

The
Aldus
Society

Celebrating Books!

Aldus Society Notes

Spring 2025

Volume 25, No. 2

Aldus Takes a Field Trip!

To the Wagnalls Memorial Library



The Publicity Committee arranged a delightful outing to the Wagnalls Memorial Library in Lithopolis, Ohio. On Saturday, March 22nd. About twenty Aldus members enjoyed a tour of the library, which included viewing two original Norman Rockwell illustrations and two original letters from Harry Houdini to Mabel Wagnalls Jones, as well as correspondence from her close friend author/humorist O Henry.

After welcoming our group, the tour guide, Carol Gaal, wearing a 1920s-style dress, very effectively transformed herself into Mabel Wagnalls Jones, the founder and donor of the Memorial, by the simple addition of a vintage style hat! She then remained in character for the next hour as we explored every inch of the historic building. Our special thanks go out to Madison Good for making the arrangements.



Annual Meeting Notice

MEMBER NOTICE: We'll be holding our annual meeting at which we elect new board members before the May 22 program. Please be sure to arrive by 7:00 pm. Thank you!

The Wagnalls Memorial

On May 30, 1925, Mabel Wagnalls Jones dedicated The Wagnalls Memorial in honor of her parents, Adam and Anna Willis Wagnalls. Adam was the co-founder of the publishing giant, Funk & Wagnalls. Both Adam and Anna were born in log cabins in Lithopolis, Ohio. Mabel knew it had always been Anna's dream to do something for the little village which had never had anything done for it and to provide opportunities not available to her as a child. With the building of The Wagnalls Memorial, Mabel would fulfill her mother's dream.

The Wagnalls Memorial Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering culture and education by means of the Wagnalls Memorial Library, Community Theater, and Scholarship Program.

Aldus Society Meetings

*Regular meetings of the Aldus Society are held at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month between September and May. Meetings are held at **Thurber Center, 91 Jefferson Avenue, Columbus, Ohio** (unless otherwise announced). Socializing at 7:00 p.m. Free parking on Jefferson or behind Thurber House and at State Auto rear parking lot (between 11th St. and Washington).*

The Aldus Society

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George Cowmeadow Bauman

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Newsletter deadlines are August 1st, December 1st, and April 1st.

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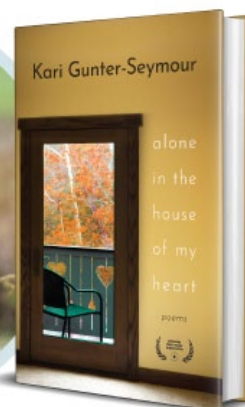


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Upcoming Program

Thursday, May 22nd
Thurber Center
Kari Gunter-Seymour

Kari Gunter-Seymour, Poet Laureate of Ohio, is the featured speaker for the May 2025 program.



Poetry by John M. Bennett

Codex Leftwich Bilabial

-For Jim Leftwich RIP

The book itched in his word
fell out his ear my pen scrawled
after seen the ink silent crying
single proof of plurality the paper
burnt smoke spoke inside the
sky vacant birds “a
stone fell on an empty floor”

seen not seen

“See The Do”, W.M. McGuffey, 1863

a tiny wind ~ black fog forgets under
chair I saw unseen the mirror sees
dark done end there gone . does it
it ching in my birth ththroat a tw
isted chain do neckless say - lost in
end corn er
a smoking match , is gone

70

Program Recap: January 9, 2025 Aldus Collects!

On Thursday, January 9, 2025, at the Thurber Center, the Aldus Society met for our annual favorite: Aldus Collects! Several members discussed their private collections, on a wide range of topics from Postcards to Shakespeare! The inimitable George Cowmeadow Bauman coordinated and managed the event and introduced the presenters:

Scott Williams, on the “Great Postcard Revolution.”

Jenna Nahhas, with “Binding & Beyond: Book Arts.”

Jay Hoster, discussing “John Stubbs—The Man Who Gave His Right Hand for Freedom of the Press.”

Harry Campbell, talking about the subject of “Doubting Shakespeare?”

