite>

The deadline is May 1, 2009. Please submit proposals of 250 words or less to Philip Goldstein at [pgold@udel.edu](mailto:pgold@udel.edu) or University of Delaware, 333 Shipley St., Wilmington, DE 19801, or visit the website: <http://English.udel.edu/RSSsite>.

Selected conference papers will be published in the RSS journal Reception: Texts, Readers, Audiences, History, which is an on-line, refereed journal which publishes theoretical and practical analyses in the related fields of the RSS, focusing mainly but not exclusively on the literature, culture, and media of England and the United States. Submissions are welcome at any time. See the RSS website for vol.1 of Reception.

The Reception Study Society promotes informal and formal exchanges between scholars in several related fields: reader-response criticism and pedagogy, reception history, history of reading and the book, audience and communication studies, institutional studies, and gender, race, ethnic, sexuality, postcolonial, religious, and other studies.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

*SHARP 2009: Tradition & InnovatioN - The state of book history / Le point sur l'histoire du livre*

23 - 27 June 2009

St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, Canada

The conference theme, Tradition & InnovatioN, provides an opportunity to explore developments in the field of Book History. Professor Natalie Zemon Davis (Princeton and the University of Toronto) and Professor Dominique Kalifa (Paris 1) will deliver plenary addresses.

In keeping with previous SHARP conferences, we welcome proposals on all aspects of book history and print culture, but especially those that address issues related to the conference theme, such as:

- the future of the discipline
- methodologies: theory versus case studies?
- the legacy of material bibliography
- the 'newmedia' and book culture
- trans-national approaches
- the technologies of reading / assessing readerships
- the evolving nature of authorship
- book history and publishing studies

Presenters must be members of SHARP (by the time of registration) in order to present at the conference. For information on membership, please visit the SHARP website at <http://www.sharpweb.org/>

Proposals may be submitted in English or French for: a) individual papers of 20 minutes, which will be combined into 90-minute panel sessions by the Programme Committee; or, b) organized panels of three papers.

Deadline for submission is 30 November 2008.

Conference website: <http://www.utoronto.ca/stmikes/sharp2009/>

## CONFERENCE

### *Robert Burns in Global Culture*

22-23 January 2009

Royal Society of Edinburgh

The Royal Society of Edinburgh is organising a major one-day conference on 'Robert Burns and Global Culture' in 2009. The conference will reflect on issues such as the global reputation of Burns, the translation and reception of Burns in world literatures, the influence of Burns on the image of Scotland abroad, and the continuing celebration of Burns in global culture in statues, music and Burns Supper events. As Scotland's National Academy, the Royal Society of Edinburgh has decided to host this conference on Scotland's national bard as one of a series of global events to commemorate Burns on the 250th anniversary of his birth, in Glasgow, Prague, Beijing, South Carolina and elsewhere. There will be contributions from leading Burns scholars from around the world, and there will be plenty of scheduled time for discussion as well as a session on the latest research on Burns. Neal Ascherson will open the conference, and there will be a Burns Supper with internationally known speakers, including Clark McGinn (see [seriousburns.com](http://seriousburns.com)). Sheena Wellington and Kirsteen McCue will perform at a musical lunch in the middle of the day. A number of additional activities are planned to complement the main conference.

For further information, including registration forms, please contact the Royal Society of Edinburgh Events Department: [events@royalsoced.org.uk](mailto:events@royalsoced.org.uk)

[www.royalsoced.org.uk](http://www.royalsoced.org.uk)

## CONFERENCE

### *'Adapting Byron'*

4-5 December 2008

The Byron Centre, University of Manchester

Few figures have captured the creative imagination to the extent of Lord Byron. Almost every age, nation and art-form has responded to his life and works. The purpose of this conference is to examine adaptations of Byron over the past two centuries, as a means to interrogate his changing reception and to consider how he and his works have been reconceived on being brought into contact with new, non-literary contexts and media. Special attention will be paid to musical and theatrical treatments of Byron's works, life and personae. The conference will include two lunchtime musical recitals on Byron-related themes.

For further information, contact [laura.tunbridge@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:laura.tunbridge@manchester.ac.uk)