

Lecture V: final lecture

I. What is the history of the book good for?

- new perspectives on how texts are made and diffused:

Who is involved in producing manuscript then published text? How much does production cost? Who is paying for it? Under what conditions of profit-making (e.g. privileges, patents, copyright, competition etc)?

- new perspectives on how texts have impact

-readers read texts that are accessible to them: consider cost, literacy, languages, distribution, marketing, libraries and other forms of sharing

-readers appropriate texts and shape the transmission of an author's ideas according to their interests and habits of thought. These can be individual or more widely shared (due to habits formed in schools, families, religious or ethnic or national groups)

-controlling access to texts has often seemed important to parents, churches, governments; historically certain categories of readers have seemed most important to protect: women, children, the lower orders/working classes. Even in the absence of formal censorship market forces often lead to some self-censorship.

- historical perspective on our shifting media ecology

some cases of supersession; many cases of co-existence

- our own choices of media in communicating

possibilities of self-publication highlights contribution of editors and publishers; more and more decisions about which media to use for which purposes...

II. Some *sententiae* for reflection:

- authors don't make books, printers do (Roger Stoddard as diffused by Roger Chartier), and many other people too
- most books lie to you in some way (Roger Stoddard, lecture)
- do books (texts? ideas?) cause revolutions?

Looking forward to many more new finds, new questions, and new answers as these questions continue to be of current and historical interest...