perform the spectrum of duties required of cultural heritage professionals, including recognition of the importance of information technology and digitization in current and future library environments, and an exploration of the effectiveness of practical training and experiential learning in addition to classroom instruction.

The book contains a limited number of illustrations, which is to be expected, because several of the papers are more speculative than academic in nature. The few figures that are included consist primarily of tables and charts, providing graphical representations of relevant data. Some are derived from the results of two different studies: the first, on educational opportunities and training needs for the care of digital collections; and the second, based on a questionnaire soliciting responses about what content should be included in descriptions of book bindings. Others offer tabular representations of information, such as Susan Allen’s report on the history of California Rare Book School.

One omission from these proceedings was a keynote address, which, according to Pierre Delsaerdt’s Introduction, was given by Michael Suarez. As Director of the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia, Professor Suarez plays an integral role in the education of cultural heritage librarians—both within the United States and from abroad. His inclusion as a keynote speaker at the Antwerp conference supports this role, but his remarks are curiously absent from the book.

Overall, the book is not intended to be prescriptive or to culminate in a concise list of recommended competences for cultural heritage professionals. Rather, it is a series of contemplative essays by professionals on the educational and practitioner sides of the issue. As a result, it is not particularly effective for a student or aspiring professional who seeks recommendations for the knowledge and skills that he or she should develop to be successful in the field. It does, however, initiate a dialog to provide those stakeholders who may be in a bit more of an influential position to begin considering the skills needed to shape the next generation of cultural heritage professionals and the options available in educational programs to cultivate the necessary skills.—Jennifer K. Sheehan, University of North Texas.


This compilation of essays began as presentations at a symposium on ephemera in the long eighteenth century, held at the City University of New York Graduate Center in March 2009. The present collection, edited by Kevin D. Murphy and Sally O’Driscoll, seeks to reconceive and resituate the study of English eighteenth-century print ephemera, emphasizing how pervasive such materials were during
the period. Their significance partly derives from the fact that many well-known visual and literary works were created in a culture swimming in these ephemera. The essays are separated into two distinct groups, the first focusing on categories, formats, and definitions of ephemera, and the second merging the study of both text and image into the scholarly analysis of ephemeral forms. Throughout, an impressive array of illustrations accompanies the text.

While the broadside ballad takes center stage in the explorations of category, other types of print ephemera are implicated and analyzed. Many librarians will enjoy the discussions around categorizing this particular type of printed matter. The essays on categorization vary in focus, from case studies of particular projects or collections to general overviews of ephemeral engagement. In one instance of the former, Patricia Fumerton explicates her project, the English Broadside Ballad Archive, which digitizes and makes accessible surviving seventeenth-century ballads printed in English. It is an impressive project, and her focus on the problems faced in determining which standards to use for both the digital objects and metadata will give librarians pause. It provides, perhaps, a valuable example of why information professionals, with their knowledge of classification schemas and metadata standards, should be involved in such projects.

Paula McDowell provides a broader view of categorization and format in her essay. McDowell notes that tools like Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) can strip away some of the layers of past categorization. While this may allow us to reassess past classification schemas, the question remains whether it is a help or hindrance to research. Perhaps the answer is yes in both cases, but information professionals will want to learn more. McDowell ends her piece by stressing the need to historicize the classifications of the past and asks us to consider whether they still work. Would a different descriptive scheme be better suited to the material and its study in today’s linked world? The remaining essays on categorization cover ephemera in the American Antiquarian Society collections, the process of collecting ballads from living people and how oral tradition informs this process, and formerly barely explored Scottish broadside ballads during the late Stuart and early Georgian periods. Together they provide a taste of the formats and categories of print ephemera and the types of research in which scholars of these forms engage.

The second set of essays usefully bridges a traditional separation between the study of text and the study of image in analyses of print ephemera. By asking scholars to look holistically at text and image together, the editors call for an interdisciplinary approach, emphasizing that text and image inform one another and converge to create richer meanings for both their intended audiences and present-day scholars. This section begins with Alexandra Franklin offering a method for determining an
image’s meaning along with three possible modes of reading that meaning. Theodore Barrow explores the reuse of woodcuts and argues that the placement and combination of images on a given sheet, in conversation with each other and the text, was the key to their interpretation. Franklin’s reflective, narrative, and allusive modes and Barrow’s combinatorial approach are helpful in providing context for the potential ways in which scholars might analyze these images. The remaining essays turn to specific subject matter represented in print ephemera, namely, Tara Burk’s analysis of execution ephemera and Sally O’Driscoll’s inquiry into effeminacy as seen in caricatures of the foppish figure known as the macaroni. Again, these essays provide a broad overview of possible ways of engaging with print ephemera and the possibilities inherent in an interdisciplinary approach.

Overall, this compilation of essays is a useful introduction to the study of English print ephemera in the long eighteenth century. The essays explore past and present modes of analyzing ephemera, as well as their associated assumptions, and encourage new methodologies and further inquiry into the form. Librarians and archivists will find that there is room in these discussions for our perspectives and expertise. The essays may encourage us to dig deeper into our ephemera collections. They also may persuade us to talk with scholars of print ephemera about the classification schemes and metadata standards libraries use, or have used, and to ask how well they serve the scholars of today and the shifting approaches to their work.—Shannon K. Supple, Reader Services Librarian, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles.


Based on the Lyell Lectures in Bibliography that Professor Ian Maclean delivered at Oxford in 2009 and 2010, Maclean’s book has expanded these lectures to produce an interesting, detail-rich history of the late Renaissance book market for scholarly works.

Though Maclean concentrates on the European learned book market, he also does a fine job of evoking the realities of the general European book trade during 100 years he covers; consequently, someone without a strong knowledge of the history of the book will find this work informative. Maclean includes chapters covering all aspects of the trade: labor, the evolution of some printers into publishers, censorship, market forces, authors, as well as covering the high point and decline of the market. His postscript makes comparisons to the modern book trade, which was predictable given the dialog over the past ten years concerning the state of scholarly publishing.