

ENCOUNTERING THE RARE BOOK

INCLUDING

Pithy *Discourses* by Professors
of a number of Disciplines
on examples of such *Rarities*
as may be found in the *Vault*
of *Rare Books* at the Kresge
Library of Oakland University.

CONTAINING LIKEWISE A

VINDICATION

OF THE

Continuing *Power* and
Presence and *Intrigue*
of The *Physical* Book.

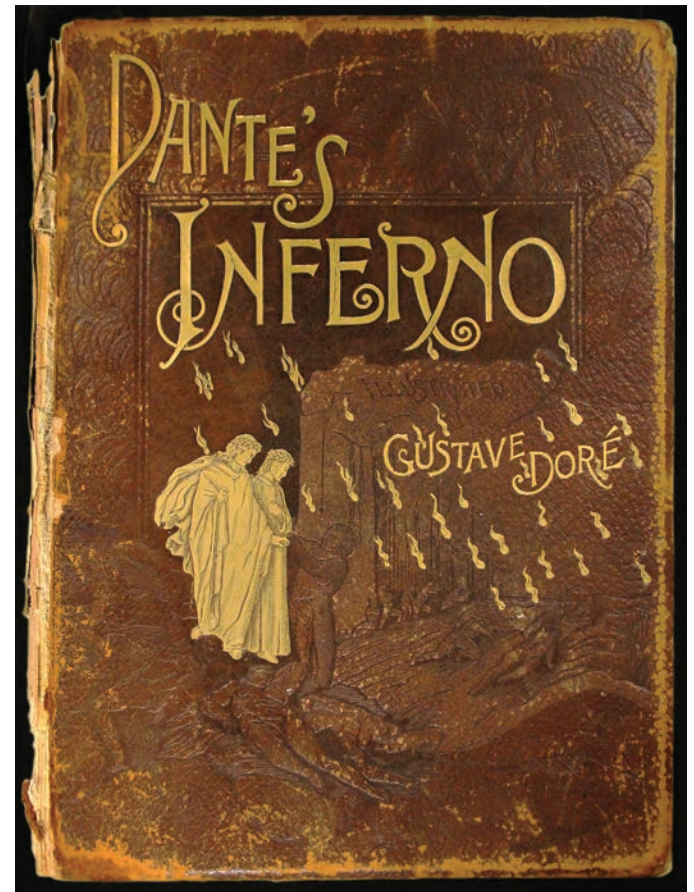
THE WHOLE INTERSPERSED WITH

Such Photographic Images,
presented in full Color, as may
be seen to *Illustrate* and even to
Illuminate this very PREMISE.

This Catalogue is presented upon the *Occasion* of the
Exhibition of said *Books*, at the Oakland University
Art Gallery, a *Display* to which has been added Diverse
Exemplars of print such as Novels, Tracts, and other
Remarkables, as Curated by Professor Andrea Eis.

Leisurely *Viewing* of the Exhibiton available Free to the
Public from 6th September through 7th October, 2018.

Rochester, Michigan.
Printed in the Year MMXVIII.



FROM THE CURATOR

Andrea Eis
Cinema Studies, Department of English

The Physical and the Intangible

Despite my immersion in the digital, I still succumb to the inescapable allure of an actual encounter with a book, and most intensely with books from previous centuries. Kresge Library's Special Collections include the magnificent, the unusual, the unique, the old, and the obscure—books that are “rare” in all the myriad nuances of that word's meaning. This exhibition is an opportunity to explore these books for their intellectual significance, historical importance, visual power, and emotional impact. These books also precipitate a synchronous encounter with the past, a looking back while concurrently looking at the present. The past continues to exist in the present moment in a book.

The palpability of book form, as a corporeal container for human thought, is distinctive from the reading of a book. The encounter with a book's content happens in a reader's mind; with a tangible book, that encounter is physical as well—it becomes matter for the senses. To hold a book that was printed in 1605, to touch a page that may not have been touched in hundreds of years, is a visceral experience that cannot be replicated in the digital realm.



Touching the rare books is unfortunately, frustratingly, and ever so ironically not possible in this exhibition that was spurred, for me, by the entrancing power of touching the past. We can, however, develop a new appreciation of the physical nature of books through the joys of close observation of the objects themselves: noticing the depth of impressions made by raised type pressed against thin paper, following a landscape of threads holding a book together, appreciating the assertion of ownership in a fluid signature. We might perceive how the years of use might ravage the well-read, even well-loved book, or how a pristine example speaks of a long life of special reverence and respect—or perhaps the total neglect of its function as an object meant to be read. An unusual cover might connote a unique object intended to display status or wealth. Conversely, an unexpected binding might signify a book that needed to be concealed, with its owner hoping that it will remain unnoticed by others, because of its dangerous or rebellious power.

As a reader, I immerse myself in the meaning of words, phrases, arguments and entreaties; as an artist, I immerse myself in form. As a curator, I chose to articulate both form and meaning with the structure and design of the exhibition.

Structure and Design

As a curator, my intent was to share the magnetic attraction of the books that reside in the library's special collections in as many modes as possible. Inviting everyone into the book vault is, of course, impossible. This exhibition offers into-the-light opportunities to see books that must generally stay in the dark, commentaries on the content and import of the books, and a behind-the-scenes look at the place where they usually reside. I began by opening the experience to others. I invited faculty from a variety of disciplines to visit the rare book collection to choose a book for this exhibition. The majority of participants had never explored the special collections, and the excitement they communicated as they tried (valiantly!) to choose just one book was remarkable. This catalog gives their perspectives on the books they chose and why, and what they learned about their choices. I asked them to find something that spoke to them—perhaps something significant in their academic discipline, or a book they had cherished in childhood. Perhaps a random book that they found while browsing the shelves, one that led to an unexpected realization, delighted with an unconventional narrative, or fascinated with a lush materiality. Options ranged from a first edition of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* with hand-colored illustrations, to intelligent and



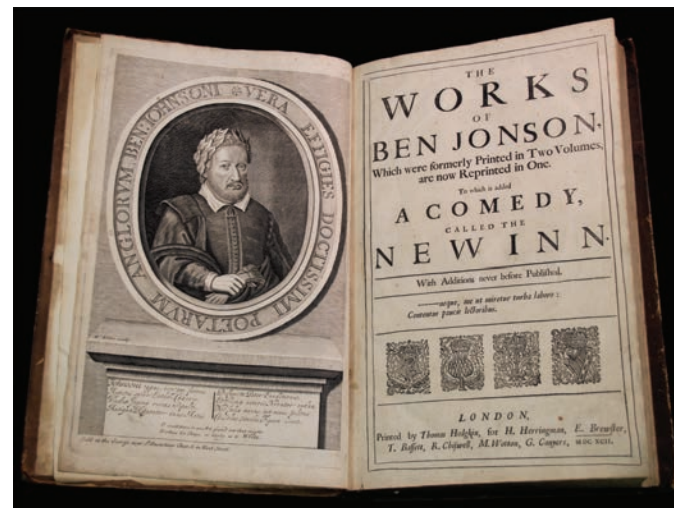
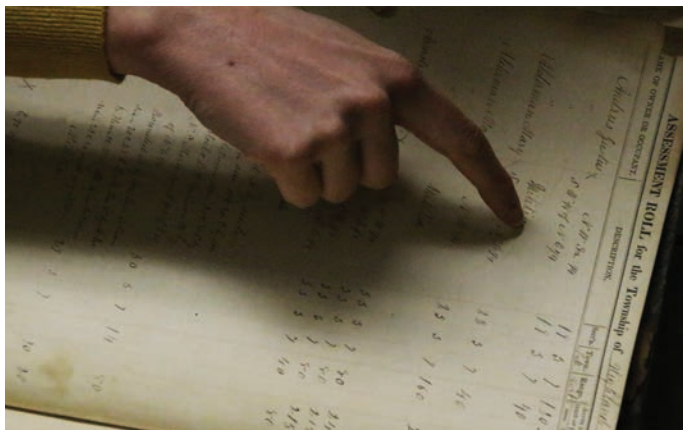
raucous women's writings dating back several centuries; from an autograph book with a tintype of a child tucked inside, to a history of Spanish literature. A mammoth book from the early 1600s contrasts with a tiny one from the early 1700s. Each time I received a faculty essay, I gained new knowledge, and an expanded appreciation for the content in the collections.



I designed the exhibition to spark an expressive, even visceral impact in the viewer. While the actual books are the core, and a source of fascination and even awe, a gallery of vitrines filled with untouchable rarities was not going to be quite enough. I felt that it was critical to further energize and celebrate the experience and meaning of rare books through scale, texture, and motion.

The large fabric pieces infuse a physical monumentality into the aesthetic qualities of the books, while embodying a supple contradiction: the soft fabric reacts fluidly to people passing by, while the scale gestures to the intellectual, cultural, artistic, and political force of the books' content. Long shelves display books for the rich variety of their cover designs, from the ornate to the utilitarian, from the quirky to the elegant. Photographs on paper offer detailed views of books that we were unable to exhibit, or of the unusual companions found next to each other on a shelf. These shelves are further explored through a film made in the rare book vault, in which the subjective camera pauses to notice mysteries and oddities, novels and tax rolls, diversions and occasional nonsense—and then to move on. In another nod to contemporary modes of experience, interactive iPad displays offer access to more illustrations and details. Finally, a ceiling-high stack of deaccessioned books constructs a new, if only temporary, purpose for the not-so-rare.

In our digitally-invested world, we have fewer and fewer chances to directly encounter the rare, to immerse ourselves in the past through the physical manifestation of the book. *Encountering the Rare Book* offers those opportunities, and along with other diverse encounters with the tantalizing essences of the rare book. Hopefully the reverberations will continue once the exhibition has closed. Perhaps, even if you can't touch the past right now, you will be inspired to in the future.

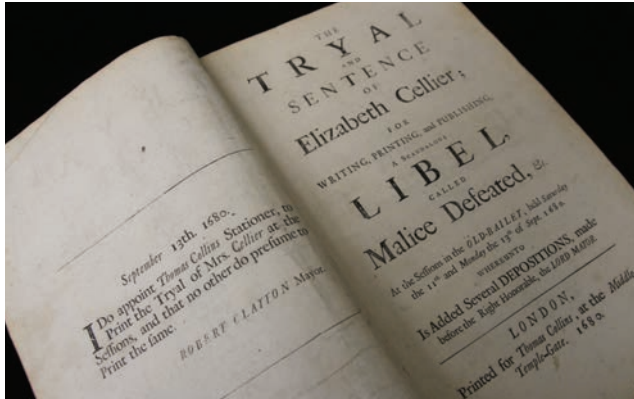


ON ENCOUNTERING THE RARE BOOK

Emily Spunaugle
Kresge Library

The first definition of encounter is “to meet as an adversary” and “to confront in battle,” or “assail,” which aptly captures widespread clichés about rare book libraries.

