

Books

AN OVERVIEW OF BOOKS AND BOOK PUBLISHING

A Short History of Book Publishing Technology

- ▶ Paintings on rock walls in Australia are about 40,000 years old.
- ▶ Ancient Sumerian tokens eventually became a kind of writing.
- ▶ Ancient Egyptians invented papyrus.
- ▶ Romans made first bound books, called “codex.”
- ▶ Illuminated manuscripts during the so-called “Dark Ages.”
- ▶ All of this leads up to 1450 and Gutenberg

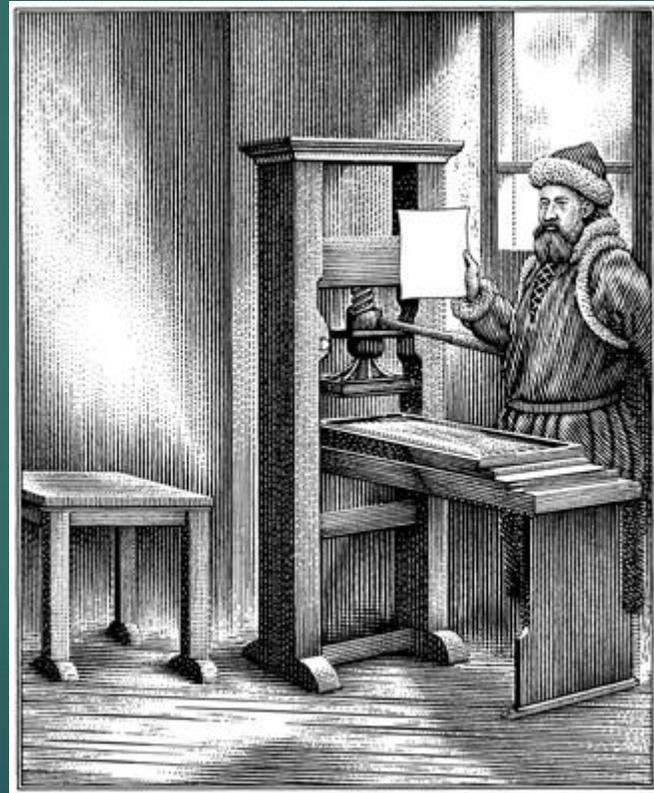
Aboriginal Rock Wall Paintings



Gutenberg, Caxton and the Rise of Printing

- ▶ Gutenberg invents movable type around 1450.
- ▶ Greatly simplifies printing.
- ▶ William Caxton becomes first English printer.
- ▶ Canterbury Tales among the very first books published in English.
- ▶ Most printed material is in form of flyers, posters, but...
- ▶ Books and newspapers and magazines all emerge from the new technology

Gutenberg Printing Press



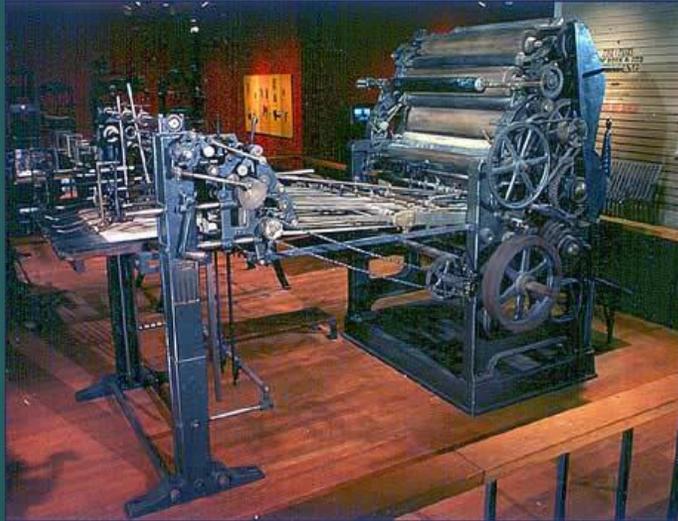
Linotype Speeds Up the Printing Process

- ▶ Mergenthaler's Linotype machine wins battle with Paige Compositor.
- ▶ Paige received financial support from Samuel Clemens (aka, Mark Twain).
- ▶ Linotype remains the dominant form of letterpress typesetting well into the 1970s and even today for extremely high-quality typesetting.



Offset Printing Another Improvement

- ▶ Offset printing in early 20th century speeds up printing, but book publishers often stick with higher quality letterpress printing.



Print-on-demand and eBooks

- ▶ After decades of few changes in printing technology two important changes emerge. They are:
- ▶ Print-on-demand technology
- ▶ Ebook technology

Future of Print Technology

- ▶ The future for book technology is digital.
- ▶ But print books continue to sell well, and independent bookstores are currently thriving. <https://www.bookweb.org/for-the-record>

A Short History of Book Content

- ▶ First books were Roman codex.
- ▶ After fall of Rome, books become rare through “Dark Ages.”
- ▶ Illuminated manuscripts save knowledge.
- ▶ Isolated monasteries in Ireland elsewhere
- ▶ Book of Kells.

Books from Gutenberg and Caxton

- ▶ Gutenberg prints Bibles. A number of these first printed books still exist.
- ▶ Caxton print “Canterbury Tales” and other books.

Fiction and Non-fiction Books

- ▶ Non-fiction books are those where the material is all true. First non-fiction books were religious, political, travel, economics.
- ▶ Fiction books are those where the story is made up by the writer. We call these made-up book-length stories “novels.”

Dime novels and Penny Dreadfuls

- ▶ Beadle brothers in 1860 start producing inexpensive “dime novels” in America. Very successful.
- ▶ Zane Grey a very successful dime-novel author of Westerns and Baseball novels.
- ▶ Inexpensive British novels had been around for some years by then in the U.K. They were called “penny dreadfuls” for their price and their literary quality.

20th-century novels' Golden Age

- ▶ Prior to the arrival of television, novels were extremely popular in America and many novelists were celebrities.
- ▶ Ernest Hemingway
- ▶ F. Scott Fitzgerald
- ▶ James Michener
- ▶ Pearl S. Buck
- ▶ Zora Neal Hurston
- ▶ Harper Lee
- ▶ Flannery O'Connor

Novels since 1960 remain popular

- ▶ Novels remain popular today from recent novelists and classics. Often the popularity is tied to television or film adaptations.
- ▶ J.K. Rowling
- ▶ J.R.R. Tolkien
- ▶ George R.R. Martin

How Book Publishing is Organized

- ▶ Trade books
- ▶ Textbooks
- ▶ Professional/Religious books

Getting a Book Published

- ▶ Fiction and Non-fiction are different processes
- ▶ Typically, a first novel must be completely written first
- ▶ Then find an agent
- ▶ Then agent finds a publisher
- ▶ Non-fiction can be sold on a proposal basis
- ▶ Find an agent
- ▶ Agent finds a publisher

Or Take the Indie Route

- ▶ Publish your book yourself as an ebook on Amazon Kindle (and elsewhere) and/or print-on-demand
- ▶ Easier to publish
- ▶ Harder to make money

The Publication Process

- ▶ Once a book is sold:
- ▶ An advance is paid to the author.
- ▶ The author gets 10-15% of the cover price.
- ▶ Pays back the advance and then makes more money.
- ▶ Acquisitions editor
- ▶ Development editor
- ▶ Distributor
- ▶ Book stores (brick-and-mortar and/or online, 40%)
- ▶ Indie authors get no advance but keep larger percentage of price.