BIBLIOGRAPHY

D. W. Krummel


1. Bibliography in General

2. The History of Bibliography
   a. The Origins of Bibliography. The Rise of
3. The World of Bibliographies
   a. National Imprint Lists: Retrospective
4. Bibliographical Practice
5. Physical Bibliography
   a. Analytical Bibliography. Descriptive
6. Historical Bibliography

1. BIBLIOGRAPHY IN GENERAL

Bibliography cites and studies books. The citing and compiling of citations into lists (i.e., bibliographies) are seen as reference (or enumerative, or systematic) bibliography, the studies of printed artifacts as physical bibliography. These activities should be seen as fitting together.

Books, narrowly defined, are monographs printed on paper. There are millions of them, their numbers are growing, and they are much used. Books may also be defined broadly, to include other forms of written records: pamphlets, journals and their contents, maps, music, manuscripts, pictures, recordings, movies, texts of all kinds, tangible objects, online, or conceptual. Books are physical objects that exist because of their ideas.

They are content as well as form, messages as well as media. The content can significantly determine the makeup and appearance of the object that readers are aware of. In turn, the object affects the way readers view the content. Bibliography deals with the content by citing and studying the physical sources. By specifying the physical evidence it locates the content; by suggesting the context of the evidence it reflects on the authority of the content.

Bibliography addresses the needs of readers by both describing and by prescribing. (Patrick Wilson’s Two Kinds of Power explores the distinction.) Readers, however, enjoy the freedom to use the citations as they please, selecting what they want, ignoring what they think they do not need, and reading into their selections whatever they wish. Bibliographical work is still validated by responsible citation and study of the written record, as informed by respect for readers and their intellectual freedom. The written record is implicitly historical in that it deals with writings that already exist; it is also political in that it is designed for future use by readers.

Bibliographical citations are also transmitted informally and implicitly. They are passed on orally: indeed, personal communication is probably the most powerful but also the least controllable and measurable medium of bibliography. The bedrock, however, is the citation, on paper or online, ideally formulated to be concise but sufficient, and based in physical evidence.

2. THE HISTORY OF BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE ORIGINS OF BIBLIOGRAPHY

The story of bibliography begins not in the West with Gutenberg’s invention of printing around 1450. From the ancient Near East, three millennia earlier, archival inventories survive on cuneiform tablets. Early Egyptian lists are known about as well. The first famous bibliography is the Pinakes (“tablets”), conceived in the fourth century B.C.E. at the great library at Alexandria, which may have included the library of Aristotle, the mentor of Alexander the Great. Its contents were thought of less as an archive than as literature, and thus they were organized by the names of authors. The tablets disappeared when the library was destroyed, but later
If books were to circulate and flourish commercially, more was needed than word-of-mouth promotion. As the output of the press grew, the bibliographical record expanded, both in numbers and in kinds, for use by readers and purchasers, authors and printers, merchants and rulers. The lists generally fall into four bibliographical genres: commercial booktrade lists (booktrade bibliographies, publishers’ and booksellers’ catalogues), topical lists (subject bibliographies), advisory lists (bibliographies of prohibited or recommended writings, whether of political, religious, or social grounds), and catalogues of collections. The four categories overlap, perhaps not always in the minds of their original compilers or in the special interests of their sponsors, but as they were used in their day and over the course of history.

**Commercial Lists.** The very first printed list (ca.1469) was a broadside issued by Peter Schoeffer, Gutenberg’s successor, who sensed the value of listing the titles he had printed. As the book trade emerged, titles were promoted through catalogues. Beginning in 1564, citations of the titles from many publishers, exhibited at the semi-annual Easter and Michelmas book fairs in Leipzig and Frankfurt, were collected and issued in lists known as Messkataloge. In time these trade lists were to expand to become current national bibliographies of German books. The Messkataloge were succeeded by several extensive periodical lists: Wilhelm Heinsius’s Allgemeines Bücher-Lexikon (1812-94), Christian Gottlob Kayser’s Vollständiges Bücher-Lexikon (1834-1912), Hinrichs’ Katalog (1857-1913), and others leading up to today’s Deutsche Nationalbibliographie (begun 1921).

Trade lists were needed because the German book trade, like the country itself, was decentralized: publishers needed to share their markets. In other countries, where the trade was centered in one city (like Paris or London), current lists emerged later, but still on the initiative of the booktrade. Most lists were not so much national as cultural resources: in a time when Latin was giving way to local vernaculars, the language of potential purchasers was primary. The Netherlands book trade lists (Johannes van Abkoude’s Naamregister van de bekendste en meest ungebruik zynde Nederduutsche boeken, begun in 1788, later replaced Brinkman’s Cumulatieve catalogus van boeken) have enjoyed an especially long life. In Great Britain, no continuing lists date from the eighteenth century. Only in the mid-nineteenth were two competing firms to emerge to share the market:
Samson & Low (Publisher’s Circular and Publisher and Bookseller, begun in 1837) and Whitaker (The Bookseller and Current Literature, begun in 1858). The Norwegian Norsk bogførgteselse dates from 1848, the Danish Dansk bogførgteselse from 1851, the Swedish Svensk bokhandels-tidning from 1863. For the Russian booktrade, the St. Petersburs firm of A. F. Bazunov prepared a Sistematicheskii katalog beginning in 1869. A Bibliographie de Belgique was begun in 1875, with extensive overlap with the Brinkman lists from the Netherlands, since Flemish publishers in both countries shared their market. In the United States, the major early trade lists were the work of Orville A. Roobach (Bibliotheca americana, 1852-61) and James Kelly (American Catalogue of Books, 1866-71). A continuing succession of American trade lists began with Frederick Leypoldt (later R.R. Bowker; American Catalogue of Books, begun 1876) and H.W. Wilson (United States Catalog; with Cumulative Book Index, begun 1898).

Over time, governments replaced the booktrade is sponsoring the national bibliography. The readership was now a civil polity rather than the booktrade’s customers. The most famous example was the Bibliographie de la France (begun in 1811), long encumbered by the arbitrary decisions of functioning bureaucracies. Booksellers and readers thus often preferred booktrade lists like Otto Lorenz’s Catalogue général de la librairie française (1867-1945), or later lists known as Biblio (now subsumed in a separate section of the Bibliographie nationale française). Other governments assumed responsibility for listings their country’s publishing output, if often selectively. The most spectacular saga of a national bibliography is that of the Russian Knizhnaia Letopis, begun in 1907 and issued continuously with few delays through a century of revolutions, invasions, and other tortuous events.