Program Recap: February 13, 2025 Roger Jerome on “Dickens in Ohio”

Few people know that the great novelist visited most parts of Ohio in 1842 and wrote about it. Aldus member Roger Jerome has studied his travels closely, and his talk delivered plenty of original details. Roger has worked professionally as an actor (television, stage, and film) and educator in both the U.K. and U.S. His talk was based on his new book, *Dickens in Ohio – The Neglected Story*, which uncovers the overlooked chapter of Charles Dickens’s visit to the heartland of America in April 1842, an engaging narrative which reveals America’s profound influence on the renowned author’s perspective and literary creations. This event also turned out to be the official book launch and signing, much to the delight of eager readers!

Roger Jerome Fascinates Aldus

By George Cowmeadow Bauman



interested in British literature, especially Charles Dicken, to the point of performing 281 one-man programs as Dickens for many years at Ohio Village—part of the Ohio History Connection—as well as at schools and social centers.

When he learned that the British author boated down the Ohio River past Gallipolis, he was determined to find reportage about Dickens’s impressions of Ohio. He studied Dickens’ own *American Notes*, published in 1850 in London, but found little.

“I looked everywhere for the books with information about Dickens in Ohio,” Jerome wrote. “I couldn’t find one. Because there isn’t one. I decided to write it.” And that’s what he talked about at his Aldus program.

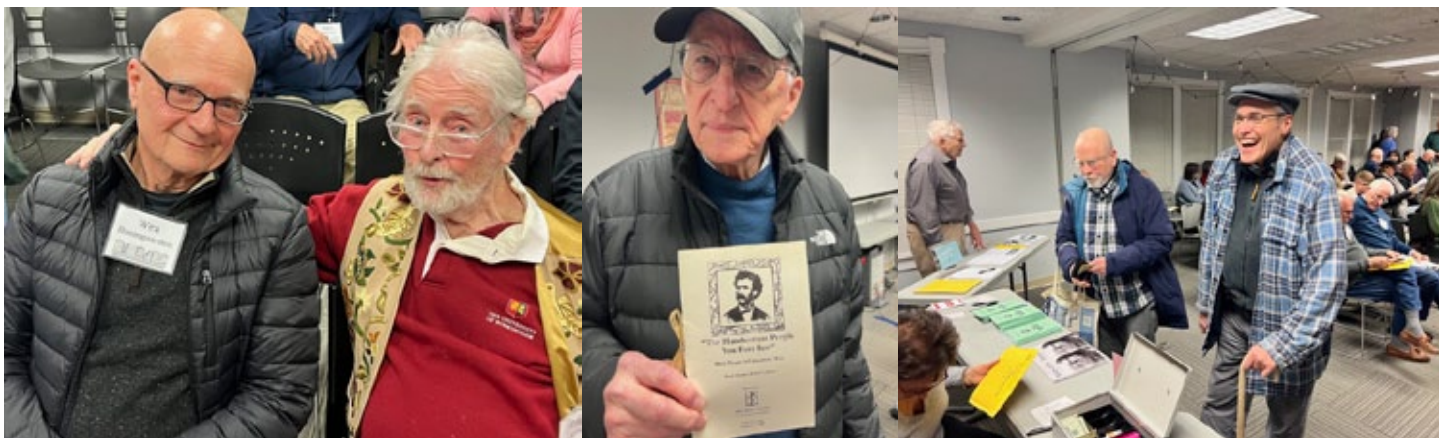
As expected, the actor performed wonderfully, using a large, vintage, colorful map of Ohio next to his PowerPoint

One of the largest attendances in Aldus’s 25 years occurred when member Roger Jerome presented a lively program based on his new book, *Dickens in America*, on February 13th.

Nancy Campbell, Judi Jerome, and Emerson Gilbert welcomed attendees, making sure arriving Aldines received their name tags. By the time everyone was seated, 65 people were there to listen to British-born Jerome talk about his fascination with the lack of reported information when British author Charles Dickens visited Ohio during his 1842 American adventure. His wife, along with her maid and Dickens’s secretary traveled with him.

For 18 years Roger lived in Gallipolis, a southern Ohio town on the Ohio River. As a thespian, he was





screen, which itself featured a map of Dickens' travel from Boston to Hartford, New Haven, and New York, then on to Philadelphia and Washington.

After Dickens visited President Tyler in the White House, the president remarked of Dickens, "I was surprised at how young he was for someone who was so well-known." Roger smoothly inserted such anecdotes into his talk.

