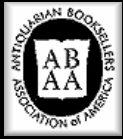




BOOKTALK



The bi-monthly Newsletter of

Sam Weller's Bookstore

New, Used and Rare Books

Salt Lake's Premier Full-Service Bookstore since 1929



October-November 2009



From Tony Weller: Relocation Update

Since our last issue of BookTalk, we and the co-owners of the David Keith Building have relisted our Main Street property in its entirety, and we are close to an agreement on its sale. Unless you are shopping for downtown property, you might not recall that we, at first, were only offering our 50% share in the David Keith Building, but since that time, our partners in ownership have decided to sell their portion as well. So the whole building is now available with information being provided by our broker, Ed Sperry of Keller Williams.

Regarding our search for a suitable new building, we have not yet made a firm choice. We've seen a few buildings that we like, but, until we make a deal on selling our current building, we will continue to look.

The Changing World of Books

As early as the 1980s, I began theorizing about the future of books in society. I arrived at ideas derived largely from the precedent of the effect the camera had on painting in the 19th century. Over the years, I have refined and tracked my predictions and now feel kind-of smart for arriving at concepts that have been strengthened by events over the intervening years. The nutshell

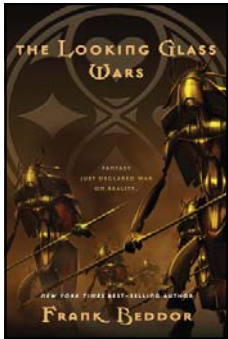
version of my theory is that the displacing effect electronic media has had on traditional uses of books will most certainly reduce the everyday need for books. However, as photography did to painting, computers have now forced books to a higher cultural plane. The body of the book was largely neglected between the 1940s and the 1990s. Look at books from that period: nearly all were made to the same design standards using a very narrow range of papers and typefaces. If illustrations were included, they were printed and placed in the same manner. Bindings were mundane and predictable and mostly hidden under predictable dust jackets. It has been easy to neglect the physicality of books more than of other objects precisely because books are the most content dense of the things we use. But since the early 1990s, there has been a creative explosion in book design running from layout to the nature and design of illustrations; from the shape and materials of the binding to the choices made about paper. All aspects of the book are being reconceived as the computer permits books to transcend mundane packages to achieve creative and beautiful marriages between text and object, in a sense, connecting the soul and body of the book.

I read auction and dealer catalogs, as well as magazines about rare books. One of my favorites is Fine Books and Collectibles and recent articles including one that showed and discussed the highest hammer prices for books at auction clearly indicate the shift the market has taken from *content* towards *object*. While art has always brought bigger prices than books, in the past the

