Into Print: Limits and Legacies of the Enlightenment; Essays in Honor of Robert

Darnton. Ed. Charles Walton. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011. xvii, 244p. ISBN 978-0-271-05012-6. \$49.95

Appearing as a title in the Penn State Series in the History of the Book, *Into Print* is a collection of twelve essays demonstrating a debt to Robert Darnton's groundbreaking scholarship on the social history of ideas (Walton, vii; Pasta, 82). Divided into five thematic parts ("Making News," "Print, Paper, Markets, and States," "Police and Opinion," "Enlightenment in Revolution," and "Enlightenment Universalism and Cultural Difference"), it includes contributions from scholars, primarily historians, who studied under Darnton. Editor Charles Walton points out in his superb preface that, while topics covered are diverse, each essay exhibits Darnton's influence by "analyzing the dynamic interaction between texts and social contexts" (vii) and treats matters that have preoccupied Darnton throughout his career, including print culture, readers and reading, public opinion, and the transmission of ideas during and since the Enlightenment.

Darnton's influence on the social history of ideas is considerable; indeed, he is a titanic figure in scholarly realms. Throughout his career, he has effortlessly traversed from history to philosophy, pausing to reflect on literature and philology on his way to social thought, criminal justice, and politics before resuming his odyssey toward horizons teeming with prospects, such as digital libraries and scholarly communication, which sometimes seem mysterious and perhaps frightening in traditional academia. Authors contributing to *Into Print* readily acknowledge the breadth of Darnton's research and influence, though their essays hew closely to publishing, trades (notably papermaking and bookselling), and social events that elaborate on his prevailing interest in the Enlightenment. One of the more striking notions addressed in this book, especially in the section "Enlightenment Universalism and Cultural Difference," is the idea that the Enlightenment itself has undergone rigorous scholarly and theoretical interrogation since Darnton first undertook his sustained work on the topic (Freedman, 182; Singham, 199).

Most of the selections in this volume consist of historical reconstructions of historical events, trends, or phenomena borne of a critical application of Darnton's own emphasis on "everyday creativity and unexpected connections" (Rosenband, 72). One contributor points out that a distinctive hallmark of Darnton's scholarly work is his inspired and thorough use of primary and archival sources. This practice contrasts "with the fashionable abstractions of postmodernist methodological discourse" (Pasta, 82). Another explains that Darnton's research style "contrast[s] the dirty work of archival research with ideas that are perhaps bright but not sustained by any evidence. He delights in the artisanal dimension of the historical craft more than theoretical approaches to history" (Chartier, 10). Darnton's privileging

of scholarly practices that are “artisanal rather than systematic” (Walton, viii) is as important and enduring an aspect of his legacy as his findings. In this respect, the essays included here serve as an apt tribute to Darnton.

An archival approach is evident in most of *Into Print*’s essays, and the book’s first two sections, “Making News” and “Print, Paper, Markets, and States” will be of particular interest to archivists and rare book and manuscript librarians as well as students and scholars of print culture. Beginning with Darnton’s notion that news is made, not found (Maza, 32), *Into Print* ultimately conveys the idea that histories themselves exhibit the intellectual fingerprints, biases, and “ideological convictions” of the historians who write them (Slauter, 29). Consequently, how scholarship is published and transmitted also reveals and reinforces these same convictions as well as other values and preconceptions, an idea that all the contributors to this volume address in one way or another.

Ultimately, *Into Print* conveys the impressive scale and scope of Darnton’s enduring influence on research on the Enlightenment and its antecedents as well as historical scholarship itself. In many ways, Darnton’s revolutionary approach and his startling conclusions grow out of a yeoman-like commitment to traditional, evidence-based research that has often manifested itself as vivid and arresting accounts of figures, some anonymous, lurking in the shadows of the printing and bookselling trades during the Enlightenment (Rigogne, 53–54; Bell, 133). The selections in this book provide readers with compelling variants composed in this vein. ~ Greg Matthews, *Metadata Librarian, Washington State University Libraries*