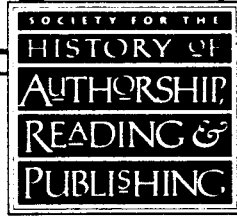


SHARP NEWS



Volume 1, Number 2

Spring 1992

• *SHARP's Electronic Discussion and Information Center Goes Online*

As mentioned in the last issue of *SHARP News*, SHARP has been looking for ways to use the tools of electronic culture to link together students of print culture. This past March we set up a kind of high-tech bulletin board, based at Indiana University, that makes it possible for all of us with access to university computer networks to share information, questions, research interests, and ideas with one another all over the world—and to do so quickly, easily, and (this is the best part) at no cost. The name of this marvel is SHARP-L, and the response to the first announcement of its existence has been wonderfully encouraging. Within a matter of a few weeks, more than 200 scholars from a wide variety of disciplines and a pretty fair sampling of countries (the United States, Canada, Britain, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan, so far) have signed on, and we hope this is only the beginning.

Here's the basic idea and how it works. The "L" in the name (in case you were wondering) stands for "listserv." A listserv is simply a way of exchanging e-mail among people with similar concerns. There are hundreds of listservs in existence, based at various institutions, each devoted to discussion of matters pertaining to a particular field of interest. When you subscribe to SHARP-L, which takes only a minute or two and costs nothing, your name and e-mail address are added to the distribution list. Then, when you post an e-mail to the list—raising a question about history or sources, for instance, or introducing a topic you'd like to hear other people's opinions about—that message automatically goes into the electronic mailbox of every other list-member (all 200 of them) simultaneously. And, of course, the same thing happens when anyone else posts a message. It is not at all unusual on a listserv for several discussions on different matters to be going on at once among all interested parties on the list, some of whom may also choose to correspond with one another individually. The listserv also provides an efficient way to distribute news about upcoming conferences, calls for papers, new publications, and the like, just as *SHARP News* does.

As you might imagine, the first thing you'll notice after joining a listserv like SHARP-L is that you've started

getting more mail in your computer mailbox than you may be used to. In fact, SHARP-L generated a torrent of messages when it first went online: Simon Eliot (who has a way with similes) said he felt like the Sorcerer's Apprentice. That initial deluge has abated considerably after two months; but still, we're all busy people, and few of us want to read through each of dozens of new messages every week, no matter how interesting some of them may prove to be. Some of us, too, have to be careful about using up our allotted file-space on the system by indiscriminately storing every piece of mail we receive. With a little planning, however, and attention to some simple points of electronic-age etiquette, the increased volume of mail needn't be a burden. Most systems allow users to call up a list of their new messages that indicates, for each message, its source and whatever word or phrase is on the "Subject:" or "Re:" line. It is a simple matter, then, to scan the list to see what looks interesting: some you may choose to read right then, others you may save to read later, and the rest you can just delete. For this mail-sorting habit to work easily, everyone who posts a message to the list needs to remember to put something on the "Subject" line so that everyone will have some idea what it's about. (Most people do this anyway, but we all forget sometimes.) Similarly, when responding to a message, it helps if your response has the same "Subject:" line as that message, so that listmembers following that particular discussion can easily find all the messages that pertain to it. Appending your full name and e-mail address to the bottom of the message makes it much easier for other members to get in touch with you. The only other point of etiquette, besides observing ordinary civility in discussion, is to avoid posting messages to the list as a whole that are really intended for just one person: if you're exchanging postal addresses with another scholar, for example, or merely thanking someone for providing a piece of information, there's no need to alert everyone on the list! The "Thanks, Janet" or "See you there!" kind of message is best handled by private e-mail. Following these few common-sense rules helps maximize the listserv's interest and usefulness for all of us.

There's no need to be shy, though, about posting messages to the list, even if they happen to be inquiries about a narrow subject that may interest only a few members—after all, that's what SHARP-L is for, and our field has many nooks and crannies. Many members of SHARP-L

2 have already had the pleasure of discovering other members with precisely similar research interests and exchanging helpful ideas and information with them. Many others have enjoyed reading and participating in list-wide discussions of more general issues in the history of authorship, reading, and publishing. Some members have had the useful and friendly notion of posting a brief autobiographical note describing their current research. Signaled by the word "Introduction" on the "Subject:" line, these messages give all of us who choose to browse through them an increasingly well-informed sense of the marvelously varied kinds of work going on in our field, fostering the kind of linkage and sense of common purpose that represents what SHARP, and SHARP-L, are all about.