Topical Lists. Other early printed subject bibliographies cover medicine (Symphorien Champier’s Index, 1506), law (Giovanni Nevizzano’s Inventarium, 1522), botany (Otto Brunfels’ Herbarum, 1530), and many other subjects. These are landmarks in the history of the disciplines, but mostly for the intellectually curious. They deal with concepts and theories; the skills were to be learned not by reading books but through instruction and apprenticeship under master practitioners. The age of modern subject bibliography began with eighteenth-century academic scholarship.

The most common subject lists were the early bibliographical Acta, lists in the spirit of St. Jerome that record the good deeds, not of the apostles of the church but of the apostles of learning, but still for critical study and veneration. The order was by authors’ names, listed alphabetically or occasionally chronologically, rather than by subject subdivisions. Notable early lists are devoted to religious orders, beginning with Johannes Trithemius’s Carmelitana bibliotheca (1493). Later major works include Lucas Wadding’s Franciscan Scriptores ordinis minorvm (1650) and Jacques Quéti’s Dominican Scriptores ordinis praedicatorum recensiti (1719-21), each of them later revised. The greatest of the genre is Augustin and Alois de Backer’s vast Bibliothèque des écrivains de la Compagnie de Jésus (1835-61, later revised by Carlos Sommervogel), still used to locate the early writings on the expansion of European settlement around the world from the vantage of the Jesuit missionaries who worked to convert the indigenous populations to Christianity.

Several early Acta celebrate the emerging national literatures. The compilers defined the criteria for inclusion; here again, the dividing lines were linguistic more often than political, since many national boundaries were not yet fixed. John Bale’s Illustrium maioris Britanniae scriptorum (1548), for instance, follows a chronology that begins with the Biblical Seth (!) and ends up with Bale himself. Italian literature is covered in La libraría (1550) and La seconda libreria (1551), by Anton Francesco Doni, with the brief entries and quirky coverage that one would expect of this famously erratic poet. French bibliography begins with the Premier volume de la Bibliothèque of François Grudé de la Croix du Maine (1584) and its competitor, La Bibliothèque of Antoine du Verdier (1585). Each has titles the other missed. Other early Acta celebrate the hero-authors of regions and cities, among them Michele Poccianti’s Catalogus scriptorum florentinorum (1589) for Florence, Leone Allacci’s Apes Urbanae for Rome (1633), Louis Jacob de Saint Charles’ Bibliographia Parisina (1643, complemented by a Bibliographia gallica, 1651, for the rest of France), and for Oxford, Anthony à Wood’s Athenae Oxoniensis (1691-92ff.).

Bibliographies before the nineteenth-century were rarely devoted to individual authors, the famous exception being Erasmus’s autobibliography at the end of his 1523 Lucubrationum, a forerunner of the lists that academics today prepare in applying for grants and promotion.
Lists of Recommended and Forbidden Books. The flood of printing in general, but Reformation and later the Counter-Reformation religious tracts in particular, called for bibliographies of opposite kinds. Books recommended for the faithful have their model in the Bibliotheca selecta (1574) of the learned Jesuit Antonio Possevino (1534-1611). Faithful readers are not always easy to separate from eager of busy readers, whose needs were served by a vast array of recommended books, advisory and critical reading lists, and bibliographical “epitomes.” The genre merges with prose works like Helen Haines Living with Books (1935, 1950), long a mainstay of library school classes in book selection. All such works beg the criteria for inclusion and exclusion and ultimately the cause of intellectual freedom: readers are grateful for guidance, but they need to ask where it is coming from. The classic framing of the problem is in Lester Asheim’s two famous essays, “Not Censorship but Selection,” Wilson Library Bulletin, 28 (1953), 63-67, and “Selection and Censorship: A Reappraisal,” ibid, 58 (1983), 180-84.

More famous are the bibliographies of the opposite kind: ones that ban books. The famous example is the Index librorum prohibitorum of the Roman Catholic Church, begun in 1564, as fearful in its consequences as it was absurd in its execution. The set went through many editions before it was finally abolished in 1966. Listing the forbidden fruit in bibliographical citations was not a wise decision: forbidden fruit is always tastier. Political censors, in contrast, rarely publicized the apostates, preferring instead to destroy the copies and often their authors. This has left modern bibliographers with the hunt for Marprelate tracts and Mazarinades, pamphlets of the English Civil War and the American and French Revolution, booklets, diatribes, and broadsides, all of it crucial historical evidence for the study of the intellectual roots of political, social, and cultural change. The bibliography of pornography is still different. Sexually explicit material had been collected avidly, less by institutions than by a small and secretive world of private collectors, in which written citations are often privileged; and tastes in erotica have often been subjectively redefined. The genres of literature suppressed on sexual, social, political, and religious grounds is surveyed in the Banned Books series (1998; new eds., 2006).

Library Catalogues. The genre begins with the Catalogus Graecorum librorum (1575), covering 126 Greek manuscripts in the city library of Augsburg. The manuscripts had been presented to the city by the patrician Johann Jakob Fugger, and Hieronymus Wolf, his librarian, had prepared this catalogue. A difference between public and private libraries then was irrelevant. Other notable early library catalogues include the Eclloga Oxonio-Cantabriensis (1600), a union list of the manuscripts in Oxford and Cambridge libraries compiled by Thomas James, who also prepared the first catalogue of the Bodleian library (1605). In the third Bodleian catalogue (1674), the librarian, Thomas Hyde, first suggested the need for consistency, anticipating the need for cataloguing codes.

Over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many libraries published catalogues of their holdings. Among the great early American catalogues were those of the Astor Library in New York (1886-88), and Charles Ammi Cutter’s for the Boston Athenaeum (1874-82). Also much respected are the catalogues of the two greatest libraries of Europe, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Catalogue général, 1900-81), and the British Museum in London (1900-05 and earlier, 1931-54, and 1968-79, superseded by the British Library General Catalogue of Printed Books to 1975, 1979-87). The Library of Congress complemented them with its Catalog of Books Represented by . . . Printed Cards (1942-46).