Upcoming & Ongoing Events: October & November

- ◆ **Ephemera: Selected Objects from the recesses of the David Keith Building**
Ongoing through **November 13th**. *Gallery on the Mezzanine*
- ◆ **Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Club**
Tuesday, **October 6th**, 7:00 PM. Beehive Tea Room. Moderated by Courtney Martin and Bruce Christensen. October selections from *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventures of the Noble Bachelor, Beryl Band, and Copper Beeches*. Tickets are \$12, and must be purchased in advance at the bookstore. Includes light refreshments.
- ◆ **Willam B. Smart: Reading & Signing**
Friday, **October 16th**, 6:00 PM. In Store. William B. Smart will be reading from and signing his book *Mormonism's Last Colonizer: The Life and Times of William H. Smart*, winner of the Evans Handcart Award.
- ◆ **Lit. Knit** Wednesday, **October 14th & 28th**, 5:30 PM. In Store. Bring in your knitting/crocheting for an hour of bookish (and other) discussion.
- ◆ **Queereads Book Club** Sponsored by Sam Weller's Bookstore and the Utah Pride Center. Wednesday, **October 21st**, 6:30 PM. In Store. Moderated by Liz Shattler. October's selection is *Candy Girl* by Diablo Cody.
- ◆ **Edwin Torres: Reading & Signing**
Friday, **October 23rd**, 7:00 PM. Vieve Gore Concert Hall, Emma Eccles Jones Conservatory, Westminster College. **Edwin Torres** will present the final reading in this year's Anne Newman Sutton Weeks Poetry Series.
- ◆ **Utah Humanities Book Festival**
Saturday, and Sunday **October 24th and 25th** 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM and 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. Salt Lake City Public Library. Multiple author interviews, readings, workshops and signings.
- ◆ **David Sedaris: Reading and Signing**
Saturday, **October 24th**, 8:00 PM. Capitol Theatre. Weller's will be selling Sedaris titles at the event. Tickets available through ArtTix.
- ◆ **Hard Boiled Book Club** Sponsored by Sam Weller's Bookstore and SLUG Magazine. Tuesday, **October 27th**, 6:30 PM. In Store. Moderated by Zach Sampinos. October's Selection is *The Boat* by Nam Le.
- ◆ **Brandon Sanderson: Reading & Signing** Monday, **November 2nd**, 6:30 PM. In Store. **Brandon Sanderson** will be reading from and signing *The Gathering Storm*, volume 12 of Robert Jordan's *Wheel of Time*.
- ◆ **Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Club**
Tuesday, **November 3rd**, 7:00 PM. Beehive Tea Room. Moderated by Courtney Martin and Bruce Christensen. November's discussion will be Sherlock Holmes on the Screen. Tickets are \$12, and must be purchased in advance at the bookstore. Includes light refreshments.
- ◆ **Lit. Knit** Wednesday, **November 11th & 25th** 5:30 PM. In Store. Join the lively gaggle of knitters as we cluck and click with some bookish dish.
- ◆ **Hard Boiled Book Club** Sponsored by Sam Weller's Bookstore and SLUG Magazine. Tuesday, **November 24th**, 6:30 PM. In Store. Moderated by Zach Sampinos. November's selection is *The Night in Question* by Tobias Wolf.
- ◆ **Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Club**
Tuesday, **December 1st**, 7:00 PM. Beehive Tea Room. Moderated by Courtney Martin and Bruce Christensen. December's selections from *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes: Silver Blaze, The Yellow Face, and The Stock-broker's Clerk*. Tickets are \$12, and must be purchased in advance at the bookstore. Includes light refreshments.

Staff Reviews



The Looking Glass Wars

by Frank Beddor

978-0-14-240941-1

Puffin Books

\$8.99

Reviewed by Neil Jensen

We have learned that a good place to start a story is at the beginning, and when you arrive at the end, to stop. Frank Beddor has found a different way to get through his story. In the first book in the series, *The Looking Glass Wars*, the story starts with Princess Alyss already escaped from Wonderland as her Aunt Redd overthrows the Queendom, killing Alyss' family the Whites.

Hatter Madigan, the royal body guard, has decided that it is time to restore Wonderland to its former glory by restoring the proper person to the throne, young Princess Alyss. Travelling through the Pool of Tears, the only portal between Wonderland and our world, Hatter Madigan travels around the world from puddle to puddle in his quest for Alyss. His quest ends in London where he finds Alice, renamed by her adopted family, and convinces her to return to Wonderland to claim her place on the throne.

Alyss learns to control her imagination, her most powerful tool against Redd, which leads to a final confrontation in the royal throne room, where good is bound to overcome evil, right?



The Forest of Hands and Teeth

by Carrie Ryan

978-0-385-73681-7

Delacorte Press

\$16.99

Reviewed by Liz Shattler

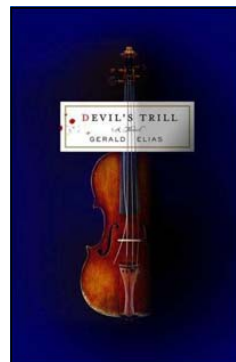
Mary has lived behind the safety of the fences in her little village her whole life as generations have done before her. Since the Return, the villagers have

taken shelter there from the Unconsecrated, the creatures that populate the Forest of Hands and Teeth, that scrape and bite and thrash at the fences. Mary dreams of the ocean, a place those in the village believe can't exist, a place which her mother has told her stories about. Could there be anything left outside the fences? Are they the last people left? Carrie Ryan has crafted a fast-paced novel that you will not want to put down as you follow Mary through her ordeals with the Sisterhood (the nuns that rule the village), her choice between contentment and love, and her ravenous curiosity for what lies beyond the fences.