In his book, he wrote that, "not even the Beatles' reception on their first American tour matched the depth and intensity of feeling that Dickens generated across the entire spectrum of American society over a century earlier...one of a handful of writers who can be compared without embarrassment to Shakespeare." (Boomers might quibble about the relative popularity of Dickens vs. The Beatles.)

Baltimore was next on his trip, and then on to Richmond, where he witnessed slavery as it was in the South; he was repelled by it. At that point, still early in his adventure, Jerome wrote, "America was finished for him..."

"This is not the America I came to see," Dickens complained.

He abruptly changed their itinerary and instead of going further south, as planned, to New Orleans, they headed west. After crossing the challenging Appalachian Mountains in a very uncomfortable stagecoach, they arrived in Pittsburgh, which he described as "a lovely city."

There began their river time, down the Ohio River on a steamboat to Cincinnati, a major city along the westward pioneer trails and waterways. Dickens—who was usually called by his pen name of Boz—quite liked the Queen City, or Porkopolis, as it was sometimes referred to. "Cincinnati is a beautiful city, cheerful, thriving, and animated."

But it wasn't too far downstream before they

experienced "hell on earth," where the beautiful Ohio met the turbulent, mighty, filthy Mississippi. After surviving the maelstrom at that junction, they turned north to St. Louis, their westernmost destination.

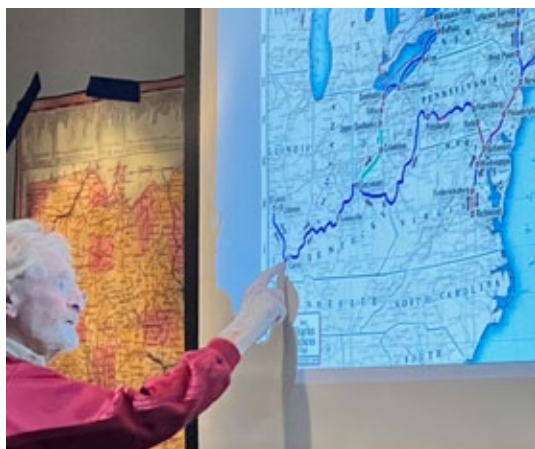
When it was time to begin the trip home, they were dreading having to get through the "detestable morass" at Cairo, Illinois, of the merging of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers.

Dickens's group left the Ohio River at Cincinnati to travel by stagecoach through Ohio to Columbus and then on to Lake Erie, upon a macadamized road, "a rare blessing," on their eventual way to the Canadian side of Niagara Falls.

They had several overnight stagecoach stops after leaving the "Queen City," until the entourage entered our own fine city of Columbus, the capital of Ohio, where Dickens noted pigs grazing on the Statehouse lawn while he stayed across High Street at Neil House, though he did refer to Columbus as "clean and pretty and is...going to be much larger."

They stayed but briefly in the state capital before it was north to Tiffin.

When they left Tiffin, the Dickens troupe rode the very first Ohio railroad, which took them slowly north to Sandusky on Lake Erie, where they traveled by boat for a brief stop at Cleveland, concluding their visit to 20 of Ohio's counties.



The Dickens group of four travelled 5,000 miles on their first visit to the United States and Canada. He stated in his book, *American Notes* (1850), that he didn't care much for America; it was not the paradise he expected. In his letters back to Britain, he repeated that he couldn't wait to get back home. He had hoped that the US would show him a more ideal society than his own, but after visiting Richmond with its open

toleration of slavery, including slavery auctions, his perspective on America was seriously damaged. “Dickens realized that humanity was not capable of utopian existence.”

Roger’s book—and his program—were well-researched, obviously a labor of love. He was quite straightforward in discussing Dickens’s displeasure with much of what he saw in the US as it was in 1842. His skills as a speaker reflected his long experience as an actor and kept the large audience entertained.

He praised various county historical societies, referring to them as “wonderfully helpful.” The book’s bibliography and other sources for information about Dickens’ time in Ohio are extensive, and Roger wove them into his presentation rather well.



After his program, questions filled the air and kept the evening going long after the initial applause. Roger signed many copies of *Dickens in America*, which sold out. The rest of us hung around longer than usual, generating a real buzz before heading home.

