

CALL FOR PAPERS

Rethinking Early Modern Print Culture

An international and interdisciplinary conference at
The Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies
Victoria University in the University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
22-24 October 2010

The view that early modernity saw the transformation of European societies into cultures of print has been widely influential in literary, historical, philosophical, and bibliographical studies of the period. The concept of print culture has provided scholars with a powerful tool for analyzing and theorizing new (or seemingly new) regimens of knowledge and networks of information transmission as well as developments in the worlds of literature, theatre, music, and the visual arts. However, more recently the concept has been reexamined and destabilized, as critics have pointed out the continuing existence of cultures of manuscript, queried the privileging of technological advances over other cultural forces, and identified the presence of many of the supposed innovations of print in pre-print societies.

This multi-disciplinary conference aims to refine and redefine our understanding of early modern print cultures (from the fifteenth to the end of the seventeenth century). We invite papers seeking to explore questions of production and reception that have always been at the core of the historiography of print, developing a more refined sense of the complex roles played by various agents and institutions. But we especially encourage submissions that probe the boundaries of our subject, both chronologically and conceptually: did print culture have a clear beginning? How is the idea of a culture of print complicated by the continued importance of manuscript circulation (as a private and commercial phenomenon)? How did print reshape or reconfigure audiences? And what was the place of orality in a world supposedly dominated by print textuality? What new forms of chirography and spoken, live performances did print enable, if any?

Other possible topics might include:

- * Ownership of texts and plagiarism; authorship; “piracy”
- * Booksellers and printers, and their local, national, and international networks
- * Readers and their material and interpretative practices
- * Libraries, both personal and institutional
- * Beyond the book: ephemeral forms of print and manuscript
- * Text and illustration, print and visuality
- * Typography, mise en page, binding, and technological advances in book-production

We invite proposals for conference papers of 20 minutes and encourage group-proposals for panels of three papers. Alternative formats such as workshops and roundtables will also be considered. Abstracts of 250 words can be submitted electronically on the conference website,

<http://www.crrs.ca/events/conferences/print/>

The deadline for submissions is 15 December 2009.

All questions ought to be addressed to the conference organizers, Grégoire Holtz (French, University of Toronto) and Holger Schott Syme (English, University of Toronto), at printconference@gmail.com.