Subscribing to SHARP-L is easy. Address an e-mail message to either `LISTSERV@IUBVM` (Bitnet) or, if outside the United States, `LISTSERV@IUBVM.UCS.INDIANA.EDU` (Internet). Leaving the "Subject:" header blank, have the body of the message consist of a single line: `SUBSCRIBE SHARP-L`, followed by your first and last names. When you send the message, your name and e-mail address will be enrolled among the subscribers, and you'll receive a note from the network confirming this. Now you're able—and, of course, encouraged—to post any messages to the list that you think might interest other members. To post a message, address it to either `SHARP-L@IUBVM` (Bitnet) or—again, if outside the United States—`SHARP-L@IUBVM.UCS.INDIANA.EDU` (Internet), and remember to put some identifying word or phrase on the "Subject:" line. (If you subscribed using your Bitnet address, for example, use that one to post your messages, too; unless you're overseas and must use Internet to subscribe and post, using Bitnet is usually a little faster and less error-prone.) That's all there is to it. Later, if you're going to be on vacation and don't want messages piling up while you're away, there's no need to unsubscribe: just send a message to whichever address you used to subscribe (e.g., `LISTSERV@IUBVM`) with a blank subject-header and the message: `SET SHARP-L NOMAIL`. When you get back, a note to the same address containing the command `SET SHARP-L MAIL` will start you up again.

If you have any questions or comments about SHARP-L, list-manager Patrick Leary of SHARP wants to hear from you. Feel free to e-mail him at `PLEARY@IUBACS` (Bitnet) or `PLEARY@UCS.INDIANA.EDU` (Internet), or to drop him a note care of the History Department, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47401, USA.



✦ *History of the Book—On Demand Series (HOBODS)*

The History of the Book is a relatively new and very lively subject which has recently been expanding rapidly in both Europe and North America. In the United Kingdom it has received a considerable stimulus from Cambridge University Press's decision to publish a multi-volume *History of the Book in Britain* and from the Leverhulme Foundation's financing of four postdoctoral fellowships in the subject. All this has led to a substantial increase in the amount of original and highly publishable research being produced. Much of this, however, is of a specialist nature, often taking the form of large quantities of tabulated data. Such research, although it is of vital interest to book historians, is frequently either too large to be published as an article in a learned journal or takes the form of work-in-progress and is therefore not appropriate to a formal monograph series.

Running parallel to book history in terms of speed of development is the technology of word-processing and desktop publishing. It is now possible, by the use of this new technology, to produce short runs of specialist books—indeed, to produce copies as scholars demand them. The new technology also allows for relatively easy emendation or expansion of a printed work, so it has become possible to print something which is clearly the product of work in progress, and produce a second edition of it the moment the researcher chooses to do so.

The *History of the Book in Britain*, although a substantial work, will simply not have the space to publish all the data on which its arguments will depend. There is therefore a need to create a printed context which will provide this data and into which the *History* can then be fitted. This context will be formed partly by articles in specialists' journals such as *The Library* and *Publishing History* (and equivalent journals in North America and Europe), and partly by such monograph series as those of the Bibliographical Society of London and the Oxford Bibliographical Society. However, publication through these outlets takes time and is, inevitably, restricted by costs of production. To complement these publications we need a system which can publish medium-to-long pieces cheaply, quickly, and flexibly. We hope that the History of the Book—On Demand Series (HOBODS) will fulfill this need.

SHARP News is the quarterly newsletter of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing. Annual membership in SHARP, which includes a subscription to *SHARP News*, is \$10 in the United States, £7 in Britain, \$15 elsewhere. Address all correspondence to the Editor, Jonathan Rose, History Department, Drew University, Madison, NJ 07940, USA.

HOBODS will publish refereed material from a variety of sources: data that was used to write an article or monograph but which itself was never published in full; M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. theses or parts of theses which contain original or significant research; data from current research topics which, although subject to addition and emendation, is already of sufficient value to be made available in the public domain. The last type, of course, will particularly benefit from the ability of HOBODS to produce new editions quickly.

Documents for possible inclusion in HOBODS should be in camera-ready copy form with a short introduction by the author. Those accepted will be reproduced and copies deposited with the copyright libraries. The title will then be added to the HOBODS list. Those wishing for a copy of a listed publication should write to the editors enclosing a sterling check to cover cost of the item (airmail postage will be included). Titles in the series will be sold at cost-price plus a small percentage to cover overheads; it is not intended that a profit should be made, merely that enough money be generated to allow the editors to extend the list.

HOBODS will be published in Oxford and Bristol by general editors Simon Eliot and Michael Turner. New and existing titles in HOBODS will be listed in *Publishing History*, *BTHG Newsletter*, *In Octavo*, and *SHARP News*. Orders should be sent to Dr. Simon Eliot, The Open University, 4 Portwall Lane, Bristol BS1 6ND, UK. All payments in pounds sterling, please.