Program Recap: March 13, 2025

Alan B. Farmer on “Lost Books and the History of English Literature”



On March 13, 2025 we met to hear about the enigma of lost books, the mysterious ellipses in our poetry, drama, and fiction that – unread by centuries of readers and scholars – still shape our literary history. It has long been known that there are lost books from Renaissance

England. These include individual volumes that previously existed, such as the copies of Montaigne’s *Essays* or *Holinshed’s Chronicles* read by Shakespeare, but also entire editions that no longer survive in even a single copy. Alan B. Farmer, Associate Professor of English at Ohio State University, explored how lost books might reshape our

understanding of the larger literary history of early modern England, offering new ways to think about our literary history.

Alan B. Farmer is the co-creator, with Zachary Lesser, of DEEP: Database of Early English Playbooks. This talk

came out of his current project on lost books in the early modern English book trade.

The Ravneberg Memorial Lecture is made possible by the Ron Ravneberg Fund and the generosity of individual donors. Presented annually, it is devoted to topics related to book arts and culture.



Program Recap: April 10, 2025

Rhiannon Knol on “Aristotle, Columbus, and Other Big Mistakes that Shaped the Modern World”



On Thursday, April 10, 2025, a large Aldus audience (of 59 members and guests, about 20 of whom were visitors—well done Program Committee!) gathered at the Thurber Center to hear Ms. Knol focus on Aristotle, Christopher Columbus, and Athanasius Kircher (among others) to explore the role wrong ideas have played in early modern science and the ongoing negotiation of empiricism and imagination. When asked by audience member Don Rice (our resident “word collector”) if there was a name for her field of study, she said “You might call it Paleoerrorology.” The audience was amused.

Rhiannon is an antiquarian bookseller with Bruce McKittrick Rare Books in Philadelphia, which she joined after seven years as a Continental books and science specialist in the Books Department of Christie’s New York. Prior to that, she was a curatorial research assistant at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, where she was the assistant curator of the international exhibition “The Art of Alchemy.”

Collecting Cambodiana: Part Three

Concluding Part III, 50th Anniversary of the Fall of Phnom Penh, April 17, 1975

By Scott Williams

Collecting Cambodiana was the mission of Cecil Hobbs. Born in Martins Ferry, Ohio, in 1907, Cecil and wife Cecile, went to Burma in 1935 where he served as an American Baptist field administrator. Joining the Library of Congress in 1943, Hobbs would make six field trips to Asia sourcing material for the library and Cornell University.

Hobbs first visits Cambodia in 1953, still under French rule. Later, that year, Sihanouk would cajole the French into granting independence without a loss of life. As 1953 ends, a “good will” tour is made by none other than Vice President Richard Nixon. A bit over fifteen years later, in early 1969, a President Nixon would order the secret B-52 carpet bombing of Cambodia to begin—it would last for four years.

Cecil Hobbs finds many obstacles to his mission in 1953. Very few books are being published in Cambodian or French, and the largest Phnom Penh bookstore named Albert Portail who agrees to be his Library of Congress agent, is *unable* to mail books overseas. Hobbs complains that this French colonial policy included Laos and



Cecil Hobbs in 1960 at the Library of Congress inspecting musical instruments with King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Rama IX, of Thailand. Photo courtesy of Library of Congress.



CULTURAL SURVIVAL Quarterly

Volume 14 1990 Number 3

CAMBODIA 1990



Cultural Survival Quarterly. This Cambodian woman working in a rice field is wearing a “krama” scarf on her head, one of the deepest symbols of Cambodia culture, worn by men and women, and politically requisitioned by the Khmer Rouge to be “their” symbol. In this issue, a Frenchman writes an eloquent homage to the vast number of uses for the checkered Cambodian krama.

Vietnam—US Embassy staff would have to be leaned-on to handle shipments. Hobbs discovers that each Cambodian ministry published on their own. They used their own private printers, often bookstores, who would then publish and sell the same title as if it were their own! There was no central office documenting or selling government publications. ***But he struck it rich in cartography***, buying many maps. His big find was “a magnificent pictorial map of Cambodia in colors, hand-done, measuring about 42” x 77” ...entitled Carte Economique et Touristique. ... It will be a fine display piece in the Map Division.” He also got lucky and found the musical score to Cambodia’s national anthem—something the State Department needed. But that was that. No one knew of any other printed scores. At Cambodia’s National Library, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Hobbs finds there is no union list to know what is held or being added.

