HABITS OF READING

IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

A Summer Humanities Institute for College Teachers
Directed by Steven N. Zwicker • 16 June-25 July 1997
Sponsored by the Folger Institute Center for Shakespeare Studies
Supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities
COVER ILLUSTRATION: Detail from the title page of *Catechismus Parvarus Primum Latine Qui Ediscatur* by Alexander Nowell (1573). INSIDE FOLD: Detail from the title page of *The Workes of John Boye* (1622). INSIDE: Plate 56 from *The Cryes of the City of London* (1711); Printer's device of fist or index is derived from a manuscript practice of attending to the word.
Institute

Founded in 1970, the Folger Institute is a center for advanced study and research in the humanities that is sponsored by the Folger Shakespeare Library and a consortium of thirty-three universities. With generous support from such agencies and individuals as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the John Ben Snow Memorial Trust, the Exxon Education Foundation, the Hillsdale Fund, Emory University, and John Dulin Folger, the Institute offers a multidisciplinary and cross-cultural program of seminars, workshops, symposia, colloquia, and lectures.

The Folger Institute Center for Shakespeare Studies was established in 1986 with an NEH grant. The programs of the Center have been expansively defined to reinvigorate college teaching through the exchange of a rich variety of ideas and approaches to the literature and history of the early modern period. The work of the Center is available to a wider scholarly community through publication of conference proceedings, distribution of slides and photocopied images of materials from the Folger collections, and online access to pedagogical workbooks.

The Folger Shakespeare Library, located two blocks from the nation's Capitol and across the street from the Library of Congress, is an independent research facility with about 256,000 volumes on British and European literary, cultural, political, religious, and social history from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries. The manuscript collection, which numbers 55,000, is especially strong in early correspondence and commonplace books. Such microfilm holdings as the state papers domestic from Edward VI through Charles I and the Cecil, Loseley, Harleian, and Lansdowne papers further extend the collections.

Chair: Barbara A. Mowat
Acting Executive Director: Kathleen Lynch
Program Administrator: Mariann Payne
Program Coordinator: Carol Brobeck
Program Assistant: Rebecca Willson
Administrative Assistant: Amy Adler
"Habits of Reading in Early Modern England" will make reading in all its facets the subject of intensive study and exploration. Working with the rich Folger collections and surveying the now substantial body of scholarship on the subject, the institute will consider the full range of intellectual and affective transactions between readers and their books. We will address the ways that the printing and distribution of books shaped texts, the relations between the practices of reading and the formation of collections and libraries, the inflection of politics by print, and the aesthetic and intellectual consequences of censorship, regulation, clientage, and patronage. We will, in other words, be concerned with all the ways we can trace Renaissance readers and their experience and, in turn, with the conclusions we might then draw about early modern authors and their embrace of those readers.

The relations between politics and reading will be a particular focus of this institute. The world of pamphlet culture and print warfare, of contest and animadversion, will be especially important to our study. Texts such as Marvell’s *Horatian Ode*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, and Dryden’s *Absalom and Achitophel* will be read as factional, polemical, and fully engaged in the issues of their own political moments. By recreating those moments, the institute will cast the poems of early

**Steven N. Zwicker**, Professor of English at Washington University, is the author most recently of *Lines of Authority: Politics and English Literary Culture, 1649-1689* (1993). With Kevin Sharpe, he coedited *Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England* (1987). *Refiguring Revolutions: British Politics and Aesthetics, 1642-1789*, also coedited with Kevin Sharpe, is forthcoming, as is *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature: From Andrew Marvell to Alexander Pope*. Professor Zwicker has worked extensively on manuscript annotation and marginalia in the rare-book collections of the Clark Library and Huntington Library and has studied the approximately 12,000 titles in the Folger’s collection of catalogued English books, 1641-1700, for evidence of the dialogue between texts and their readers.

about early modern authors and their embrace of those readers.

The relations between politics and reading will be a particular focus of this institute. The world of pamphlet culture and print warfare, of contest and animadversion, will be especially important to our study. Texts such as Marvell's Horatian Ode, Milton's Paradise Lost, and Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel will be read as factional, polemical, and fully engaged in the issues of their own political moments. By recreating those moments, the institute will cast the poems of early modern England as case studies for texts as political agents and for textual interpretation as a vital strategy for understanding culture and society.

