



## PRESS RELEASE

### The George A. and Jean S. DeLong Book History Book Prize 2020

The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP) is delighted to announce the award of the 2020 DeLong Book History Book Prize to **Jeffrey T Zalar**, Associate Professor; Ruth J. & Robert A. Conway Endowed Chair of Catholic Studies, Department of History, the University of Cincinnati, for his title *Reading and Rebellion in Catholic Germany, 1770-1914* (Cambridge University Press)

In announcing the Prize at SHARP's virtual conference judge Michael Hanscher commented:

Richly informed by archival research and set out in a detailed and compelling narrative, this book illuminates how a major reading community actually functioned during the efflorescence of popular print culture. Conventional notions of clerical control over the reading habits of the lower-class Catholic population in Germany are dissolved by the facts discovered here, which reveal readers' prolonged and far-reaching engagement, sometimes hesitant, sometimes confident, with all kinds of forbidden books. The drive for communal discipline epitomized by the *Index Liborum Prohibitorum* could not withstand the pervasive appeal of books as such, nor of magazines and newspapers, all of them mass-produced commodities that at once enlarged the field of discussable ideas, established a ground for private subjectivity, and advertised the allures of commodity culture. Professor Zalar's stimulating account of German Catholic readers demonstrates why the history of reading and of lower-class cultures cannot be told solely in terms of the intentions of the elite, and how we should appreciate the agency of readers. It is a major contribution to book history and a model for future research.

Jeffrey T Zalar receives \$1,000 as winner of the SHARP DeLong Book History Book Prize.

Commendations were also made to (in alphabetical order) **Robert Culp** (Bard College) for *The Power of Print in Modern China* (Columbia UP), **Jennifer Richards** (Newcastle University) for *Voices and Books in the English Renaissance* (Oxford UP), and **Fei-Hsein Wang** (Indiana University) for *Pirates and Publishers: A Social History of Copyright in Modern China* (Princeton UP).

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## About SHARP

SHARP was founded to create a global network for book historians working in a broad range of scholarly disciplines. Research addresses the composition, mediation, reception, survival, and transformation of written communication in material forms including marks on stone, script on parchment, printed books and periodicals, and new media. Perspectives range from the individual reader to the transnational communications network. With more than 1000 members in over twenty countries, SHARP works in concert with affiliated academic organizations around the world to support the study of book history and print culture. See <http://www.sharpweb.org/>

## About the DeLong Prize

SHARP annually awards a \$1,000 prize to the author of the best book on any aspect of the creation, dissemination, or uses of script or print published in the previous year. Owing to the generosity of the DeLong family in endowing the prize, from 2004 it has been known as the George A. and Jean S. DeLong Book History Book Prize. Previous winners include Brent Nongbri's *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* (Yale University Press, 2018), Eric White, curator of rare books at Princeton University Libraries, USA, *Editio Princeps: A History of the Gutenberg Bible* (Brepols, 2017), Eva Mroczek's *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (Oxford University Press, 2016), Kristina Lundblad's *Bound to be Modern* (Oak Knoll Press, 2015), Daniel Wakelin's *Scribal Correction and Literary Craft: English Manuscripts 1375-1510* (CUP, 2014), Paula Rabinowitz's *American Pulp: How Paperbacks brought Modernism to Main Street* (Princeton University Press, 2014), David McKitterick's *Old Books, New Technologies: The Representation, Conservation and Transformation of Books since 1700* (CUP, 2013), and Helen Smith's *'Grossly Material Things': Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (OUP, 2012). Details of the 2021 prize submission process will be available later in 2020, via <http://www.sharpweb.org/main/delong-book-history-prize/>.

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