larger, non-academic audience; unfortunately, the appeal of this book to a general reader is limited. The book as a whole would probably find interest mostly with graduate students and academics studying the history of libraries, or the Center for the Book specifically.

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In its insightful treatment of a complex subject, Eli MacLaren’s book is an important addition to the growing literature on early Canadian copyright law and its influence on the book trade. Building on George Parker’s seminal work, MacLaren highlights the detrimental impact of nineteenth-century imperial copyright policy on the development of a robust Canadian publishing industry that, in turn, stunted the growth of a national literary identity. Drawing on original archival research and expressed in clear and engaging language, MacLaren canvasses a historical timeline that begins prior to Confederation and ends in the early twentieth century.

The introduction and the first two chapters set out the author’s arguments and describe in sharp detail the multi-layered political and legal contexts that operated in colonial Canada. MacLaren deals very deftly with a difficult subject, rendering intelligible the various laws and practices that operated within colonial Canada – not only domestic but, more importantly, imperial and American. His thesis is that the legal context within which nineteenth-century Canada found itself “compelled the book trade … into modes of operation that were more or less incompatible with original publishing” (5). According to MacLaren, Canadian publishers, stifled by imperial copyright laws that disregarded their interests, took on the role of publisher-agents rather than original literary publishers.

Chapters 3 through 6 consist of a series of individual case studies of Canadian publishers or authors whose experiences illustrate MacLaren’s overarching message. Chapter 3 is an exploration of the Belford Brothers of Toronto and their reprinting enterprise. The book’s treatment of the Belfords is particularly enjoyable to read.
Their attempts to work around the constraints imposed by imperial copyright laws are brought into sharp relief and their powerlessness in the face of the North American copyright divide, as MacLaren terms it, makes for compelling reading.

MacLaren ends his chronicle of the Belfords in the late 1870s. However, it might have been worth mentioning that, in 1882, the Rose-Belford Company issued an unauthorized “foreign” reprint of Mark Twain’s *The Prince and The Pauper* in Canada. The reason this might have been a particularly interesting example to conclude with is that the publishers included a two-page preface to justify their actions:

> The Importers of this cheap edition … do not disguise their motive in placing it on the Canadian market. Their object … is to show, by its importation into, and sale in Canada, *as a foreign reprint of a work which has secured British copyright,* how anomalous is the present law of Literature in the Colonies, and how injuriously, and in an especial degree this affects Canadian printing and publishing industries … The action we have now taken … nullifies in great measure, the benefit which Imperial copyright affords … and this course we feel justified in adopting, so long as the United States government refuse[sic] to accord to British or Colonial authors reciprocal legislation, and while American publishers are free to flood Canadian markets with reprints of English books.

This passage would have made a nice postscript to MacLaren’s treatment of the Belfords and their attempts to circumvent the combined effects of imperial copyright, the 1875 Canadian Copyright Act and the realities of US reprinting of British copyright works. In these few paragraphs, one gets a real sense of the moral outrage of Canadian publishers in the face of the intractable legislative and political machinery that protected British and American publishing interests over theirs.

Of all the case studies, the weakest is to be found in the next chapter about William Briggs of the Methodist Book and Publishing House, and his failed attempts to become an exclusive Canadian distributor of authorized British and American works. Briggs’s case brings to light a different copyright issue than the one that MacLaren had so meticulously chronicled in the previous chapters and which lies at the heart of his book’s overarching thesis. The issue that Briggs faced had less to do with the problem of unauthorized American reprinting and imperial control over Canadian reprinting as it had to do with a different legal concern, namely that of parallel importation. Briggs was an authorized distributor of copyright books who found himself...
in direct competition with other distributors of the same books. His particular situation did not flow directly from the North American copyright divide except to the extent that the prohibition on Canadian reprinting forced him into the role of distributor. I suspect that this is the point that is being made in the chapter but this message seems to get lost somehow.

The final two chapters strengthen the thrust of the book. Chapter 5 relates to the Macmillan publishing company whose success derived from the fact that it did not resist the copyright divide but found its place within it. It was the quintessential publisher-agent. Chapter 6 recounts the career of celebrated author Charles William Gordon who wrote under the pen name Ralph Connor. The Connor study is especially insightful in demonstrating that the meteoric rise of this Canadian author was largely due to the unauthorized reprinting of his books in the US. This ensured that multiple versions of his works made their way to the international mass market quickly and cheaply which, in turn, resulted in his becoming one of the major literary figures of his day. The discussion of the Gordon case reinforces the fact that authors’ and publishers’ interests do not necessarily coincide and that the North American copyright divide had its most damaging effect on Canadian publishers. The concluding chapter neatly ties the book together.

The one disappointment in this otherwise excellent work was the fact that the endnotes are somewhat sparse especially in relation to the legal history. For those of us interested in pursuing some of the threads of MacLaren’s arguments and in being able to rely on his original research, there is little upon which to draw. A more detailed and comprehensive series of endnotes would have facilitated further scholarship at the intersection of law and book history.

Nineteenth-century Canadian copyright history makes for fascinating study, fraught as it was with legal and political conflict and intrigue. In 1896, librarian Richard Lancefield lamented that “[t]he interests of Canada, so far as copyright is concerned, have been cruelly sacrificed for the last fifty years.”¹ In Dominion and Agency, MacLaren shows us just how cruel that sacrifice was. Dominion and Agency should be essential reading for book historians and legal historians alike. It should also serve as a cautionary tale for

¹ Richard T. Lancefield, Notes on Copyright – Domestic and International (Hamilton, ON: Canadian Literary Bureau, 1896), para. 152.
contemporary Canadian policymakers as the vestiges of this history remain part of our copyright story to this day.

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Bonnie Mak traces the ever-changing understanding of Buonaccorso da Montemagno’s *Controversia de nobilitate* from its first appearance as a fifteenth-century manuscript to its modern digital versions. *How the Page Matters* represents an impressive scholarly accomplishment. Mak positions her work as a bridge between book history divisions such as print versus manuscript, or paper versus parchment. While drawing our attention to the page as a cultural phenomenon and evidence of “multiple modes of production, including handwriting, printing, and computation” (73), she shows that equating modes of production with specific historical periods overly simplifies the discipline, as well as limits the possibility of discovering new relationships between particular representations. For instance, she notes that printers have continued to use parchment and that illumination appears in many printed materials; one cannot say that parchment and illumination only belong to a particular era. By focusing on the page, she argues that we notice the stability over time of things like scripts and typefaces, layout, images, white space, and paratextual devices, all of which contextualize particular texts as they are understood and presented by printers and publishers. Moreover, the very materiality of the page itself provides clues to the cultural significance of the text.

Mak provides high-quality, full-page images of selected pages from the *Controversia de nobilitate*, illustrating the differences and similarities evidenced by Humanistic book-hand, Gothic cursive, typefaces influenced by both these hands, illuminations, and woodcuts, as well as other components such as pagination, title-pages, and dedications. These specific examples illustrate clearly Mak’s thesis that the page identifies and informs the meaning to be taken from it. Digitizing different instances of pages from a particular text allows us to observe all these modes simultaneously, so that we can see