



K O N I N K L I J K E N E D E R L A N D S E  
A K A D E M I E V A N W E T E N S C H A P P E N

## Do sales matter? Reputation and contemporary popularity in the Early Modern Book World

A masterclass by Andrew Pettegree, Amsterdam, Monday 27 August 2018

All authors worry about their sales, even if, as in the first age of print, they made hardly any money from their books. In today's book world, there is no clear relationship between sales and literary reputation; and in an age when the Nobel Prize for Literature may be awarded to a troubadour with no very obvious literary pretensions, even our concept of literature seems increasingly malleable. In the early modern period also, the relationship between sales and reputation deserves to be probed further, not least for its impact on our understanding of the societies we study. Are the books we choose to study from previous centuries chosen because contemporaries recognised them as important or because they reflect our current preoccupations? And how can we know which books past societies particularly valued? These troubling questions – troubling not least because they are so routinely ignored – are the subject of this workshop.

Preparatory Reading

*Owen Gingerich, The Book Nobody Read: Chasing the Revolutions of Nicolaus Copernicus (London: Penguin, 2005)*

Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, 'What was published in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic?', *Livre. Revue Historique* (2018)

Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree, *Lost Books. Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016)

Please also read and prepare the following discussion document:

*Catalogus variorum & insignum librorum incompactorum* (Amsterdam: Abraham and Petrus van Someren, 1685).

Available from Book Sales Catalogues Online

<http://www.brill.com/products/online-resources/book-sales-catalogues-online>