Universal Bibliography. The dream of one single bibliography, vast, comprehensive, and sufficient, is timeless. The first printed bibliography, Johann Trithemius’s Liber de scriptoribus ecclesiasticis (1494), actually covers more than the writings of ecclesiastics: it nobly assumes nothing less than that all writings are the work of God, a vision of the wondrous totality of the intellectual universe. In truth, Trithemius’s work is based mostly on the books in his monastery library at Sponheim. His work is still modest alongside Conrad Gessner’s Bibliotheca universalis (1545-55). Trithemius (1452-1516) was a learned scholar who looked inward (his best known other work is in cryptography), Gessner (1516-1565) was a brilliant polymath who looked outward to new fields involving the world at large, from natural history and geology to linguistics (in all of which fields he was historically important). Gessner’s curiosity led him to end his work with a fourth volume, the famous “pandects,” which provided subject access to the earlier volumes. Inevitably, his successors were lesser minds, who
created selective abridgements of his work with shortened citations. Among Gessner’s ambitious but sad successors is Francesco Marucelli (1625-1703), who copied out 111 volumes of citations to create his Mare magnum, a great bibliographical ocean still preserved but largely inaccessible in his Bibliotheca Marucelliana in Florence. Several other works have a national spin in their titles, although their purpose was not to record the nation’s publications but to cite writings that were part of the national heritage, published anywhere: Christophorus Hendreich’s Pandectae Branden burgicae (1699; only A-B were completed) and Robert Watt’s Bibliotheca Britannica (1824) come to mind. In the twentieth century the world visions have been revived and begun to be implemented in the name of Universal Bibliographical Control.

THREE LATER DEVELOPMENTS.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, three innovations were to alter the world of bibliography profoundly: cataloguing codes for libraries, serial lists of current writings, and the formal study of books as physical objects. All had precedents in earlier periods. All were justified by emerging readerships in the new democratic societies; by a burgeoning book production made possible because of the readers as well as the Industrial Revolution; and by a proliferation of subject specialties that resulted from and in turn fostered to the new agenda of academic scholarship.

Library Cataloguing Codes. As libraries were established—in particular the publicly financed ones beginning in the nineteenth century, where costs needed to be measured—rules and uniform citation practices began to be developed. The goal was to provide for sharing bibliographical citation practices, and in time citations themselves, based on practices of compiling lists. Compilers of bibliographies were in turn influenced by cataloguing codes, whose citations were easy to adapt and whose arbitrary practices saved the compilers many decisions.

The difference between cataloguing and bibliography has been often proposed and continuously redefined over the years, and a firm relationship probably should not be fixed. The two obviously have much in common, not only in the material they describe but often also in the ways they describe it. They are still different in their objectives. Cataloguing describes copies for all readers, bibliographies cover delimited literatures and serve the needs of identified audiences of readers. Many writings have long fallen outside the scope of cataloguing practices—periodical articles and many other analytics among them—and often particular communities of readers make best use of citations formulated with the familiar terms they use and in the structures they know. Ideally, cataloguing data are based on autopsy of copies, but the content is frequently verified in bibliographies. Bibliographers too are expected to have examined the copies they cite, but today they are greatly helped by the way catalogues provide not only locations but also citations to adapt.

Serial Bibliographies of New Writings. Scholarly journals arose with the learned societies of the late seventeenth century, along with a few short-lived bibliographies. The Acta were still sufficient, especially with supplements. One of the most famous of them, Christian Gottlieb Jöcher’s Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexikon (1750-51), for instance, had a supplement as late as 1897. A changing academia led to lists like Jeremias Reuss’s Repertorium commendationum a societatibus litterariis editarum (1801-21). Periodicals of all kinds called for indexing, but the indexes were particularly important to the proliferating fields of scholarship. Slowly the bibliographical focus gives way to subject classification, in the interests of providing a current awareness service to the growing scientific communities. Detailed indexes were needed in fields that were evolving, and occasional annotation of the entries in time led to today’s abstracting services.


Physical Bibliography. The study of books as physical objects has its roots in the work of the early printers and book craftsmen, who asked how they could make their books more attractive and easier to produce. Discerning collectors, antiquarian dealers, librarians, and inquisitive readers in time came to ask the same questions, particularly over the course of the nineteenth century. A crucial figure was the Cambridge University librarian Henry Bradshaw (1831-1886), who proposed a “natural history method” for studying the changing output of the early printers and rationalized the
collation provides the basis of descriptive bibliography. The founding of bibliographical societies around the turn of the century served to establish the new field, thanks in part to their journals and other publications. [Their scholarship is discussed in section 5. below.]

3. THE WORLD OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Today’s wealth of enumerative bibliographies ranges from separate monographs in book form, often in multi-volume sets, to pamphlets, articles, and handouts. Many lists are also now being posted online, where they can be easily updated, but also silently reconceived, renamed, or even deleted.

NATIONAL IMPRINT BIBLIOGRAPHIES: RETROSPECTIVE

Most retrospective lists are censuses of known copies, but a few cite unrecorded the titles of works now lost. The bibliographies fit along an axis of place (whether defined by geographical borders, by language, or by the effective market for the book trade) and time (from the earliest imprints to the present). The genres and their contexts are detailed in Friedrich Domay’s Bibliographie der nationalen Bibliographien (1987).

United States. Annals for the Colonial and early Federal years are recorded in Charles Evans’s American Bibliography (1903-59) and extended by Ralph R. Shaw and Richard H. Shoemaker in American Bibliography (1958-63) and the Checklist of American Imprints, so far through 1846 (1964- ). The online North American Imprints Project will subsume the extant entries, minus Evans’ chronicle of the press. The Bibliography of American Imprints to 1901 (1993) is particularly strong for the early years, thanks to recent cataloguing at the American Antiquarian Society.

Great Britain. The landmarks are the Short-Title Catalogue . . . , 1475-1640 (1926; 2nd ed., 1976-91, commonly called either “STC” or “Pollard and Redgrave,” for the guiding spirits behind the 1926 ed.), and Donald M. Wing’s Short-Title Catalogue of Books . . . , 1641-1700 (1945-51; 2nd ed., 1972-98). These are now incorporated into the online English Short-Title Catalogue, which also subsumes the Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue, an ambitious online descriptive bibliography project. The Nineteenth-Century Short-Title Catalogue (1984- ), in contrast, covers a considerably larger literature mostly by merging the card catalogues of several major British scholarly libraries. For the general literature of the later years and up to the highly selective British National Bibliography in 1950, booktrade lists are needed, along with the British Museum and other library catalogues. For regional writings, Harry G. Aldis’s List of Books printed in Scotland before 1700 (1916, 1970) has brief citations, while Eiluned Rees’s Librae Walliae (1987) cites Welsh books, 1546-1820, in fine detail.

