



The New Bibliopolis: French Book Collectors and the Culture of Print, 1880-1914 (Studies in Book and Print Culture)

Willa Z. Silverman

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The late-nineteenth century in Europe was a period of profound political, social, and technological change. One result of these changes was the rise in France of an upper-bourgeois bohemian class. Many of its members stimulated interest in unique forms of artistic expression such as illustrated books. On account of their influence, an atmosphere of intense bibliophilic activity came to define French culture at the turn of the century. *The New Bibliopolis* explores the role of *amateurs* in promoting the book arts in France during this period.

Drawing on extensive original research, Willa Z. Silverman looks at the ways in which book collectors supported print culture. She shows how, through the admiration demonstrated by collectors for this medium, print came to be a crucial part of popular conceptions of aesthetics. As collectors, publishers, authors, designers, and directors of bibliophile societies, reviews, and small presses, these book lovers became passionate and prolific interlocutors of the printed word in a uniquely artistic epoch. Silverman analyzes subjects as diverse as the relationship between book collecting and aesthetic and cultural currents such as Symbolism; the gendered nature of book collecting; the increased collaboration between authors and illustrators; and the marketing of fine books at international exhibits.

The New Bibliopolis is an important contribution to the study of book history, French sociocultural history, and fine and decorative arts.

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