In 1971, when Kresge Library acquired a collection of rare books from Marguerite Hicks, the former owner was left with the impression that the Oakland University students who encountered them were “almost scared of the books.” Cultural representations perpetuate the presumption of white-gloved guardians of libraries and archives hoarding their dusty treasure, protecting them from would-be readers.

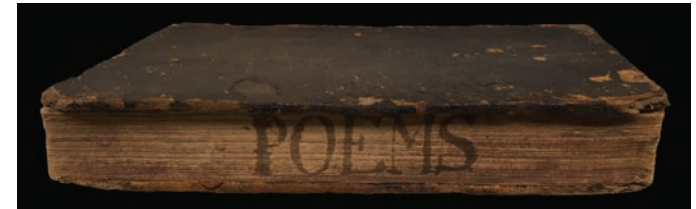
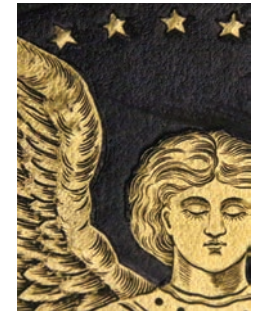


While our rare books require extra care, Kresge Library isn't a museum, and the rare books aren't in retirement. They earn their keep. Kresge Library partners with faculty across the disciplines to host undergraduate and graduate classes in history, modern literature, early American women writers, and book history, to name but a few, inviting students to our reading room to investigate, turn pages, inspect bindings, and ask questions. From miniature books to oversized directories, from early 17th century folios to rare Depression-era pamphlets, Kresge Library welcomes the public and encourages interaction with its rare books.

Why bother with the physical copy? And why an exhibit encouraging an encounter with the book? Simple words on a page have successfully tessellated across multiple editions and formats: your e-reader, laptop computer, or reprinted trade paperback can each host the text of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.



But books communicate more than a simply textual narrative. The vehicles by which novels, legal statutes, statistics, train timetables, and poetry are communicated constitute their own rich narratives that deliver clues about book manufacture and trade, whether in our contemporary moment, back to the earliest days of moveable-type printing in the 15th Century, or manuscript practices long predating that. A simple book might contain singly-sold pamphlets collected together in one volume. Cracked and crumbled bindings might reveal manuscript pages or the unbound sheets of a failed novel reused as binding materials. Books may be encased in splendid leather covers with sumptuous, marbled endpapers at the behest of the owner, and other copies of the same title may simply be left in cheap wrappers.



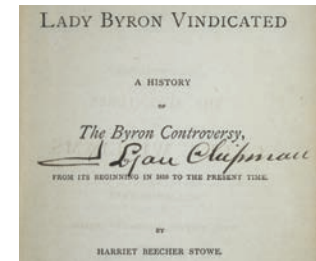
The stories of books extend post-production, as authors, readers, and owners leave their own idiosyncratic traces, too: a copy inscribed and gifted to a family member on their birthday; a reader's disapproving commentary scrawled in the margins of a contentious text; bookplates, former owners' names, and family trees sketched inside covers; newspaper clippings, manuscript letters, and dried flowers tucked between pages.

These discoveries can add to our understanding of Scrooge's change of heart in *A Christmas Carol* as we fold in the stories told by the life of the book itself—for example, how patrons at an East Anglian library, a family in the northeastern states, or a child learning English, would have experienced this copy of *A Christmas Carol*. An encounter is created where content and its material form meet, enabling us to consider the stories told by the entire book object.

So start a conversation, as you would with any other new acquaintance, with a simple game of compare and contrast: how does a book object on display compare to the bestseller you took on vacation? the 1940 Detroit city directory to whitepages.com? Even without the specialized knowledge held by fastidious first-edition collectors, everyone has some experience with and conception of a book. In fact, the Book has crafted its emulators in its own image: websites



include tables of contents and “pages.” You might be surprised by the familiarity of our books, and what new things you can learn. You'll easily recognize some enduring features, like tables of contents and page numbers, and can wonder unabashedly at the anomalies. The encounter of the Book allows us to linger on these arresting moments of defamiliarization.



This encounter with rare books from Kresge Library isn't a confrontation or a challenge to throw down the gauntlet. In fact, there aren't any white gloves here (and one should always remove one's glove to make a new acquaintance). Instead, we invite you to “encounter” our books—to “meet” them, and to “fall in with, casually.” If it were up to us, we'd throw off the glass vitrines and introduce you to these, some of our best and brightest. The deluxe and dilapidated, the ravishing or ruinous alike, these books are open(ed) for your encounter.

We invite you to “fall in with” our books.



A NOTE ON THE BOOK OBJECTS

Dominique Daniel
Kresge Library



Items for this exhibit are drawn from Kresge Library's collections of rare books, which have been acquired since the 1960s. Books are deemed "rare" or "valuable" from a constellation of factors beyond mere uncommonness, among which are age, and cultural and historical value. Among the holdings are books about Michigan local history, including the manuscript tax rolls for Oakland County, art books, 17th and 18th century books of English literature, books autographed by famous authors ranging from Mark Twain to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and many more. Most disciplines are represented, from theology to physics, and literature to medicine, reflecting the inexhaustible passion of book collectors.

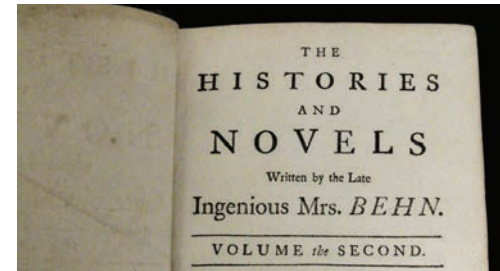
The Marguerite Hicks Collection consists of published writings by and about women from the 17th through early 20th Centuries, and includes epistles, poetry, amatory fiction, memoirs, cookbooks, conduct manuals, and proto-feminist pamphlets from preeminent women. Marguerite Hicks, for whom the collection is named, became interested in women's literature while doing a seminar paper for an English class at Wayne State University. Furthering her interest in the form of a master's thesis, she started collecting books written by female English authors of the 17th and 18th Centuries, using *The Learned Lady in England, 1650-1760*, a 1920 scholarly study by Myra Reynolds of the University of Chicago. Hicks, with the help of close friend



Dr. Thelma James—a longtime professor of folklore at Wayne State University—successfully amassed her collection remotely from British booksellers until the early 1940s, when war raged in Europe and the Atlantic. It was even reported that some of Hicks' book shipments were lost en route at sea. As Kresge Library acquired her extensive collection in 1971, Hicks noted:

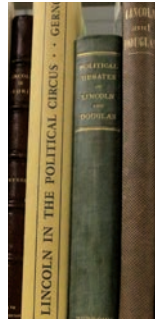
The collection was a great joy to do, for it brought correspondence with most of the great booksellers of England and Scotland. Also, there was much delight in living for many years with the writings of women of purpose and character who had many of the struggles we seem still to be engaged in. They did manage some small triumphs. We miss the actual presence of the books very much, for they had become dear friends.

— Marguerite Hicks' letter to Philip Howard,
October 7, 1973 (Oakland University Archives)



The collection, which totals over 900 volumes, includes works by the first English women who adopted authorship to earn a living: Aphra Behn, Eliza Haywood, Delarivier Manley, and many other women who wrote pseudonymously or anonymously to hide their identity or construct a new one. Thanks to Hicks' prescient interest in 17th and 18th century women writers, Oakland University received multiple offers to microfilm the collection in the 1970s. To this day the collection contains extremely rare and even unique items such as *The India Guide*, a fictional journal of a young woman traveling to India, published in 1785.





TALE OF THE
 GREAT
 SMALL SWAMP
 H. B. STOWE
 VOL. II.

WIFE AND
 H. B. STOWE

PINK &
 WHITE
 TYRANNY
 MR. H. B. STOWE

SIX
 of 1 by
 Half-a-Dozen
 of
 THE OTHER

UNCLE TOM'S
 CABIN.
 STOWE
 I

UNCLE TOM'S
 CABIN.
 STOWE
 II



These collections are used by genealogists, historians and other scholars, students, alumni, and the general public. They are used for research, exhibits, teaching and learning, and for sheer enjoyment: genealogists trace the lives and estates of their ancestors in Oakland County's old tax rolls; students marvel at the curious history of a Mark Twain first edition, or analyze the political messages of the shocking illustrations in the early 20th century leftist magazine, *The Masses*; faculty study the bindings of 17th century folios or the wartime illustrations of Polish artist Arthur Szyk. Rare books have the unique ability to offer rich artefactual experiences, elicit affective responses, and facilitate intellectual explorations.





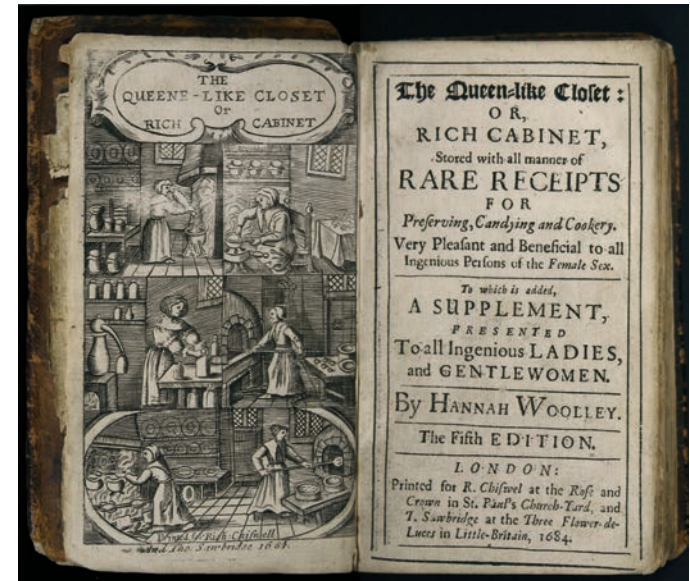
THE QUEEN-LIKE CLOSET

Katie Greer, Associate Professor and First Year Experience Librarian
Kresge Library

Social history, and specifically the roles of women in the family, has always been a personal interest of mine. Books that women wrote for each other, passing down their wisdom and advice on household management, provide a fascinating peek into lives that otherwise are all-too-often lost to history. Hannah Woolley's *The Queen-like Closet*, of which the library owns a 1684 edition, is only one of several such books that she wrote, and includes recipes, healthcare advice and remedies (including how one could avoid the plague and, once that fails, the treatment of plague sores), how servants should conduct themselves, and other tidbits which would have undoubtedly been indispensable for the 17th-century woman.