Best Weller's Selection

October/November

Reviewed by Bruce Christensen



Devil's Trill

by Gerald Elias

978-0-312-54181-1

Minotaur Books

\$25.99

In this delightful novel Gerald Elias, Associate Concertmaster of the Utah Symphony, has written a thrilling tale set in the mysterious world of Classical Music. A world famous Stradivarius of mythic origin is stolen after a concert in Carnegie Hall, setting in place a sequence of events guaranteed to keep the reader up late to see what will happen next.

The characters in Devil's Trill are memorable. Daniel Jacobus, a blind misanthropic violinist and teacher; Yumi, his strong-willed pupil; and Nathaniel Williams, a former member of his musical trio and now an investigator of stolen violins, add to the enjoyment of reading this book.

The author does not answer the question "Will classical music survive?" but he gives an insightful portrait of this world of musicians, agents, teachers, and reviewers in all their tarnished glory. While reading the Devils Trill I listened to some of the wonderful music mentioned in this informative novel; it enhanced the pleasure the book gave me.

content and *influence* of books were the largest determinants of their value. Content still reigns with the prime and most stable factor being influence on the course of humanity driving high prices. But what is observable in current and recent times is a notable shift towards the object of the book itself. The article I read about the biggest auction prices had a preponderance of books with amazing illustrations and maps, remarkable artistic bindings, excellent printing and books of unusual and unique physical traits commanding the highest prices.

At our bookstore, I half-joke about doing business in the “post-literate society.” It is certainly a cynical exaggeration, but truthfully, thin books sell better than thick ones. I don’t have to like it to observe it. But the bright side of this cultural tale is that the fewer books we have in the future, I believe, will be more beautiful and sensually appealing than anyone of current generations is accustomed to owning.

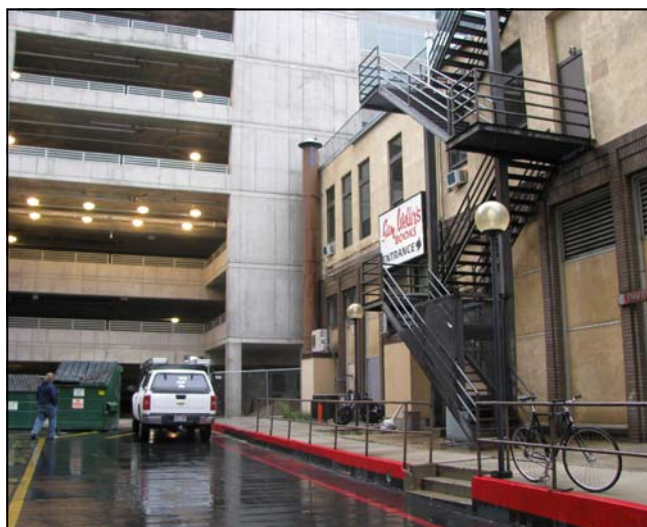
These are complex ideas, and while I feel clever for having accurately anticipated, I am sure that some of my assessment will turn out wrong. However, as we continue our search for a building we are also active in the conceptualization of what you and our community want, and what you will support in the way of the millennium bookstore. We are not about to become shallow booksellers but such thoughts will shape our decisions about our inventory as we reinvent.

I want to mention another positive outcome from the same effect. There is a broadening interest in rare book collecting and the book arts. I meet many young readers who delight to own rare editions of books they love, very old books, or new books of the amazing designs to which I have referred. While future citizens may own fewer books, I believe the books they will own will be afforded higher stature within their owners’ lives.

Last, because of our troubled economy, those with surviving means should recognize that now is an opportune time to purchase rare books. Except for the super-noteworthy and desirable ones, prices have dropped from their pinnacle right after the millennium. And many families who are financially strapped have been selling old family collections. Though sales have slowed, the supply of remarkable books has increased. If you love them and have the money, you really ought to buy them before the economy improves.

