

AARON T. PRATT

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CURRENT APPOINTMENT

University of Texas at Austin, 2017 to present
Carl & Lily Pforzheimer Curator of Early Books & Manuscripts, Harry Ransom Center
Assistant Professor of Instruction, Department of English

PREVIOUS APPOINTMENT

Trinity University, 2015–2017
Assistant Professor, Department of English

EDUCATION

Yale University, 2010–2016
Doctor of Philosophy, English Literature
Dissertation: “**The Status of Printed Playbooks in Early Modern England**”
Committee: David Scott Kastan (Director, English), Lawrence Manley (English), & Keith Wrightson (History)

The Ohio State University, 2008–2010
Master of Arts, English Literature

The Ohio State University, 2001–2005
Bachelor of Arts, English & Philosophy
Minor in Women's Studies

PUBLICATIONS

Coeditor with Kirk Melnikoff and Breanne Weber. *Playbook Wills, 1529–1690*. Under contract with Manchester University Press.

Coauthor w/ Claire M. L. Bourne. “**‘Ordinary’ and ‘Sorry’: Imperfect Reading in the J. Fleming Playbook Collection, 1695–1709.**” Under review.

“**Through the First Folio, Darkly: When is a ‘Perfect’ Copy Perfect?**” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 74.4 (2023): 396–404.

“**The Long Lives of First Folios.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. November 28, 2023. Accessed December 19, 2023.

“**The Great Old Ones.**” *Fine Books and Collections*. Autumn, 2023. Republished online as “*The Long Lives of Very Old Books: Books as Historical Artifacts.*” September 12, 2023. Accessed October 9, 2023.

Book People of the Nuremberg Chronicle: A Coloring Book. Austin, TX: Harry Ransom Center, 2023.

“**Charting a Path.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. December 5, 2022. Accessed June 2, 2023.

“**A Rare Gift: First-edition *Principia* Highlights Extraordinary Collection.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. December 6, 2021. Accessed May 19, 2022.

“**Paper Pitfalls.**” *Quires & Clasps* (personal website). May 30, 2021. Accessed May 31, 2021.

UPDATED FEBRUARY 7, 2024

“**Primary Source: An Elizabethan Exorcist’s (very weird) Secret Press.**” *Not Even Past*. October 31, 2020. Accessed December 5, 2020.

“**Learning How to Read Again.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. October 14, 2020. Accessed December 5, 2020.

“**Sometimes You Want Your Blank Blank.**” *Quires & Clasps* (personal website). April 2, 2020. Accessed December 5, 2020.

“**Picturing the Plays of Shakespeare & His Contemporaries.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. March 19, 2020. Accessed April 16, 2020.

“**Revealing an English Schoolmaster’s *Piers Plowman*.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. January 15, 2020. Accessed February 16, 2020.

Coauthor w/ Kathryn James. *Collated & Perfect*. New Haven, CT & Austin, TX: Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library & Harry Ransom Center, 2019.

“**Gutenberg Misbound.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. May 24, 2019. Accessed August 24, 2019.

“**Printed Manuscripts.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. October 4, 2018. Accessed August 10, 2019.

“**The Trouble with Translation: Paratexts & England’s Bestselling New Testament.**” In *The Bible on the Shakespearean Stage: Cultures of Interpretation in Reformation England*, edited by Thomas Fulton & Kristen Poole, 33–48. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

“**In the Galleries: Interactive Design in Early Printed Books.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. January 4, 2018. Revised & republished as “Technology in Paper: Interactive Design in Early Printed Books.” *Not Even Past*. August 20, 2020. Accessed September 28, 2020.

“**A Baroness & Her Bookshelves in an English Parish Church.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. October 19, 2017. Accessed August 10, 2019.

“**Instructions for Reading Aloud in the Gutenberg Bible.**” *Ransom Center Magazine*. July 5, 2017. Republished as “The Gutenberg Bible Comes with Reading Instructions.” *Yahoo!/Time*. October 2, 2017. Accessed August 10, 2019.

“**Printed Playbooks, Performance, & the 1580s Lag.**” *Shakespeare Studies* 45 (2017): 51–59.

“**Horror & Exploitation on VHS: The History of Home Video Comes to Yale.**” *Journal of Visual Culture* 14.3 (2015): 332–335.

“**Stab-Stitching & the Status of Early English Playbooks as Literature.**” *The Library*, 7th ser., 16.3 (2015): 304–328.

