

**ABEL PAPERS****RICHARD ABEL PAPERS**

- Provenance:** An outright gift of Kit Abel Hawkins, Richard Abel's daughter, in July of 2015 and later in 2015 and into 2016.
- Ownership:** The Richard Abel Papers are owned by Reed College.
- Access:** Please contact the Special Collections Librarian at Reed College for access to the Papers.
- Size:** The Richard Abel Papers consist of three manuscript boxes, 1.5 linear feet.
- Processed by:** Gay Walker
- Date:** August 6, 2015; December 2015; February 2016.

**Biography**

Richard Abel '48 was born on July 7, 1925. He attended Reed College and was active as a student, organizing frequent recorded music programs in the Capehart Room, in printing and graphic design, in working at and then taking on the management of the Reed College Bookstore, ordering academic titles for Reed's classes and faculty, and becoming the full-time manager after a foray into graduate school at U.C. Berkeley. He married Katherine Ferguson '48, who was a fellow student for the first two years; she left when they married and had children. Abel was one of the participating founders of Reed's Champoeg Press, helping to print the first title, *A day with the cow column in 1843* by Jesse Applegate, along with professors Lloyd Reynolds and Dorothy Johansen.

With university and college libraries requesting the acquisition of scholarly titles from domestic and foreign booksellers, Abel created the Richard Abel & Company, Inc. to act as a distributor of those titles. His company made ground-breaking advances with the approval plan concept, in centralized cataloging, computerization, and in turn-key libraries with a full card catalog in A/V format accessible from many locations.

After purchasing the imprint from Reed College, Abel continued to produce many titles under the Champoeg Press name until 1981. He also founded and ran several local Oregon presses until 1989, including the Timber Press which became known for its books about botany, the Amadeus Press for books on music and musicians, the Areopagitica Press for history imprints, and the Dioscorides Press for pure botany and materia medica titles. Abel served as a trustee and as the U.S. Editor for *LOGOS: the Journal of the World Book Community* as well as a member of Transaction Publishers' Board of Directors. He was widely published in the bibliographic

world on books and printing history, making a statement before Congress in 1971, writing regular essays for publishing newsletters, and authoring several books including *The Gutenberg Revolution*, 2011. He died April 17, 2013.

## Scope and Contents

These papers primarily contain documents and materials relating to the programs of the Richard Abel and Company, Inc., mostly from the 1970s. There are also some ephemera from the Timber Press and Abel's other bibliographic and publishing activities.

## Box Index

### BOX 1

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Abel, Richard: *The Gutenberg Revolution* - reviews  
Abel, Richard: Hearings, Statement on Higher Education Amendments of 1971, HR, Committee on Education and Labor, Special Subcommittee on Education  
Abel, Richard: *Immigrant Publishers* – review  
Abel, Richard: Review of *Tributes*, I. Horowitz  
Abel, Richard: Reviews in *Scholarly Publishing*  
Abel, Richard: "Ten Books Useful to the Overseas Traveler..."  
*Against the Grain* – with writings by Abel  
Amadeus Press  
Boulé, Margie: "The Clothing of the Culture: Interview with...Richard Abel, from *The Burnside Reader*  
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Chvatal, Donald and Gary Olson: "A Computer-based Acquisitions System for Libraries" in *ASIS*, v.8  
Easton, Valerie: "A Northwest Native" in the *Seattle Times Magazine*, 9/14/2003  
*International Communications Forum – Ten Years 1991-2001*  
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Mater, Jean: "Public Acceptance Assessment Check Prepared for Use with *Citizens Involved: Handle with Care!*"

O'Neill, Ann: "How the Richard Abel Co., Inc. Changed the Way We Worked"

*Papa Abel Remembers* [flyer]

Richard Abel & Company, Inc. Approval Plan. [Notebook.]

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Richard Abel & Company, Inc. "Change in Pricing Policy"

Richard Abel & Company, Inc. *Innovations in Library Services*

Richard Abel & Company, Inc. "Integrated Acquisitions and Cataloging Service", 8/21/72

Richard Abel & Company, Inc. "Preliminary Program Statement for an Opening-Day Collection", University of Houston, Clearlake ~1972

Richard Abel & Company, Inc. Technical Services [Notebook]

Richard Abel & Company, Inc. [Travel Schedules]

Rittenhouse Award, 11/15/2008

Timber Press: Flyers

Timber Press: Guest Book – "In Appreciation of Richard Abel 1991"