

Talking About Association Copies

Give and take, and even a few yarns, from the second session of the March 19 Symposium

Mary Williams: We'll begin with Celia Hilliard, a member since 1982, whose collecting interests focus mainly on Chicago and its history, including the Columbian Exposition and the Chicago Century of Progress Exhibition. Another specific part of her collecting interests focuses on the Art Institute. So we welcome Celia, hoping we can learn from her standpoint as a private collector.

Celia Hilliard: When you focus your collecting on a single institution, or on a group of people engaged in a shared enterprise, association copies can be a satisfying way to confirm your sense of this community. It's a way to build your narrative. Inscriptions and annotations, as all of the speakers this morning emphasized, are living evidence of relationships. Typically you are already aware of some of these when you start, but the association copies provide clues and suggestions about connections and factors that you might otherwise never have suspected.

Here's an example: In 1917 the Caxton Club sponsored an exhibit at the Art Institute of Whistleriana from the collection of Walter Brewster. The club published a paper catalog, but Brewster ordered 50 special hand-bound copies printed on handmade paper. My husband and I have copy number 10, which Brewster inscribed with elaborate thanks to David Kennedy. (The Kennedy Brothers were dealers who were very close to Whistler. They made it possible for Brewster to acquire incredible rarities, one of them a portfolio of etchings that Whistler had presented to Queen Victoria. She willed it to one of her ladies-in-waiting, whose heirs sold it to Brewster.)

Other kinds of presentation copies suggest a more intimate or affectionate relationship, including the one that I chose to write up for our publication, *Other People's Books*, and that

work is never finished by just one person. It isn't even finished in one generation. It just goes on.

Association copies can also illustrate the romance of the curator in cultivating the donor. We have a copy of Fred Sweet's biography of Mary Cassatt. He was a long-time paintings curator at the Art Institute, and it's inscribed "with much affection" to Miss Helen Donnelley, who later gave the museum masterworks by Matisse, Picasso, Hans Hoffman, and others.

And you can find useful information in inscriptions. In 1917, Charles Lang Freer, in failing health, agreed to a large exhibition of his Asian paintings and objects at the Art Institute (this was just before he transferred the collection permanently to the Smithsonian). In this, he had the constant assistance of a tall, willowy beauty named Katharine Rhoades. She was an accomplished painter herself. She had been the lover of Alfred Stieglitz, three years previous. Freer allowed her to select all the objects that would go on display in Chicago. She was with him at his deathbed, and was one of three persons mentioned in Freer's will who were given authority to approve acquisitions to the Freer collection after he died. At the same time as this Freer Exhibition

went on view in Chicago, the Museum put on display the ancient Chinese pottery belonging to the great collector Dirkan Kelekian. We have Katharine Rhoades' own copy of the catalog for this pottery collection, which Monsieur Kelekian inscribed to her, addressing her, "oh brightest and fairest collaborator..." I think this lady cast a wide net. When you encounter this sort of thing in search of the full story, it can prompt new areas of investigation.

I did want to add that I don't believe an "annotation" must be strictly restricted to

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Celia Hilliard

is a 1915 catalog of the Buckingham *ukiyo-e* prints. Clarence Buckingham was encouraged and advised in his collecting by Frederick Gookin, who wrote this catalog, and who became the first keeper of the collection after it was presented to the Art Institute. The copy I wrote about was inscribed many years later by Helen Gunsaulus (who followed Gookin in the role of keeper of the collection) to her "splendid assistant" Margaret Gentles, whose career Helen Gonzales promoted, and who carried the Buckingham torch after Gunsaulus died. And I like the notion that important



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only what is handwritten. I think we can expand the definition a bit. I'm sure that many of you are aware of the great art exhibition which took place at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933 – works by Titian, Vermeer, Velasquez – all gathered from great collections around the world. It was a stupendous show, so remarkable that it was held over for a second year. We have a hardbound copy of the catalog, signed by both Robert Harshe and Daniel Catton Rich, who were the director and curator most responsible for bringing that show to Chicago. But how much more telling is a small leaflet, a 3-page brochure, illustrating the highlights of this show. We have several

pristine copies of this leaflet, but my favorite one is a banged-up one that is splashed all over in red ink: LAST CHANCE! THIS GREAT EXHIBITION POSITIVELY CLOSES NOV. 1! There is such a sense of urgency. You were there. You really understand the excitement and the energy of that show, the impact it had on Chicago. For me, that's the value of association copies, the way they can

demonstrate that something you're holding in your hand made a difference, that somebody cared.

Williams: Eden Martin has been a member of the Caxton Club for a little over three decades. He has an admired collection of English, Russian, and U.S. literature of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, and also a noted collection of World War I poets.

Eden Martin: We start by asking what's an "association copy." I remember asking Paul Ruxin what he thought it was, and he gave me a definition. It's pretty close to the one that David started with today, which I will call the "traditional" definition: An association copy is a copy of a book that belonged to, was annotated by, or used by, either the writer or a person connected to the book, or in an expanded version, some celebrated person.

I think when you look at *Other People's Books*, you find that most items belong to either the classic or

a slightly expanded definition. In their talks today both David Pearson and Heather Jackson argue that scholars and collectors should have broader interests. Not just people who wrote the book, or were connected to the book, or even celebrated people, but anybody who annotated the book, or put marginalia in the books, or mutilated books. They also look at the impact the book had on society at the time.

But to me, an association copy is more than that. It is evidence of something. Take, as an example, an early edition of one of Winston Churchill's books. It's a wonderful thing to have. You can read it, or you can read a modern edition and keep the original. Now, supposing you have a copy from Churchill's



Eden Martin

library, a copy with a bookplate that Randolph put in. That makes it an artifact, but nothing more. It merely tells you that it sat on Churchill's shelf, if you can believe the bookplate. But if someone presented a copy of a book, that presentation is evidence of something. If Churchill gave a presentation copy of a book to his wife, or one of his children, or one of his political allies, each would be evidence of relationship. Beyond that, if there are notes it, they can tell something interesting

about their relationship or about something in the book's contents. To me that's important. It has value not just to collectors, but to scholars.