Coauthor w/ David Scott Kastan. “**Printers, Publishers, & the *Chronicles* as Artefact.**” In *The Oxford Handbook to Holinsbed’s Chronicles*, edited by Paulina Kewes, Ian W. Archer, & Felicity Heal, 21–42. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

“**Latimer, Hugh.**” In *Encyclopedia of English Renaissance Literature*, edited by Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr. & Alan Stewart, 582–583. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Coauthor w/ John N. King. “**Bibles as Books: The Materiality of English Printed Bibles from the Tyndale New Testament to the King James Bible.**” In *The King James Bible after 400 Years: Literary, Linguistic & Cultural Influences*, edited by Hannibal Hamlin & Norman W. Jones, 61–99. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *The Complete Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, ed. Thomas N. Corns, Ann Hughes, & David Loewenstein. *Prose Studies* 33.1 (2011): 79–82.

EXHIBITIONS

“**The Long Lives of Very Old Books.**” Major exhibition at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Fall 2023.

“**The Books of Renaissance Women**” & “**The History of Science & Mathematics.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Spring 2022.

“**Printing the World in Premodern Europe.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Spring 2022.

“**Illustrating Early English Drama.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Spring 2020 & Fall 2021.

“**Understanding Chaucer.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Fall 2019.

“**Collated & Perfect.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Spring 2019.

“**Dying Well in Early Modern England.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Fall 2018.

“**I do not lik this: Frances Wolfreton, Collector & Critic.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Spring 2018.

“**Interactive Design in Early Printed Books.**” In *Stories to Tell* at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Fall 2017.

“**The Gutenberg Bible**” at the Harry Ransom Center. Austin, TX, Fall 2017 to present. (Opening, label, & an occasional companion object change every 3 months.)

PRESENTATIONS

“**Making a First-Class First Folio.**” Presentation at What’s Past is Prologue: Mobilizing the UBC First Folio, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada, November 18, 2023.

“**The First Folio Wasn’t at the Frankfurt Book Fair.**” Presentation for public panel at What’s Past is Prologue: Mobilizing the UBC First Folio, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada, November 17, 2023.

“**Shakespeare Wasn’t at the Frankfurt Book Fair.**” Presentation at 400 Years of Shakespeare’s First Folio: Separating Fact from Fiction, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, October 27, 2023.

“**Binding Shakespeare before the First Folio.**” Presentation at Shakespeare for All Time: A Symposium on the 400th Anniversary of the First Folio, Yale University, New Haven, CT, September 29, 2023.

“**Science on Screen: *The Colour of Ink.***” Pre-screening interview with Lars Nilsen at Austin Film Society, Austin, TX, May 27, 2023.

“**Grappling with a Monumental Map: Joan Blaeu’s *Nova totius terrarum orbis tabula.***” Online presentation with Ellen Cunningham-Kruppa for The American Trust for the British Library, March 8, 2023.

“**Survival of the Thickest? Or, Why Do Some (Very) Old Books Survive Better than Others?**” Online lecture for British, Irish, and Empire Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, TX, February 6, 2023.

“**The Early History of European Printing (in a global context).**” Presentation at the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, TX, October 20, 2022.

“**What to Do with the UBC First Folio.**” Presentation at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada, May 13, 2022.

“**Perfecting the Renaissance.**” Keynote lecture at Forging Ahead: Fakes, Fabrications, & Facsimiles in Cultural & Literary History—Medieval to Modern, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, The University of California, Los Angeles, CA, May 4, 2022.

“**The Blaeu World Map.**” Presentation with Ellen Cunningham-Kruppa at the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, TX, April 28, 2022.

“**Revisiting Wise’s Sophisticated Marlowes; Or, Bibliography Old & New.**” Online lecture for donors of the Bibliographical Society of America, May 25, 2021.

“**Collection Connections: Renaissance Humanism between Islamic Covers.**” Online presentation & conversation with Andrea Knowlton for the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, April 29, 2021.

“**It’s Not Snowing on Miami Vice; Or, Book History’s Media Literacy Problem.**” Pre-circulated paper for the Politics of Bibliography II, a seminar at the Virtual 49th Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, April 2, 2021.

“**Collection Connections: What Did Gutenberg Invent?**” Online presentation & conversation with Devin Fitzgerald for the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, December 10, 2020.

“**Sharing Special Collections with an Overhead Camera.**” Online presentation, June 3, 2020. Published to YouTube by The Bibliographical Society of America, June 8, 2020.