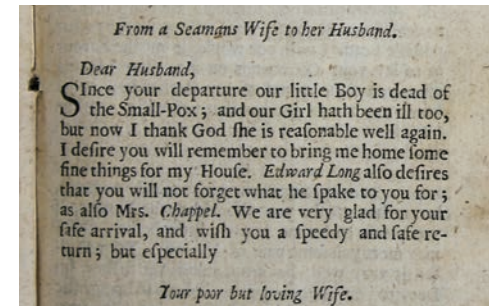
One of the owners of our book added her own recipes and knowledge to the front pages; holding those handwritten pages nearly four-hundred years later provides a visceral connection to the women, perhaps even my own ancestors, who came before me. Although things are certainly more egalitarian than in times past, women still do a large portion of the household management, and we still share our knowledge with each other—just recently my mother came over and taught me one of our family recipes, and I will someday pass that on to my own children.

Although I was drawn to this book because of my personal interest in cookery and family life, I found myself particularly touched by a section of the book in which the author has printed various sample letters as a didactic aid for women who are beginning their epistolary careers. In the example “From a Seamans [sic] Wife to her Husband,” the letter begins: “Dear Husband, Since your departure our little Boy is dead of the Small-Pox; and our Girl hath been ill too, but now I thank God she is reasonable well again.” Such a matter-of-fact statement for what had to have been a terrible loss! How fortunate we are to live in a time which, despite its many tribulations, provides us with reasonable expectations of living to at least middle-age.



Title page, *The Queen-like Closet: or, Rich Cabinet*, Hannah Woolley. 1684.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.

“From a Seamans Wife to her Husband”





Title page and frontispiece, “Mr Fezziwig’s Ball,” hand-colored plate by John Leech. *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens. First edition, 1843.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Brad Roth, Professor
Department of Physics

I read *A Christmas Carol* every December, so I was delighted to find a first edition of Charles Dickens’ classic novella in the Rare Book Collection of Kresge Library. I never tire of Dickens’ “ghostly little book.” I love his language, humor, and wonderfully drawn characters.

I enjoy the Ghosts of Christmas Past and Present best; the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come frightens me. One of my favorite scenes is when Scrooge’s nephew Fred and the Ghost of Christmas Present collude with Topper to catch Fred’s sister-in-law (the plump one with the lace tucker) during a game of blind man’s bluff. I’m a cheapskate focused on my work, so I have a certain sympathy for Ebenezer. I read the book each year as a reminder to not become a “tight-fisted hand at the grindstone.”

All of us in higher education ought to recall the words of the Ghost of Christmas Present at the end of Stave 3, as he revealed two wretched children hidden in his robes: “This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both...but most of all beware this boy.”

I sometimes wonder if I should have been born a Victorian. I love their physics—Faraday, Maxwell, and Kelvin are my heroes—as well as their literature. *A Christmas Carol* was published in 1843, the same year that James Joule measured the mechanical equivalent of heat, George Stokes analyzed incompressible fluids, and Ada Lovelace wrote the first computer program. Holding a first edition in your hands connects you to that time, as if Dickens, like Marley’s Ghost, “sat invisible beside you.” The library’s copy has lovely illustrations, which at that time had to be painstakingly hand-colored.

I intend to continue reading *A Christmas Carol* each year, with the hope that I, like Scrooge, can “become as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew.”

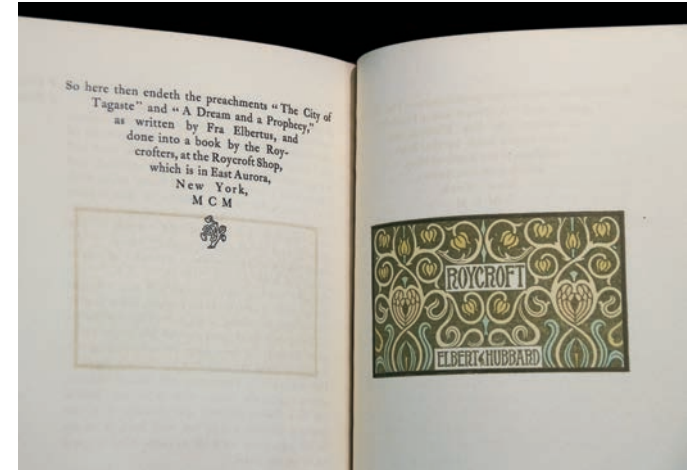
THE CITY OF TAGASTE

Meaghan Barry, Assistant Professor of Graphic Design
Department of Art and Art History

In graphic design history, the British Arts and Crafts movement led by William Morris receives a lot of attention, while a small offshoot in the United States is often overlooked. In the late 1800s, a group of artists and designers rejected the rise of mass production during the Industrial Revolution. These artists embraced craftsmanship and decorative arts, specifically influenced by the medieval period. As part of the movement, private presses such as Morris' Kelmscott Press focused on bookmaking as an art. Traditional bookbinding methods, handmade paper, and typeface design from these private presses are celebrated in the field of graphic design.

Influenced by Morris, Elbert Hubbard brought the Arts and Crafts movement to the United States when he founded the Roycroft Press in 1893. The Roycroft Press was located in East Aurora, New York, and the art colony of craftspeople sold artisan furniture, leather, metal, and books to support the community. Hubbard is a controversial and eccentric figure who some believe adopted the movement for capitalistic purposes and "Disney-ified" the Arts and Crafts movement, making it a tourist attraction in the United States. When William Morris' daughter was invited to visit the Roycroft campus, she said, "I would never visit that vulgar imitation of my father."

Whatever Hubbard's true intentions, the work of the Roycrofters is a beautiful example of design that emerged from the Arts and Crafts movement. This limited edition copy is signed by Elbert Hubbard himself, and features the Roycroft Press's mystical-looking printer's mark. Throughout the book, decorative floral patterns and motifs are seen as illustrations, accompanied by handset letterpress typography. Despite the book's age, the pages have not yellowed due to the Roycrofters' attention to craft; they used high quality handmade paper that did not use wood pulp. No matter if the Roycroft Press is an imitation of William Morris' Kelmscott Press, the craftsmanship and design of their objects justify their importance in the American private press movement.



The City of Tagaste: or a Dream of the Future and a Prophecy.
Fra Albertus (pseudonym for Elbert Hubbard).
No. 96 of 940 copies, 1900.

LIBER SCRIPTORUM

Josephine Walwema, Associate Professor
Department of Writing and Rhetoric

It is not difficult to see why *Liber Scriptorum* is included in the rare book collection. Published in 1893 with the subtitle, *The First Book of the Authors Club*, the book includes the who's who of authors circa 1893. A quick scan of the table of contents lists 190 names, including Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), Charles Dudley Warner, John Van Dyke, William Stillman. All male! It is intriguing to think that women were not thought of as authors in 1893! Considering that the Authors Club, which was founded in 1882, did not allow women members until 1971, that perception lasted almost ninety years.

Liber Scriptorum is also a beautiful book. Its cover, the color of a brown mocha, mimics wood-carved engravings. Its typography calligraphic. Its fine letters adorned in intricate shapes and lines. Its heavyweight old style typeface whose bold capitals convey the literary masculinity that was the authority of the time. And the paper is handmade! It is clear that the book makers were very deliberate about what they wanted this book to look and feel like. They designed for touch and sight.

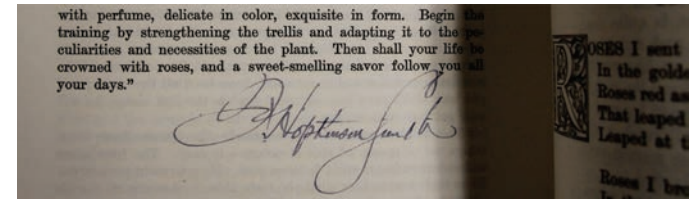
With topics ranging from Roses, Sir Thomas More, Joy and Duty, Song, Flammantia Moena Mundi, the authors indulge in showmanship with nary a sense of audience awareness. Take, for example, "How to Train Our Wives and Children" by Hopkinson Smith. Smith's take on men's status in society is a given. Man "has his rod and gun, the fields, the water. The hills" (p. 350). By contrast, the wife "has spent one third of her life in the nursey, one third, on her bed recovering from its effects" and the other on housekeeping. Not to worry, writes Smith, with training, she can bloom into a sweet smelling rose.

That is some 19th century patriarchy!



Liber Scriptorum: The First Book of The Authors Club.
No. 238 of 251 copies. 1893.

T. Hopkinson Smith's signature at the end of
"How to Train Our Wives and Children"



THREE THINGS

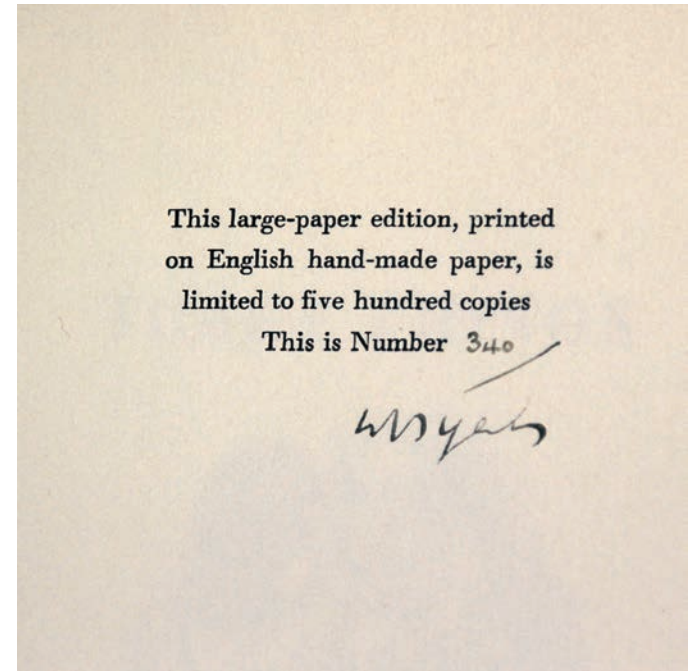
Katie Hartsock, Assistant Professor of Creative Writing
Department of English

I had never seen or touched the signature of William Butler Yeats before I held our library's copy of *Three Things*. It was tidier, more box-like than I'd expected from a poet I've always loved for his expansiveness. After long admiring (and in the case of Yeats, sometimes memorizing) a poet's work, I'm still surprised at how jolting it can feel to encounter their signature. Unlike artists' signed paintings, printed poems are not usually accompanied by the personality of signatures. Seeing Yeats' name in his own hand made the book in my hands breathe.

