

BOOK STUDIES

Annual Report 2025

University of Münster
English Department
Chair of Book Studies

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2025 in Review

We are delighted to share some news and highlights from 2025 with our academic friends and colleagues.

Research and Networking (selection)

In September of 2025, the Chair of Book Studies was thrilled to host the Bookselling Research Network (BRN) in Münster for their annual meeting. Conference papers included such topics as lesser-known figures of resistance bookselling, audiobook piracy, radical bookfairs, and the Indian book market. A keynote lecture was given by local antiquarian bookseller Michael Solder (Antiquariat Solder). This international event was generously supported by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the International Office of our university, and the Faculty of Philology. A [conference report](#) written by Carla Schäfer is available on the BRN website, and a related special issue of *Mémoires du livre / Studies in Book Culture* is planned for 2026.

We welcomed Dr. Millicent Weber (Australian National University) to the Chair of Book Studies between September and November. This was made possible by a University of Münster Fellowship. Over her time in Münster, Dr. Weber co-organized the online “Doing Audiobook Research” symposium, and a related special issue with LOGOS is planned for 2027.

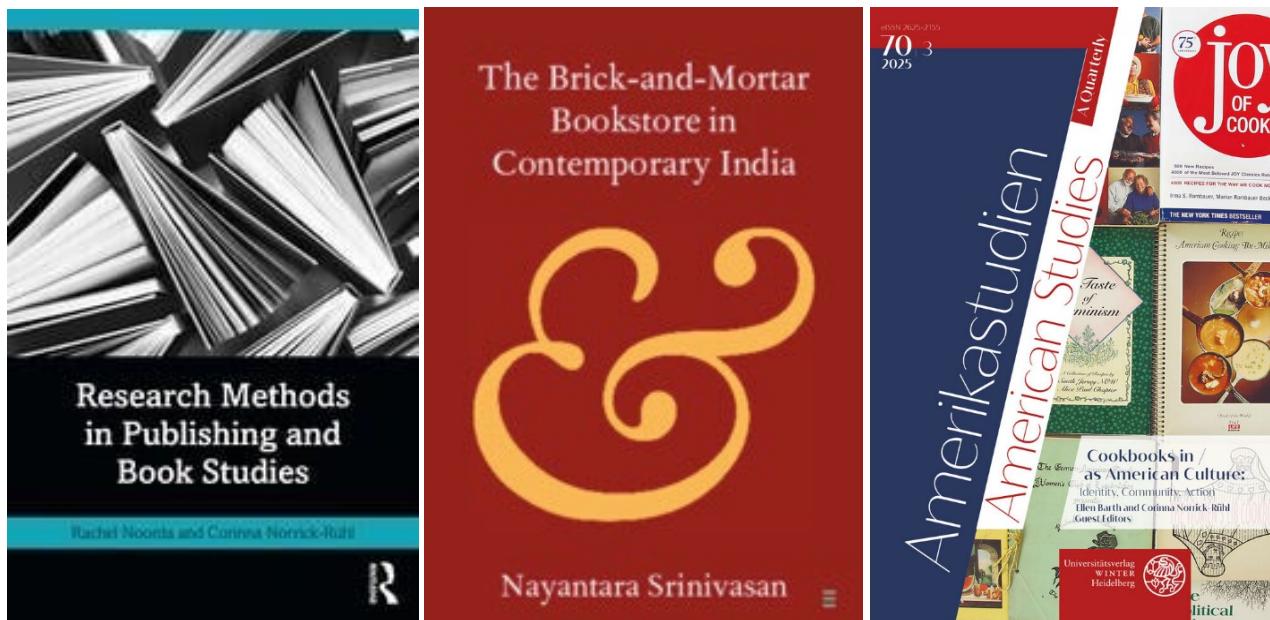
Over the course of the year Book Studies staff and associated PhD students presented papers at international conferences including the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP) conference “Communities and Values of the Book” in Rochester, New York, USA (Ellen Barth, Corinna Norrick-Rühl, Swara Shukla) and at the “Dis/Trusting the Institution(s) of Literature” conference in Dublin, Ireland (Chandni Ananth, Miaïna Razakamanantsoa, Carla Schäfer).

Publication News (selection)

We're pleased to highlight a few publications by Book Studies staff and associated scholars that appeared this year. The book *Research Methods in Publishing and Book Studies* (Routledge) by Rachel Noorda and Corinna Norrick-Rühl details a number of research methods in the fields of Book and Publishing Studies. Each section offers a description of the given method, case studies, study questions, and suggestions for further reading.

Ellen Barth and Corinna Norrick-Rühl co-edited a special issue of the journal *American Studies / Amerikastudien* on the theme “Cookbooks in/as American Culture: Identity, Community, Action.” Among the excellent contributions to this special issue is an article by former MA BAPS student Aleksandra Sukhodolskaia, whose piece “Cookbooks and Politics: A Thematic Analysis of Goodreads Reviews of Kathy Gunst and Katherine Alford’s ‘Rage Baking’ (2020)” began as a Book Studies term paper.

We're also thrilled to report that this year saw Nayantara Srinivasan's master's thesis published by Cambridge University Press as part of their series Elements in Publishing and Book Culture. Also a former MA BAPS student, Tara is now a Book Studies PhD candidate supported by a scholarship from the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes.