The current *Caxtonian* has an article I did on Graves, and one of the chunks of it is about the copy of his first published book that he gave to his sister. It's an artifact. It's also proof of the relationship between the writer and his favorite relative. And most importantly, it has his notes about the poems – where they were written, the circumstances in which they were written, what camp he was in, certain references to other people, all evidence about what was going on in his life and in his mind. So we have presentation copy, evidence of relationship, as well as evidence of what was going on in his mind. This is more than just artifact.

I'll now show you a few slides that illustrate evidence of relationships.

This is a copy of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

The first edition was published in 1855. In 1863, Walt goes to Washington, eventually getting a job with the federal government. He volunteers in the military hospitals. In 1865 he publishes a little book of poems called *Drum Taps*, which has some of my favorite poems in it, including the one about the assassination of Lincoln. At the end of 1865, he meets a young man named Peter Doyle, an 18-year-old Irish Catholic who had been paroled from the Confederate army. I'll read you a paragraph. This is Doyle, later, writing about first meeting with Walt Whitman. "Walt had his blanket – it was thrown round his shoulders – he seemed like an old sea-captain. He was the only passenger, it was a lonely night, so I thought I would go in and talk with him. Something in me made me do it and something in him drew me that way. He used to say there was something in me had the same effect on him. Anyway, I went into the car. We were familiar at once – we understood. He did not get out at the end of the trip – in fact went all the way back with me. From that time on we were the biggest sort of friends." The friendship is documented elsewhere. When Whitman was ill, Doyle helped take care of him. Doyle was not educated, but Whitman would read him poetry, and Whitman wrote in his own diary about how tormented he was about his affections for the young man, about the compulsive and humiliating pursuit, and his resolution to stop it. There has been a lot of speculation about the relationship, but they were close friends, no question about it, and it lasted until the end of Whitman's life, when he gave Peter Doyle his silver watch.

About the time he met Peter he was working on a fourth edition of *Leaves of Grass*, which had 80 new poems in it, including the *Drum Taps* civil war poems. And that's the book that you see on the screen. It's a beat-up copy. What makes it interesting is that this is the copy of *Leaves of Grass* that Whitman gave to Doyle. The picture [of Whitman] was not in the book. It was tipped in. We don't know, but presumably Whitman gave it to Doyle when he gave him the book. And the inscription is "Peter G. Doyle from Walt Whitman, Washington, April 29, 1888." What's interesting about it is that this is perhaps the closest personal relationship Whitman had as an adult. It makes the book much more

interesting. It's still an artifact, but it's also evidence of something more. There's a penumbra around it that is hard to describe, but which makes it of great interest to a collector.

The picture on the screen is Tolstoy. You all know him. You've read him. Wonderful short



Steve Tomashefsky

stories, three great novels. And then he quit writing novels. At the end of his life he was most interested not in fiction or imaginative writing, but in religion, morals, the church, the future of Russia. He wrote lots of stuff, some of which has never been translated and isn't read much anymore. He's very interested in peasants and education. His last major work was a collection of excerpts from the writings of other people. He wrote in his diary, "I have to create a circle of reading for myself." Then he cites the major writers, including the scriptures, which everyone needs to read. He came up with this "circle of reading" in 1904. He doubled it to two volumes in 1906. I personally much prefer *War and Peace*, but Tolstoy didn't. He said, "To complete a book for the masses, for millions of people, is incomparably more important and fruitful than to compose a novel of the kind which diverts members of the wealthy classes for a short time and then is forever forgotten." He hadn't realized that *War and Peace* would never be forgotten. This is the copy of *Circle of Reading* that he gave to his son Andre in February of 1906. It's a presentation to his son, and by his own testimony,

he thought it was the most important work he ever wrote. It isn't just an artifact, it's evidence of something more: of the relationship between two people and of what the author thought was his most important work, which to me gives it a special interest.

Williams: Our next speaker is Steve Tomashefsky who wears many hats today. He has been a Caxton Club member since 2002, and is a former President. He's also a member of the committee of the symposium, and has agreed to join us today as a private collector. He calls himself a "recovering" private press collector, because these days he collects ornithological works and books about food.

Steve Tomashefsky: I'd been collecting books for quite a few years before I knew anything about association copies, but I can vividly remember the time I first heard the notion of an association copy and saw one. When I was a senior in college, having finished all the various courses needed to graduate, I enrolled in a graduate seminar on bibliography that was given by W. H. Bond, who was the director of the Houghton Library. To pass the course we were required to do

some research at the library. So one day I was sitting there in the reading room, and Professor Bond walked by and asked me, "Have you ever been in the stacks?" and I said no, so he said, "Well, then let me take you in." He led me to the stacks and asked if there were any authors I was particularly interested in. I mentioned that at the time I was fascinated by T.E. Lawrence – "Lawrence of Arabia" – and he said, "Well, then I have something to show you." He walked a few shelves over and he pulled out a copy of the *Oxford Book of English Verse*, a familiar blue-bound copy. He opened it up and pointed to the inscription. I had known from reading *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* that Lawrence had carried a copy of the *Oxford Book of English Verse* with him during the Arabian campaigns and that he had frequently opened it and read something to give himself solace in the course of the battles. The pencil inscription said, "This is the copy of the *Oxford Book of English Verse* that I carried with me during the Arabian campaign," and it was signed T. E. Lawrence. I thought that was pretty impressive, and I said so to Professor

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Bond. He replied, "You know, there are five or six copies that have the same inscription." In its way, that is an odd sort of an association. It probably tells you something about T.E. Lawrence, that, had there been only one, and had this been *the* one, we probably wouldn't have known. That was my introduction to association copies, perhaps through the back door.