Containing just four sewn-together pages, this pamphlet reflects several of my own sources for poetic inspiration, for what Yeats would call "the fire in my head": the blending of narratives of people and landscape; my roles as mother, wife, and poet; and finally what the Irish hero Finn McCool, according to legend, once called "the music of what happens."

Three Things was published in Faber and Faber's Ariel Poems, a series pairing a well-known author's poem with illustrations from a leading artist. Gilbert Spencer provided entrancing drawings for the poem "Three Things," in which a bone "wave-whitened and dried in the wind" sings alone on a beach. The voice of the bone, which is a woman's, describes three pleasures: mothering, lovers, and her "rightful man." It is an auto-elegy, a song that mourns its own singer, and asks "cruel death" to give these three things back.

But for me, its lament becomes two things: praise of transformative love, and a reminder to enjoy these pleasures before we too diminish to bone.



Colophon signed by W. B. Yeats.
Three Things, W. B. Yeats.
Number 340 of 500 copies, 1929.

THE BABY'S OPERA

Jessica Payette, Associate Professor of Music, Musicology
School of Music, Theatre, and Dance

The Baby's Opera (1877) is a collection of traditional English nursery rhymes illustrated by Walter Crane and engraved by Edmund Evans. A special feature of this book is the intent to preserve the melodies of nursery songs that were passed down through generations by oral tradition. The verses are presented in musical score with “music by the earliest masters,” and harmonization by Crane’s sister, Lucy, who is unacknowledged on the title page. Though ultimately more famous as a book illustrator, as a young man Crane (1845–1915) aspired to gain accolades as a painter and exhibited paintings at the Royal Academy. He later became a figurehead in the British Arts and Crafts movement, which advocated for the inclusion of decorative arts in fine art exhibitions. Crane pioneered breakthroughs in the design of children’s books, introducing a softer palette of pastel colors and smaller dimensions (*The Baby's Opera* is 6.6 x 6.1 inches) that made them easier for children to hold. As the title denotes, the collection is conceived as an opera, a dramatic staging of texted music. Crane embeds the table of contents in the architectural frame of an opera house, complete with proscenium arch and animal operagoers peeking out of private boxes. A diverse cast of nursery characters is then presented and situated in every type of English landscape: pastoral farms, the sea, urban apartment houses, and orderly aristocratic gardens.

Anticipating the increasing commoditization of children’s literature in the twentieth century, an imposter copy of *The Baby's Opera* was released in the United States by McLoughlin Bros., which drew Crane’s condemnation: “the pirated edition grossly misrepresents my drawings, both in style and coloring; the full-page colored plates are complete travesties, and very coarse ones, of the originals.” A side-by-side comparison of the plates for “The Mulberry Bush” displays Crane’s superior craftsmanship. Crane’s drawing attests to his appreciation for Japanese prints—with delicate hues contrasting with bold, black lines—as well as his study of Classical drapery, as creases in the fabric create the illusion of movement. The imposter version lacks sharp outlines and substitutes deep shades of burgundy and goldenrod for the fabric, destroying the subdued color palette.



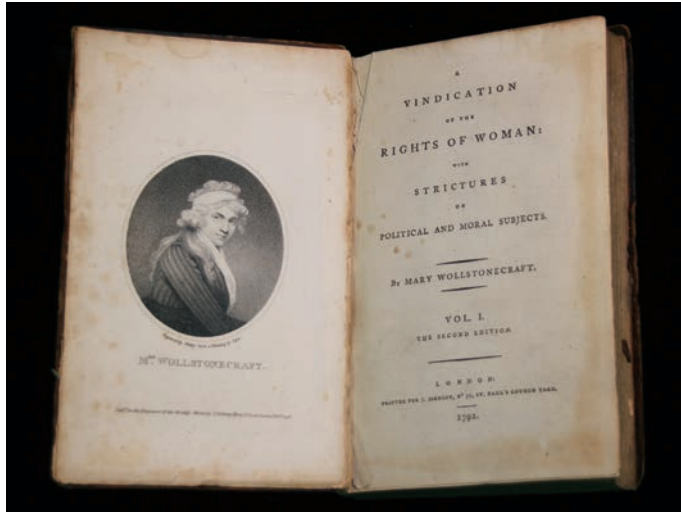
Illustration by Walter Crane for “The Mulberry Bush,”
The Baby's Opera: A book of old rhymes, with new dresses,
Walter Crane. Published by Frederick Warne & Co., 1877.



Illustration detail from the pirated version of
The Baby's Opera, published by McLoughlin Bros., 1877.

A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN

Mark Navin, Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy



A Vindication of the Rights of Woman; with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects,
Mary Wollstonecraft. 1792.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.

In 1972 Chinese premier Zhou Enlai is reported to have said it was “too early” to identify the impact of the French Revolution. That was perhaps hyperbolic (and some suggest it was a mistranslation), but nonetheless I imagine the French people of 1789 would be surprised to learn that their revolutionary ideals – *liberté, égalité, fraternité* – still serve as swords and shields in today’s assaults upon custom, tradition, and hierarchy. Consider contemporary cultural battles about gender: the institutions of our personal and professional worlds still reel in response to the radical idea that women are human beings. It may then seem ironic that one of the earliest English-language defenders of the French Revolution was a woman. In *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790), Mary Wollstonecraft argued against those in her own country (especially Edmund Burke) who characterized the French Revolution as irrational violence of a tyrannical mob.

In a later work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, published in 1792, Wollstonecraft identified the transformative potential of the Revolution’s liberal egalitarianism for gender. Here, she advocated equal educational opportunities for women, and she reimagined marriage as a partnership between husband and wife. Furthermore, Wollstonecraft argued that those who point to woman’s supposed weak nature to try to justify their second-class status have only men to blame, since it is men who have insisted that girls and women be socialized to become excessively emotional and preoccupied with their physical appearance. We therefore see in Wollstonecraft an anticipation of themes from both first-wave feminism (freedom and equality for women), and second-wave feminism (the oppressive social construction of gender). However, Wollstonecraft’s views were also fervently Christian, and they were part of her broader commitment to communitarian utopianism.

So, while it’s true that Wollstonecraft anticipated important aspects of contemporary feminism, her work may be even more revolutionary than it first appears to be.

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE COURT OF BERLIN

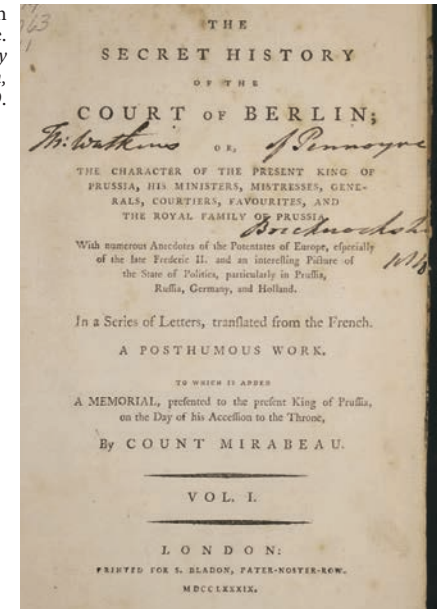
Dominique Daniel, Associate Professor and Coordinator
for Archives and Special Collections, Kresge Library

Rarely did a book cause such an uproar as *The Secret History of the Court of Berlin*, published anonymously in January 1789, on the eve of the French Revolution. Its author, the talented but ambitious and sulfurous Count of Mirabeau, made public diplomatic letters he had secretly sent from Prussia to French government officials in 1786-1787. His witty, caustic, and scathing criticism of the Prussian court created such a diplomatic crisis that King of France Louis XVI had the book seized and burned. Although most people recognized Mirabeau's incendiary style behind the anonymous label, Mirabeau vehemently denied he was the author. In spite, or maybe because of, such censorship, 20,000 copies circulated clandestinely and new editions—including some in German and in English—appeared the same year.

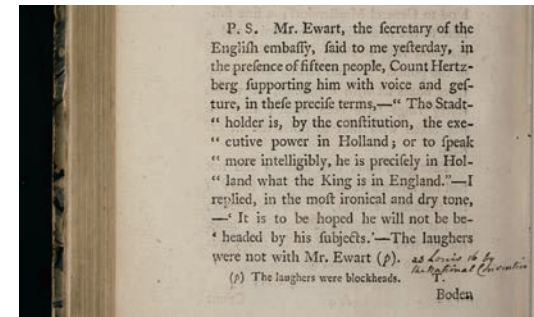
Inscribed on the pages of Kresge Library's copy are visible remnants of the conversations sparked by the book through comments made by the anonymous translator and by a reader who signed his name throughout, Reverend Thomas Watkins of Pennoyre.

The translator's biting notes, published in the book, are reactions to what he saw as egregious statements by Mirabeau. As for Watkins, a conservative English clergyman who was reading Mirabeau's work in the 1810s, he added his remarks with pen and ink in the margin of the book's pages. His marginalia make clear that he had no sympathies for the French and their revolution and create an imaginary dialogue through time and space with the now deceased author. For example, when Mirabeau recalls a joke he made to fellow diplomats about the Dutch ruler not losing his head and claims he made his audience laugh, the translator bluntly notes that "the laughs were blockheads." But reading the same passage years later, with the luxury of hindsight, Watkins pauses at the thought of a ruler losing his head and adds an ironic note, "as Louis 16 by the national convention."

Title page with
owner's signature.
*The Secret History
of the Court of Berlin*,
Count Mirabeau. 1789.



Translator's note and Watkins marginalia.