Great New Parking Right Next Door

We are pleased to announce that the parking that has been built by The Hamilton Partners in their new 222 South Main office tower just north of us is planned to open in mid-October. It will have 100 public parking stalls that will be the most affordable covered parking in our neighborhood! Main access will be from 2nd South, just west of the Monaco Hotel. A second entrance is in the alley directly behind our store. Thank you Hamilton and the Salt Lake City Redevelopment Agency for this facility where short term parking will cost no more than parking meters.



The view by the rear entrance of Weller's, accessible from third south. Entrance to large parking facility at 222 S.

Kudos to Catherine Weller



Catherine Weller receives the Bookseller of the Year Award from the Mountains and Plains Independent Booksellers Association

With great pride we report that Catherine Weller is the 2009 Mountains and Plains Independent Booksellers Association (MPIBA) recipient of the Gordon Saull Bookseller of the Year Award.

The late Gordon Saull was a legendary sales representative and later manager for the American News Company, a distributor of paperbound books before opening his own distribution company, Gordon's. After selling Gordon's, he repped for Henry Holt and other publishing firms. Everyone in the book trade esteemed Gordon, and the Bookseller of the Year Award, which is given annually along with the Sales Rep of the Year Award, is possible because of an endowment bequeathed by Gordon Saull.

Catherine joined the Weller family bookselling tradition in 1994, three years after marrying Tony Weller. Prior to her bookselling work, she spent a decade in library work within the University of Utah's library system. Catherine is Sam Weller's main buyer for new books and supervisor of author events and publicity. She is also a former president of the MPIBA.

Catherine received her award at the recent 2009 annual MPIBA trade show and convention in Denver last month. The MPIBA is a trade association with members in 14 western states. The excellent Meg Sherman, of W. W. Norton Books, received the Sales Rep of the Year Award. She also presented Catherine with hers. The

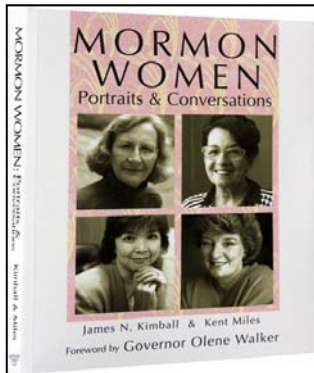
honors were bestowed upon both of these influential bookwomen by a panel of booksellers and publishers' sales reps. In Catherine's comments she made the point that the work done here at Sam Weller's Books is a team effort and that her recognition would not have been possible without the work and contributions of the other 21 booksellers who work here. Nonetheless, it is clear to all who know her, that this bookwoman's dedication, drive, intuition and intelligence are extraordinary. We are fortunate and proud that she is such a big part of our three-generation bookselling endeavor.

Utah Humanities Book Festival

The 2009 Utah Humanities Book Festival will occur at the Main Branch of the Salt Lake City Public Library from the evening of Wednesday, October 21st to the afternoon of Sunday, October 25th. As usual, the Book Festival has quite a line up of authors, local and national. On the local front you can listen to our own wonderful young adult authors, Sara Zarr and Shannon Hale, discussing the craft of writing, or the equally delightful Robert Kirby and Terrell Dougan talking about the of humor in their books. Authors from outside Utah include Michael Cunningham – yes, *that* Michael Cunningham – author of the Hours; performance poet Edwin Torres; and one of the students who integrated Arkansas' Little Rock High School, Carlotta Walls LaNier. Add to that the folks from NPR's Selected Shorts, the Beehive Archive producers, book arts for children, the Rare Book Road Show with Tony Weller and Ken Sanders, independent booksellers selling books for author signings, and you've got an event that must not be missed. See you there!