Romance-Language Nations. No single French list covers the years before the Bibliographie de la France (1811- ) and its booktrade counterparts. Probably the most useful is still Alexandre Gionarica’s Bibliographie de la littérature française du 16. [-17., -18.] siècle (1959-69). Italy similarly has no single sources, although the sixteenth century is being covered by the online “EDIT16” (Censimento nazionale delle edizioni italiane del XVI secolo), while the nineteenth is the basis for CLIO: Catalogo dei libri italiani dell’Ottocento (1991- ). For these and other areas, the British Museum—long seen as having the world’s second-best collection of everything—prepared short-title catalogues for its holdings. That for France, 1470-1600, was the work of Henry Thomas (1924, 1986), that for Italy the work of A. F. Johnson and others (1958), extended in Dennis E. Rhodes’s Short-Title Catalogue of Seventeenth-Century Italian Books (1986).

Sketchy book-trade bibliographies cover Spain and Portugal, often their New World colonies. The basic historical work is Antonio Palau y Dulce’s vast and conspicuously stenographic Manual del librero hispano-americano (1948-77). The heroic bibliographer of Latin America is José Toribio Medina. His Biblioteca hispano-americana (1898-1907) is useful, but the most impressive of his many works is the eight-volume La imprenta in Mexico, 1539-1821 (1908-12; the first volume, based on earlier work by Joaquín García Icazbalceta, was revised, 1954, 1981). Medina also compiled lists for many other countries. His work is complemented by the work of other historical bibliographers, notably covering Cuba (Carlos Manuel Trelles y Govín, 1902-26) and Haiti (Max Bissainte, 1951, 1973). There are also British Museum short-title catalogues by Henry Thomas, of Spanish (1921), and Portuguese books (1926) with a 2nd ed., by Dennis E. Rhodes (1989, some with revised editions).

Germany and Adjacent Areas. The Leipzig and Frankfurt booktrade lists extended to cover much of the output of the German-speaking world, i.e.,
Austria, parts of Switzerland and of what now are many other central European nations. The two enormous “GV” sets (Gesamterverzeichnis der deutschsprachigen Schrifttums, 1700-1910 and 1911-65) interfile the entries from the earlier lists of Heinsius, Kayser, Hinrichs, their successors, and supplements. The earlier periods are covered in the “VD” series: the Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts (1983) and the online Verzeichnis . . . des XVII. Jahrhunderts. A. F. Johnson listed the British Museum’s German books, 1455 to 1600 (1962); David A. Paisey prepared a supplement (1990), and a list for the years 1601-1700 (1994).

For the Low Countries, Wouter Nijhoff & M. E. Kronenberg’s Nederlandsche bibliographie (1923-61) covers the years 1500-1540. Later holdings in Belgian libraries are listed in Elly Cockx-Indestège and Geneviève Glorieux, Belgica typographica, 1541-1600 (1968). A. F. Johnson and Victor Scholderer prepared a British Museum Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in the Netherlands and of Dutch and Flemish Books Printed in Other Countries from 1470 to 1600 (1965), which was extended to 1620 by Anna E. C. Simoni (1990).

For Swedish imprints, Isak Collijn’s Sveriges bibliografi covers the years to 1600 (1927-38) and later (1942-46), which Rolf du Rietz is extending in Swedish Imprints, 1731-1833 (1977-). For Denmark, Christian Walther Bruun’s Bibliotheca danica, 1482 til 1830 (1877-1931), was extended to cover the years 1831-40 by H. Ehrencron-Müller (1943-48). For Norway, Hjalmar Pettersen’s Bibliotheca norvegica (1899-1924) covers the years 1643-1813.

Other Nations. The most heroic saga in all of bibliography is probably that of several generations of the family of Estreicher, librarians at the Jagiellonska Library in Krakow, who since 1872 have been compiling the Bibliografia polska, covering imprints up to 1900. Other notable lists from Eastern Europe include the lovely Czech torso of a Knihopis ceskych a slovenskych tisku (1925-48); Ioan Bianu’s Bibliografia romanescas veche 1508-1830 (1903-36); and the online Hungarian Magyar Nemzeti Bibliográfiá data bases, covering early imprints from what is now Hungary as well as early editions in the Hungarian language printed elsewhere.

Other notable retrospective national lists include John A. Ferguson’s Bibliography of Australia, 1784-1900 (1941-69), Austin Bagnall’s New Zealand National Bibliography to the Year 1960 (1970), Sidney Mendelssohn’s older South African Bibliography (1910), and Marie Tremaine’s Bibliography of Canadian Imprints, 1751-1800 (1952, with a supplement by Sandra Alston and Patricia Lockhard Fleming, 1999), as well as Fleming’s superb Upper Canada Imprints, 1801-1820 (1988) and Atlantic Canadian Imprints, 1801-1840 (both 1991).

NATIONAL IMPRINT BIBLIOGRAPHIES: CURRENT

Ideally these should extend the retrospective lists. Usually, however, there are chronological gaps and different criteria for inclusion, the exception being the Bibliographie Nationale Français, a direct successor to the Bibliographie de la France. The British National Bibliography (begun 1950), one of the most successful recent national bibliographies, was a totally new project. It was the model for Canadiana (also begun 1950), the Australian National Bibliography (begun 1961), and the New Zealand National Bibliography (begun 1967)—all government supported. In Germany, the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie was established in Leipzig in 1921 as successor to national and trade lists that date back to the Messskataloge, but with many changes. During the Iron Curtain era, a Deutsche Bibliographie was issued out of Frankfurt in the West. National reunification led to a Deutsche Nationalbibliographie based on cooperative efforts.

The mid-twentieth century also saw official national bibliographies set up in Eastern Europe, serving the cause of ideological control along with the promotion of books and reading. The quality varied from the barely competent to the superb. It is not clear how much these lists are being weakened by a less rigid enforcement of copyright deposit laws now that publishing is no longer managed by the state. In most Third World countries, current national bibliographies have been meager, fostered and sustained mostly by a weak local book trade working with a national library and with encouragement from UNESCO and friends abroad. For several decades beginning in the 1960s, the American Libraries Book Procurement Center at the Library of Congress managed a program for acquisitions of books from countries with counterpart currencies (PL-480), and cataloguing them in an Accessions List series. Several countries with well developed booktrades have strong national bibliographies that use their national scripts, the Japanese Nihon Zenkoku shoshi being a good example. Recent
titles are cited in Barbara L. Bell’s *Annotated Guide to Current National Bibliographies* (1998). For the latest developments, the invaluable sources now are the *Reference Resources Europe* works maintained by the Italian publisher Casalini, annually in print (REA, 1995–) and online (REO).

