

∞ AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ∞

ACTS OF READING



TEACHERS, TEXTS & CHILDHOOD *from 18TH CENTURY to the PRESENT DAY*

**ACTS OF READING : TEACHERS, TEXTS AND CHILDHOOD
FROM 18THC TO THE PRESENT DAY**

*Report of an international conference held at the Faculty of Education
University of Cambridge on 19 and 20 April 2007.*

Acts of Reading was a most successful conference where we enjoyed beautiful Spring weather, though a packed programme gave participants little time to be outside! (For a taste of the conference, please see the photographs below.) Contributors came from USA, Canada, Australia, Italy, Spain, Germany, Sweden, Ireland, Scotland and England. The conference was wide-ranging, considering many kinds of texts, teachers, readers and readings of word and image from the past and present, including an exploration of digital technologies on reading, and concluding with the multimodal future of reading. At the heart of the conference lay Jane Johnson's extraordinary and unique reading lessons for her children (housed at the Lilly Library, Indiana University) and her story (1744), family papers and other archival material (housed at the Bodleian Library, Oxford). Between us, we certainly succeeded in exploring domestic literacy and drawing Jane Johnson 'out of the shadows'.

We were extremely lucky in the expertise and eloquence of our speakers (Evelyn Arizpe, Eve Bearne, Elizabeth Johnson, Margaret Meek Spencer, Victor Watson, Susan Whyman). Shirley Brice Heath gave a dazzling keynote lecture, demonstrating the breadth of her scholarship which included the perspectives of neuroscience and linguistics, as well as visual literacy, social anthropology and history. Participants should be praised for the quality of their papers, their appreciativeness, sociability and good time-keeping. Having half an hour (rather than the usual 20 minutes) to deliver papers, plus 30 minutes discussion, avoided the often rushed feel of conference presentations. Our excellent Chairs kept the programme running smoothly and often added their own subtle touches to the proceedings.

For details of programme and paper presentations, see below.

Acts of Reading – the next episode

Pied Piper Press has agreed to publish the book of the proceedings which will be edited by Evelyn Arizpe & Morag Styles. Contributors who have not already done so, are invited to

submit a written version of their paper by the end of April (or later by negotiation with Morag Styles). Decisions will be made about which papers best fit the forthcoming book (*Acts of Reading: Teachers, Texts & Childhood*) by the end of May 2007. (Those contributions which do not fit the book – we won't be able to include all the topics – might offer them to one of two journals published by Pied Piper Press, *Journal of Children's Literature Studies* and *Journal of Reading, Writing and Literacy*.) We plan to publish the book in the summer or autumn of 2008.

We will provide further information when we contact you, but it might be useful to know that final versions of accepted contributions -

- should be 4000 – 6000 words long;
- should be submitted by the end of September 2007;
- should be sent simultaneously to Morag Styles (ms104@cam.ac.uk) and Evelyn Arizpe (e.arizpe@educ.gla.ac.uk) by email attachment;
- follow Pied Piper Press guidelines for referencing (debbie@piedpiperpublishing.com);
- can include illustrations, but as there is no budget for this, (i) you need to gain written permission to use illustrations of which PPP will need a copy and (ii) black and white only.

Morag Styles would like to thank –

- All the speakers, chairs and paper presenters;
- All the participants for being such a delightful group of people to work with, and to those in particular who sent kind letters, cards and emails after the conference;
- Evelyn Arizpe for sharing the paper approval process and much more;
- Marilyn Brocklehurst's Bookshop;
- Debbie Mynott & Pied Piper Press;
- Faculty of Education Research Committee for a financial contribution to the costs of the conference;
- Jan Oram, Conference Administrator;
- Homerton College Conference Office and Catering;
- Colleagues from the Faculty of Education who attended the conference as speakers and Chairs and helped in many small ways;
- Peter Miles and Ken Bingham for taking photographs;
- Faculty of Education staff who contributed to the success of the conference in numerous ways.

ACTS OF READING

Thursday 19 April

8:30 - 9:20		Registration, coffee, bookshop	NFB
9:20		Welcome - Morag Styles	NFB GS5
9:30		Drawing Jane Johnson out of the shadows Victor Watson Chair: Valerie Coghlan	NFB GS5
10:00		Bringing 'Wisdom into the Hearts of Young Persons': Aesop, Watts and Newbery as sources for Jane Johnson's fables and maxims Evelyn Arizpe Chair: Morag Styles	NFB GS5
10:45		COFFEE	
11:15		<u>Choice of Paper Presentations I</u>	NFB GS5
	i]	Reading Fictions	
	<i>OR</i>		
	ii]	Reading, Imagination & Childhood	NFB 2S5
1:15		BUFFET LUNCH	
2:15		New Protocols of Reading: What counts as evidence? Margaret Meek Spencer Chair: Lissa Paul	NFB GS5
2:45		<u>Paper Presentations II</u>	NFB GS5
	iii]	Reading Pedagogies: Past & Present	
	<i>OR</i>		
	iv]	Acts of Reading	NFB 2S5
4:45		TEA	
5:15		Jane Johnson, Olney and Samuel Richardson: A Life in Letters Susan Whyman Chair: Evelyn Arizpe	NFB GS5
5:45		Digital Jane: Improving Access to the Jane Johnson Manuscript Nursery Library GS4 Elizabeth Johnson of Lilly Library, University of Indiana Chair: Shirley Brice Heath	
6:30		Wine reception sponsored by Pied Piper Press	NFB
7:15		Conference dinner in Homerton College Great Hall	
9:00		Following Jane's trail - Morag Styles Coffee in Combination Room	

Friday 20 April

9:00		Keynote lecture: The Book as Home: Imagining and Envisioning Shirley Brice Heath Chair: Michele Cohen NFB GS5
10:15		COFFEE
10:45		<u>Paper Presentations III</u>
	v]	Teachers, Texts and Childhood - NFB GS5
	<i>OR</i>	
	vi]	Teachers and Readers NFB 2S5
1:00		LUNCH Homerton College
2:00		<u>Paper Presentations IV</u>
	viii]	Reading Visual Texts NFB GS5
	<i>OR</i>	
	ix]	Reading the Past NFB 2S5
4:00		TEA
4:30		‘And what do you think happened next?’ Reading the Future NFB GS5 Eve Bearne Chair: Victor Watson
5:00		FAREWELL