
This volume complements the exhibition, *The Reader Revealed*, at The Folger Shakespeare Library from 4 September 2001 to 19 January 2002. In addition to nine essays, it includes a select bibliography and an illustrated catalogue of 115 items and their descriptions.

*The Reader Revealed* could be subtitled “The Reader Enthralled.” The excellent short essays by early modern specialists will be read with profit by non-specialists interested in the history of the book in this period. For instance, I have already found Sabrina Alcorn Baron’s lucid essay on the use and influence of red ink and black-letter type in manuscript and print traditions to be valuable background reading for students of the history of modern document design. Using the rich collection of the Folger Shakespeare Library, other essays in the volume give fascinating accounts of the reading and annotating habits of identifiable historical individuals (John Dee, William Drake, Narcissus Luttrell), the communal reading of John Foxe’s Protestant work, and the symbolic reading of William Dugdale’s publication, along with anonymous readers revealed in Folger manuscripts and books.

Steven N. Zwicker provides a helpful introduction to these essays and exhibition; as he suggests, the reader is revealed in early modern text through an abundance of physical evidence, from simple marks, glosses, and corrections to outlines, synopses, and re-arrangements. *The Reader Revealed*, itself, artfully reflects and reveals all these features. The black Roman text is set within red rules and under red titles; the white watermark cover illustration of early modern readers reveals the readers in a positive black image on the fly leaf. A delightful design element revealed under a reading lamp are “watermarks” of pointing fingers and the word “NOTA,” along with other readers’ marks identified in essays and catalogue items, all replicated intermittently in the margins of the whole volume. In these ways, the volume entices the reader to join centuries of predecessors by writing in the wide margins – but in light of the concluding essay by William H. Sherman on Renaissance readers and modern collectors, the cautious reader may want to keep a second copy in a pristine state for the postmodern sensibilities of the rare book trade.
A conference on “Transactions of the Book” was held at the Folger in November 2001 in conjunction with this exhibition, with the support of the Center for the Book, Library of Congress. The conference brought together scholars who focus on the early modern period, featuring, as well, notable historians Adrian Johns and Elizabeth Eisenstein as session chairs. Roger Chartier gave a keynote address on “Don Quixote in the Printing House.”

This exhibition, the catalogue, and the conference represent a model of a coherent program for study of the history of the book. Together, they validate the collecting habit of Henry Clay Folger to the full: “rather soiled by use” reveals the reader in a remarkable way in a unique collection of early modern texts.

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This collection brings together thirteen articles by David L. Cowen, written over his long career in researching literature on pharmacy, and published in journals as diverse as the *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, Pharmaceutical Historian, Medical History,* and *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*. The high cost of the volume may be offset by its reproduction of articles from what are normally widely scattered sources in libraries – including some German-language publications. The concept of ‘pharmacopoeial’ literature is broadly construed to include sectarian medicine, veterinary medicine, and domestic and folk medicine since, as Cowen points out, *materia medica* and pharmacotherapy were “what the practice of medicine was all about” (vii). More bibliographical than historical, the essays range from 1951 to 1987 by date of first publication, and are reprinted in facsimile with continuous pagination for the collection. Their geographical arrangement illustrates the spread of this literature from Edinburgh to the United States.

Throughout these essays, Cowen demonstrates his understanding of the need to study extant copies of books: he identifies ghosts; corrects other errors in the historical literature; presents checklists of