The United States has no national bibliography, aside from the Bowker and Wilson trade lists. It is generally assumed that there is very little of importance that is not in today’s online union catalogues. New registrations at the Copyright Office in the Library of Congress have been listed in print since 1891. The data are often useful in bibliographical work, but the *Catalog of Copyright Entries* is often not well organized for use and hard to call a national bibliography. In 1948 the Bowker Co. began issuing *Books in Print* (a French counterpart, *Les Livres disponibles*, began in 1977, the German *Verzeichnis lieferbarer Bücher* in 1978), now accessible online.

**CURRENT ONLINE SUBJECT BIBLIOGRAPHIES**

Vast in their size and timely in their service to research, most current subject bibliographies are now online. (Constructed not as a sequence of entries (alphabetical, chronological, or classified) with indexes, the online sources are accessible through search terms, such as can be regularly updated to reflect new concepts and relationships. Some lists give entries only, others include abstracts. Many of the most respected of them grew out of sources that began in print, among them the MEDLINE/PubMed database (successor to the *Index medicus*, begun in 1879), WilsonWeb Library (incorporating many of the H.W. Wilson Co. library lists, including the *Readers Guide to Periodical Literature* (begun in 1905), *Chemical Abstracts* (begun in 1907), the Modern Language Association’s *Annual Bibliography* (growing out of the American Bibliography, begun in 1921), *Biological Abstracts* (begun in 1926), and the *International Bibliography of the Social Sciences* (begun in 1951).

The proliferating world of online bibliography is expanding in many imaginative directions. Services like *The Web of Science* (begun in 1961 as the *Science Citation Index*, later expanded to cover writings in the social sciences, arts, and humanities) document the spread of learning in footnotes and references. Vendors often produce several services, some of which they have taken over from earlier printed sources, others of which they have originated. *America: History and Life* has *Historical Abstracts* as a counterpart; in Lexis/Nexis, the former focuses on legal research, the latter on the news media. Some provide full texts, which still require bibliographical entries for access, others are built around search-term access in ways that imply that bibliographical authority is irrelevant.

Printed bibliographies have been either subsidized or justified by likely purchasers. Most current online subject bibliographies are rather different: as commercial businesses, they need to follow different economic rules as they negotiate operational decisions that will reconcile the demands of investors with the needs of their identified readers.

**OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHIES.**

Countless other lists cover narrowly defined subject areas, whose readers come to know their strengths and weaknesses. The bibliographies describe the literatures of subject areas large and small, of academic disciplines, and of topics within and between the disciplines and subject areas, as qualified by historical periods, geographical areas, and perspectives. They serve readers at all levels, from children and amateurs to specialized scholars, and they include citations in many languages. Often their entries are classified in categories that reflect the structures of their readers’ fields of interest, annotations address the specific agenda of the discipline. Lists may also include periodical articles and sections of larger works, chapters of books, essays in anthologies, poems and songs in collections, or individual maps in atlases—what bibliographers call “analytics” and which are outside the purview of library cataloguing. Their scope is limited to the written record as it exists when the list is being compiled: future titles need to go into a supplement or a later edition. Many lists are now published online, although the linear layout is still usually that of the printed page. Among the printed and online genres are the following:

**Bibliographical Guides.** Bibliographies of bibliographies—lists that cite the lists that cite the sources—are of limited but occasional usefulness. The most extensive, now four decades old, is Theodore Besterman’s *World Bibliography of Bibliographies* (4th ed., 1965-66). It cites over 100,000 titles, out of a likely several million today. It is limited to lists published separately (in other words, bibliographies at the end of or as parts of other works are excluded). It can be very useful, particularly for its juxtapositions of lists that cover the same general topic but also for its totals of the
number of entries cited in each list; but there is general consensus that
bibliographies of bibliography are rarely a first place to look. Besterman
himself devised his subject headings. They usually work, occasionally they
are idiosyncratic, even counterintuitive. Alice E. Toomey’s supplement, A
World Bibliography of Bibliographies, 1964-1974: A List of Works
Represented by Library of Congress Printed Catalog Cards (1977), is
arranged under Library of Congress subject headings, which are often no
less counterintuitive. Besterman’s precursors are discussed in Archer
Taylor’s A History of Bibliographies of Bibliography (1955). One step
beyond such lists is Aksel G. S. Josephson’s Bibliographies of Bibliographies
Chronologically Arranged (1901, with supplements to 1913). No successor
to any of these works has ever appeared. Considering the magnitude of the
task—the complexity of the genres, the sheer number of titles—the
prospects of successors seem slim.

Bibliographical guidance is often easier to dig out of selective guides to
reference sources. Most notably of these has been in the United States the
Guide to Reference Books (11 eds., 1902-96, long the work of a notable
lineage of American reference librarians: Alice Bertha Kroeger, Isadore
Gilbert Mudge, Constance Winchell, Eugene Sheehy, and Robert Balay;
now online as the A.L.A. Guide to Reference). Foreign counterparts include,
eds, under different titles); for Germany, either Georg Schneider’s
Handbuch der Bibliographie (1923; latest ed., 2005) or Wilhelm Totok and
Rolf Weitzel, Handbuch der bibliographischen Nachschlagewerke (1954
and later eds.); and for France, Louise-Noëlle Malclès’s ancient but
venerated Les sources du travail bibliographique (1950-58). A selection of
the most important new reference sources, many bibliographies among
them, appears annually in College and Research Libraries, as well as in
reviewing media like the American Reference Books Annual (1970, and as
ARBAonline); also in the H.W. Wilson Bibliographical Index (1937-, now
online at Bibliographical Index Plus).

**Subject Lists, Monographic and Analytic.** These range from brief check-
lists, often of ephemeral interest—their very existence is often best known
by informal communication among specialists—over to monuments of
scholarship like the multi-volume Clarendon Press Bibliography of British
History (1928-70), the New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature
(1969-77), along with T. H. Howard-Hill’s British Literary Bibliography
series (1966—) to single out a few major works. Several smaller lists serve
also as basic guides to specialist reference librarians and as textbooks in
historical methods courses for graduate students. Notable examples include
the Harvard Guide to American History (Oscar Handlin, later Frank Freidel;
1954 and later eds.), and Vincent Duckles’s Music Reference and Research
Nathan Work’s Bibliography of the Negro in America and Africa (1928),
maps out a literature that supports a richly expanding field of scholarship.