When we were originally planning the book and this symposium, one of the internal debates we had amongst ourselves was whether we had a case to make that association copies (by that I mean defined more or less in the narrow way to which Eden referred) were something of interest primarily to collectors, or whether they had some sort of independent scholarly value. I certainly agree with Eden that association copies have something to tell us, but I'm not so sure it's about relationships. I would probably not go so far as to say they tell us a whole lot about relationships. A presentation to a child or to a spouse doesn't surprise us. A presentation copy given to somebody we didn't know the author had a relationship with would be different, but they are pretty rare. From my perspective, I don't believe the collecting of association copies necessarily involves an increase in learning or scholarship. But I do believe, very sincerely, that a book is more than just a text. A book is really an object, no less than a piece of sculpture, an antique chair, a flint arrowhead, a Roman coin – the sort of thing that people collect and put in museums to look at.

In that sense an individual book is a piece of cultural history that can at least tell us something, or connect us to where we came from culturally. We're used to seeing museum exhibits that display cultural objects from the past, whether anthropological, historical, or artistic. Many of those objects are closely identified with a creator who made them, although many are anonymous. But just as nature abhors a vacuum, we are psychologically resistant to anonymity. An old coin becomes more meaningful if we know who struck it, or whose pocket once held it, or who spent it and what it paid for. An arrowhead would

acquire greater meaning if we knew that Sitting Bull had shot that arrow, or that it had killed General Custer. But it can be difficult to define what we think that added meaning really is. For me, one of the added meanings is that it reduces the anonymity of the object. An association locates the object in a particular place and time, and brings us closer to a particular human being, for better or worse.

Some years ago I saw an exhibit at the old Huntington Hartford museum in New York of architectural drawings by Hitler's protégé Albert Speer. On several of the drawings were

their place in a world where only text matters. But that's not the world I live in. Each book I own is an object that has cultural significance based upon one or more features with which it is endowed. One of those features, and it's one I try for in as many cases as I can obtain, is an association with someone of interest, an association that reduces the object's anonymity and links it, and therefore me, with another person at another time. Though I collect books in several fields, my largest collection, and the one that's richest in associations, is books about birds. In that area, I pursue



Mary Williams, chair of the 2011 symposium committee

Hitler's own markings or sketches in blue grease pencil. The sketches themselves were entirely innocuous. But the fact that Hitler had actually drawn those lines himself, had actually touched the paper, gave me a sense of horror that exceeded the effect produced by any number of newsreels or photos of Hitler. Books, no less than other cultural objects, are connected with people – the people who write them, the people who make them, the people who own them, the people who read them, the people who collect them. But books suffer from what I call the determinacy of the text, the belief that the text is the only important thing about a book. That's the kind of thing that leads to Kindles and iPads, and that oxymoron, "audio books," all of which have

associations of two types: one, books on birds that were owned by ornithological scholars, and the other, books that were owned by other noted ornithology collectors. Sometimes those two categories overlap. Books that were owned by other people, or that show evidence of having been owned by other people, serve as a kind of spur to further investigation and scholarship.

One of the things that always fascinates me when I see a book advertised is "former owner's signature." The first thing I do when I get a book like that is see if I can decipher who the former owner was

and what I can find out about him or her. Surprisingly, and maybe Tom would be shocked by this, in many cases I've found that the former owner was somebody who did have a significant association in some way with the book, because they were a known ornithologist, perhaps, that the bookseller neglected to notice or to mention.

Let me just focus for a moment, as I conclude, on the second category mentioned, which is books that were once in some other collector's collection. Book collecting, as we all know, has a long and interesting history. We didn't invent it. We don't write on a clean slate. There is great pleasure in tracing book ownership from one collector to the next, and joining the great chain of collecting, or

the great tradition of collecting. Having books that were formerly in collections of such ornithology collectors as H. Bradley Martin, John Thayer, Evan Morton Evans, William Braislin, and S. Dillon Ripley keeps the chain going, and makes the books themselves more meaningful to me as a collector.

You learn about the art, technique, and history of collecting by learning about the people who have collected the books that are now in your collection. After all, almost every book was once owned by somebody, usually an anonymous somebody. In that sense, books that have an association are a way of making books rarer and more expensive, as Tom said this morning. Knowing that a book played a part in the life of an admired role model animates that copy with a certain mojo that an anonymous copy can never have. You can call it a form of fetishism if you like. But keeping a connection to those who blazed a path adds something to the humanity of the text by locating the object in a history that matters to us. It is too easy to focus on annotations and glosses, which in most cases would have independent value whether

they were written in the book or somewhere else, and have an interest apart from the mere association with the writer. But the association with whomever the book is associated – a person who is of interest to the collector – carries it into a level of cultural connection that at least to me, as a collector, whether it has any significance to anyone else, means a great deal. Does a book have more significance because of who used to own it? In many respects, probably not. But given the choice between a book with no provenance and another copy that was once owned by a collector in my field, I don't have the slightest doubt about which one has more intrinsic value.

Williams: Now, David and Tom, do you have any reactions to our three private collectors?

Tom Congalton: I'd like to say that in my talk I probably clung more closely to the traditional definition of association copy. It's not just about scholarly value. It could also be

seen as a trophy for collectors. However, I was absolutely delighted by David and Heather's expansion of the definition as being a delivery system for marginalia. If for no other reason, it expands my market. It points out the beauty of the rare book world, where the limits of

by recognizing the importance of association copies. The value of these things is not cultural, it's commercial.

Congalton: Maybe in my world, the future of all books will be as artifacts.