Hobbs’ final field trip in 1971 completely skips war-

torn Indochina. He retires that year with a Superior Service Award as long-time head of the Southern Asia Section of the Orientalia Division of the Library of Congress.

Saving Cambodiana was the mission of Judy Ledgerwood. A decade after the fall of Pol Pot, Cambodia’s national library, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, was still recovering. Cornell University anthropologist, Judy Ledgerwood, would describe in a special issue of *Cultural Survival Quarterly* (see image left) what Cambodia’s national library was now like:

“The building today houses perhaps 50,000 volumes... But the collection is a strange jumble of old French-language works and recent gifts from socialist comrades. Almost none of the books are in Khmer. ... Even one year ago most of these books were still stacked in piles around the building... they are now on shelves arranged by language group, ... with no further internal categorization.”

Judy would go on to describe what had happened:

“(U)nder Pol Pot, books were deliberately destroyed in Cambodia; it has been estimated that as much as 80 percent of the written works in Khmer were destroyed. At the National Library [Bibliothèque Nationale] some books were burned; others were simply thrown from the shelves and left to rot on the floors. The shelves themselves were filled with dishes. The grounds were used to raise pigs. The books that are in the building now have been gathered up from many locations and brought together since 1979. Staff members report literally picking books up off the streets, gathering them out of abandoned houses...”

Ledgerwood was part of a team from Cornell working to save and microfilm the oldest and rarest texts in the library—its insect-infested palm-leaf and mulberry-leaf manuscripts. She describes her work environment: only a couple staff members survived the Khmer Rouge regime and these few Cambodian staff are being paid the equivalent of \$3 a month. They did not know how to catalog books or read foreign languages. The building’s windows are kept closed to prevent further insect infestations, creating a moldy hot-house. Only half of the original 1920s ceiling fans still operated.

Today, Judy Ledgerwood continues her close association with Cambodia, specializing in cultural recovery from mass human trauma, as a Professor of Anthropology at Northern Illinois University. And today, the *Bibliothèque Nationale* is renovated, operates with a paid staff of over thirty, and its palm leaf

manuscripts are preserved and microfilmed.

My final departure from Cambodia, in August 1973, would be in a packed, poorly sprung, 1960s Peugeot 404 station wagon. It was a day-long journey from Battambang to the Thai border. On the Cambodian side, in hot and dusty Poipet, I had hundreds of deflated Cambodian Riels left in my pocket to look for a cheap souvenir, or not. I entered a Chinaman's single-story wooden shop selling everything. Nothing. But then, I spied, hanging high-up in a dark corner an old Chinese scroll painting of a tiger. Wow! "For sale? How much?" I asked. A dreary-looking middle-aged Chinaman in white tank top T-shirt, black pants and sandals wanted about \$350. No sale. Pol Pot would soon forbid *any* currency to better control the population and prevent business. This, despite printing in advance their own Khmer Rouge currency notes which, today, you can still purchase online. Pol Pot's comrades who called for the adoption of their new currency and a return to its abandoned cities were killed, but only after confessing under torture to being KGB-CIA agents.



Kampuchea. Published in Chicago in 1979 by Liberator Press. Desperate to counter global outrage, the Khmer Rouge began in late 1978 to invite communist-affiliated journalists from around the world to come visit. They were taken to the Khmer Rouge's own Potemkin Village full of smiling, well fed, hard-working peasants and then sent home.

I thought I had concluded my sad, eye-opening, Cambodian "experience." But back in Bangkok, there would be a knock on the door of my hotel room! I was staying, again, near the train station in a lively, dirt-cheap hotel and restaurant catering to young travelers. Two women and a man, young hippie budget backpackers, came into my tiny room to discuss what to do about a



Khmer Republic. I picked up this large glossy color magazine dated March 1973. The cover shows the ceremony supporting the Vietnam War's Peace Agreement between Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. The Khmer Republic declared a cease-fire to join the agreement. However, the Khmer Rouge would have nothing of it, declaring that the Vietnamese communists had sold out to the Americans.

young American in the hotel. *He had just returned from Cambodia and was having a nervous breakdown.* We decided on a two-person delegation—the women—to help counsel him through his crisis.