Among scholarly descriptive bibliographies, two landmarks are devoted to
literary genres: W. W. Greg’s Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to
the Restoration (1939-59) and David F. Foxon’s English Verse, 1901-1750
(1975). The output of historically significant presses is cited and discussed
by Horace Hart (Oxford University Press, 1900, extended by Harry Carter,
1975), Philip Gaskell (John Baskerville, 1959; the Foulis Press, 1964), D. F.
McKenzie (the early Cambridge Press, 1966), C. William Miller (Benjamin
Franklin, 1974), William S. Peterson (Kelmscott Press, 1984), and Marcella
Genz (Ergagny Press, 2004).

**Bio-Bibliography.** Collected bio-bibliographies no longer predominate as
in the days of the Acta, although several are still today among the mainstays
of the bibliographical reference shelf. Many of the most respected of them
cover national literatures. One thinks of Karl Goeddeke’s Grundrisz zur
Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung aus den Quellen for Germany (1859,
re-issued and extended; new ed. in progress); the Maurist Histoire littéraire
de la France (1733ff.), first of many French guides; Thomas Ersew’s
Almindelig forfatter-lexicon (1843-53) for Denmark, Jens Halvorsen’s Norsk
Forfatter-Lexikon, 1814-1880 (1885-1908), succeeded by Holger
Ehrencron-Müller’s Forfatterlexikon omfattende Danmark, Norge og Island
indtil 1814 (1924-35) for Norway, Bengt Ahlén’s Svenskt författarlexikon
(1942) for Sweden, and Innocencio Francisco da Silva’s Diccionario
bibliographico portuguez (1858-1923)—the latter notable for its filing of
entries by the author’s first name (those who work extensively with
Portuguese surnames will understand). Two other sets of Acta are mainstays
of the reference shelf in fields where creativity is basic: Robert Eitner’s
Quellenlexikon (1900-04), with citations of manuscripts printed editions of
composers, and Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, Allgemeine Lexikon der
For artists and their work.

Bibliographies devoted to one person emerged only over the last century, and are essentially of two kinds. Those devoted to writings about the person tend to have short entries, and are essentially of biographical interest. Writings by the person range from brief checklists, to superbly detailed descriptive bibliographies that are essential to textual scholarship. Among the many notable examples of the latter are those on Cotton Mather and his family (Thomas J. Holmes, 1931-40), on Samuel Johnson (J. D. Fleeman and James McLaverty, 2000), on several eighteenth century authors by Allen Hazen, nineteenth century American authors by Joel Myerson, on twentieth-century authors by Donald Gallup and Matthew J. Bruccoli, and others by William B. Todd.

Commercial Lists. Trade lists have largely been subsumed in national bibliographies, although publishers still issue lists to promote their titles. Many antiquarian booksellers now cite their offerings on the Internet, with citations are often models of descriptive bibliography and annotations (i.e., “blurs”) of impressive historical scholarship. The laborious efforts are justified in the interests of finding customers, although scholars in general often learn to benefit from the record of the bibliographical facts and the lore behind the materials.

Library Publications. Library catalogues often function as bibliographies, even if their main goal is to organize and find items in the collection. Most library catalogues are now in union catalogues, and merged on the Internet in the interest of document delivery. Most libraries also prepare finding aids (“pathfinders”) for work in the collections, selective bibliographies of a sort organized with a view to proposing search strategies for their readers. Exhibition catalogues, as they call attention to valuable or important works in the collections, often function as bibliographies. They work like dealers’ catalogues in that the historical details in their annotations serve not to entice purchasers so much as to delight visitors.

Clearly the most important of all bibliographies today are the library union catalogues. The great National Union Catalog, pre-1956 Imprints (1968-80, known either as “NUC” or often for the name of its publisher, Mansell), in 685 volumes with a 69-volume supplement, grew out of the Library of Congress Catalog of Printed Books (1942-46), in 167 volumes, with later supplements. It is updated but so far not entirely duplicated in the WorldCat bibliographic database, maintained by OCLC (the Online Computer Library Center), to which over 60,000 member libraries contribute. Its over 88 million records cover books, serials, sound recordings, musical scores, maps, visual materials, mixed materials and computer files. Recently OCLC subsumed RLIN (the Research Library Information Network, maintained by the Research Library Group; not all RLIN bibliographical records are in WorldCat as of this writing, however). OCLC also mains close contact with the union catalogues in other countries and often records their holdings.

Incunabula. Books from Gutenberg’s day to 1501 (the “cradle” of printing) make up a much smaller but still very special bibliographical world of their own. The books are scarce, most of them large and beautiful. They testify to a world much different from ours today, so as to call for expertise of three kinds. The content is expressed either in a Latin that is usually corrupt or in vernaculars that were just beginning to be formed. The physical books call for a deep knowledge of analytical bibliography, particularly of type forms, since most printers needed to provide their own materials and adapt their skills. Finally, modern bibliographers need to know the bibliographical history, since older sources are still cited and very useful. The first major figure in this history is Georg Panzer, whose Annales typographici (1793-1803) are still useful for being arranged by imprint date. Ludwig Hain’s Repertorium bibliographicum (1826-38) and its successors may not be held in high respect today, but scholars still consult them. More venerated is Robert Proctor, whose concept of “Proctor order” (titles are gathered first under country, then under city, then under date) is seen in the great catalogue of the British Museum (begun 1908, completed only in 2007). The next event was the Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke, a unified guide begun in 1925 but still incomplete since the 1940s. Frederick Goff’s one-volume Incunabula in American Libraries (1964) is still an indispensable starting point, although the “ISTC” project (now the Illustrated Incunabula Short Title Catalogue, and online now as “ISTC2”) promises to be the essential bibliographical record for incunabulists.
4. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PRACTICE

COMPILING BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Enumerative bibliography involves compilers preparing lists, which contain citations (consisting of entries and, often, annotations) of written material, for the use of readers. Enumerative bibliography succeeds when the lists work the other way around: readers search the lists and find the citations. Readers are the unpredictable factor: they often find what they need in unexpected places and they use it in ways that can rarely be anticipated.