Hilliard: This is just a little postscript. I was

thinking about the fact that Steve said he was a "recovering collector" of books by private presses, and that he is moving into books about food, among other things. We have several collections related to people who were associated with the Art Institute and its development. One of these is a group of cookbooks, which are always annotated, if only by what's spilled on them. When people are asked to submit recipes, it is very interesting to see what they offer. For instance, Mrs. Martin Ryerson, the wife of the greatest collector of Old Master paintings in the museum's history, submits a recipe for borscht. Which was very surprising. I also have a copy of *The Gold Coast Cookbook*, a privately printed book that doesn't identify its contributors – though each recipe has notations, and it's clear they



Tom Congalton

that world are only defined by the imaginations of collectors, curators, and librarians. Every good collector, curator, or librarian – or rare bookseller for that matter – their job is to expand that definition constantly in new ways. And this symposium, I think, points that out.

David Pearson: What matters about books? Why are they important? We've had a strong emphasis on books as artifacts rather than collections of words. We're moving on from the traditional value of books. If you ask most people why are books important, they would say it's because they've got knowledge in them. It's about ideas, about words...it's the content that matters. But we're moving on from that and saying that what's really interesting and culturally important about these books is different. The question of how many books society is going to pay to keep will get louder as time goes by. Maybe really the value of books is around commercial opportunities for dealers to make more money

come from the grandchildren of pioneers who inhabited the mansions along Rush and Astor Streets. Most of the recipes in this book are unbelievably overloaded with butter and cream. There are big grease spots and soup stains on most of the pages. But there's one page that is absolutely pristine, and on it is a dish that's described as being a "secret from the grave." I think the blank space tells as much as words.

Martin: I keep struggling with a question that I probably ought to forget about, which is why is it important to collect a book Boswell signed, or Johnson owned, or Whitman gave to somebody. Let me circle it. My grandfather, who got me interested in books, didn't have any money, so the only books he could afford were modern editions. He got all the pleasure he needed out of reading a modern edition; he virtually memorized much of it. My brother and I are practically copies of each other. We made our livings the same way, we have the

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same interests. He's probably better read than I am, and he doesn't have any old books. He has modern books. So who's right? If you were advising a child or a grandchild or a friend, would you advise them to collect old books? How would you make the argument?

What I've come to think, and it sort of reflects Steve's views too, is that there are some things in life that are not susceptible to argument. The old maxim is "de gustibus non est disputandum" – in matters of taste there can be no argument. It's not that you shouldn't argue about it, it's that you can't get at it in an argumentative way. Either you like it or you don't. You like French food or French wine or Ferraris or original works by Whitman or you don't, and you can't talk somebody into it if they don't. For many people these may be something of great interest and pleasure. If you do like Whitman and you can afford it and you can get a book that Whitman handled or touched, or Hemingway, or Poe, or Samuel Johnson, or a great ornithologist, it somehow brings it alive to you in a way that adds value to your life, even though you can't logically justify it. It seems to me that the best thing to do is to get away

from the notion, which I try to do, of arguing somebody into having the same interests that I do. I encourage others to try it, and tell them if they like it they'll have a lot of fun. But if they prefer fast sports cars, then more power to 'em.

Williams: That raises the question of how we value association copies. We've considered the cultural value of an association copy as an artifact, or the market value of an item. It's much easier to assign a market value than it is to find a cultural one.

Tomashefsky: Those things are not mutually exclusive. It tends to be the case over time that things having enduring cultural value tend to be expensive. One thing, as a collector goes through the shelves of what might be called "used" book stores: you see shelf after shelf of books that were published long ago, that exist in hundreds of copies. They were apparently enormously popular at the time, but nobody ever reads or thinks about them today. Of course, things come in cycles. For all we know, our mindset is wrong and those are

great books. They were great in their day, and maybe they'll come back.

Price follows value to some degree. If something has value to more than one person, at least, it will probably be higher in price. How you put a value on an item as a collector is alchemical, in the sense that how you relate to your books can be complicated. It's an open secret among book collectors that many



David Pearson

of us own books that we've never read. And although I like to think that eventually I'll read all the books, life is short, and I'm fully prepared to recognize that I may never get around to all of them.

Hilliard: But that's okay, just to have them and want to read them.

Tomashefsky: I want those books, and am I willing to pay for them? Absolutely. Not necessarily because I'm fascinated by their texts. Often times I don't specifically know what the text is before I've bought it. But it represents something: a moment in history, a moment in the history of ornithological writing, say, that is an important part of the kind of collection I want to have and build. Which is not to say that I don't enjoy reading. The books that I read I enjoy reading. But that's not the only factor that motivates me, or that determines whether a book has value, or whether it's worth paying for the book.

Congalton: I think that the way booksellers value books and the way that collectors value books are very similar. When I buy an

expensive book, which I do pretty frequently (including association copies, obviously) invariably somebody asks me, "You know who you're going to sell that to, right?" But the answer is, generally, no. Usually I have no idea. I buy expensive association copies because I'm fascinated by them, and I'm just hoping that there's one other person in the world that will be as well, for slightly more money, or in some cases a lot more money. And I suggest that that's how collectors value association copies. They see them, they're offered, they have to have them or they don't. And if they don't have to have them, then I've collected a lovely association copy. Sometimes there are similar copies, or things that could be comparable. With association copies the value of them is that they are all unique, except maybe for that T. E. Lawrence book. Most of them are unique in some sense, and they can't be compared with complete confidence.

Paul Ruxin: Eden Martin's discussion of the Tolstoy started me thinking about commonplace books. People used to keep them to keep track of thoughts that were

meaningful to them. In a sense the commonplace book is the ultimate association copy. It almost becomes a doppelganger of the keeper of the commonplace book. Is there any systematic study, or marketplace for, commonplace books?

Martin: I failed to read the inscription in the Tolstoy. Directed to his son Andre, he says, "You should read in this every day." Which is the service he thought he was doing for very large numbers of people, as opposed to the handful who were going to read *War and Peace*.

