Melzer tells us that penmanship is still alive and well sustained not least and ironically by on-line discussion groups such as Ornamental Penmanship and Cyberscribes.


In his editorial preface David Blewett says that the huge response to the call for papers for this special issue of *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* indicates the importance of the link between fiction and print culture. The novel, indeed, owes its existence to the invention of printing. Reading was suddenly a private and solitary affair and, as he says, contributed to introspection, imaginative excitement, and the growth of individualism.

The collection is arranged under three headings: Author and Book, Book Illustration, and the History of the Book. The first section includes essays on *Tristram Shandy*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Frances Burney, and Maria Edgeworth. The essays look at the problems of authorship, not least for women writers, editing, marketing, and the rise of literary reviews. Aileen Douglas’s essay on Maria Edgeworth, for example, looks at her role as her father’s copyist and transcriber, and her resistance to the notion that literary works were different from or inferior to other forms of writing. Douglas links this to Edgeworth’s commitment to literacy in the labouring classes, the copy being the means whereby writing is spread.

The second section looks at the evolution of illustrations in fiction, the link between the text and the illustration, and the relationship of the artist and the writer. As Nicholas Cronk points out, writers have often been suspicious of allowing illustrations into their texts and the intrusion and competition they represent. Nonetheless the illustrated eighteenth-century French novel is widely seen as attractive, and certainly these days collectible. He traces the changing pattern of illustration over the century, from no illustrations, to illustrations in reprints of popular editions, to plates in definitive and revised editions, to an expectation of illustrated first editions. His examples focus on *Manon Lescaut* and *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*. Another
particularly interesting essay traces the reception of *A Sentimental Journey* through illustrated editions. The many illustrations in this second section add to the pleasure and importance of this volume of the journal.

The third section is a collection of essays on bibliography and the history of the book. They include work on the production of the texts, the book as physical object, the dissemination of novels, markets, authors, and publishers, and some reflection on collecting eighteenth-century novels for a modern rare-book library.

Bibliographical work on eighteenth-century texts has come a long way since and in part thanks to the ESTC, first proposed by the Bibliographical Society in 1962. It is good to have this sample of current work being done in eighteenth-century book history and print culture collected in an important volume.


This is the latest volume of articles from the Bibliographical Society of America, published two years after the date on the title-page. The volume is especially notable for R.B. McKerrow’s previously unpublished 1928 University of Cambridge Sandars Lectures and an essay by G. Thomas Tanselle on the bibliographical concept of format. Other essays include work on the stemma of the *Piers Plowman* B manuscripts, Byron and Medwin, Edward Young’s *The Centaur Not Fabulous*, the Hinman collator, and Samuel Richardson’s anonymous periodical writings.

Tanselle points out that format, once an exclusively bibliographical term to describe the shape and size of a book, is now widely used in everyday language. We all use format to mean the way an electronic document is arranged: font, spacing, margins, justification, and so on. Even when used by publishers about printed matter it may refer to the nature and order of the contents or even to layout, typography, and overall dimensions. Bibliographers use the word format to express the relationship between the physical structure of the book and some of the print-shop work that produced that structure. So as Tanselle points out format is not just the size and the shape of the book. Format is about reading the physical aspects of the book,