“**Why Did Elizabethans & Jacobeans Read Shakespeare’s Plays?**” Presentation at the Faculty Seminar on British Studies, The University of Texas at Austin, TX, February 28, 2020.

“**Yes, Playbook Readers in Elizabethan & Jacobean England Cared About Authorship.**” Presentation at the Workshop in the History of Material Texts, The University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, February 10, 2020.

“**The Paradox of Perfection: Re-evaluating the Kemble-Devonshire Playbooks.**” Presentation at the annual meeting of the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, St. Louis, MO, October 19, 2019.

“**Binders in a Bind: Making Books in an Age of Print.**” Lecture at Saint Anselm College, Goffstown, NH, September 25, 2019.

“**Perfect.**” Presentation as part of Collated & Perfect, a Pforzheimer Lecture at the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, TX, February 28, 2019.

“**Collated & Perfect.**” Roundtable moderation & discussion at the Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT, February 5, 2019.

“**Shakespeare’s Books.**” Lecture at West Texas A&M University, Canyon, TX, November 6, 2018.

“**Perfect Books.**” Presentation at Books & Their Use[r]s, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, October 19, 2018.

“**Sophisticated Books.**” Keynote lecture at the Book History Workshop, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, June 4, 2018.

“**Conway’s Taste for Playbooks.**” Pre-circulated paper for Early Modern Cultures of Taste, a seminar at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, Los Angeles, CA, March 29, 2018.

“**Where Was Luther in the English Bible, 1525-1611?**” Presentation at Nailing Down the Protestant Reformation: A Symposium on the Martin Luther Quincentennial, The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, November 10, 2017.

“**Playbooks & Their Authors Before the Playhouses.**” Pre-circulated paper for Shakespearean Distortions of Early Modern Drama, a seminar at the 45th Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, Atlanta, GA, April 6, 2017.

“**The Trouble with Translation.**” Presentation & roundtable discussion at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, Chicago, IL, March 31, 2017.

“**Stabbed then Stab-Stitched: Marlowe’s Death & the Transmission of Dramatic Manuscripts.**” Presentation at Old Books/New Approaches, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX, February 17, 2017.

“Marlowe’s Playbooks & Manuscript Transmission.” Presentation at the annual convention of the Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, PA, January 6, 2017.

“Quod Auctor’: Rethinking the History of Dramatic Authorship in Print.” Presentation at Shakespeare, the Book, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX, September 30, 2016.

“Too Gory for the Silver Screen: Horror as Video.” Presentation at Terror on Tape: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the History of Horror on Video, Yale University, New Haven, CT, May 7, 2016.

“Infinite Riches in a Little ROM.” Presentation at the annual convention of the Modern Language Association, Austin, TX, January 7, 2016.

“Communities of the Book: Academics, Booksellers, Curators, & Collectors.” Roundtable discussion at the Orientation & Opening Colloquium for the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in Critical Bibliography, Rare Book School, Charlottesville, VA, May 30, 2015.

“Cheap Print, Playbooks, & the Advent of English Literature.” Presentation at the annual meeting of the Bibliographical Society of America, New York, NY, January 23, 2015.

“A Review of DEEP & Updating McKerrow’s Dictionary.” Pre-circulated responses for Digital Resources for the Early Modern Book Trade, a workshop at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, St. Louis, MO, April 12, 2014.

“Reading Unmarked Bibles in Elizabethan & Jacobean England.” Presentation at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, New York, NY, March 29, 2014.

“Stab-Stitching & the Status of Playbooks as Literature.” Presentation at “New Bownde”: New Scholarship in Early Modern Binding, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC, August 15, 2013.

“Buying Playbooks in Early Modern England.” Pre-circulated paper for a seminar of the Yale Program in the History of the Book, Yale University, New Haven, CT, January 17, 2013.

“Buying & Reading the Bible in Shakespeare’s England: A Polemic.” Pre-circulated paper for Reading Shakespeare & the Bible, a seminar at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, Boston, MA, May 5, 2012.

“Radical Soteriology & Winstanley’s Antinomian Hermeneutic.” Pre-circulated paper for The Bible & Early Modern Radicals, a seminar at The King James Bible & its Cultural Afterlife, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, May 6, 2011.

“The Materiality of English Bibles from the Tyndale New Testament to the King James Bible.” Pre-circulated paper for the Seminar for the History of the Book, The Ohio State University, April 16, 2010.

“Sorry, Bale: Revisiting Tudor Apocalypticism.” Presentation at the 6th International Conference of the Tudor Symposium, Sheffield, UK, September 15, 2009.