Teaching Highlights

In addition to reoccurring courses for MA and BA students (Text, Book and Culture; Theory and Literature), this year's course offerings also included a wide variety of topics, from pre-modern (The Changing Value of Books and Reading in Pre-modern and Modern Britain) to 21st century (Bookstagram, BookTok & More), as well as courses that focused on institutions (Reading the Library) and national contexts (Cookbooks and the Myth of the Melting Pot).

In the postgraduate class for advanced MA students, a number of guest lectures and workshops were held to deepen students' understanding. Speakers included Dr. Kanupriya Dhingra (Visiting Postdoctoral Researcher, Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory), Dr. Evi Heinz (HU Berlin, Centre for British Studies), Dr. Christina Neuwirth, Clara Newkirk (COMUE Université Bourgogne-Franche-Comté / Ehrenpreis Centre for Swift Studies), as well as associated PhD candidates Swara Shukla and Nayantara Srinivasan.

In the summer semester, MA BAPS students taking part in the module Historical and Social Perspectives: The Book curated the exhibit "From Stories to Suffrage: Early Reading Experiences of 19th Century Women Activists in Britain."

Excursions and Study Trips



In late January 2025, members of the postgraduate class book studies traveled to Baden-Württemberg with Ellen Barth and Corinna Norrick-Rühl to tour the rare book fairs "Antiquaria Ludwigsburg" and "Antiquariatsmesse Stuttgart." In Stuttgart, a tour was hosted by the Verband Deutscher Antiquare and Dr. Markus Brandis. Dr. Frédéric Spagnoli from Besançon's MA course Rare Books and Digital Humanities joined the Münster group for both fairs.

In October, students once again had the opportunity to represent the Chair of Book Studies at Frankfurt Book Fair on the invitation of the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels' "Studium rund ums buch" initiative. Six students from the MA BAPS and NTS programs ran a booth over the course of five days, where they engaged with visitors and discussed studying Book Studies at the University of Münster alongside peers from other universities at the "Vorstellungsrunde" events. In addition, we presented two events on the Studium rund ums Buch stage: a discussion on trends in transnational audiobook markets with Corinna Norrick-Rühl and Millicent Weber, as well as a conversation with PhD candidate Swara Shukla on Wattpad and the reading of serialized fiction (moderated by Johanna Kreisner).

Additional study trips included a visit to the local printer Letterwish, the ULB's rare books reading room, the Ehrenpreis Centre for Swift Studies, and the University of Münster's Bible Museum.

Book Studio



2025 was a big year for the Book Studio. In the first half of the year, Book Studio workshops were generously funded by Universitätsgesellschaft. These included an erasure poetry workshop jointly organized with the staff of *Satura*; a zine-making workshop for English Department staff; paper marbling workshops; two workshops with Dr. Evi Heinz on the topic of "Reading Kew Gardens with a Carving Tool;" and two found object mono-printing workshops. In November, the Book Studio once

again hosted weekly zine-making meet ups. Thanks to these meet ups, the Mini-Zine Library now includes more zines by Münster students.

The Book Studio was one of several initiatives from Faculty 09 spotlighted at the June “Lehrreise” with Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, Prof. Dr. Ulrike Weyland, and it was also featured in the winter 2025/26 issue of *UniKunstKultur*, which can be read [online](#).

In memoriam

Dr. Marie-Luise Spieckermann (1947–2025)

It is with deep regret that we inform you of the passing of our former colleague, Dr. Marie-Luise Spieckermann, on November 9, 2025, in Münster. Dr. Spieckermann was employed at the English Department of the University of Münster until 2012. Since then, she was a recurring and welcome guest at events held by the Chair of Book Studies.

After studying English and philosophy in Sheffield and Münster, she completed her PhD in 1980. Her doctoral thesis focused on William Wotten (published with Peter Lang, 1981). From 1983, as a research associate, she taught and researched topics related to 18th-century English literature and book history and beyond. In collaboration with our esteemed colleague Prof. Dr. Bernhard Fabian, head of the former Institutum Erasmianum at the University of Münster, Dr. Spieckermann’s interest focused on book historical projects, particularly those related to Friedrich Nicolai. From 1998 until her retirement in 2012, Dr. Spieckermann was a senior lecturer at the Chair of Book Studies in the English Department working with Prof. Dr. Müller-Oberhäuser.

We will honor Dr. Spieckermann’s memory and contributions to our field and academic community.

- Prof. Dr. Gabriele Müller-Oberhäuser & Prof. Dr. Corinna Norrick-Rühl

Book Studies Team 2025

Prof. Dr. Corinna Norrick-Rühl

Birgit Hötker-Bolte

Chandni Ananth

Ellen Barth

Dr. Marie-Luise Spieckermann +

Prof. em. Dr. Gabriele Müller-Oberhäuser

Katharina Berger, Thea Clasen, Alara Ergin, Michael Erwig, Johanna Kreisner, Hanna Wirsbowsky (student research assistants)

Associated PhD Students¹

Chandni Ananth

Jessica Eickmann

Miaïna Razakamanantsoa

Carla Schäfer

Swara Shukla

Nayantara Srinivasan

Alma Topalli

¹ Registered with the University of Münster, first supervisor either Prof. Norrick-Rühl or Prof. Müller-Oberhäuser.