Of Local Interest Reviewed by Joan Nay



Mormon Women: Portraits and Conversations
by James N. Kimball and Kent Miles
Foreword by Governor Olene Walker
978-0-9801406-1-3
Handcart Books
\$18.95

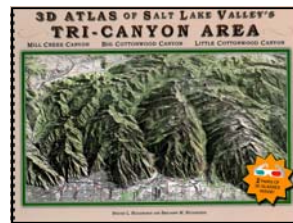
Long time friends, Jim Kimball and Kent Miles knew the drawbacks of producing a book on the story of Mormon women. After all, they were a couple of Mormon guys, and there have been plenty of books written by men on the subject of women. However, Kimball and Miles took a slightly different approach, and decided to let the female subjects in this new work do the talking . . . “women conversing about women’s lives.”

Kimball and Miles visited with fourteen Mormon women around the world, and simply let them talk about their lives. It is a diverse group of women too. There are several local and nationally known names: Utah Supreme Court Justice Christine Durham; Pulitzer prize author Laurel Thatcher Ulrich; local poet Emma Lou Thayne. Also, there are a number of lesser known voices featured: a former Communist guerilla medic from the Philippines; a city manager from Australia; a news anchor for the deaf in Japan; a gulag survivor from Armenia; a fashion designer and humanitarian from France. All Mormon women, all giving voice to their religious belief and how it plays out in their varied lives. Run-of-the-mill platitudes are lacking here. These voices are refreshingly candid and honest; unusual and intriguing. We can only hope the words of the numerous other

women interviewed will eventually be in print.

The elegant black and white photos of the subjects taken by Miles are a bonus.

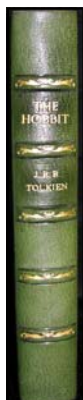
3-D Atlas of Salt Lake Valley’s Tri-Canyon Area
by Steven L. Richardson and Benjamin M. Richardson
978-0-982-502006
University of Utah Press
\$19.95



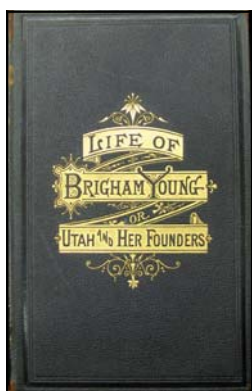
This work on Salt Lake Valley canyons is a serious atlas, with accompanying scale, symbols and technical data. But, you may have so much fun with it you will forget that salient point. At first look the pages appear mis-printed. But wait. Put on the accompanying pair of 3-D glasses and THEN look at the pages. Whoa! Big Cottonwood Canyon east of Salt Lake City suddenly appears in amazing 3-dimension. Each two-page spread has two views of the same area . . . one an aerial photo and the other a topographic map. Two pair of 3-D glasses accompany each book. Reasonably priced, and, a lot of fun.



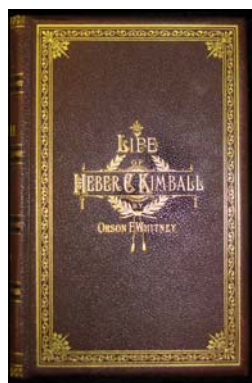
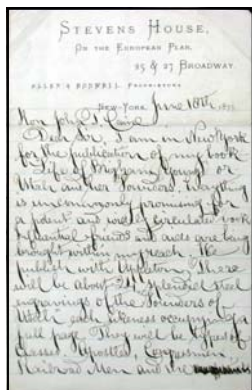
Rare Book Acquisitions by Tony Weller



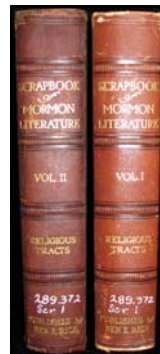
- A beautifully bound 1st American edition of the *Hobbit*, by **J.R.R. Tolkien**. This 1937 original is bound in forest green morocco with gilt décor on its raised bands and gilded edges and turn-ins, as well as marbled endsheets. Only flaw is a small moisture ring on the front cover. Very attractive and inexpensive at \$4000



