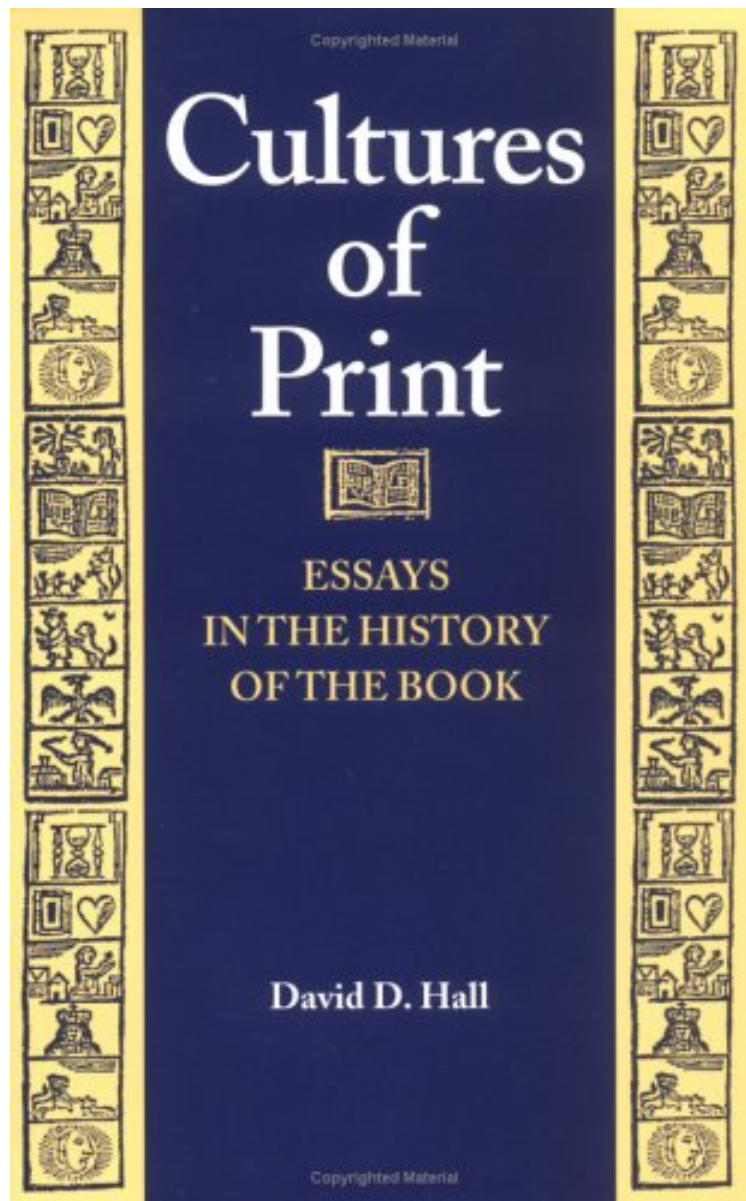


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Cultures of Print: Essays in the History of the Book (Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book)

David D. Hall

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Print: Essays in the History of the Book (Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book):

How did people in early America understand the authority of print and how was this authority sustained and contested? These questions are at the heart of this set of pathbreaking essays in the history of the book by one of America's leading practitioners in this interdisciplinary field. David D. Hall examines the interchange between popular and learned cultures and the practices of reading and writing. His writings deal with change and continuity, exploring the possibility of a reading revolution and arguing for the long duration of a Protestant vernacular tradition. A newly written essay on book culture in the early Chesapeake describes a system of scribal publication. The pieces reflect Hall's belief that the better we understand the production and consumption of books, the closer we come to a social history of culture.

From *Library Journal* In this collection of six skillful essays, Hall (*Witchhunting in Seventeenth Century New England 1638-1692*, Northeastern Univ., 1990) breaks new ground. Starting with the assumption "that the better we understand the production and consumption of books, the closer we come to a social history of culture," Hall expertly lays out the state of our knowledge in the areas of printing, literacy, reading, and the interchange between learned and popular culture in early America. He then argues for a new approach to the early American cultures of print. By stressing how print was used rather than dwelling on quantitative studies of book production and distribution, Hall sketches a fuller, more human picture of early American culture. While acknowledging the authority exerted by the church and the state in controlling the content of printed material, Hall points out that much is missed if we fail to consider the effects of the marketplace and the intermediary role of entrepreneurial printers and booksellers. Recommended for academic and large public libraries with an interest in American studies. —Paul A. D'Alessandro, Portland P.L., Me. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Will surely command a wide audience in the academy and gain a regular place on syllabi devoted to book history. Hall is a master of the historiographical essay and in his reflections on the history of the book, he manages both to assay the shape of the field and to suggest the cultural insights it offers into the past. This is a growing international field and Hall is its most sophisticated proponent and practitioner in the Americanist camp." —Robert A. Gross, chair of the Program in the History of the Book, American Antiquarian Society "Hall is widely acknowledged to be the foremost authority in the United States today in this field, and this collection of essays represents some of his most important work. It promises to be the starting point for anyone working in the history of the book in America." —Mary Kupiec Cayton, Miami University About the Author David D. Hall teaches American religious and cultural history at Harvard University. His books include *Worlds of Wonder*, *Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* and he is general editor of the multivolume *History of the Book in America*.