index would save much trouble for inquiries like these. The second index, for versions in other languages, is just what the title suggests, but since the second bibliography is in alphabetical order, no other index is needed. Finally, there is a list of classical and vernacular short titles. This is headed by a rather confusing note which one would hope to see corrected in any future edition.

This is a book which belongs in any theological library. The few little problems mentioned above are things that an historian of the Anglican liturgical tradition might see as deficiencies but other readers might not, and they do seriously detract from the usefulness of this beautiful book. At least one other scholar was pleased to know that there is now a reference work that gives the number of languages into which the Prayer Book has been translated.

I still have no idea what one would do with a Prayer Book in shorthand.

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Since its inception with the publication of Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin’s L’apparition du livre in 1958 (trans. The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800, 1976), the history of the book as a discipline has mushroomed practically exponentially. The literature on the subject is now considerable, keeping the vigilant bibliographers busy in their happy task of recording new publications. There are academic courses and programmes in book history, established centres for the study of the book and print culture at universities and other repositories, and a plethora of national histories of the book at various stages of completion. The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP), the discipline’s flagship organisation, has a thriving membership, its own journal and newsletter, a large and useful website, and a steady stream of commentary on its listserv. If the book as an artifact of the transmission of culture is dead, as so many doomsayers have maintained or prognosticated ad nauseam, then it is passing strange
that so much attention is being devoted to its history and its alleged demise.

A definite sign that the discipline has come of age is the publication of this textbook, *The Book History Reader*, edited by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, both of whom are associated with the Scottish Centre for the Book. Their proposal for a textbook was in fact placed on their website at http://www.pmpc.napier.ac.uk/scon/HOBReader.htm, and comments pertaining to the tentative table of contents and accompanying material were solicited. According to the back cover of the paperback, this anthology is “a pioneering book,” “an essential collection of writings,” and “a vital resource for all those involved in book publishing studies, library studies, book history and also those studying English literature, cultural studies, sociology and history.” The editors’ website proclaims that the textbook’s audience is both general and academic, for undergraduate and graduate students, to be used in courses devoted to the subject and “as a stimulus for its utilisation in new courses.”

Twenty-seven essays, all previously published, appear in *The Book History Reader*. They are grouped together into four parts: I What is book history? II From orality to literacy, III Commodifying print: books and authors, and IV Books and readers. In addition, the editors have added a general introduction, short introductions to each part, a checklist of publications, and an index. In certain cases the original essays have been revised slightly by the contributors. Although each section has a particular emphasis, the essays have common themes and links of discussion.

Many of the contributors to this anthology are well-known pioneers of this new discipline: D.F. McKenzie, Élisabeth Eisenstein, Roger Chartier, and Jonathan Rose, for example. There are also selections from newer contributors to the field – the first chapter of Adrian Johns’s scintillating and award-winning *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (1998), which challenges Eisenstein’s conception of the fixity of print. Predictably, the volume begins with Robert Darnton’s classic essay – “What Is the History of Books?” – justly renowned for Darnton’s explanatory model the “communications circuit” but also for his penetrating analysis of the publishing history of Voltaire’s *Questions sur l’Encyclopédie*.

A major challenge in an anthology of this kind is to find the right balance in the selection of essays. The history of the book after all is a wide-ranging discipline with roots in the history of printing, the Anglo-American tradition of analytical bibliography, the *Annales*
methodology of quantitative social history, in-house histories of publishing houses, and evolving models of mass communication. Some researchers focus their efforts on specific case studies while others examine aspects of readership in order to promulgate literary theory with a vengeance. How does one maintain a delicate balance between an emphasis on empirical evidence and the volatility of theoretical pyrotechnics?

To be sure, The Book History Reader contains a number of essays that are heavily theory-laden: Jerome McGann on the socialisation of texts, Pierre Bourdieu on the field of cultural production, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault on the meaning and death of authorship, and Stanley Fish on reader responses to texts. On the one hand these essays illustrate the different perspectives and approaches to the history of the book, and to a certain extent scholars and students should be generally aware of various theoretical shifts, however intricate and cerebral they may appear to be. At the same time, one should note that several of these theory-laden essays have a cultural context elsewhere, and the controversies and debates that they engender really relate to these other concerns. McGann’s essay, for example, which is an extract from his book, The Textual Condition (1991), is in fact an extended critique of the Greg-Bowers theory of copy-text. His essay certainly has a bearing on the history of the book but only if one understands the developments in editorial theory and the hegemony exercised by Fredson Bowers in the latter half of the twentieth century over American editorial projects.

In short, many of these essays will prove to be interesting and illuminating for the generalist and the undergraduate student – for example, Chartier on the practical impact of writing, E. Jennifer Monaghan on literacy instruction and gender in colonial New England, and Janice Radway on the Book-of-the-Month Club and middle-class culture. With respect to many of the other essays, however, the appeal will be limited to the cognoscenti who already understand the complexities of the discipline. Take McKenzie’s two excerpts from his 1985 Panizzi lectures, Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts, as a case in point. Much of McKenzie’s discussion is an attack on W.W. Greg and Bowers’s interpretation of bibliography as a study of the book as a physical object. But there is no text from Greg or Bowers as a backdrop to McKenzie’s excerpts. In their introductions Finkelstein and McCleery provide only a few clues in their sparse paragraphs on Greg and Bowers. Without a capable instructor who will explain the direction of Anglo-American
bibliography in the last century, the beginning reader will have no idea of the inextricable relationship of bibliography with the history of the book and the relevance of McKenzie’s critical discussion.

In summation, this textbook is sure to find a wide audience where book history and print culture are taught in university courses. Yet the general reader and the undergraduate student will be troubled and baffled by the theoretical undertone in many of the essays. The selection of essays has been made intelligently, but there are gaps in the narrative (no excerpt from Febrvre and Martin, for example). The short introductions by the editors are tantalizingly cryptic and fail to provide sufficient information on the developments in the history of the book, the contexts of the various essays, and their relationship one to another.

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En septembre 1990 se tenait à Göttingen le premier colloque international visant à dresser un bilan des recherches dans une discipline en pleine expansion, l'histoire du livre, et proposant une réflexion sur ses possibles orientations (Bödeker, Paris, IMEC, 1995). Dix ans après, alors que certains projets d'histoire nationale du livre étaient achevés ou sur le point de l'être, que d'autres projets similaires s'organisaient, et que la recherche dans les domaines du livre, de l'édition et de la lecture ne cessait de s'enrichir, un nouveau colloque organisé en mai 2000 à l'Université de Sherbrooke au Québec et réunissant une cinquantaine de participants venus du monde entier prenait la mesure des progrès réalisés. Ce sont les actes de ce colloque qui paraissent ici, sous le titre Les Mutations du livre et de l'édition dans le monde, du XVIIIe siècle à l'an 2000.

L'ouvrage marque une nouvelle étape dans le développement de la discipline de l'histoire du livre pour deux raisons essentielles. La première tient à l'ampleur de la recherche publiée, puisque ce ne sont pas moins de quarante-six articles, dont treize sont livrés en anglais, qui sont réunis dans ce volume. Une telle amplitude permet