The handwritten annotations in the margins of the Folger's rare books will be used as vital evidence in our study of the ways sixteenth- and seventeenth-century men and women read and responded to texts. By historicizing the reader—studying the contemporary representations and reimagining the social and physical sites and circumstances of reading—we will work to recreate the acts of attention and arts of interpretation that define the world of the early modern reader. Taking advantage of the institute's own setting in a library that is itself an important case study in the archiving of the period, we will examine a wide range of primary materials. These will include Renaissance texts on aesthetic theory and hermeneutics, as well as the metatexts of Renaissance books: their printed prefaces, dedications, illustrations, tables, and indexes.

In the course of the institute, participants will expand their knowledge of the book as a physical object with a session in the Folger's conservation laboratory. They will develop their facility in reading the hands of annotations with a palaeography practicum. They will examine search strategies for evidence of readers' responses to texts with an introduction to on-line resources. Finally, they will supplement field trips to the National Gallery of Art with an introduction to the Gallery's archive of prints and library of slides.

Throughout, the institute will make available strategies for college faculty to understand, and more importantly to teach, how texts spoke to the passions of early modern politics and spirituality, to class circumstance and to gender, to party allegiance and to political ideology. To that pedagogical end, participants will collectively assemble a packet of illustrative materials to be reproduced for incorporation into their own coursework with students.

## Eligibility

Enrollment in "Habits of Reading" is largely limited to those eligible to receive NEH support to attend (see below). Applications are welcome from full-time faculty in the humanities. Scholarly individuals from other fields will be considered.

## Faculty


**Anthony Grafton** is Professor of History at Princeton University. From Humanism to the Humanities, coauthored with Lisa Jardine (1986), The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe, coedited with A. Blair (1990), and Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Humanism in an Age of Science, 1450-1800 (1991) are among his publications. Commerce with the Classics: The Disciplines of Reading in Renaissance Europe is forthcoming.


Anyone who has taken part in an NEH humanities institute or summer seminar Sixteen participants will be selected to receive support that will include support: graduate students, secondary-school teachers, unaffiliated scholars, and early modern politics and spirituality, to class circumstance and to gender, to party allegiance and to political ideology. To that pedagogical end, participants will collectively assemble a packet of illustrative materials to be reproduced for incorporation into their own coursework with students.

**Eligibility**

Enrollment in "Habits of Reading" is largely limited to those eligible to receive NEH support to attend (see below). Applications are welcome from full-time faculty members in any of the humanities disciplines. A few places may be available for independent postdoctoral scholars, part-time faculty, and faculty members from colleges and universities outside the United States who are able to participate without stipend support; they are accordingly welcome to apply to attend.

**Financial Support**

Sixteen participants will be selected to receive support that will include (1) a stipend of $1,500, (2) an allowance for travel to and lodging in Washington, and (3) a contribution to food expenses. The following persons are ineligible for NEH support: graduate students, secondary-school teachers, unaffiliated scholars, and teachers in institutions outside the United States (although non-citizens with permanent teaching appointments in U.S. institutions of higher learning are eligible). Anyone who has taken part in an NEH humanities institute or summer seminar in the last two years will be given lower priority in consideration. Those applicants who are eligible for NEH support will automatically be considered for it.

**Application**

1 March 1997. For application forms, write Kathleen Lynch, Acting Executive Director, The Folger Institute, The Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 East Capitol Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. Or telephone (202) 675-0333, or e-mail <institute@folger.edu>.

**The Folger Institute**

Anthony Cradon is Professor of History at Princeton University. From Humanism to the Humanities, coauthored with Lisa Jardine (1986), The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe, coauthored with A. Blair (1990), and Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Humanism in an Age of Science, 1450-1800 (1991) are among his publications. Commerce with the Classics: The Disciplines of Reading in Renaissance Europe is forthcoming.


Michael Mendle, Professor of History at the University of Alabama, is the author of Dangerous Positions: Mixed Government, the Estates of the Realm, and the Making of the 'Answer to the XIX Propositions' (1985) and Henry Parker and the English Civil War: The Political Thought of the Public's Privado (1995). He is at work on The English Civil War and Political Thought.

Kevin Sharpe is Professor of History at the University of Southampton. In addition to numerous articles, he has authored The Personal Rule of Charles I (1992), coedited two volumes of essays with Steven Zwicker, and coedited Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England with Peter Lake (1994).