The First Two Titles

1. Alexis Weedon. *Summary Statistics for George Bell & Sons and the Bohn Libraries, 1865-1920* (Oxford and Bristol, 1992), 32 pp. Price £2.00 (UK), £4.00 (overseas). The first chapter contains summary statistics on George Bell & Sons 1860-1905, including frequency of print runs, percentage of print run sold before costs recovered, and breakdown of expenditure on stereos, electros, and molds. The second chapter covers the Bohn Libraries 1865-1920 and includes information on such series as British Classic, Cheap series, French Memoirs, Historical, Novel, Reference, Science, Sports and Games, and the Uniform series. There is an appendix of graphs.

2. Simon Eliot. *A Measure of Popularity: UK Public Library Holdings of Twenty-four Popular Authors, 1883-1912* (Oxford and Bristol, 1992), 47 pp. Price £2.00 (UK), £4.00 (overseas). The twenty-four authors covered are Harrison Ainsworth, R.M. Ballantyne, Walter Besant, M.E. Braddon, William Black, R.D. Blackmore, Rhoda Broughton, Wilkie Collins, Marie Corelli, Charles Dickens, H. Rider Haggard, E. Bulwer Lytton, Margaret Oliphant, James Payn, G.W.M. Reynolds, Walter Scott, R.L. Stevenson, Anthony Trollope, Mark Twain, Jules Verne, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Mrs. Henry Wood, and Charlotte Yonge. The work is divided into three chapters (1883-92,

1893-1902, 1903-12) and surveys over eighty library catalogues from England and Scotland.



• *Other Ventures in Book History*

The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing is only the latest of several new enterprises in book history to emerge in recent years. Roger Chartier, Hans-Erich Bodeker, and Donald McKenzie have organized the Reseau International sur l'Histoire du Livre et de l'Édition, a network of mainly European scholars. (Like SHARP, however, the Reseau is open to book historians from all nations.) In June 1991 the Reseau published the first issue of *In Octavo*, a twice-yearly newsletter in French and English. To subscribe to *In Octavo*, contact Olivier Corpet, IMEC, 25 rue de Lille, 75007 Paris, France.

The new Research Society for American Periodicals is now publishing a newsletter and a journal, *American Periodicals*. RSAP met last November in Washington in conjunction with the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals, and will hold sessions at the American Literature Association conference in San Diego 28-31 May 1992. RSAP membership costs \$15.00 for one year and \$28.00 for two years, and includes a subscription to *American Periodicals*. Contact Prof. James T.F. Tanner, P.O. Box 5096, University of North Texas, Denton, TX 76203-5096.

Epilogue: Canadian Bulletin for the History of Books, Libraries, and Archives is published twice yearly in English and French. Its focus is chiefly (though not entirely) Canadian, and it features research articles, book reviews, news notes, and archival reports. Its recent publications section forms the basis for the Canadian submission to the *Annual Bibliography of the History of the Printed Book and Libraries*. A subscription costs \$15.00—Canadian dollars for Canadians, American dollars for Americans. Contact the editor, Bertrum H. MacDonald, School of Library and Information Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3H 4H8.

Calls for Papers

The 24th annual conference of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies will meet in Providence, Rhode Island, 21-25 April 1993. Abstracts and papers are solicited for a panel entitled "Publishing History and Cultural Criticism, 1660-1800." Issue-oriented papers aimed at generating discussion and communication across disciplines are particularly welcome. Please send papers or

CONFERENCES

The Third National Conference on "Canadian Bibliography: Achievements, Challenges, and Opportunities" will meet at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, on 31 May and 1 June 1992. The meeting is jointly sponsored by the Bibliographical Society of Canada, the Association for Canadian Studies, and the National Library of Canada. Contact the Association for Canadian Studies, P.O. Box 8888, Station A, Montreal, Quebec H3C 3P8, Canada.

The next issue of *SHARP News* will feature a report by Mark Lehmsstedt on the work of the Leipziger Arbeitskreis zur Geschichte des Buchwesens. That organization will be sponsoring a conference in Leipzig 25-27 September 1992 on "Buch und Buchhandel im frühen 19. Jahrhundert." For information contact the Leipziger Arbeitskreis zur Geschichte des Buchwesens, c/o Deutsche Bücherei Leipzig, Deutscher Platz, D-O-7010 Leipzig, Germany.