A bibliography, as W. W. Greg proposed and Theodore Besterman famously recalled, must be based on “some guiding principle.” A transcript of citations becomes a bibliography when the principle becomes legitimized through use, although compilers commonly explain their decisions in their introduction. Admittedly, readers rarely read introductions: they impatiently turn instead to the citations. The introductions thus serve mostly to fix the list in the context of the literature. Rules for compilers follow conventions that are rarely specified but are widely understood and justified through use. The basic decisions involve:

Scope. Compilers make their topics manageable by defining their scope. All bibliographies include or exclude titles on grounds determined by the physical object or the intellectual content of the material being described. The obvious physical distinction separates books from other forms of recorded knowledge. Some forms are closely akin to books—pamphlets, government documents, and ephemera come to mind—and in lists usually fit comfortably alongside books. Continuations—serials, periodicals, journals, newspapers—usually work like books and rarely pose problems, although their component units (“analytics”) can be overwhelming in their profusion. Other forms—maps, printed music, pictures—often benefit from separate listings, as do audio-visual materials—sound recordings, films, videos—as well as electronic forms, so as to lead to hybrids like discography, filmography, videography, and webliography. The less the documents look and work like printed books, generally the harder they are to fit into a bibliography, although readers are often best served by including them.

Citation Style. Bibliographical citation practices are spelled out in style manuals, which arose to provide consistent practices for scholarly journals. The many style manuals differ in details and have evolved over the years, but the most important today is arguably the Chicago Manual of Style (latest ed., 2003), now compatible with the dissertation style long associated with Kate L. Turabian. The Modern Language Association prefers slightly different practices in its Style Manual (latest ed., 2008) and Handbook (new ed. expected, 2009), as do the British university presses at Oxford (Horace Hart latest ed., 2005) and Cambridge (Judith Butcher, latest ed., 2006). Scientific usage, most often prescribing authors’ given names as initials and the publication date before the title (once called “Harvard style”), is spelled out in manuals from the American Chemical Society (latest ed., 2006), the American Psychological Association (latest supplement on electronic references, 2007), and the Council of Science Editors (formerly the Council of Biology Editors; latest ed., 2006), among others. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) have also addressed bibliographical style. Many publishers further specify their preferences in “house style” sheets. Cataloguing codes can often inform bibliographical practice, although compilers commonly adapt the rules for the materials being cited, and with a view to the convenience and background of their selected readers.

Annotation. Compilers often find it important to define the aim, scope, or thesis of the writing being described; to identify the sources and context; to single out significant features; or to praise or incriminate the work (the former best done in understatement, the latter often by quoting the text). The goals of describing and evaluating are not as different as one might think. The writing style may be either conventional prose (to catch the reader’s attention) or “telegraphic” (busy readers, making quick decisions on whether or not to look at the writing, can usually do without the subject and often the predicate). Readers often benefit from comparing and contrasting entries, often done by annotating several entries together.

Organization. Most entry sequences follow one of three orders: alphabetical, chronological, or classified. Alphabetetic lists are usually by main entry, most often the name of the author. The alphabet is not intrinsically intelligent but it is easy to search. Chronological lists suggest the growth of the literature, and reflect the ideal of historia litteraria. Classified lists display the literature under categories. Compilers are often stimulated by obvious juxtapositions but have second thoughts about titles that belong
in more than one or no category. The idea of systematic bibliography is something of a counterpart to the systematic card catalogues in many libraries. Linear sequences usually ask for indexes, in printed lists as either internal cross-references or separate indexes, in computer lists through entry access.

Well designed bibliographies need to be clear, precise, and efficient. In the course of helping readers identify, tabulate, and explore, they are most effective when they lead readers think about the substance rather than the methodology, and to compare entries by moving from broad overview to fine structure.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SEARCHING.

Searching for specific citations is unlike subject searching, much like hunting is unlike farming. Readers still need to know the sources they work with, their scope, organization, and citation practices. But they also need to decide whether citations, once located, are actually what they are looking for: will any edition, or version, suffice; how specific must the citation be? Often the exact needs are determined only as the search progresses. Generally, searches lead to one of four outcomes: (1) success: the right citation has been located; (2) positive failure: the citation has been found but it is not what is needed; (3) negative success: the citation has not been found, but it may be there; and (4) failure: the item has not been found, and it is certain that it is not there. Distinguishing between (3) and (4) is helpful in sizing up the bibliographical infrastructure of the literature. In general, the smaller and more transparent the list being searched, the more easily it can be determined that the result is failure rather than negative success. In many vast lists, it is simply not possible to guess where an item has been logically but ingeniously concealed. For this reason, bibliographical searching benefits from smaller lists and a knowledge of how they work.

The more important the search, the more time should be allotted to it. But many important ones turn out to be very brief: it is often the intellectual curiosity of the searcher that makes them time-consuming. Online searching is almost always faster than work with paper sources, if also less cardio-vascular. But printed sources, laid out visually and deployed physically, ask to be searched for contexts. Locating entries is different from understanding them, so searching can be boring and routine or highly stimulating.

5. PHYSICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

As nineteenth-century scholarship flourished and became increasingly methodical, the study of the artifactual evidence of bibliography became self-consciously analytical. Antiquarian booksellers and collectors had long known that some books were more desirable than others as physical objects, philologists and literary scholars had understood the importance of authenticity of literary writings, historians had long celebrated the bibliographical lore behind famous events, while librarians and private collectors had long taken special pride in their celebrated rarities. These groups, as they coalesced into bibliographical societies, stimulated each other in their dialogue and wrote up their findings in journals that aspired to the scholarship of academic disciplines. The goal was announced, boldly and provocatively, by W.W. Greg (in the Bibliographical Society’s 1942 Studies in Retrospect, p. 25), thus: “bibliography is the study of books as material objects, irrespective of their contents.” This study has come to be seen as several different activities.

ANALYTICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The study of physical books entails an analysis of typography, paper, ink, “printing house practices” (i.e., layout and design, typesetting, imposition, and presswork), as well as illustration and binding. Philip Gaskell’s New Introduction to Bibliography (1972) is the standard overview, but much work has been done since his day, as synthesized in many writings and notably discussed in G. Thomas Tanselle’s annual essays in Studies in Bibliography. The graphic arts become important in evaluating the working aesthetics of particular printers, traditions, and periods, while technology is now essential to the study of paper (e.g., the “Leningrad method,” also digitized watermark archives), ink (“PIXE,” i.e., particle-induced X-ray emission), layout (“fingerprinting”) and other evidence. Probably most important of all have been the digital images that make it possible to examine copies in distant locations side-by-side.
Evidence of tampering emerges out of a close study of the physical objects, making analytical bibliography essential to establishing their authenticity. The famous example is the legendary exposure of the forgeries of the highly respected bibliographer Thomas J. Wise, uncovered and written up by John Carter and Graham Pollard in their *Enquiry into the Nature of Certain Nineteenth Century Pamphlets* (1934).

