



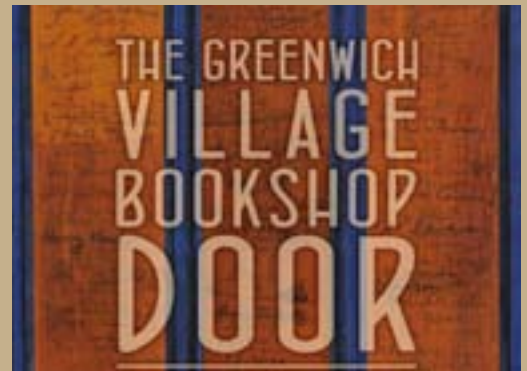
HARRY RANSOM
CENTER



The Greenwich Village Bookshop Door: A Portal to Bohemia, 1920-1925 Exploration

Name _____ Date _____

THE HARRY RANSOM CENTER is a humanities research library and museum. Current exhibitions are on display in the galleries on the first floor. The Gutenberg Bible and the First Photograph are on permanent display in the lobby. The Ransom Center is free and open to the public.



In the Gallery

The Greenwich Village Bookshop Door: A Portal to Bohemia, 1920-1925

In the early 1920s, noteworthy visitors to Frank Shay's Bookshop at 4 Christopher Street began auto-graphing the narrow door that opened into the shop's office. Signed by over 240 artists, writers, publishers, and other notable habitués of New York City's Greenwich Village neighborhood, this unusual artifact is a literal portal to the past, revealing the rich mix of innovators--from anarchist poets to major commercial publishers--that defined this slice of Bohemia from 1920 to 1925.

1. What are the origins of the door? Where was it first hung and how did it find its way to the Harry Ransom Center?

2. What is the door rumored to have hidden in Frank Shay's bookshop?



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3. Briefly describe the role of Frank Shay's Bookshop in Greenwich Village's history?

4. A wide variety of authors, artists, playwrights, local business people and friends of the shop's owners signed the Greenwich Village Bookshop door. Name 5 people who signed the door and list their professions.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

5. Of the 242 signatures on the door, how many has the Harry Ransom Center been able to decipher?

6. Describe the evolution of the location of Frank Shay's Bookshop through the years.

7. In the early 1920s, how was Greenwich Village redefining itself?

8. Why did Frank Shay print book covers in different colors?



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9. Briefly summarize the relationship between Frank Shay and Christopher Morley?

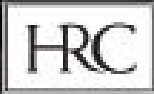
10. What was the inspiration for Frank Shay's traveling bookshop?

11. What were some of Frank Shay's creative methods for selling books?

12. What was the first woman-owned bookshop in America?

13. How did the curator decipher the signature "Bar Dar"? (Location: middle of the gallery, in the "Deciphering the Door" section)

14. Besides the door, select one other artifact and discuss its relevance to the history of the Greenwich Village.



15. How does the Greenwich Village bookshop door aid your understanding of the early 1920s?

Need help? A guide to the exhibition is available at the front desk.

21st and Guadalupe Streets
The University of Texas at Austin
512-471-8944
www.hrc.utexas.edu

Gallery hours

10 a.m.–5 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
10 a.m.–7 p.m. Thursday
Noon–5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday
Closed Mondays.

Reading and Viewing Room Hours

9 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday
9 a.m.–noon Saturday

Tours

Free public tours are offered Tuesdays at noon, Saturdays at 2 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m.

Further Research

The Reading and Viewing Room, located on the second floor, serves readers requiring use of the Center’s manuscripts, rare books, and visual materials.

Learn more

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