“Yet is the text a light to the cronicles’: Bale, Foxe, & Apocalyptic Historiography.” Presentation at the 44th International Congress on Medieval Studies, University of Western Michigan, Kalamazoo, MI, May 8, 2009.

MEDIA APPEARANCES

“2023 Fall Preview: Six Texas Art Exhibitions to See this Year.” Interview with William Sarradet. *Glasstire*. August 31, 2023.

“Austin’s Harry Ransom Center gives a look inside more than 150 old books with fascinating histories.” Interview with Amber Heckler. *CultureMap Austin*. August 18, 2023.

“**Harry Ransom Center unveils ‘The Long Lives of Very Old Books’ exhibition, spotlighting centuries-old literary treasures.**” Interview with John-Carlos Estrada. *CBS Austin*. August 17, 2023.

“**From eBay to UT, a Priceless Ancient Gospel of John Papyrus Fragment Ends Up in Austin.**” Interview with John-Carlos Estrada. *CBS Austin*. December 6, 2022.

“**LARGEST & smallest.**” Interview with Gabriel C. Pérez. *KUT Austin*. September 28, 2022.

“**The Texas Oil Heir Who Took On Math’s Impossible Dare.**” Interview with William J. Broad. *New York Times*. January 31, 2022.

“**Aaron Pratt, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas.**” Interview with Thomas Dabbs. *Speaking of Shakespeare*. July 25, 2021.

“**Aaron Pratt on Early Books & Manuscripts at the Harry Ransom Center, Austin, Texas.**” Interview with Andy Kesson. *A Bit Lit*. July 9, 2020.

“**Bright Young Librarians: Aaron T. Pratt.**” Interview. *Fine Books & Collections Magazine*, May 20, 2020.

“**‘Juliet & Romeo’: Newly unearthed text suggests how Milton might have edited Shakespeare.**” Interview with Hannah Natanson. *Washington Post*. September 17, 2019.

“**Frankenbooks.**” Interview with Caroline Barta & Amy Vidor. *Archival Fever*. Podcast audio. February 15, 2019.

“**How the VCR Began America’s Love of On-Demand Content.**” Interview with Alexi Horowitz-Ghazi. *All Things Considered*. August 6, 2016.

“**Yale Is Starting a VHS Archive & It’s Full of Horror Movies.**” Interview with Jeremy Hobson. *Here & Now*. March 27, 2015.

“**Yale Library Acquires Blockbuster Collection of ‘70s & ‘80s VHS Tapes.**” Interview with Ed Stannard. *New Haven Register*. March 11, 2015.

“**Yale Is Building an Incredible Collection of VHS Tapes.**” Interview with Natalie Kitroeff. *Bloomberg*. March 5, 2015.

“**U-Va’s Rare Book School: A ‘summer camp for book nerds’.**” Interview with Lee Powell. *Washington Post*. August 18, 2014.

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

Faculty Summer Research Stipend. Trinity University, 2016.

Yale Graduate Student Assembly Conference Travel Fellowship. For presentation at the 43rd Annual Meeting of The Shakespeare Association of America, 2015.

Katharine F. Pantzer New Scholar. Bibliographical Society of America, 2015.

The Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in Critical Bibliography. Rare Book School, 2014–2017.

Folger Institute Grant-in-aid. For participation in the seminar, Researching the Archive, led by Jean E. Howard & Pamela H. Smith, 2014–2015.

James M. Osborn Fellowship in English Literature & History. Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, 2013.

Yale Graduate Student Assembly Conference Travel Fellowship. For presentation at “New Bownde”: New Scholarship in Early Modern Binding, 2013.

Folger Institute Grant-in-aid. For attendance at the conference, An Anglo-American History of the KJV, 2011.

Folger Institute Grant-in-aid. For participation in the seminar, The History of the Stationers' Company, led by Ian Gadd, 2011.

Folger Institute Grant-in-aid. For participation in the seminar, Mastering Research at the Folger, led by Zachary Lesser, 2009.