Congalton: I think one of the features of the commonplace book is that traditionally they have been pretty common. You find them all the time, and they tend not to bring very much money. As a result, I probably pay less attention to them than I should.

Pearson: There is an exhibition catalog, a book about commonplace books, published in the last few years.

John Chalmers: It was published by the Beinecke Library.

Pearson: It's a tradition that's not completely dead, but I suspect it's a lot less common than it used to be.

Audience member: I can confess to keeping a commonplace book. I don't know if anybody else here does as well. In the Boston area there's a gentleman by the name of George Herrick who collects commonplace books and has spoken about them extensively. Just as a matter of curiosity, does anyone else in this room keep a commonplace book? [Several hands raised.]

Audience member: A commonplace computer file!

Paul Ruxin: It occurs to me that in a sense the ultimate published commonplace book is Samuel Johnson's dictionary, because what set it apart is that he illustrated every definition, and there were 114,000 quotations illustrating the use of the word, from Johnson's own reading.

Paul Gehl: A specific followup question I think was implicit in the first question here. What is the difference between handmade personal commonplace books and published ones? The latter are the real junk of used bookstores, and unless they've been put together by a famous author, they're rarely collected by anybody. And yet it is one of the most ubiquitous genres, down to calendars of quotes of the day, which are put out in their thousands and tens of thousands.

Tomashefsky: What's different about Johnson's Dictionary or a published commonplace book is that there are many copies of the same thing. Inherent in the concept of association copy as we've been using it here is that it's a one-off unique specific object. If a book has a printed facsimile of the author's signature on the front page, that's not an association copy because there are many of them and it's not a unique item.

Audience member: I know a professor at the University of Texas in a technology field. He was an early adopter of the Kindle, on which he had 200 books, all annotated and searchable. He recently transferred them over onto his iPad. Now he reads all of his books on his iPad, annotating them, so he has all of his notes on his reading in this one place. I will also add that he is in his late sixties. He's someone who has had a life with books that

has lasted a very long time. That is showing us what may happen in the future with these life-long reading experiences.

A question which this raises is when somebody keeps all of their books on their iPad or their Kindle with all of their annotations, who owns that object? The reader owns the Kindle, but Amazon owns the book. I don't know what the relationship is between the text of the book that they've annotated, whether they're able to export their annotations in some form that will keep a record of



Lively discussion at breaks

them in relation to that text. The fact that we don't know how to answer that question is important. As a librarian at an institution that focuses on contemporary literature, this is a pressing question that our field hasn't yet begun to address. The field is changing so fast that we don't even know what's happening in this first decade of the e-book, whether it will be documented at all, or be lost. It's exciting but at the same time scary.

Congalton: A related matter: when we do appraisals now, we often have to assign a value to electronic files when people donate them to institutions. It's a question that's working itself out, but it's not worked out yet. The question of copyright is for the lawyers here.

Tomashefsky: Let me talk a little about that, because it's a field I have some interest in. In the Kindle case that was cited, you have to start with the agreement with Amazon. I'm sure there's something there that addresses the question of ownership. Normally speaking, the author has the ownership of the right of the work, and also the right to give permission to others to modify it or improve it in any way. You're not allowed to take somebody's

work and just change a few words and call it your own. One might argue that annotating a text is in a way modifying and improving it, and therefore falls within the original copyright holder's right to claim or to direct. One might also argue that the notes are simply independent notes that happened to be placed in a certain location, and that therefore the copyright belongs to the person who wrote them. Without actually knowing, my hunch is the annotations actually don't electronically flow back to Amazon. They probably reside on the Kindle and go nowhere unless the annotator sends them somewhere.

One other thing I wanted to say: I believe Heather Jackson's paper referred to the reluctance that many people have today to be annotators, at least in physical books. It's one thing to annotate something electronically, where you would think you could wipe it off if you wanted to, but once you've made an ink mark in a book it's pretty much there forever. There was a time when I was a heavy underliner and annotator, but these days I feel a reluctance to make marks in books to the point where, although I'm perfectly happy to collect books that have been

signed, autographed, bookplated, or dedicated by other people, I have a horror of even adding a bookplate of my own – of altering it in any way from the way I received it.

I think there may be a shift in attitudes. I think maybe it's true that in the 18th century more people had a self-confidence that they had something to say that was worth writing in the margins of a book. Today it requires a bit more hubris, perhaps, to think that we have something worth putting next to the words of Tolstoy or Whitman. If you follow Professor Jackson's idea that part of the reason for annotating books is that the next person who has the book will somehow benefit from your annotations, that means the annotation is not an entirely private matter between you and the author.

Pearson: Isn't there a fundamental contradiction, though, if you're saying that you do collect books that have been owned by previous ornithological collectors? They have to have marked their books in some way to demonstrate that ownership which you can then value. Aren't you actively denying posterity the

See ASSOCIATION COPIES, page 8

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opportunity to the same thing by not marking your own books?

Tomashefsky: That's exactly the point I was making about annotations. I can say that to own a book that was previously owned by Bradley Martin is a fabulous thing, but for me to envision that anyone would give a damn about owning a book that was owned by me...

Pearson: Should we do a straw poll in this room and ask how many people mark their books? [Hands raised.] It's about half and half. That question about whether you should mark, or write in, or annotate books – there's quite a long history of a variety of thinking on that. It's one of the things that Bill Sherman brings out in *Used Books*, in which he does some historical investigation into attitudes towards writing and marking in books over time. He demonstrates that there's always been a dichotomy, quite conflicting views. I'm not entirely convinced that what Heather Jackson said in her paper is quite right that there is a significant change in the 19th century about whether to mark in books.