About the size of Missouri, what is Cambodia like today? Phnom Penh's *skyscraper skyline* would put many big American cities to shame. Under its new communist rulers, beginning in 1979, would emerge a very young, wounded, one-eyed leader named Hun Sen. At first, the shattered economy would slowly recover due to a decade-long Western trade boycott. Oxfam, the UK-based charity, would smuggle food into the country to help its starving population get back on their feet. The "old" anti-Soviet Cold War would find the USA in collaboration with China supporting Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge coalition government for a **full decade** after it was overthrown! Since 1990, Cambodia's economy has advanced at a healthy pace.



Propaganda Postcard. The République Khmère's Commissariat Général au Tourisme published at least three different crudely-printed propaganda postcards that I purchased. The caption states: "Don't let us perish under the yoke of the Vietcong and North Vietnamese." The actual view is of Angkor Thom's south gate (12th century) and its giants' causeway. Many of the heads would be cut off and sold to antique dealers.

People look happy, busy, and well fed despite rampant corruption. Hun Sen's son is now in power and vows to elevate his country to "UN middle-income status" within the next 20 years.

As for the amazing, always gesticulating, Prince and/or King Sihanouk, he commissioned or wrote many books on all of these matters! For example, in 1962, he had published a thick image-laden folio simply titled *Cambodge*. In 1974, it would be *My War with the CIA*. Spectacularly, Sihanouk's reign ran from 1941 to 2012. ***That is 71 years as Cambodia's public leader,*** whether holding power or not, in his small beloved country. He was one of the most sophisticated world leaders of his era—using cultural aphorisms in their own language against foreign leaders to make a point at the right moment during negotiations. He was courted by everyone, including the Kennedys (of course). ***In his spare time, he produced fifty films and wrote musical scores.*** He encouraged Western jazz and rock & roll music, while strongly supporting Cambodia's traditional music and dance. Some of my favorite YouTube music videos of this music have sadly disappeared.

As for the infamous Pol Pot, his ***"last act"*** in 1997 was to order the murder of his long-time Khmer Rouge colleague, Defense Minister Son Sen, whom he had worked with since Paris in the early 1950s. Son Sen's whole multi-generational family also went to their graves being steam-rolled for good measure. For this atrocity, Pol Pot would finally be brought to trial by his last remaining military commander, the infamous Ta Mok. Upon Pol Pot's natural death, the following year in 1998, Ta Mok would declare that Pol Pot was nothing but shit and that was being too kind, emphasizing that even the trash used to cremate Pol Pot was too good a use of trash. Ta Mok's last remaining band of ***original die-hard Khmer Rouge troops*** were then captured in 1999 by Hun Sen's military. Ta Mok would live out the rest of his life, several more years, in comfortable detention waiting for the glacial UN Court to begin his prosecution.



Realités Cambodgiennes. Nixon's special envoy, General Alexander Haig, meeting with the Khmer Republic's leader, Marshall Lon Nol in April 1973 to assure total U.S. support. By chance, in the mid-1980s, I would meet a retired U.S. Marine responsible for psychological operations during the Vietnam War. He came up through the ranks with Haig and positively detested him—an account reiterated by other military. Haig would run for the Republican Party's presidential nomination in 1988.

Today, *Pol Pot's cremation site has become a tourist attraction*, and nearly 3 million tourists swarmed Angkor Wat the year before the Covid epidemic. In April of 2025 there will be plenty of 50th anniversary news stories on both the fall of Phnom Penh (April 17) and Saigon (April 30). Some may then decide to visit Phnom Penh's Tuol Sleng (S21) high school torture/prison museum on their next vacation—*dark tourism* is what the industry calls it.