TEACHING

The University of Texas at Austin

Faculty

Premodern Book Illustration, Fall 2023 (Conference Course)

How to Read an Old Book, 1450–1830, Fall 2022 (Graduate Seminar)

The Long Lives of Early Printed Books, July 2021 (Extracurricular Intensive 3-Day Seminar)

Printing the Law in Early Modern England, Fall 2019 (Conference Course)

BEME: Bibles of Early Modern England, Fall 2018 (Conference Course)

Trinity University

Faculty

Revenge in Renaissance Drama, Spring 2017

Great Books of Western Modernity, Spring 2017

Introduction to Shakespeare, Fall 2016

British Literature to 1800, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, & Fall 2016

Shakespeare, Fall 2015 & Spring 2016

Great Books of the Ancient World, Fall 2015

Yale University

Acting Instructor

English for Freshmen / Terror, Horror, & the Literary Imagination, Spring 2014

Teaching Assistant

John Milton (John Rogers), Fall 2013

American Literature, Colonial to Civil War (Michael Warner), Spring 2013

Shakespeare's Histories & Tragedies (David Scott Kastan), Fall 2012

Teaching Associate / Tutor

Daily Themes (Richard Deming), Spring 2012

Daily Themes (Langdon Hammer), Spring 2011

The Ohio State University

Acting Instructor

First-Year Writing / The Rhetoric of Trucks: F150s, Bigfoot, & American Identity, Spring 2010

First-Year Writing / Media Madness: Sensationalism in Our Culture, Winter 2009

First-Year Writing / Arguing Religion & Politics: The Rhetoric of Controversy, 3 terms, 2008 & 2009

EDITORIAL SERVICE

Not Even Past. Series Editor, Primary Source: History from the Ransom Center Stacks, 2020 to present.

Shakespeare Quarterly. Submission Referee, 2020 & 2023.

Shakespeare Newsletter. Member, Editorial Board, 2019 to present.

Texas Studies in Language and Literature. Submission Referee, 2021 & 2022.

Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America. Submission Referee, 2021.

Script & Print: Bulletin of the Bibliographical Society of Australia. *Submission Referee*, 2021.

Shakespeare. *Submission Referee*, 2017.

The Expositor: A Journal of Undergraduate Research in the Humanities [at Trinity University]. *Coeditor*, 2016–2017.

Cambridge University Press. *Press Reviewer*, 2016.

Literature Compass. *Submission Referee*, 2016.

Reformation. *Submission Referee*, 2015.

The Library: Transactions of the Bibliographical Society. *Submission Referee*, 2013.

Reformation & Literature & History. *Editorial Assistant*, 2009–2010.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Digital Scriptorium. *Member, Board of Directors*, 2022 to present.

Freedom & the Press Before Freedom & the Press. *Member, Advisory Board*, 2022 to present.

Harry Ransom Center. *Member, Metadata Steering Group*, 2019 to present.

Bibliographical Society of America. *Member, International Working Group*, 2018 to 2020; *Member, Publishing Committee*, 2020 to 2022; *Liaison to the Renaissance Society of America*.

Harry Ransom Center. *Organizer, Pforzheimer Lecture*, 2018 to present.

Marlowe Society of America. *Webmaster*, 2017 to present.

Harry Ransom Center. *Member, Hiring Committee*, 2020 & 2022.

Harry Ransom Center. *Member, Early Books & Manuscripts Fellowship Subcommittee*, 2020.

Harry Ransom Center. *Co-chair, Space Management Task Force*, 2019–2020.

Andrew W. Mellon Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography at Rare Book School. *Cofounder & Committee Member*, 2016–2020.

Harry Ransom Center. *Member, Fellowship Committee*, 2018 to present.

Shakespeare, the Book. *Organizer*, September 30–October 1, 2016.

Terror on Tape: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the History of Horror on Video. *Co-organizer*, May 6–7, 2016.

The Futures of Historicism: A Symposium in Honor of David Scott Kastan. *Co-organizer*, October 2–3, 2015.

The Yale Program in the History of the Book. *Cofounder & Co-organizer*, 2012–2015.

Pomerium Renaissance Working Group. *Convener*, 2012–2015.

Tudor Books & Readers, 1485-1603, an NEH Summer Seminar for College & University Teachers. *Project Assistant*, 2012.

RELEVANT NON-ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Aaron T. Pratt Antiquarian Books. *Owner*, 2011–2016.

Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. *Curatorial Assistant*, 2011.

Stream Right / Engauge. *Lead Systems Administrator & Development Team Leader*, 2007–2008.

MyTriggers. *Lead Systems Administrator*, 2006–2007.

Qwest Communications. *Senior Systems Engineer*, 2000–2001.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Bibliographical Society of America, 2018 to present.

Andrew W. Mellon Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography at Rare Book School, 2017 to present.

Bibliographical Society (UK), 2011 to present.

Shakespeare Association of America, 2011 to present.