This is the best anecdote I know about ways of writing in books and marking historic books: when I was working in Durham in the historic library, somebody came in and asked "Do you have any incunabula here?" I said, yes, yes, we've got a reasonable collection. "I'd like to see some, because, you know I collect incunabula, and I'd be very interested to see some of yours." So, being a helpful rare book librarian, I produced a book (I don't remember now what it was), but it was a book with a historiated initial. The guide letter was there, but the initial had not been filled in or rubricated. He said, "Shouldn't that capital letter be filled in?" I said, yes, the space was left. The printer

intended that to happen. But nobody actually did it. Then he said, "Do you not do it?" I said, well, no, we don't do that. And he said, "Well, I do that in mine." It's always struck me that it's kind of hard to argue with this. I suspect that not many people nowadays would take a 15th century printed book and actually fill in the

highlight in green pen, and the plaintiff's arguments you'd highlight in blue marker, and so forth. We had a visiting professor from Wales, Professor Jones, who was fascinated by what he regarded as a purely American practice. He would often march up and down the aisles of the classroom and make com-

ments on the colors that people would devote, and how many colors. One day I showed up for class not having been able to read the material. I was sitting close to the front of the class. Professor Jones was able to look down and see my book and see that there were no markings. He said, "Virgin pages, I see there, Mr. Tomashefsky. Have we not done the reading?"

Martin: I just wanted to respond to the question of whether you mark books or not. If by marking a book, you seriously detract from its value, you wouldn't do it. Why would anybody scribble his name with a ball-point pen in a first edition of Hemingway?

On the other hand, if you had a paperback modern edition, and you wanted to make notes, and it cost \$12, and you can buy as many copies as you want, it's useful to go through and mark in the margins, and if there's a passage you like you can mark it, or if there's something that strikes your fancy then you can go back and find it again. So you can't answer in the abstract. If it's a collectible rare book, marking it detracts from the original condition of the book, even with a

bookplate. If a book has value, marking on it is a big risk.

Ronald Smeltzer: So far the assumption has been that association copies occur by something having been written in them. I'd like to raise the issue in two parts. Part one, suppose one has iron-clad proof of ownership via sale records, but if the owner didn't write in it, are you willing to accept that as an association copy? Supposing the answer to that is



The symposium was co-sponsored by The Newberry Library and the Bibliographical Society of America. David Spadafora of the Newberry, left, and John Neal Hoover of the BSA welcomed the audience as the event began.



guide letters. But in terms of what the printer intended, it's hard to argue with what he was doing.

Tomashefsky: Another story. I do remember the last time I was actively involved in annotating, which was when I was in law school. It was quite common in those days that when you read your book of cases, you would highlight different parts of the case in various colors. The facts of the case you would

no, the second part is if one can make a good case that the book influenced the professional work of this owner who didn't make a mark in it, then are you willing to consider it an association copy?

Congalton: I'm willing to accept it, because I'm going to try to sell it. When we had Ben Shawn's library, we had a label made. We took the books right off his shelves. The family approved of it. You have to keep some sort of chain of provenance of where they've been. That's not easy if you don't mark the books. That's why many collectors store the bookseller's invoice with the book.

Smeltzer: I'm talking about my essay in the book. I'm the second owner, I bought the book at a London auction from James Watt, the engineer. And I make the case in my essay that this book definitely influenced his work, but there is no mark of ownership in the book.

Pearson: But you know that it was his copy.

Smeltzer: I know it was from the sale in London.

Hilliard: You have to do something to keep that information with the book.

Pearson: This is what I would do: I would write in pencil, on the flyleaf, the source, who you are, and how you know this. That way the information is associated with the book, and it's always there.

Smeltzer: I was just concerned that all day we've been assuming it's some annotation in the book, and it's not always the case. So we agree it can be an association copy.

Pearson: Absolutely.

Audience member: I've collected children's books, which often have family inscriptions. They don't seem important today, but might they be hundreds of years in the future?

Pearson: Undergraduate scribbling in a textbook that's 400 years old is something that today has great scholarly and research value. We curate it and look after it in libraries. But undergraduate highlighting of textbooks today is something that librarians curse and put it in exhibition cases as examples of what not to do. Quite where the line is drawn, chronologically, how many centuries have to pass, before the highlighting becomes treasured marginalia, I leave you to contemplate.

Mark Samuels Lasner: This follows a bit on Eden's remark. What about removing marks and changing a book? I can think of a wonderful example of an owner removing evidence. This was the copy of Keats' poems that he presented to William Wordsworth. When the book appeared on the market in the late 19th century, it was partially unopened. The next owner opened the rest of the book so that

we no longer know how far Wordsworth got before he was bored. I think we all know of examples in books where people have removed bookplates, removed prices, removed inscriptions. It's done commonly, not only by booksellers, but by collectors, even by librarians, even by myself. I wonder if you'd comment on this, the evidence, whether it is of a famous person, of a person unknown, which is being removed from books.

Congalton: Here's an anecdote that demonstrates how we can't know everything. I recently had a book, *The New Negro*, by Alain Locke. It's a very important work in African-American history. It was his own copy. I offered it for sale for a certain amount of money, and it had a really unsightly bookplate, another person's, in it. I sent it out to have this unsightly bookplate removed. When it came back, I discovered that the bookplate had covered an inscription from the author, saying that it was the first copy of this book, inscribed to somebody else. Of course I offered it in the catalog before I sent it out, and I ended up selling it to an institution for much less money than I should have. But the provenance of a book changes with what we know. We almost never know everything there is to know.

Peggy Sullivan: Mine is a comment. I was glad to hear the question about children's literature, which I think has been ignored so far today. I have various observations about that. Some children's books have the most fulsome inscriptions and dedications as gifts, but all too often they don't have last names, so for example if you found an *Alice in Wonderland* that read "For Winnie on his 6th birthday from his loving mother Jennie," and you didn't know they were the Churchills, you might not recognize its value. I'm not suggesting that the world is full of books like that, but there are some. And the second thing is, children have a natural instinct for destruction, which they exercise on many books. It increases value inversely. Some studies a few years ago, one on children's books about etiquette and the other on children's books about self health care – they started out thinking they might have difficulty locating copies, but found that they discovered plenty of copies in almost pristine condition because the children had not been interested in them. What they like they destroy.

Tomashefsky: I destroyed many books as a child.

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Photographs by Robert McCamant.



SCHOLARSHIP WINNER, from page 12

music celebrity, fandom (including some of its more troubling aspects), and the effects of idol worship. Using Christopher's own photography and text, the book will be printed via offset and letterpress (both in-house at Columbia College). "American Ambition" will be a 20-page traditional codex, handbound, and printed in an edition of 150.

Among Christopher's supporting materials was his artist's book *Walang Hiya/No Shame*, the text of which is made up of derogatory words from Tagalog and American slang. *Walang Hiya/No Shame* is a book constructed in a classic carousel binding structure and can be displayed in the form of a star. Its words are cut out by hand from black and white paper, creating a dimensional, sculptural effect. Using text only, with its cut-out words its only images, instead of well-known pop culture images, this book stands in contrast to Christopher's other books included in his supporting materials, although they all share the subject matter of pop culture. Among the other books was one which featured Mickey Mouse (a one-sheet book); one Kermit the Frog, using the lyrics to the theme from *The Muppet Show*; and one *Alice in Wonderland*, a collage book.

It was the investigation of the two languages in *Walang Hiya/No Shame* which led Christopher to plan to focus his subsequent work on Eastern and Western popular culture. Following "American Ambition," (which will explore pop idols in Western society), Christopher plans to explore pop idols from Eastern cultures such as the Philippines.

Christopher has been invited to attend the September dinner meeting, where he will receive his check. He has been invited to show his work on a table during the cocktail hour.

I hope Caxtonians able to attend will take advantage of the opportunity to congratulate our 2010-2011 Scholarship recipient, to see his work and to converse with him about it.

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Book and manuscript-related exhibitions: a selective list

Compiled by Robert McCamant

(Note: on occasion an exhibit may be delayed or extended; it is always wise to call in advance of a visit.)

Art Institute of Chicago, 111 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-443-3600: "Avant-Garde Art in Everyday Life" (this moment in east-central European modernism is explored with nearly 300 works of photography, photomontage, and photographically illustrated posters and books), Galleries 182-184, through October 9.

"Artful Alphabets: Five Picture Book Artists" (display of original alphabet drawings, plus a variety of ABC books for you to share with your child) Ryan Education Center, through November 6.

Chicago Botanic Garden, Lenhardt Library, 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, 847-835-8202: "Treasures of the Lenhardt Library," through August 7.

Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street, Chicago, 312-744-6630: "Movie Mojo: Hand-Painted Posters from Ghana" (inspired by movies, created by a wide variety of artists), through September 4.

Columbia College Center for the Book and Paper Arts, 1104 S. Wabash Avenue, 312-369-6632: "The World as Text" (reading room of contemporary artist's books, zines, exhibition catalogs and alternative publications), 2nd floor gallery, through August 12.

Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, 312-747-4300: "In Service to the Union: Civil War Artifacts" (items from swords to posters will be exhibited in cases at the Library and online), Special Collections Exhibit Hall, Ninth Floor, through July 17. "Actors, Plays & Stages: Early Theater in Chicago" (memorabilia of the first performance at the Sauganash Hotel, vibrant 19th century theaters and the rise of the Loop's grand auditoriums), Chicago Gallery, Third Floor, into 2012.

DuSable Museum of African American History, 740 East 56th Place, Chicago, 773-947-0600: "Black Wings: American Dreams of Flight" (significant figures, events, and themes associated with African Americans in aviation and aerospace history), opens July 2.

Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Historical Society, 361 E. Westminster Avenue, Lake Forest, 847-234-5253: "Uncanny, Unabridged, Unforgettable: 150 Years of Lake Forest" (honors Lake Forest's Sesquicentennial), through December 29.

Loyola University Museum of Art, 820 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, 312-915-7600: "After the Flood: Eklavya Prasad's Photographs of Life in North Bihar, India" through July 31.

Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, 312-280-2660: "Pandora's Box: Joseph Cornell Unlocks the MCA Collection" (Cornell's work in dialogue with objects from the MCA's collection), through October 16.

Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago, 312-943-9090: "2011 Newberry Library Book Fair" Thursday, July 28 and Friday, July 29: 12 p.m. - 8 p.m.; Saturday, July 30 and Sunday, July 31: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Northwestern University, Charles Deering Library, 1970 Campus Drive, Evanston, 847-491-7658: "Who is the journalist?" (using books and rare materials from the Library's collections to explore an array of journalistic identities and incarnations), main library, through September 2. "René Binet and Ernst Haeckel's Collaboration: Magical Naturalism and Architectural Ornament" (Binet had received the prestigious commission to design the principal gateway to the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900 - which he did from coral structures as they had been elucidated by the German biologist Ernest Haeckel. Binet's work parallels the Art Nouveau style but is unique in its geometric developments taking off from Haeckel's studies of biological morphology), Special Collections through October 28.

Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, 773-702-9514: "Before the Pyramids: The Origins of Egyptian Civilization" (exhibition shows that the most fundamental aspects of ancient Egyptian civilization - architecture, hieroglyphic writing, a belief in the afterlife, and allegiance to a semi-divine king - can be traced to Egypt's Predynastic and Early Dynastic eras), through December 31.

University of Chicago, Joseph Regenstein Library, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, 773-702-8705: "Firmness, Commodity, and Delight: Architecture in Special Collections" (drawing on a wide range of rare books, manuscripts, archives, and graphic materials elucidating the history of architectural practice, the exhibit celebrates the opening of the new Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery and the completion of construction of the Joe and Rika Mansueto Library), Special Collections Research Center Exhibition Gallery, through July 29.