The American Journalism Historians Association will hold its annual convention in Lawrence, Kansas, 1-3 October 1992. For information about the AJHA contact Prof. Nancy Roberts, School of Journalism, 111 Murphy Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

The American Printing History Association will hold its annual conference 3 October 1992 at Princeton, NJ. Contact the APHA, P.O. Box 4822, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

The Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies and the Atlantic Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies will meet 15-18 October 1992 in St. John's, Newfoundland. The conference topic is "New Worlds vs. Old: Discovery, Discourse, and Rediscovery in the Eighteenth Century." Proposed panel sessions include Discoveries Educational, Geographical, Historical, Linguistic, Literary, Medical, Scientific, S/Textual; Fiction and Travel Literature; Printing and the Book Trade; Anthologies, Dictionaries, Translations: Editing Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope; and Literature and Law. Contact Don Nichol, Conference President, CSECS '92, Department of English, Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada A1C 5S7; telephone (709) 737-8064; fax (709) 737-4000; e-mail DNICHOL@KEAN.UCS.MUN.CA.



Recent Publications

General

Hans-Erich Bodeker, Gerald Chaix, and Patrice Veit, eds., *Le Livre Religieux et ses Pratiques* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991).

Roger Chartier, ed., *La Correspondance: Les Usages de la Lettre au XIXe Siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1991).

Roger Chartier, *L'Ordre des Livres: Lecteurs, Auteurs et Bibliothèques en Europe entre les XIVe et XVIIIe Siècles* (Aix-en-Provence: Alinea, 1992).

Sandra L. Hindman, ed., *Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, circa 1450-1520* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1991).

Fred Kobrak and Beth Luey, eds., *The Structure of International Publishing in the 1990s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1992).

Henry Mayr-Harting, *Ottoman Book Illumination: An Historical Study, part 2* (London: Harvey Miller, 1991).

M.B. Parkes, *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1991).

Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *Sources for the History of Women's Magazines, 1792-1960: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1991).

Britain

Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992).

Patricia Anderson and Jonathan Rose, eds., *British Literary Publishing Houses, 1820-1880 and British Literary Publishing Houses, 1881-1965* (Detroit and London: Gale Research, 1991).

N.F. Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1991).

M.T. Clanchy, *Literacy and Law in Medieval England* (Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1992).

Dennis Griffiths, ed., *Encyclopedia of the British Press* (London: Macmillan, 1992).

N. John Hall, *Trollope: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1991).

Leslie Howsam, *Cheap Bibles: Nineteenth-Century Publishing and the British and Foreign Bible Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991).

Linda K. Hughes and Michael Lund, *The Victorian Serial* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1991).

David F. Mitch, *The Rise of Popular Literacy in Victorian England: The Influence of Private Choice and Public Policy* (Philadelphia: Univ. Of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

Don Nichol, *Pope's Literary Legacy: The Book-Trade Correspondence of William Warburton and John Knapton* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1992).

Jonathan Rose, "Rereading the English Common Reader: A Preface to a History of Audiences," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, January-March 1992.

James D. Startt, *Journalists for Empire: The Imperial Debate in the Edwardian Stately Press, 1903-1913* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1991).

Canada

Patricia Lockhart Fleming, *Atlantic Canada Imprints, 1801-1820: A Bibliography* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1991).

Yvan Lamonde, *La Librairie et l'Édition à Montréal, 1776-1920* (Montreal: Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec, 1991).

Mary Lu MacDonald, *Literature and Society in the Canadas, 1817-1850* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1992).

China

Pierre-Henri Durand, *Lettres et Pouvoirs: Un Procès Littéraire dans la Chine Impériale* (Paris: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1992).

France

Harvey Chisik, ed., *The Press in the French Revolution* (Oxford: Voltaire Press, 1991).

Robert Darnton, *Édition et Sédition: L'Univers de la Littérature Clandestine au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991).

Alain Gheerbrandt and Leon Aichelbaum, *K Editeur* (Cognac: Le Temps qu'il fait, 1991).

Jean-Marie Goulemot, *Ces Livres qu'on ne Tient que d'une Main: Lecture et Lectures de Livres Pornographiques au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris: Alinea, 1991).

Carla Hesse, *Publishing and Cultural Politics in Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1810* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1991).

Germany

Michael Cahn, *Der Druck des Wissens: Geschichte und Medium der wissenschaftlichen Publikation* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1991).

Leipziger Jahrbuch zur Buchgeschichte, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991).

United States

Robert D. Arner, *Dobson's Encyclopaedia: The Publisher, Text, and Publication of America's First Britannica, 1789-1803* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

James L. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture: Journalism, Filmmaking, and Broadcasting in America since 1941* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992).