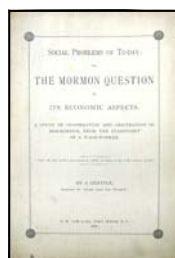
- A remarkable full gilded leather 1st edition of **Edward W. Tullidge's** *Life of Brigham Young* published in 1876. This copy from the late Sam Weller's library, is beautiful with only minor wear. What is most remarkable is the laid-in 1875 sixty line letter from Tullidge to **John T. Caine**, early Mormon convert, Territorial House Representative from Utah, Co-Founder of the Salt Lake Herald and later, City Recorder for Salt Lake. The letter provides details about the forthcoming publication of this very book. A beautiful copy with a notable associational autographed letter. Also laid in is an embroidered Brigham Young bookmark and a postcard of Young with 21 wives. \$7500



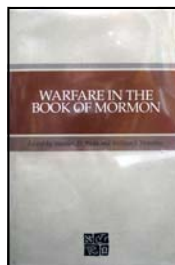
- Also from the library of Sam Weller is a full gilded leather copy of **Orson F. Whitney's** *Life of Heber C. Kimball*. Included with this beautiful first edition is a small promissory note signed by Kimball and dated 1850. \$7500



- A leather-bound two volume set of **Ben E. Rich's** *Scrap Book of Mormon Literature* that used to reside in the library of Le Grande Young. Nearly invisible repairs to volume II. \$300



- An interesting 1886 pamphlet entitled *Social Problems of To-Day; or, The Mormon Question in its Economic Aspects. A Study of Co-Operation and Arbitration in Mormondom, from the Standpoint of a Wage-Worker* by "A Gentile" In very good condition with slight chipping. \$75



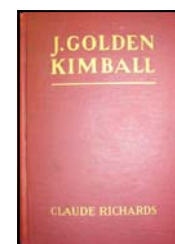
- A like-new jacketed copy of *Warfare in the Book of Mormon* by **Stephen D. Ricks** and **William J. Hamblin**. Since its 1990 publication, this book has become rather hard to find. \$175



- A nice 1967 hardcover copy of **Napoleon Hill's** *Think and Grow Rich* in a bright dust jacket with a signed bookplate from Napoleon Hill. \$225



- A very well preserved first edition of the rare *Maori – Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* by **Edward Tregear** from 1891. Edges are subtly rubbed and hinges are tender. Externally bright. \$400

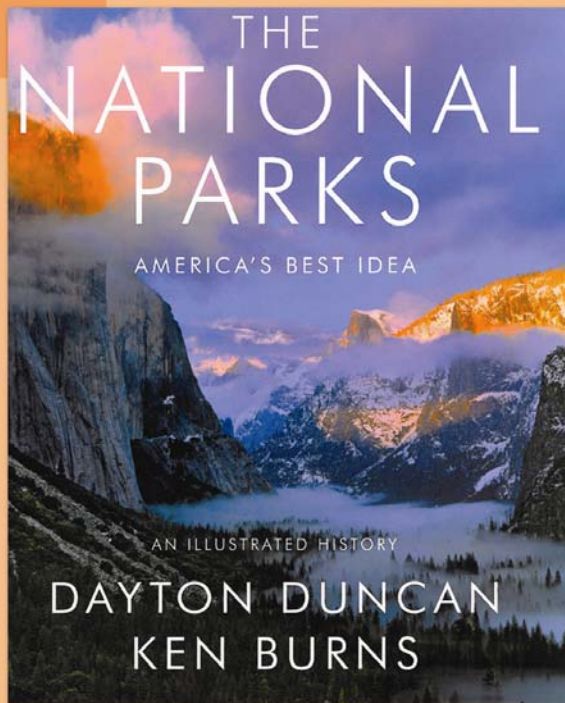


- A very nice, solid copy of **J. Golden Kimball: The Story of a Unique Personality** by **Claude Richards**. This 1934 1st edition sells for \$40



Sam Weller's Bookstore

254 S. Main St., Downtown SLC
(At the Gallivan Plaza TRAX Stop)
(801)328-2586
(800)333-SAMW
www.SamWellers.com



**You've seen the parks.
You've seen the PBS series.
Now see the book.**

*The National Parks:
America's Best Idea*
by Dayton Duncan
and Ken Burns
978-0-307-26896-9
Alfred A. Knopf
Hardcover
\$50.00

Newsletter Editor: **John Clukey**