
Libraries, Books, and Culture

Ralph Lee Scott

The Library History Seminar VII heralding "Libraries, Books and Culture," sponsored by *The Journal of Library History*, the Graduate School of Library and Information Science of the University of Texas at Austin, and the School of Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, began on March 6, 1985, at the Savoy Restaurant in Chapel Hill. Some 160 library history scholars from the United States and Canada attended the sessions. The three-day seminar featured five plenary and twelve concurrent sessions—a total of twenty-eight papers. The topics explored the role and significance of books in the development of society. At the first plenary session, seminar participants (and Haynes McMullen) learned that the seminar would be a sort of oral festschrift in honor of McMullen, a distinguished library historian and professor of library science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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The concurrent opening session featured two themes, "The Early Use of Printed Books in Europe and America" and "The Formation of American Bibliothecal Institutions." Speakers were Michael Hackenberg of the University of Chicago, David Cressy of California State University at Long Beach, Jane A. Rosenberg of the Council on Library Resources, and Wayne A. Wiegand of the University of Kentucky. A special tour and reception of the National Humanities Center at Research Triangle Park followed.

In the evening, John P. Feather, lecturer at Loughborough University in England, gave a stimulating talk on "The Book in History and the History of the Book." His paper produced a number of thought-provoking questions from the audience. The consensus was that it is not possible to separate the book from history and vice versa.

The March 7 morning sessions addressed two themes: "Popular Libraries in Mid Nineteenth-Century North America" and "Western Influences in the South Asian World of Books." Speakers



Dr. Haynes McMullen, professor of Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, to whom the "Libraries, Books and Culture" seminar was dedicated, and Dean Edward G. Holley. (Photograph courtesy University of North Carolina School of Library Science.)

included Robert V. Williams of the University of South Carolina and Donald Clary Johnson of the College of William and Mary.

The seminar next turned to "Circulating and Rental Libraries in the Modern U.S." and "The Role of the Library in Two Cultural Contexts (Islam and Germany)." Speakers were Philip A. Metzger of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine; Philip B. Eppard, Harvard College Library; Hedi BenAicha, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; and Margaret F. Stieg, associate professor of library service at the University of Alabama.

In the afternoon at the third plenary session, David D. Hall of Boston University and the American Antiquarian Society raised a number of interesting questions in his paper "The History of the Book: New Questions? New Answers." His thesis continued and enlarged on that of John Feather. Later sessions in the afternoon covered "The Influences of Private Libraries" and "Books and Libraries in Twentieth-Century France and the Soviet Union." Speakers were Ralph J. Coffman, Boston College; Alan Gribben, University of Texas at Austin; Mary Niles Maack, University of Minnesota; and Marianna Tax Choldin, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The fourth plenary session in the evening, held in Gerrard Hall, featured another stimulating discussion, this time by Margaret Rossiter of Harvard University on "Women and Scientific Literature." Professor Rossiter gave an enlightening paper on the role of women in the professions (including librarianship) and the difficulties scholars have in tracing their role in the written record. Rossiter spoke of the long hours, low pay, and small recognition that was the lot of the bulk of women scientists. She made the point that many of these scientists were neither appreciated nor missed until after their deaths, when the contributions they had made became apparent.

The first of the morning sessions on March 8 covered "Religious Literature in Two Diverse Cultures" and "Women in Professional Leadership: The American South." Speakers featured were David L. Ferch, Mount Mercy College; Jonathan A. Lindsey, Baylor University; James V. Carmichael, Jr., the University of North Carolina; and Anne Firor Scott, Duke University.

The final concurrent sessions concerned "Research in Reading: Two Approaches" and "Reports of Current Library Historiography Abroad." Larry E. Sullivan of the Herbert H. Lehman College of the City University of New York, Robert Sidney Martin of Louisiana State University, Peter F. McNally of McGill University, and Paul Kaegbein of the Univer-

sity of Cologne were the featured speakers.

The seminar formally closed with another outstanding meal by the Savoy Restaurant. The final plenary session paper was delivered at the Savoy, by David Kaser of Indiana University. He spoke on "The American Academic Library Building Enters Its Second Phase, 1870-1890." After lunch, participants selected from tours of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University libraries. Seminar members departed, awaiting eagerly the presentation of further stimulating papers at the Library History Seminar VIII, to be held five years hence.

Henderson Friends Publish Booklet

The Friends of the Henderson County Public Library have published a booklet for library volunteers, detailing the jobs they can perform in libraries. The particular duties of some twenty-four positions have been described after consultation with the professional librarians concerned and with their approval.

The booklet is available for \$3 prepaid. Send your check to the Secretary of the Friends, Henderson County Public Library, 302 N. Washington Street, Hendersonville, NC 28739.