Bibliographers recall Falconer Madan’s phrase, “the duplicity of duplicates,” and instinctively look for differences between copies that appear to be identical, and then seek to explain how and why the differences came about. In work with printed books of the hand-press era, they separate the differences and have conventional names for them. *Editions* are the basic units of production, that is, all the copies run off from the same printing surfaces. *Impressions* distinguish all the copies of a single press run. *Issues* involve changes overtly announced, for instance on title pages, and deal often with conditions of sale. *States* involve covert changes, made within a press run and not meant to be noticed, least of all mentioned on the title page. Often the levels of differences are hard to explain, or ambiguous, in which case the term *variant* is a useful recourse. (The conceptions are Anglo-American: terms used in continental Europe, like *Ausgabe*, *Auflage*, and *triage*, fit awkwardly into their hierarchy.)

**DESCRIPTIVE AND TEXTUAL BIBLIOGRAPHY.**

Descriptive bibliography is enumerative bibliography informed by analytical bibliography, in order to specify the exact particulars of the physical objects for scholarly use. Its rhetoric is ruled by conventions that provide for details that identify the important physical characteristics. Analytical bibliographers need to know the history of the materials and practices of printing and publication. Descriptive bibliographers will also know the grammar for formulating citations based on models that date from Henry Bradshaw in the nineteenth century, as later refined by W. W. Greg and codified in *Fredson Bowers’ Principles of Bibliographical Description* (1949). Enumerative citations are assumed to apply to all copies of a particular title; any differences are irrelevant for the intended readers.

Descriptive bibliographers may identify either a specific copy, with details on all of its relevant idiosyncrasies, or they may conceive of ideal copy (which, in Bowers’ conception, is “a book which is complete in all its leaves as it ultimately left the printer’s shop in perfect condition and in the complete state that he considered to represent the final and most perfect state of the book”). Citations in enumerative bibliographies are generally shorter, and their conciseness is assumed to be sufficient. Descriptive bibliographies explore physical details in order to allow readers reasons either to infer that the description is sufficient, or to record the insufficiencies.

Citations in descriptive bibliographies usually transcribe the title page and collate the gatherings. The ideal title-page transcription covers all its printed statements, often with type styles in “quasi-facsimile” presentation. The collation uses a grammar that records the gatherings by their signatures and the number of leaves in each gathering. A knowledge of early printing practices is essential, beginning with the basic practices of imposing the type within the form of the press, for purposes of accommodating sheets that were later folded once, twice, or three times (so as to produce folio, quarto, or octavo format). The directions of the paper’s chain and wire lines and the placement of the watermark are most often the crucial evidence. Changes during a press run were common. Leaves were added, removed, or cancelled, unsigned gatherings were added at the beginning, or interpolated. The early printing shop was constrained in its conditions—labor was usually cheap and materials were expensive—and the physical book needs to be explained in terms of how it was assembled.

The precise details of producing a physical book often explain its content. Textual bibliography is a search for authenticity of literary works based on a probing of the printed evidence. Its roots are in classical philology, Biblical studies, and modern editorial practice. Its calls on the practices of analytical bibliography to authors whose writings exist in variant printed editions, often in the absence of manuscript sources. Locating the crucial evidence requires a thorough familiarity with the text, a close reading of many copies in search of variants, and a knowledge of printing house practices, as well as an understanding of the authors and their working relationships with their printers, editors, and publishers. Contrary to what one might suspect, there are important differences in the texts not only of earlier authors of the “hand press era” (before about 1830) but also of many twentieth-century authors as well.
6. HISTORICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

The written history of the artifacts that define our civilization begins as “book appreciation,” popular accounts of books and printing that recall the classic lore, of Laurens Janszoon Coster in Holland as a possible precursor of Gutenberg, of the Columbus letter and role of printing in the rapid spread of the news across Europe, of the Depositio cornuti typographici and Wayzgoose revelry among printing apprentices and journeyman, of the dispersal of the 1640 “Bay Psalm Book” and the forging of the 1639 “Oath of the Freeman,” of Walt Whitman’s “leaves of grass” as a reminder of his work as a printer. The early craftsmen were heroes, their editions were works of art.

Bibliographers delight in these stories, and also in the vast profusion of other names, titles, and events they work with. They were rarely collected into historical narratives, however; before the twentieth century the historiography of bibliography was rather meager. In works like Karl Schottenloher’s Das alte Buch (1919, later eds. as Bücher bewegten die Welt), the account begins to be framed as cultural history. The annales tradition of French academic scholarship, rich in charts, statistics, and maps, characterizes L’Apparition du livre (1958), begun by Lucien Febvre and completed by Henri-Jean Martin, as well as the later Histoire de l’édition française (1981-85), to date the most lavish of several recent national histories of the book. Two complementary exhibitions in London in 1963 further expanded the agenda of historical bibliography. At Earl’s Court, a display on the history of the printing crafts and technology reflected a flourishing scholarship in the processes of book production, obvious tied to analytical bibliography. Two major periodicals emerged—the Journal of the Printing Historical Society (1965) and Printing History (1979)—along with syntheses based on the acts of production, such as Michael Giesecke’s Der Buchdruck in der frühen Neuzeit (1991) and Adrian Johns’s The Nature of the Book (1998). The second part of the 1963 exhibition, at the British Museum, was devoted to the first publications of the historic landmarks of Western thought, and led to the celebrated Printing and the Mind of Man catalogue (1967), along the way implying the crucial role of the antiquarian booktrade in preserving our cultural heritage. Other works stand out in the rise of historical bibliography. Elizabeth Eisenstein’s The Printing Press as an Agent of Change (1979) surveys the views of earlier writers who evaluated the impact of Gutenberg’s invention, and Robert Darnton studies the archival evidence of the publishers of the great eighteenth-century Encyclopédie in The Business of Enlightenment (1979). Andrew Pettegree’s recent The Book in the Renaissance (2010) points out that early printers probably made much of their living from miscellaneous and ephemeral “job work,” most of which does not survive.

Are there significant differences between historical bibliography and the new fields of study called Print Culture and Book History (or histoire du livre)? If there are, they are subtle and often irrelevant. All of the families of bibliography benefit from being conceived with the needs of both readers and materials in mind. Alfred W. Pollard, one of the heroes from the last century, famously reflected these sentiments when he described bibliography as a “big umbrella.”