For complete information on events and exhibits of the Festival of the Architecture Book, see www.1511-2011.org.

Until a replacement exhibit editor is found, please send your listings to bmccamant@quarterfold.com, or call 312-329-1414 x 11.



Mansueto Library, University of Chicago
READING ROOM ON OPENING DAY (MAY 16); CRANE WITH BOOK BINS

Caxtonians Collect: Laurel Church

Interviewed by Robert
McCamant

Readers of the *Caxtonian* when Bob Cotner was editor are likely to be familiar with Laurel Church, since he frequently ran her poems in the newsletter.

A few times, she also contributed articles. In 1996, she wrote about the author, naturalist, and photographer Gene Stratton-Porter, and this editor's note appeared:

Caxtonian Laurel Church was born and reared on a family farm at Higgins Rd. and Cumberland Ave., just outside suburban Park Ridge, where a small truck-gardening community prospered until the late 1950s. Construction of the Kennedy Expressway cut a swath through all of the farms, displacing everything in its path; the house and brick barn her parents had built were replaced by the Cumberland cloverleaf. Dr. Church is chair of the Communication Program, Aurora University.

She remembers the origin of her interest in politics as being on the playground of her grade school. "Many of the other kids supported Truman in the Presidential race, but my family were Dewey supporters. I had to learn quickly how to stand up for my views."

From Park Ridge, Church moved to Champaign to attend the University of Illinois. She eventually earned a BA and MA in political science, and a PhD from the University of Illinois' Institute for Communication Research. But it wasn't a smooth path: a marriage and daughter intervened, and time was spent in DC during the Kennedy years. "I still generally just do what comes next," she says. "I am not the



Photograph by Michael Sawdey

Robert Cotner Speaks on Thoreau
At Caxton Club, Friday, April 24, 1998

By Laurel M. Church

William Wisniewski sat next to me yesterday at lunch, a thin man in a gray jacket, making no claims for attention, but pleased just the same; and we made attempts at private conversation even as the rest of the table discussed the books that got away and the lore of past bookstores with 25 cent first editions in original dust covers, we ate good seafood, and my new friend remembered for me his wartime stay in New Guinea, where fish were caught fresh each day.

An excellent talk with photographs from a lifetime of thoughtful looking held us all together ending in milkweed's promise each fall and into spring and new beginnings spin a web, joining us together thanking the speaker with questions, soft clicking of a camera marking time until we trail away to our next engagements.

One last question of my table partner about his days in New Guinea: Was it a good place to fight a war, I asked; Oh no, he said, I can recall a night at the sea when the moon was high and I wanted to escape that island leaping from moonbeam to moonbeam he said.

Thoreau would understand that, Bob, even as his words give us the grace to be his guests in the eye of the mirror.

sort of person who establishes a grand plan and carries it through." She speculates that it was the early years which formed her that way. Nonetheless, she has accomplished a great deal.

She was a female pioneer in the political science field. "When I was in graduate school there were no female faculty in political science, not at Illinois, not at other schools." Though she had no female role models, she remembers the University of Illinois fondly. "In those days there was no shortage of money, and the library would sometimes purchase whole collections to support the work of one graduate student or faculty member."

Along the way she became fascinated with the Left Book Club (a UK political publishing house on a membership model) and the Spanish Civil War and they have been a continuing collecting interest. "I have always loved England. Part of why I did my thesis on the communication theory of social movements is that I wanted to be able to go there, and to Spain, to study," she admits.

She did teaching while studying at the University of Illinois, but her first real job was as assistant professor of Communication at the University of Vermont. (It was a one year appointment, but they kept her six years.) From there she moved to Aurora University, where she founded the communication program, and where her second and current husband, Michael Sawdey, held a variety of faculty and administrative posts. Though she has retired from academic life, Aurora University lists her as a Poetry

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Caxton Club Scholarship Recipient 2011-2012

Martha Chiplis, Scholarship Chair

On Friday, May 13, the Caxton Club Scholarship Committee (Michael Thompson, Alice Schreyer, Kathryn Tutkus, and I) met at the Newberry Library to consider the applicants for the 2011-2012 Caxton Club Scholarship. After the committee looked over each of the entries and discussed each one in detail, it was determined that one of the applicants, Christopher Saclolo, was particularly deserving based on the quality and the appropriateness of his proposal to the Club's mission.

On behalf of the Scholarship Committee, I presented its choice to the Council the following Wednesday and it was approved. Saclolo is an MFA candidate at Columbia College Chicago Center for Book and Paper Arts.

Christopher's proposal is to create an artist's book titled "American Ambition," which will concern itself with the American fascination with pop music celebrity. The narrative of the book will focus on an admirer of a pop

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Walang Hiya/No Shame is Saclolo's most ambitious book to date.

LAUREL CHURCH, from page 11

Artist in Residence and professor emerita.

Aurora University was also where Church met Bob Cotner and was enticed into the Caxton Club. He had joined the Club in 1990, and recruited Church and Sawdey to join in 1995, the Centennial year.

The next year, poetry hit her life. She knows the day it happened: March 10, 1996, she wrote her first poem. "Of course, I'd been writing my whole life. But I never thought that

I had the musical or mathematical skills to be a poet. Actually, though, I'd been writing prose poems all along without realizing it." Once they started, the poems came thick and fast. She estimates that she wrote 2500 of them between 1996 and 2007, her most prolific period – while still fully engaged with teaching and administration. There were series of poems, about a single figure, or about British music hall performers in the thirties, WWII, or Vietnam – all topics she had been inter-

ested in all along.

Photography is another great interest, one she shares with Sawdey. Together they have accumulated a great many books (they're not sure exactly how many, but there could be 15,000) in a very large house in Aurora. "The books do weigh heavily on the question of whether we should try to move for our retirement," Sawdey says.

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