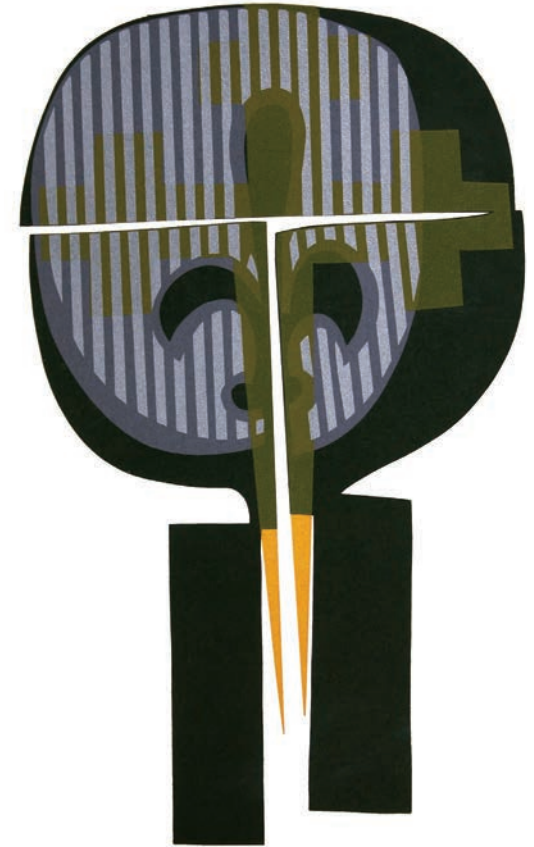
THE PROLOGUE TO THE CANTERBURY TALES

Gania Barlow, Special Lecturer
Honors College, Departments of English and of Writing and Rhetoric

Why would a twentieth-century artist create a deluxe illustrated edition of a literary work from the fourteenth century? Whatever Ronald King's personal motives, the original screen prints in his edition of the *Prologue to Geoffrey Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales* form part of a long and vibrant tradition. One of the oldest copies of *The Canterbury Tales*, the fifteenth-century Ellesmere manuscript, is likewise a deluxe illustrated edition, hand-written and hand-painted. Famously, that manuscript includes portraits of each of Chaucer's pilgrim storytellers, a design concept that King beautifully echoes and modernizes with his abstract images.

The Canterbury Tales has long been considered one of the "Great Books" of English literature, but I believe that what makes it "Great" is not its dusty old age and fixedness, but rather its surprising openness and modernity. In it you can find religious and social satire; debates about gender and sexuality; depictions of refugees and the horrors of violence; explorations of morality, justice, the power of language; and many more such themes still relevant today. Moreover, Chaucer's "Great Book" is fragmentary and unfinished—some scholars think on purpose—in a way that invites readers to take an active role in continuing to tell the stories of the pilgrims Chaucer described in his *Prologue*. And indeed, readers have been doing so since at least the fifteenth century, when the monk John Lydgate wrote himself into Chaucer's pilgrimage. With Ronald King's portraits and original poem about the Cook in this edition, he offers his own interpretations of Chaucer's pilgrims, and in a way, also joins their ranks by taking part in the tradition of continuing to tell Canterbury tales. King's *Prologue* is thus a creative cousin not only to the Ellesmere manuscript and the work of John Lydgate, but also to newer works like that of Patience Agbabi who reimagines the Canterbury pilgrims as diverse, twenty-first century Londoners in her spoken-word-style poetry collection *Telling Tales*.

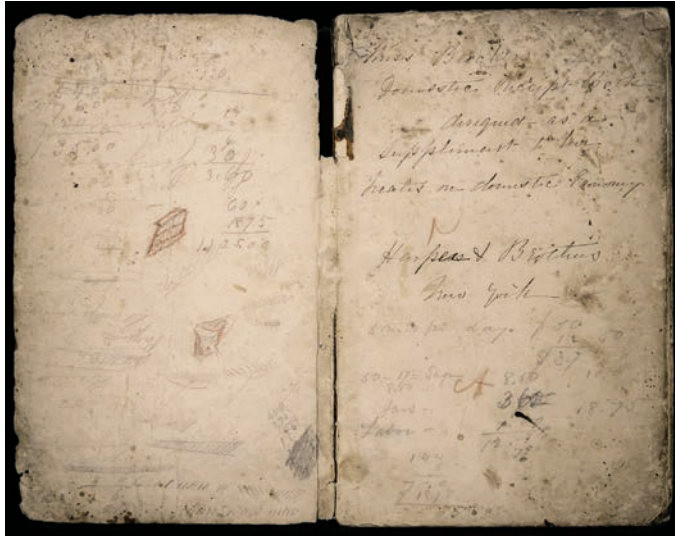
The rare book collection includes other creatively illustrated Canterbury Tales editions: a facsimile of William Morris' ornate 1896 Kelmscott Press edition, and a 1946 edition with images by Arthur Szyk.



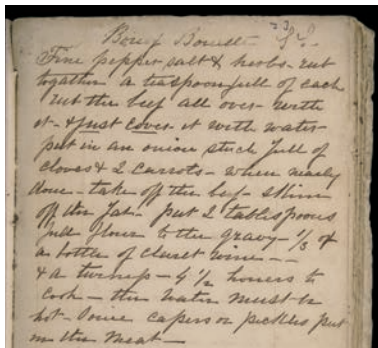
"The Knyght," illustration by Ronald King.
The Prologue to The Canterbury Tales, Geoffrey Chaucer.
Number 141 of 250 copies, signed by the artist. 1978.

MISS BEECHER'S DOMESTIC RECEIPT-BOOK

Anna Spagnuolo, Professor with contributions by Denise Diebold, Secretary II
Department of Mathematics and Statistics



Inside front cover, manuscript commonplace book with selections from *Miss Beecher's Domestic Receipt-Book* [Catherine Esther Beecher] and additions by multiple hands. Undated.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.



Page 23.
Recipe for
Bouef Bouilli.

It was fascinating to discover *Miss Beecher's Domestic Receipt Book* in the rare book collection of Kresge Library. This copy is completely handwritten, though a version was published by Harper and Brothers, New York in 1846. The handwritten copy includes less information overall, and some different “receipts” from the published book. However, the first page states both the full title of Catherine Beecher's book, and “Harper & Brothers New York,” so the owner is apparently copying part of that already published book.

At first, I was attracted to the book because it looked so delicate and was wrapped with a thin rope. I was intrigued when I found out that it is a recipe book! It is small and extremely fragile with each page having crinkled edges. The book consists of handwritten recipes that cover everything from breakfast to dinner, including breads, puddings, several types of meat dishes, soups, and deserts. It is amazing to see, smell, and touch this book! And it is apparent that the book was used in the kitchen frequently, because of the residual food on some of the pages. For example, on page 8, the recipe for “Breakfast Cakes” calls for 4 eggs among other ingredients, and there are splashes of yellowish-colored food on it.

It is also amazing to see that there are different handwriting styles throughout the book, indicating that a few authors contributed to this collection and wrote the recipes in themselves. In fact, on some pages where there is a difference in writing, there is a name listed above the recipe. Also, the types of “fonts” used are different in some places, even when the handwriting seems to be the same. This could be due to various qualities and types of ink pens.

One of the other extremely interesting features of seeing this original book is that there are scribbles in it and some math calculations! For instance, on the inside cover and the title page, there are numbers being multiplied out and others being divided, with the words “sugar,” “jars,” and “labor” written next to them. It makes us wonder if they were trying to mass-produce some of the food.

HISTORIA DE LA LITERATURA ESPAÑOLA

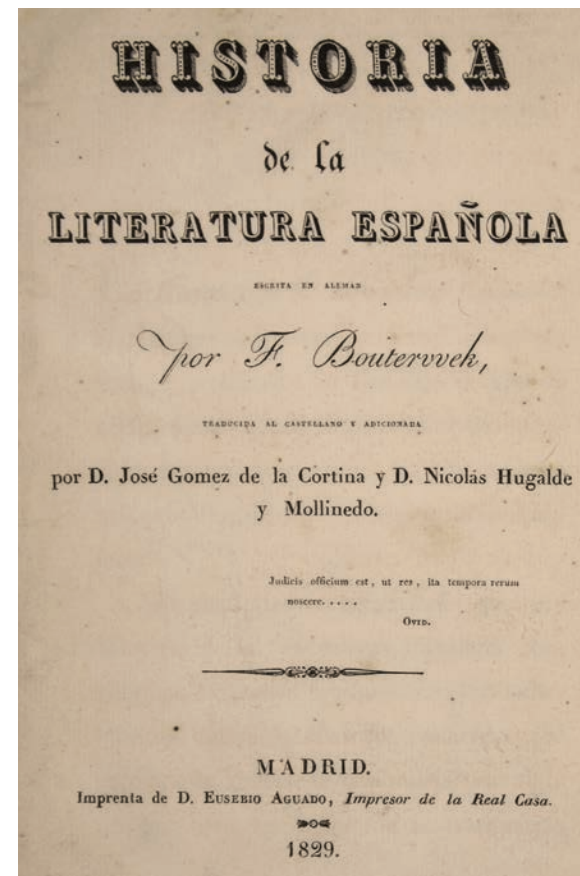
Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo, Associate Professor of Spanish
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

Friedrich Bouterwek's *Historia de la Literatura Española* was one of the first attempts at presenting a comprehensive history of Spanish literature. The copy in the Kresge Rare Book collection is the Spanish translation of the 1804 German original *Geschichte der spanischen Poesie und Beredsam* published by José Gómez de la Cortina and Nicolás Hugalde y Mollinedo in 1829.

Bouterwek's history of Spanish literature was part of his *Geschichte der Poesie und Beredsamkeit seit dem Ende des dreizehnten Joahrhunderts* (History of Poetry and Eloquence Since the End of the Thirteenth Century). The twelve volume collection aimed to present a comprehensive view of the European cultural landscape covering in the following order Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, and German literatures.

Bouterwek's literary history was informed by Juan Andrés Morell's *Dell'Origine, progressi e stato attuale d'ogni letteratura*, 1782-1799 (About the Origin, Progress, and Current State of All Literature). Unlike Andrés Morell, who understood literature in very general terms as the eloquent expression of knowledge, Bouterwek is already attuned to the Romantic understanding of literature as an aesthetic representation that escapes rational understanding and is closely connected to national identity. The literary is for Bouterwek an expression of what Hegel would refer to as the *Volksgeist* only a few years later in his 1837 *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte* (Lectures on the Philosophy of History).

Bouterwek's distances himself from Andrés Morell also in his understanding of what constitutes European tradition. Unlike Andrés Morrell, who saw Arab presence in Southern Europe (particularly Spain) as the link between European and Graeco-Latin traditions that led to the Renaissance, Bouterwek conceived European culture as separate from any external influences. Bouterwek extols in his *Geschichte der spanischen Poesie und Beredsam* the cultural proximity between Germany and Spain, a cultural fraternity that he bases on the presence of Germanic and Christian elements in the latter. Bouterwek's work is an example of the Eurocentric drive behind what Goethe would later call *Weltliteratur* or World Literature.



Title page.
Historia de La Literatura Española, Friederich Bouterwek.
Translated by D. José Gomez de la Cortina
y D. Nicolás Hugalde y Mollinedo. 1829.

THE GIRLHOOD OF SHAKESPEARE'S HEROINES

Stacey Hahn, Associate Professor of French
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures



"Katharina,"
illustration
by T.F. Dicksey
for "Katharina and
Bianca; The Shrew
and the Demure"

The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines,
Mary Cowden Clarke. 1879.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.



Anyone interested in the reception of Shakespeare during the Victorian period will be intrigued by Mary Cowden Clarke's *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines*. Clarke, a leading nineteenth century Shakespeare scholar and author of the first *Complete Concordance to Shakespeare*, applied her extensive knowledge of the Elizabethan period to produce fifteen fictional tales of Shakespeare's most prominent heroines.

In her preface, Clarke writes that her intent "has been to trace the probable antecedents in the history of some of Shakespeare's women; to imagine the possible circumstances and influences of scene, event, and associate, surrounding the infant life of his heroines ... those gems of character recognized in their maturity, as by him developed; ... such a design would combine much matter of interesting speculation, afford scope for pleasant fancy, and be productive of entertainment in the various narratives." Clarke produces a fanciful recreation of the circumstances surrounding the heroines' families, upbringing, and education, replete with occasional letters, and realistic dialogues, many imitative of diverse social classes.

The volume, whose aim is "the development of character, and not of history," was widely popular in the United States and England, and came out in several editions, including a gift-edition. The handwritten inscription on the book's inside front cover indicates that our edition was intended to be an 1897 Christmas gift for a certain young woman named Katie. This charming edition contains nine lavishly decorated portraits of select heroines.

Considered by many to be a conduct book, appropriate for conveying moral lessons, the book was often passed down from mother to daughter. Although largely now forgotten, the book has much to teach the modern reader about Victorian mores as well as about its author, who was a prominent and well-respected early female scholar.

POLK'S DETROIT CITY DIRECTORY

Karen Miller, Associate Professor
Department of History

It is sometimes the mundane object that is most useful.

Before there was the internet, before there were phone books, there was the city directory. These cheaply printed, massive volumes were produced annually to provide the names and addresses of an entire city's population. They also included advertising sections, where businesses could pay for display ads to promote their services.

Polk's Detroit City Directory provided a detailed snapshot of who lived where and what they did for a living. At the same time, it provided a forum for advertisers to promote services from automobile repair, to mortgage servicing, to technical training schools. *Polk's* was a necessary map for navigating the unfamiliar in urban environments. For a new-comer to the city, it was invaluable. Because they were so accurate, and because they were updated every year, *Polk's* also provided a detailed picture of city life. By examining the advertisements, we can understand the anxieties and most compelling needs of the city's population. We can now follow a person's migration through the city.

In 1940, Detroit's population was surging, as workers and their families arrived seeking high-paying defense jobs. They could scan the fifteen pages of ads for real estate companies, looking for homes to buy or apartments to rent. They were taught what to expect from the labor market through advertisements for products like No Nod, which promised "TIRED? PEP UP! DON'T LOSE YOUR JOB"; successful employees would not wink, or blink, or nod with a simple dose of No Nod.

The 1940 *Polk's* also raises questions regarding the divisive Sojourner Truth Riots two years later. The conventional narrative explains that when confronted with black defense workers moving into their neighborhood, white homeowners violently attacked them for "intruding" into their established community. However, of the three indicted for conspiring to spark race riots, two did not even live in the city in 1940. Under what circumstances do "outsiders" lead a rebellion over neighborhood integration? What factors beyond race contributed to such a violent disturbance?



Yellow Pages advertisement for No Nod, p. 75.

White Pages advertisement for No Nod, p. 352.

Polk's Detroit (Wayne County, Mich.) City Directory. 1940



Yellow Pages advertisement for

Restricted [Segregated] Subdivisions, p. 211.

Polk's Detroit (Wayne County, Mich.) City Directory. 1940



THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

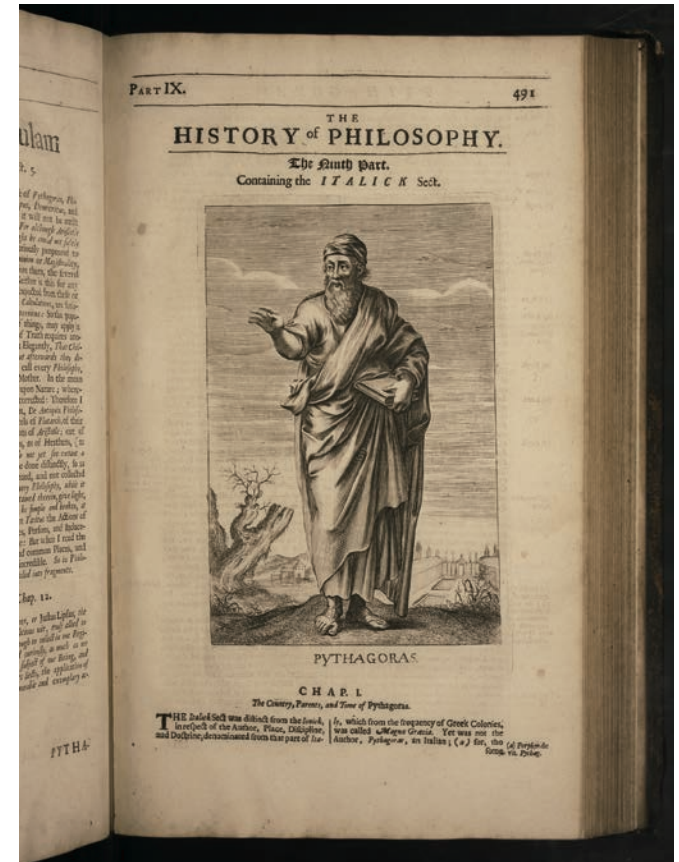
Mark Rigstad, Associate Professor
Department of Philosophy

Thomas Stanley's *History of Philosophy* (1687) was first published in four separate parts between 1655 and 1662. It was the first English history of philosophy. In this second edition, published in a single volume, chapters on major figures of ancient Greek, Roman, and Chaldean philosophy are illustrated with 26 engravings. I have chosen the image of Pythagoras, because popular narratives about him have traditionally involved more mythological fancy than historical fact. For example, Aristotle reports that Pythagoras revealed at the Olympic Games that he had a golden thigh, by which he was identified as Apollo incarnate.

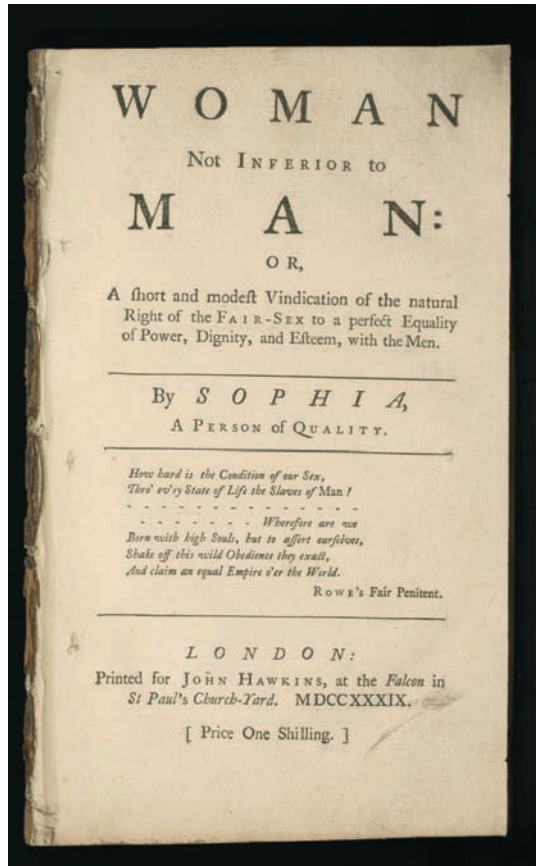
Although Stanley does not indulge this kind of ancient legend, he does embrace a different kind of (probably mythological) narrative about Pythagoras that became commonplace among many Renaissance and Early Modern Christian thinkers. According to this school of thought, known as voluntarism, reason alone is not a sufficient source of moral knowledge, because one must also have access to revealed truths about God's will, either from direct revelation, or from scripture. If so, the supposed birth of moral philosophy in ancient Greece stood in need of some explanation. How could Greek philosophers have known the laws of Moses? Aristotle named Pythagoras as the first philosopher to treat the subject of morality. Consequently, in making sense of this beginning of moral philosophy, voluntarist Christian theorists tended to favor commonplace notions about how Pythagoras must either have been Jewish or have learned from Hebrew sources.

In his version of the voluntarist story, Stanley conjectures that Pythagoras probably met with Jews in exile in Babylon, and that he "might" have studied with the prophet Ezekiel. It's chronologically possible. Ezekiel would have been approximately 52 years his senior. Popular consensus today is that Pythagoras probably never traveled beyond western Turkey and southern Italy. Yet some scholars think that a youthful trip to Egypt seems plausible. If so, why not Babylon?

What do you think? Could Pythagoras have been a student of the prophet Ezekiel? Do you think it matters?



"Pythagoras," by an anonymous illustrator.
The History of Philosophy, Thomas Stanley. 1687.



Woman not inferior to Man,
Sophia, A Person of Quality. 1739.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.

THE SOPHIA PAMPHLETS

Andrea Eis, Professor of Cinema Studies
Department of English

The title of first Sophia pamphlet states the author's case in the negative—*Woman Not Inferior to Man* (1739)—with the subtitle of “a short and modest vindication.” What Sophia actually sought to prove was anything but modest: the natural right of women to “a Perfect Equality of Power, Dignity, and Esteem” with men. An anonymous ‘gentleman’ answered: *Man Superior to Woman* (1739), asserting man’s “natural right to sovereign authority over the woman.” Sophia responded: *Woman’s Superior Excellence Over Man* (1740). Gone was any deferential characterization of her writing.

No one knows definitively who these authors were. In *Woman Not Inferior*, Sophia expresses anger at the belief that women should be subservient to men. She makes reasoned, intelligent arguments for women’s rights to equal education, to hold positions in government and the military, as lawyers and scientists. The ‘gentleman’ writing *Man Superior*, however, is flagrant in his ridicule of women, contemptuous of “the Weakness of their intellects, which seldom can reach higher than a Head-dress.” Asserting that all women fall well short of “Man’s Superior Wisdom,” he declares that educating women would only render them a nuisance. Describing women as creatures, he adds “softening Epithets” (pretty, charming, beautiful), maintaining that will be “sufficient Atonement for the grossest invectives” he aims at them.

The gentleman’s outrageousness creates a perfect set-up for *Woman’s Superior Excellence Over Man*—which may have been its actual purpose, as a prevalent theory suggests Sophia wrote all three pamphlets. She counters the gentleman’s “impotent endeavors to wound us” with “rational theory”—and a few insults. Current public discourse may echo the tone of the dueling pamphlets, but there are deeper parallels. Noting that few men “prescribe any bounds to their lust and brutality,” Sophia would likely find accord with the #metoo movement. She also observes that for some men “probability and appearance of truth serve the same turns as well as truth itself could,” leading them to “exaggerations and hyperbole” as they “metamorphose good into evil, and evil into good, at their pleasure.” Sophia was a woman of the 1700s, but her writing can be eerie in its contemporary relevance.

NEW MASSES

Graham Cassano, Associate Professor of Sociology
Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice

New Masses (published 1926-1948) encapsulated a moment when the revolutionary dreams of aesthetic modernism intersected with the revolutionary goals of political radicals. As the journal of the American cultural left, *New Masses* pushed artistic, stylistic, and political boundaries, publishing modernist radicals like John Dos Passos, Richard Wright, William Carlos Williams, Langston Hughes, and Tillie Olsen. This synthesis of revolutionary politics and modernist aesthetics came from the same impulse: the sense the modern world had outgrown the past, but had no new language fully adequate to the present. On the eve of the Great Depression, lead editor, Mike Gold, put it this way: "The fact is: All conscious artists today know and feel, almost as intelligently as a New York Communist vestmaker, that bourgeois thought is dying, that bourgeois art is breaking up" ("Notes on Art, Life, Crap-Shooting, Etc.," September, 1929). Gold and his collaborators found the new language they sought, emerging from the ground up, among workers, in songs, in voices that had been traditionally excluded from respectable discourse (union activists, immigrants, African Americans, women), and among modernist painters, illustrators, and graphic designers.

In 1927, *New Masses* celebrated the international workers' holiday, May Day, with a special two-color cover by Hugo Gellert. Black and red, the colors of struggle and solidarity (as well as death and blood), the cover features two faces, ambiguously related. The black figure in back appears bent over. Perhaps working. Perhaps in shame, or in grief, or in prayer. With gears overhead (or are they targets? or lenses? or time's arrow?), maybe Gellert meant to suggest that capitalism creates solidarity between the races as they all struggle against the same economic injustice. Or, both figures, red and black, represent the same worker. The black figure is the worker bent by exploitation, prejudice, and pain. In the foreground, that worker stands upright, empowered, face strong, with a gaze directed toward the red flag of revolution. Or, the red figure represents the struggle to hold onto faith in the future, and the bent black figure is the shadow of despair that always hides behind hope.



Cover illustration and design by Hugo Gellert.
New Masses, Volume 3, Number 1, May 1927.

UNTITLED (ABC BOOK)

Megan Peiser
Assistant Professor, Department of English

I am unsure why I am drawn to this book, a mere 4 inches high. I call it, affectionately, Rinky-Dink. Though from the Hicks Collection, it is neither a famous text, nor about women writers. It is a puzzle, speaking to the visceral work of a book historian: to uncover the stories of books, and the peoples who made them.

It could be slipped into a pocket, or tucked between the folds of a larger book, referenced discreetly when praying, or thumbed by the clumsy fingers of a child. Lovingly encircled by hand-colored wallpaper, its survival across four centuries is testament to a deep commitment to God, and tradition—or evidence of a cluttered attic in the family home.

It is also *clandestine*. *Outlawed*. *Censored*. This tiny volume tells of wavering religious freedoms in the Netherlands, scrupulous business practices of Early Modern printers, and of educational neglect.

Showing the alphabet, common Roman Catholic prayers, and the sacraments, it taught children basic elements of the Church while doubling as a reading primer. Yet this book remained unread—over time only a bookworm munched holes in its pages. Its pages are unopened—still retaining their original folds from when the book was manufactured. Folds are usually cut by their first reader, detaching each leaf from the next.

Amazingly, this book carries *another* book in its scant binding. Beneath the wallpaper is a shred from Flemish priest Adrianus Romanus's 1608 mathematics text. This sheath, a printer's scrap, protected Rinky-Dink from spiritual censors, like the bishop of Antwerp, who banned such ABC books, and ordered schoolmasters to collect and destroy them. This sweet volume survived. Or escaped.

Perhaps what I love is that Rinky-Dink has lived a long life full of contradictions. Despite great efforts to produce such a text to educate Dutch Roman Catholics during a Protestant rule, this book spent more time passing from one private collector to another than it did being read by a member of the Church. Now it lives the life of an educational example: poked and prodded, folded over and examined. In many ways it is finally serving its purpose.



Front and back cover. *ABC Book*, anonymous. c. 1711.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.

Inside front cover and first page.



A PLEA FOR WOMAN

Jo Reger, Professor of Sociology and Women and Gender Studies
Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice

In 1843, Mrs. Hugo Reid wrote *A Plea for Woman* with the question, “Can man be free if woman be a slave?” posed under the title. As a women’s movement scholar, there are multiple ways to interrogate this text. I could ask who Mrs. Reid was and put her in the context of the time. I could analyze the book’s content, embedding it in a discussion of intersectionality, noting its “whiteness” and unquestioned heteronormativity.

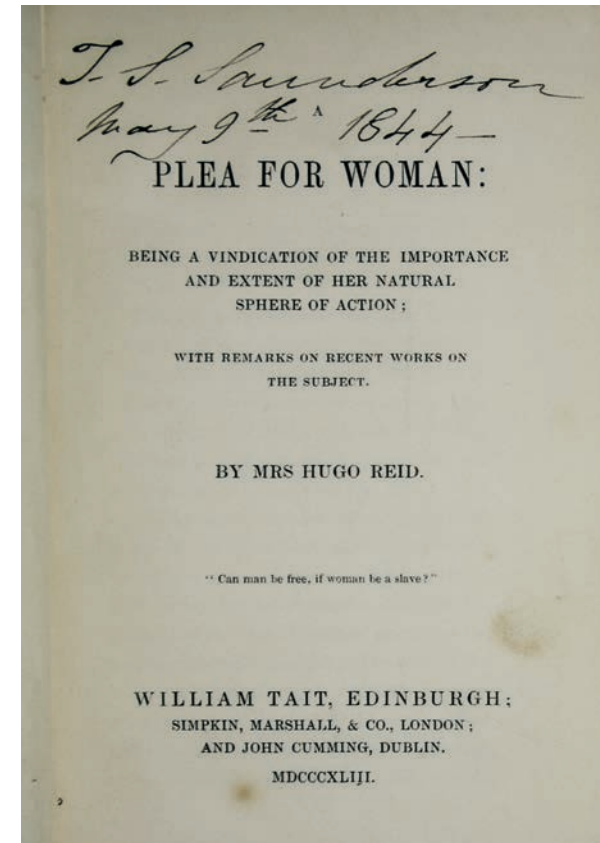
But instead I find myself asking a different set of questions. Who owned this book? What did it mean to hold it and read it? On the title page is a name, T. S. Saunderson, and the date May 9th 1844. I know virtually nothing else about her (I like to imagine that this was owned by a woman) except she probably lived in Great Britain, where the book was published, and she was literate at a time when a majority of English women were not. She was most likely white, upper class and privileged.

Someone (maybe T. S.) offers additional clues on what this book meant to the reader. There are two places that have long sections penciled at the margins. The first begins on page 28 and reads:

But to revert a little: we think that the old prejudices regarding women convert the noble duty of self-renunciation into a most criminal self-extinction. These old prejudices will distinguish her individuality, oblige her to renounce the good even more than the evil of her nature, and convert the inflexible rule of duty into a very flexible principle of submission to, and connivance at, all the weaknesses and wickedness of man.

Following this on page 66, it reads, “Yes! it is true woman was made for man, but not without reference to herself.”

Did these passages comfort the reader searching for an understanding of what it meant to submit and obey, yet seek value in oneself as an educated and privileged woman? I’m left to wonder if they helped at all.



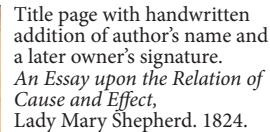
Title page, signed by “T. S. Saunderson, May 9th 1844.”
A Plea for Woman, Mrs. Hugo Reid. 1843.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.

Mary Lewis, Associate Professor
Department of Psychology

Published in 1824, the book entitled *An Essay upon the Relation of Cause and Effect* by Lady Mary Shepherd piqued my curiosity on many levels. Visually, the softened edges of its cover and thickness and the cream-colored paper preserving her words of analysis elicited a seriousness and reverence for its contents. I was taken by the handwritten editorial comments written in the side margins in a script hard to discern yet representing a critical analysis of the Lady Shephard's own words and the way in which they were printed (p. 5). I could almost feel the intensity of her concentration—hearing her mind speaking her own voice as she worked to ensure that the words printed on those pages presented an logical and thoughtful argument critiquing Mr. Hume's and his followers' essays on cause and effect.

In reading a biography of Lady Shepherd, I learned that she worked to wed together rationalism and empiricism in her essay, bringing in what was, at that time, cutting-edge physiology to support her ideas. I was in awe. It is what I teach in my class on the history of psychology, yet what I present was based on the men who published at that time. To have the confidence to critique a dominant philosophical figure (Mr. Hume) and offer such coherent ideas in publishable form took more than a little gumption. I found that some of her work was also used as a textbook at Cambridge University.

I am grateful to those women who saw in themselves the strength to present their ideas . . . to write . . . to unabashedly be themselves.

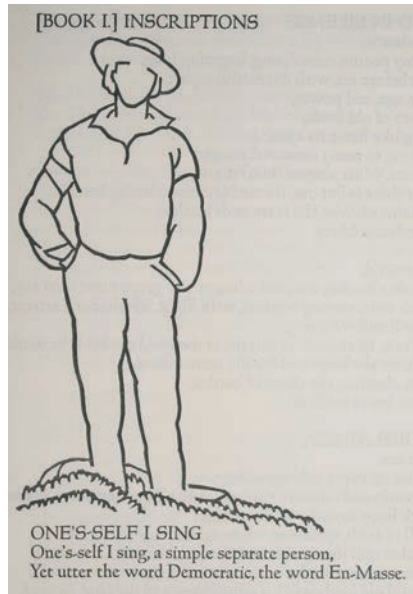


Note

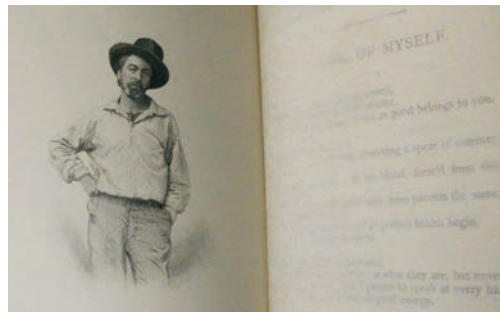
it; & dispute which nearly lost the mathematical chair in one of our universities to the present possessor of it, on account of his favouring this doctrine. His opinion, however, as far as it related to any countenance it might afford to the principles of atheism, was defended from the insinuation, by a learned treatise, from the then Professor of Moral Philosophy in the same university. This treatise, whilst it controverts Mr. Hume's opinions in some respects, ^{the whole reasoning of them is} ~~is~~ ^{not new,} has been generally considered as a test of the Proof of Superior intellect: X

LEAVES OF GRASS

Timothy Donahue, Assistant Professor
Department of English



Woodcut by Valenti Angelo.
Leaves of Grass, Walt Whitman.
Copy 248 of 400 copies, 1930.



From 1881 edition
of *Leaves of Grass*.

In “Song of Myself,” from Walt Whitman’s 1855 collection *Leaves of Grass*, the poet announces, “I am large, I contain multitudes.” Naturally, then, when I visited Kresge’s Rare Books Room, I asked to see their largest Whitman book. What we found was a rare edition of *Leaves of Grass* printed in 1930 by Edwin and Robert Grabhorn. The Grabhorn *Leaves* is as beautiful as it is big. The book is four times the size of common paperbacks, and its pages present Whitman’s poems in an oversized font, with luxurious margins, alongside woodcut illustrations by the artist Valenti Angelo.

The book’s substantial size is no accident. The Grabhorns were renowned for their employment of allusive typography and design, an approach to bookmaking that seeks to craft a product whose physical elements resonate with, and interpret, the text’s content. The Grabhorns’ *Leaves* is very big, then, because the poetic self speaking on its pages is so capacious that it “contains multitudes.”

Still more powerful connections to Whitman’s writing are found in Angelo’s illustrations. The image accompanying the first poem echoes the frontispiece of the original 1855 *Leaves*, which features a decidedly laid-back Whitman, with hat askew, hand on hip, and shirt unbuttoned, staring at the reader. But Angelo reproduces just the outline of the frontispiece image, depicting a faceless figure who seems to be both Whitman in particular and a more general male form.

Angelo’s illustration thus powerfully registers the distinctive way critics have found Whitman to address his readers. In the middle of “Song of Myself,” for instance, Whitman declares, “This hour I tell things in confidence, / I might not tell everyone, but I will tell you.” The “you” of these lines at once addresses a single reader intimately, “in confidence,” even as that “you” necessarily calls out to the potentially infinite number of readers of the poem. That is, Whitman addresses his readers in a way that is at once intimately specific and generally public, and it is precisely this paradox of being simultaneously specific and general, one person and every person, that Angelo’s elegant, spare, outline-only illustrations capture.

WOMAN ON THE AMERICAN FRONTIER

Valerie Palmer-Mehta, Professor
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Given the focus on men in historical fiction and nonfiction, we might consider the Hicks Collection—an array of 17th to early 20th century books by and about UK and US women—a treasure trove. The collection provides readers with insight into women's lives during a period when few thought their exploits worth documenting. William Fowler, in *Woman on the American Frontier*, ably demonstrates the folly of such a perspective. Fowler works against stereotypical portrayals of women as passive and vain domestic types by presenting the pioneer woman “as a soldier and laborer, a heroine and comforter in a peculiar set of dangers and difficulties such as are met with in our American wilderness” (3-4).

Fowler flouts conventions of gender by presenting women as courageous leaders and fearless protectors. We are introduced, for example, to Deborah Sam[p]son, who presented herself as a man and honorably served in the American Revolutionary War, as well as Mrs. Benham, whose skillful use of a revolver and effortless wielding of an ax prevented marauders from killing her family and burning down her home. As Fowler records their adventures and tribulations, he presents early pioneer women as intrepid, hard working, self-sufficient, and resourceful (even if persistently “cheerful”). However, he simultaneously perpetuates other cultural norms of the period, glorifying imperialism and colonization, and reifying racist assumptions and language. He also tends to belittle women who are not forging a pathway in the wilderness or the battlefield.

The book documents an intriguing and often overlooked aspect of US history, writing 17th-19th century pioneer women into the public record. It provides a valuable contribution to our understanding of women's activities during the period as well as their subversion of traditional gender expectations. At the same time, however, the book serves as a reminder of how even thoughtful, forward-looking writers can simultaneously disrupt dominant cultural codes, while remaining blind to, and reifying, others. Through the lens of time, the disjunctures in Fowler's work may be easy for the reader to spot. However, if we were to turn such a critical lens on ourselves, what might we find?



Detail from “Rescuing a Husband from Wolves”
(Mrs. White). Engraving by J. Harst.
Woman on the American Frontier, William W. Fowler. 1877.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection

FRUITS OF RETIREMENT

Emily Spunaugle, Assistant Professor and Humanities Librarian
Kresge Library

Fruits of Retirement exhibits the textual lineage of female agency at its intersection of authorship, printing, and readership. Authored by Mary Mollineux, this 1702 collection of pious poetry was published posthumously. Jailed for attending Quaker meetings, Mollineux was excessively modest but an incisive apologist for Quakerism. The collection was printed by Tace Sowle who became exclusive printer to the Society of Friends. Sowle is recognized as an exceptional printer, compositor, publisher, bookseller, and shrewd businesswoman. *Fruits*, remarkable for its measured poetic reflection amid the profusion of characteristically polemical Quaker pamphlets, would see six editions in the 1700s.

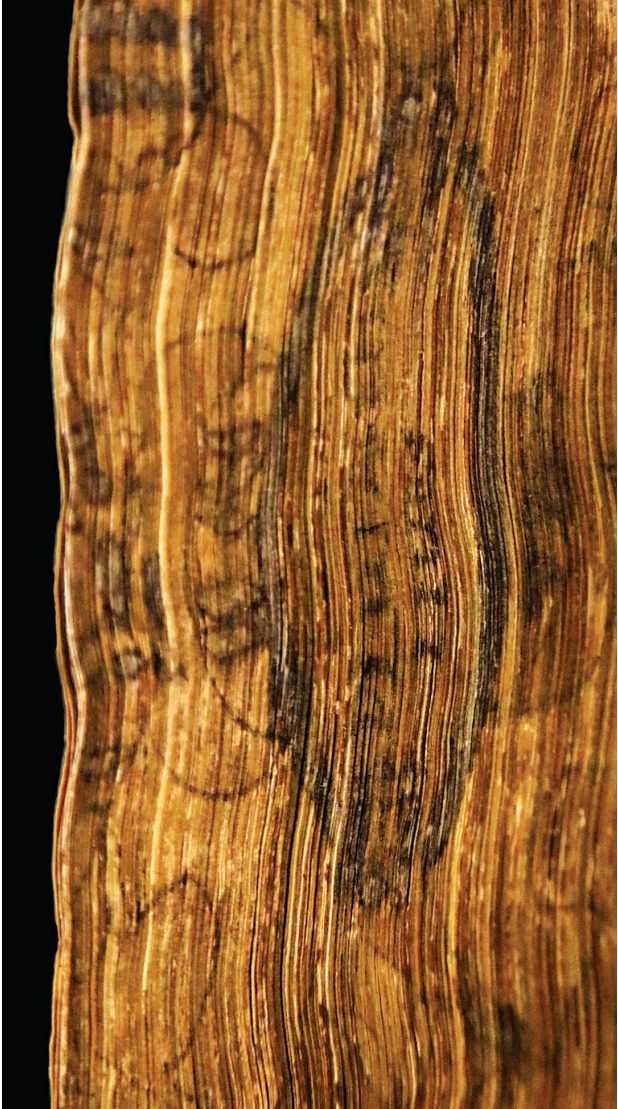
But this petite book's unremarkable butterscotch library rebinding encases pages softened by wear, bearing the traces of former lives, and evincing its particular use. Enter the third woman of this book—presumably a young girl practicing her handwriting: “Mary Draper, her book” reappears in the book’s margins and gutters, nearly hidden during the latest rebinding. Mary’s mantra constitutes the opening lines of a popular poem copied by children: “Mary Draper, her book / God give her grace therein to look / Not only look but understand / For learning is better than house or land / When house and land are gone and spent / Then learning is most excellent. But Mary doesn’t reach the final couplets; the book is rife with false starts. Her “therein” for “therein” suggests that Mary heard the rhyme and tried to recreate it without reliable exemplar.

Another Mary appears in 1774 (or, conceivably, a married Mary Draper), her proof of ownership penciled on a fresh strip of paper pasted on the outer edge of the page. But Mary Draper’s interaction with this text is reflected in other copies. The copy at the University of Texas bears inscriptions of over five distinct readers “in juvenile hands with dates from 1723 to 1729.” A copy at Wellesley College notes that the “autographs dated of former owners... appear frequently.”

Mollineux’s text, for its accretion of production, readership, and circulation, challenges our too-pat notions of feminized spheres, suggesting open-endedness as text, reader, and context are continuously triangulated in the 18th and 21st Centuries.



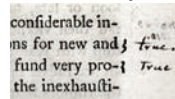
Fruits of Retirement: or Miscellaneous Poems, moral and divine,
Mary Mollineux. 1702.
From the Marguerite Hicks Collection.



THE PEOPLE OF

ENCOUNTERING THE RARE BOOK

Curated by



Andrea Eis

Book selections by



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Meaghan Barry
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Graham Cassano
Dominique Daniel
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Film music composed and performed by Ron Rost

Book scans by Margaret Friant

Fabric and photographs printed by David Lambert

Fabric exhibition supports by Matthew Carlsen and Paige VanSickle

Catalogue copy editing by Emily Spunaugle

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Hilarius, Pictaviensis. 1605. Jonathan Riley-Smith Crusades Collection.
Inside front cover: Frontispiece, *Misery's Virtues Whet-stone*,
Lady Grace Gethin, 1699. Marguerite Hicks Collection.
Inside back cover: Endpaper, *The Dialogues Of Plato*,
Plato; tr. Benjamin Jowett. 1892.

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The centuries of writers, illustrators, designers, typesetters, printers, and book binders who created these books, and the book sellers who made it possible for people to own them

All of the faculty who participated—working with you was inspiring

From the Gallery and the Department of Art and Art History

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Ron Rost, for composing and performing his intriguing music for the film

Steven Rost, for his patience with my intensity while I was working on this exhibition, and always being willing to talk over exhibition “stuff”