Donald Franklin Joyce, *Black Book Publishers in the United States: A Historical Dictionary of the Presses, 1817-1990* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1991).

Carl F. Kaestle, Helen Damon Moore, Lawrence C. Stedman, Katherine Tinsley, and William Vance Trollinger, Jr., *Literacy in the United States: Reading and Readers since 1880* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1991).

E. Jennifer Monaghan, "Family Literacy in Early 18th-Century Boston: Cotton Mather and His Children," *Reading Research Quarterly*, Winter 1991.

Nan Robertson, *The Girls in the Balcony: Women, Men, and the New York Times* (New York: Random House, 1992).

Joan Shelley Rubin, *The Making of Middlebrow Culture* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1992).

Louise L. Stevenson, "Prescription and Reality: Reading Advisors and Reading Practice, 1860-1880," *Book Research Quarterly*, Winter 1990-91.

James Tagg, *Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

Cynthia Zarin, "Profiles: Jaz" [on James Laughlin, founder of New Directions Publishing Corp.], *New Yorker*, 23 March 1992.

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Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992).

First SHARP Conference: Final Call for Papers

SHARP will hold its inaugural conference 9-11 June 1993 at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York City. Our initial call for papers has already generated a very promising response covering a broad range of topics. We are still welcoming proposals for individual papers or entire panels; and please let us know if you would like to chair a panel or contribute to less formal workshops on teaching and research in book history. Proposals (two pages maximum—please do not send complete papers) should reach Dr. Simon Eliot, The Open University, 4 Portwall Lane, Bristol BS1 6ND, UK no later than 1 July 1992. Also contact Dr. Eliot if you would like to serve on the SHARP Program Committee, which will meet in London on or around 27 July; include your summer address and telephone number. (Any SHARP member who is not submitting a proposal may serve on the Program Committee.)

How We Are Doing

Inventing a new scholarly society is a fascinating enterprise, and in this column we will report regularly on our progress in getting SHARP airborne. So far, the answer to the query above is: Very Nicely Indeed. When we mailed out our first newsletter three months ago, we had hoped to have 100 paid members by this point in time. In fact, we have more than 160, and we are allowing ourselves to feel optimistic about hitting our goal of 300 by this time next year. Some have made generous contributions to SHARP beyond their membership dues: huzzah and thanks to Ruth B. Bottigheimer, Louise L. Stevenson, and Barbra B. Higginbotham. The gratifying response to the SHARP-L listserv, ably managed by Patrick Leary, is yet more evidence that there are plenty of isolated book historians out there who want and need to link up with a network of fellow researchers. And, as you see before you, *SHARP News* now looks much spiffier, thanks to the desktop publishing skills of Philip A. Metzger at Lehigh University.

Our members are nicely distributed across the disciplines, including history, literature, sociology, journalism, librarianship, art, classics, and economics. A few publishing professionals have taken a keen interest in SHARP, but frankly we need to do more to involve people from that field. We already have a good membership base in the United States, Britain, Australia, and English-speak-

ing Canada; but we have yet to establish secure beachheads in most other parts of the world. Although we have attracted some Anglophone scholars of non-English literatures, that area too needs work.

If you can help in publicizing SHARP in any constituency, we would be most grateful. We could also use some (cheap) legal assistance in getting SHARP formally incorporated.

This summer and fall, your president will be roving through Britain for the dual purpose of (1) research into the history of British working-class readers and (2) spreading the SHARP gospel. Linda Connors, my colleague at Drew University, has generously volunteered to edit the next issue of *SHARP News*, which will come out in August. Linda will be checking my mailbox regularly, so continue sending membership applications and news for *SHARP News* to Jonathan Rose, History Department, Drew University, Madison, NJ 07940, USA; or you can contact Linda Connors directly at the Drew University Library.

If you have business that needs my personal attention, you can reach me between 2 June and 1 October at London House, Mecklenburgh Square, London WC1N 2AB, UK, telephone 071-837-8888. I will be on expedition in the provinces (and hence incommunicado) from 1 October to 23 November, when I return home.

—Jonathan Rose

If you join SHARP now, you will receive the next five issues of *SHARP News* for the price of four, as well as the SHARP Membership Directory, to be published in the summer of 1993. Send a check for \$10 (US) or \$15 (elsewhere), payable to SHARP, to Jonathan Rose, History Department, Drew University, Madison, NJ 07940, USA. British residents can join SHARP by sending a check for £7 to Dr. Simon Eliot, The Open University, 4 Portwall Lane, Bristol BS1 6ND, UK.

Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Professional Affiliation:

Research Interests:

Check if you prefer *not* to be listed in the SHARP Directory: