Enfin, le chapitre 4 aborde brièvement, en une dizaine de pages, l’impression lithographique et l’invention de l’offset, la photocomposition et la révolution numérique qui ont des conséquences considérables, « plus encore peut-être que n’en eut l’invention des caractères mobiles par Gutenberg » selon l’auteur (p. 107). Les ouvrages en français permettant de retracer l’histoire des techniques d’impression sont rares. En ce sens, nous sommes redevables à Michael Twyman de nous offrir ici un ouvrage de grande qualité. En prime, la qualité des illustrations en fait un bel objet à conserver et à chérir.

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For the book lover, looking for a book that inspires and entertains is a passion that never dies. How we discover book treasures is a combination of serendipity and the cunning promotional efforts of the publisher and bookseller. It will come as no surprise then that the history of advertising and promotion in the book trade is rich with remarkable stories. Books for Sale is a collection of papers delivered at the thirteenth annual Book Trade History conference held at the Foundling Museum in London, England, in November 2008. As the subtitle suggests, the topics covered span from incunabula to the Internet and give us a broad picture of the experiments and innovations in book promotion that have driven sales for the past five hundred years.

Robin Myers sets the tone for this collection by providing a solid introduction to the study of the business of bookselling and introducing us to the topics covered by the eight authors. The first essay, by Lotte Hellinga, gives us an ample account of the surviving advertisements (44 in total) from the fifteenth century. Julianne Simpson traces the sale and distribution of Christopher Plantin’s Biblia Regia completed in 1572. Simpson provides us with evidence of Plantin’s shrewd business acumen and his innovative use of printed
advertisements for books. All this information she collected from her research at the Plantin archives in Antwerp.

When does printed information become advertising? Michael Harris addresses this issue as a subtext in his essay on eighteenth-century advertising and throws light on the symbiotic relationship of advertising in the promotion of printed material and consumer goods. This essay is not about the advertising of books as much as it is about the role of advertising in print. Harris examines the business of John Houghton and how his printed matter diversified and cross-subsidized other ventures such as medical cures. The essay is illustrated with reproductions from various publications and gives us a picture of the blurred lines between what is information for the public good and what is mercantile commercialism. Building on this, Phillippa Plock’s essay inspects the world of eighteenth-century trade cards preserved in Lord Rothschild’s Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire, England. Plock focuses on the Parisian book trade and the use of “visual rhetoric” to persuade wealthy recipients to purchase books. Six reproductions of these cards illustrate this style of advertising and give us a glimpse into their power to convince and intrigue.

Charles Benson invites the reader to explore the Irish book trade and its expansion in the nineteenth century. He is the Keeper of Early Printed Books at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, which gives him a unique advantage to peruse the collection of advertising ephemera there. Benson discusses the considerable advertising expenditure made by Irish publishers to promote their projects by the use of newspapers, magazines, wrappers, inserts and subscriptions and promotional offers. One interesting detail about the publication of Deighan’s *A Complete Treatise on Arithmetic* (1804) is that the publisher printed the names of subscribers in the book if they paid the full price in advance. Deighan’s book also contained advertisements (as was the custom) for other editions. Benson also describes how the printing of testimonials and endorsements was a popular practice to encourage buyers. Although these new advertising methods were not unique they are an example of how the publishing trade in Ireland flourished as it embraced the emerging age of persuasion.

Alan Powers discusses the appearance of a powerful device for catching the reader’s eye and providing a stage for endorsements and promotional blurbs – the dust jacket. It is interesting to note that Marshall McLuhan declared the future of the book to be: “the blurb.” The importance of the dust jacket as an advertisement and a surface
for the display of design and art was underappreciated. Today we take the dust jacket for granted as a mark of a properly packaged, hardcover trade book, but there was a time when it was an innovation, a sign of modernist novelty by which the publishing industry and readers distinguished the new from the old. Many despised it and thought it a waste of paper. Powers explains with illustrations of popular jackets how the paper wrapper book jacket emerged as an advertising device. Today, of course, early dust jackets are prized items for collectors, precisely because so few survived the initial contempt with which they were greeted.

What does the world of literary prizes have to do with bookselling? Everything, it seems, and Peter Straus outlines their impact on sales in Britain and its tangent markets. Straus’s experience as a literary agent is evident in his insider’s understanding of book marketing and the impact a prize may (or may not) have on sales. A breakdown of the implications of the Booker prize on Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* gives the reader a rare insight into the actual numbers publishers must consider when developing their profit and loss projections. This is a good article that could be expanded to include the impact of the new mass-market technologies of the Internet and mobile devices and how these have contributed to the impact of literary awards on sales.

The impact of the Internet is the focus of Udo Göllmann’s article. Göllmann is an ABE Books employee in Europe who provides a survey of the effects of digital technology on book sales. Göllmann predicts that the future of the printed book will remain intact and that it will only be a more treasured and sought after commodity as digital technologies improve. Missing from Göllmann’s prediction is the impact of digital piracy on the book trade and the role of the Google settlement on future printed books sales. As publishers struggle to find a business model for book sales in the light of new technologies like the Amazon Kindle and the Apple iPad, it is becoming increasingly apparent that a seismic shift in the culture of bookselling is on the horizon. Complete with contributors’ bios and an index, *Books for Sale* gives us the perspective to reflect upon the book technologies that have driven sales and changed our relationship with reading.

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