

as impassioned, opinionated, devoted to the trade and, with few exceptions, blessed with narrative abilities and an extraordinary sense of humor. With Eric Moore—founder in 1965 of Eric T. Moore Books in Hitchin, Hertfordshire—readers of these interviews will probably agree “that bookselling is the most humane, sociable, ill-organized, yet absorbing form of commerce to be found anywhere.”

So, is “ill-organized” a distinguishing characteristic of the bookseller profession and even a source of pride? In one of the funniest but also most illuminating interviews of this highly enjoyable volume—Markham’s conversation with Eric Korn, the London bookman once known for his “Remainders” column in *The Times Literary Supplement*—we come to understand that “ill-organized” may in fact be just the self-deprecating way in which the very best booksellers describe how they lead a customer from book to seemingly unrelated book, often based on only a single minor physical or textual detail the books have in common—“minor,” that is, except in the eye of the prospective customer. Korn, asked about the “unusual degree of free association” that seems to characterize his thinking and writing style, suggests that this is “the one advantage of having an undisciplined mind.... If you’re heavily structured ...it’s harder to find profitable cross-fertilization.” Peter Eaton celebrated his own powers of association by creating whimsical exhibits of curiosa in his bookshop, displaying things like “the clock that belonged to the people who put the engine in the boat Shelley drowned in.” (Or was this example just made up?)

Crisscrossing associative filaments link the thousands of books on the bookseller’s shelves in a dense net of intertextuality, a net that may exist solely in the bookseller’s mind and can be only inadequately represented or replaced by catalog searches or even keyword searching in a full-text environment. This may explain, at least in part, the disdain many antiquarian booksellers have for computers and the Internet. It’s not primarily the economic

survival aspect that is at work here. (Though Korn does quip that admitting computers into bookshops is “rather like turkeys cultivating cranberries.”) In the end, it’s the particular kind of wilderness guide service that only a truly knowledgeable bookseller can provide that explains the resistance of the guild to “embrace” change. This refrain is heard throughout Markham’s book. Nigel Burwood, owner of Any Amount of Books on London’s Charing Cross Road, asserts that it “would have been better for the book trade if the Internet had never been invented.” Yet all the same, Burwood and other booksellers interviewed on the pages of this book have leapt into the new environment with both feet, since “because it has been invented, you have to join in.” And they have done so very successfully, while still seeking to attract customers to their shops in the physical world, where many of the most fascinating conversations—and exciting discoveries—still take place.

This book was self-published in a hardbound edition limited to 500 copies in 2004. It may still be available through Sheila Markham’s Web site, but it is hard to find through the usual online ordering channels. The new paperback edition, by contrast, is both available and affordable. Those who want to read the interviews but place no value on owning the book may find many of them at the Sheila Markham Rare Books Web site, including the interviews with Peter Eaton, Eric Korn, Nigel Burwood, and Simon Gough. Though they are unlinked, Google knows they are there; and librarians, using passages quoted in this review, should have no problem finding them. Nothing beats owning the printed book, however, for pulling all of this material together and keeping it conveniently and reliably in one place for a very long time. Physical books are like that.—*Jeffrey Garrett, Northwestern University Library.*

Wiegand, Shirley A. and Wayne A.
Wiegand. *Books on Trial: Red Scare in the Heartland.* Norman: University

of Oklahoma Press, 2007. 286p. alk. paper, \$24.95 (ISBN 0806138688). LC 2007-4141.

On August 17, 1940, Oklahoma City police raided the local office of the Communist Party, the Progressive Bookstore, and five private homes. They confiscated thousands of books and other printed materials and arrested sixteen people under a state Criminal Syndicate law dating back to WWI. Law enforcement officials probably expected to achieve their aim of intimidating radicals and driving them out of the state quickly. Instead, the arrests resulted in a series of trials, convictions, and appeals that lasted over three years. In 1940, the Nazi-Soviet pact was in force and American Communists opposed the war. By 1943, Hitler had invaded the Soviet Union, Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor, and the United States and Soviet Union were allies. The changed political climate, along with widespread public protest at the violation of civil liberties in the absence of “clear and present danger,” helped the accused eventually to gain acquittal. A cause celebre that attracted the attention of the likes of Eleanor Roosevelt sank from historical memory.

When Wayne Wiegand stumbled on the story in 1999, he invited his wife Shirley to join him in the exhaustive detective work that eventually led to *Books on Trial*, one of the most engrossing books I’ve ever reviewed for a library journal. Shirley had taught law at the University of Oklahoma, and Wayne specialized in library history. They haunted archives and libraries around the country, pored over newspaper files, solicited documents under the Freedom of Information Act, and interviewed people with direct or indirect experience of the incident. Their narrative incorporates generous quotations and summaries of court proceedings, written documents, press accounts, and eyewitness testimony. It is sprinkled with vivid words and images that bring the era to life, such as this passage describing Detective Wade Webb’s preparations for an undercover visit to the Progressive

Bookstore: “He then donned an old oil-stained shirt, an oil-soaked hat and overalls, and some greasy, oil-soaked boots. He had not shaved for two days. ‘Now I look like a Communist,’ he thought as he checked himself in the mirror.”

What surprised me most about this story was the timing. I’d been under the impression that the anti-Communist witch hunt picked up steam only in the late forties, with the Cold War. I knew about the Hatch Act of 1939 outlawing membership in “subversive” organizations by federal employees, and the Smith Act of 1940 making it illegal to advocate the overthrow of the government. But I did not realize that the House Un-American Activities Committee existed before the war. The Wiegands provide information on the background to the trials within Oklahoma, where poverty, unemployment, and racial segregation were potent sources of discontent. Local issues were the real concern of the radical activists and the forces who opposed them (business, industry, veterans groups, the KKK). But the international situation forced the constitutional issue of free speech—the right to read and think what one wished—to the center of the conflict. The prosecution used scare words such as Trojan Horse and Fifth Column and ridiculed the names of some of the defendants, Jews from New York. Defense supporters hurled accusations of Gestapo tactics, while each side branded the other as fascist and un-American.

Bob Wood, the state Communist Party Secretary, was charged with running the bookstore, while the others were charged with being Communists, but all their cases rested on the purportedly seditious content of thousands of books, ranging from the works of Marx and Lenin to Thomas Jefferson and Charles Dickens. It was quickly pointed out that these books could be found in research libraries and were for sale in bookstores. Once the issue was defined as one of censorship, support for the defense (initially confined to left-wing voices) widened to include groups

such as the American Booksellers Association, university faculty and administrators, and professional associations. But not the American Library Association.

The Wiegands learned what they could about the lives of the principals in the case, even tracking down their descendants to find out about their later lives. I particularly enjoyed the portraits of the brilliant strategist Bob Wood, the party loyalist Alan Shaw, the irrepressible would-be novelist Ira Jaffe, and their wives Ina, Nena Beth, and Wilma. An FBI informant reported on them this way: "Robert and Ina Wood are the real leaders and the party whips, experienced and well traveled and slick as ice." Alan and Eli were "mere babes in arms" next to Bob Wood, "who keeps them going through flattery and bombast." The Wiegands are unsympathetic toward the prosecution side, implying that their motives were political, but the pugnacious Assistant County Attorney John Eberle does emerge as an individual.

Readers are given ample evidence with which to make up their minds about the rights and wrongs of the case, with a few exceptions. The Wiegands offer little background on right-wing groups in Oklahoma such as the American Legion, and they tend to underestimate (in my opinion) grassroots support of racism and nativism. While they acknowledge that the American Communist Party was mouthing the party line from Moscow, they nevertheless view the Communists in the case as basically good-hearted and nonideological. More information on treatment of the American Nazi Party would have provided a useful context for comparison.

The authors occasionally hint at their story's relevance to events today, as when they comment that "another part of Oklahoma's conservative elite made clear its priorities on civil liberties in periods of national crisis." They speak their minds more openly in an epilogue, referring to periodic episodes of "paranoid politics" in American history, the antiterrorism bill passed under Clinton, and the USA

PATRIOT Act. They are heartened that the strength of public opinion can restore the balance. Puzzlingly, they remark that the nation must have emerged from the Oklahoma affair with a "good dose of cynicism." Perhaps. The performance of the press and the legal system struck me as better then than now. My final impression is one of sad irony, knowing that the temporary victories for freedom of thought and expression recorded in this book were reversed almost as soon as the war was over. — *Jean M. Alexander, Carnegie Mellon University.*

Caribbean Libraries in the 21st Century: Changes, Challenges, and Choices.

Ed. Cheryl Peltier-Davis and Shamin Renwick, Medford, N.J.: Information Today, 2007. 387p. \$49.50 (ISBN: 1573873012). LC 2007-9440.

This is a current compilation of specially written chapters on a wide-ranging set of topics by knowledgeable people with Caribbean experience. The title is overbroad, however, as there is nearly no attention to the non-English-speaking islands of the insular Caribbean, countries like Puerto Rico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Haiti. The editors and most of the 40 contributing authors have a connection with one of the campuses of the University of the West Indies, supplemented by others working in the Bahamas and the Dutch-speaking countries. Two of the contributors are currently working in the region, and the other two have had considerable experience with IFLA.

The subtitle accurately reflects the variety of chapters. These include surveys of two countries; institutional histories of large and small academic libraries; examination of services to several special populations, including people living in rural areas, users of school libraries, blind and print disabled users; and chapters, including collection management, a classification scheme for Caribbean legal materials, and special information services to the agricultural sector. Impact and appropriate integration of informa-