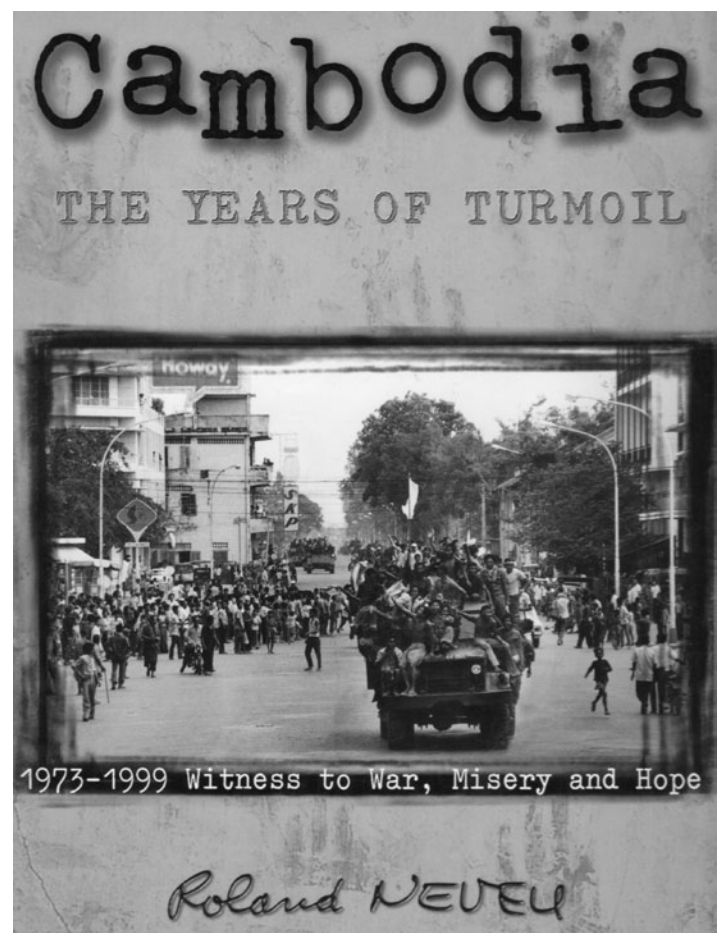
Collecting and reading Cambodiana has been a mission of mine, too. One of my favorite travel narratives, covering all three Indochina nations, is *A Dragon Apparent* (1951, Jonathan Cape) by British travel writer Norman Lewis. He is there to describe it before modernity and war sweep away its *zeitgeist*. As so many writers do, Lewis quotes the famous French observation, “Cambodians plant the rice; Vietnamese harvest it; and the [impossibly lazy] Laotians? They watch it grow.”

My oldest travel account on Cambodia is by the Chinese Ambassador Chou Ta-Kuan (Zhou Daguan) who came to Angkor Wat in 1296 during its glorious height. Unlike most diplomatic records, Chou included a description of his journey and described the culture, including its bizarre practices. One being the drinking of bile extracted from human gall bladders. Thought to be extinct, modern historians would discover that rural Khmer Rouge cadres continued this tradition with their victims.

Ignoring Chinese warnings, the Pol Pot leadership clique would flee their empty capital Phnom Penh in early January 1980 at the very last second from advancing communist Vietnam's army. *They would leave behind their most secret documents* for Vietnamese, Russian, Japanese, Indian and Western academics and journalists to discover and translate. *So many books* were then published about the auto-genocide that killed about one-quarter of the population. These titles also include many autobiographies by Cambodians who *lived* through their “3 years, 8 months and 22 days” nightmare. We are reminded of Sydney Schanberg's *The Death and Life of Dith Pran*, which became the movie *The Killing Fields*. Its lead actor, Haing Ngor, would write his own autobiography, *A Cambodian Odyssey*.

With so many Western-written histories, I was recently excited to acquire through a friend visiting Cambodia the English-language version of the first academic title *by a Cambodian* about what happened. Better yet, it was written for Cambodian students with a Khmer-language print run of 200,000 copies that included funding to distribute it, with teacher aids, to high schools across Cambodia. *A History of Democratic Kampuchea* (1975-1979) by Khamboly Dy was published in 2007 by the Documentation Center of Cambodia. This publisher's website can be safely visited (*unlike Bibliotheque Nationale's!*).

Falling into this *terrifying historical rabbit hole*, two titles stand out. The Australian American Ben Kiernan's 1996 book, *The Pol Pot Regime*, is published by Yale, where he teaches to this day. And for a broader historical sweep, starting in 1945, there is David Chandler's *The Tragedy of Cambodian History* (1991, Yale). Photography buffs will appreciate Frenchman Roland Neveu's book, *The Fall of Phnom Penh*. His accompanying diary roaming Phnom Penh that day is surreal. But to end on a “beautiful book” note, there is *The Angkor Guidebook* (2015, Andrew Booth). For those who have ever dreamed of visiting Angkor Wat, you can now enjoy the first book, to my knowledge, having clear overlay-painted pages, to lay on top of matched photographs, to show what ancient Angkor's vast complex of temples and water-control structures once looked like.



Roland Neveu. Another photography book by him features one of his most famous photos on the cover. On “liberation day” April 17, 1975, a *fake* convoy of “liberation” soldiers cooked up by Lon Nol's brother, Lon Non, drive up and down the main street of Phnom Penh in order to somehow confuse the Khmer Rouge entering the city. This group would also take over the radio station “as liberators” before being shot.

Just a Word...

By Tricia Herban

Paper

In the kids' game, paper is the weakest. It can be damaged by a rock and cut by a scissors. Yet in real life paper is immensely powerful. Just think of the value of our money—all the higher amounts are printed on paper. And not just any paper. Our paper bills have holograms embedded in them and are on special paper infused with fabric fragments. While not indestructible, paper money is intended to withstand many transactions and to enable varied aspects of commerce.

Paper is also a crucial transmitter of information. Going back centuries, paper has been used to record legal matters. Paper replaced vellum made from animal skins and offered the advantage of economy of cost and portability as it could be easily folded, cut and bound.

Today, paper is used for all manner of things from love notes and valentines to wrapping fragile items for safe transit or just mopping up a spill on the floor. We use paper without giving it a thought. And although the advent of electronic technology was supposed to lead us to a "Paperless Society," so far, most important documents get printed and go from the omnipresent screen to a folder or desk drawer. Ironically, due to the speed of technological changes, archival materials are still stored on paper where the format remains consistently retrievable.

So omnipresent is paper that it has become a verb. I can decoratively paper my walls or paper something over to hide it. And then there is the frequent question at the grocery

checkout "Paper or Plastic?" which of course refers to one's preferred method of carrying out purchases—in a paper or plastic bag. And now, once again, paper has become preferred because it is the only option that is biodegradable! Thus, having come full circle, we value paper for both its indestructibility and its destructibility!

Final

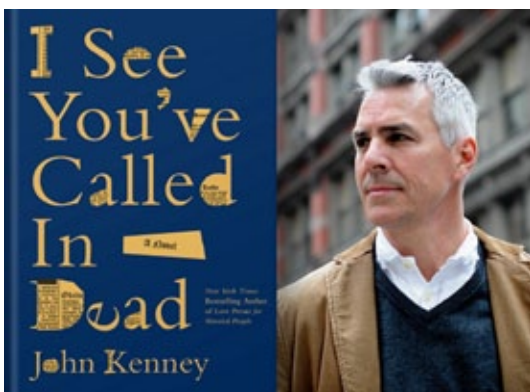
A noun or an adjective—that is the question. And often the twain merge, meet and mingle as in "I took the final." Or, "Did you write the final yet?" The final what?, a foreigner might wonder. But those familiar with the vernacular know that it is the final exam that is meant because the familiarity of association of the two words "final" and "exam" has led the former to replace the latter in common parlance. Hence it is context that gives "final" its unique meaning as a noun.

However, one must also know it's more frequent usage as an adjective and adverb as in "His decision to take the final was final." And "The judge's decision was equally final," meaning not subject to change or dispute in any way.

And this brings me to the final meaning for this discussion, the last meaning of final. A series can be any length, the alphabet for example, but it will always have a final or last item. The final letter of the alphabet is Z and the final letter of final is L. And with this, my last word, I am finally done—and that is indeed, final!

Summer 2025 Programs at Thurber House

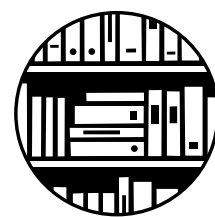
Learn More and Register at thurberhouse.org!



THURBER HOUSE SUMMER WRITING CAMP 2025

Grade Level	Time	Dates
RISING 2/3 GRADE:	12:30 PM - 4 PM	JULY 28-AUGUST 1
RISING 4/5/6 GRADE:	9 AM - 4 PM	JUNE 2-6, JUNE 9-13, JUNE 16-20, OR JUNE 23-27
RISING 7/8/9 GRADE:	9 AM - 4 PM	JULY 7-11, JULY 14-18, OR JULY 21-25

THURBER HOUSE



The
Aldus
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Celebrating Books!