



The Book

Newsletter of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture
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Wiggins Lectures, 1997-99

Carla Peterson, professor of English and comparative literature at the University of Maryland at College Park, will deliver the 1997 James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture. The lecture, "National Culture, Local Culture: Charlotte Forten Grimké, Frances E.W. Harper, and the Politics of Publishing in the Postbellum Period," will be delivered in Worcester on Friday, October 3, 1997. It will appear in the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* and be available separately approximately six months after the lecture.

Peterson is one of three scholars who have accepted invitations to deliver Wiggins lectures as a result of the deliberations of a committee formed for that purpose. E. Jennifer Monaghan, professor of education at Brooklyn College, will be the 1998 lecturer, and Michael Winship, professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin, will lecture in 1999.

Serving on the Committee on the James Russell Wiggins Lecture were Susan Allen, libraries and media services, Kalamazoo; Bernardo Gallegos, educational foundations and interdivisional studies, California State University at Los Angeles; Patrick Leary, history, Indiana University; and Susan Williams, English, Ohio State University. Scott Casper, history, University of Nevada, Reno, chaired the committee.

Book Notes

MARKETS, MAGAZINES, AND MORES: PERIODICALS AND PRINT CULTURE

It's a common experience: you're at home, tending your affairs, when the mail arrives. You step out to collect the delivery, anticipating the usual mix of bills, catalogues, magazines, perhaps even a personal letter, and then you notice the large, bold message in the transparent envelope. "YOU, MR. ROBERT A. GROSS, ARE THE WINNER OF ONE MILLION DOLLARS" That is, once you open the package and read the small print, if you follow instructions, fill out the enclosed forms, return them at your own expense, and happen to have the lucky number in the Publishers' Clearing House Sweepstakes. Taken unawares, stirred by the promise of sudden riches, you follow the bidding and await the reward. In that expansive moment, you

may even subscribe to one of the magazines issued by the sponsors of the contest. Of course, that's all you're ever going to get. But you never learn: time and again, you join in the competition, and though you've never met a winner, there on television are people just like you joyously welcoming Ed McMahon at their door. Through the generosity of the Magazine Publishers of America, they will realize their dreams of abundance and freedom, and you will pay for a year's subscription to *Travel and Leisure*.

It's a curious way to sell magazines, but one with deep historical roots. Since the late nineteenth century, American periodicals have purveyed visions of a consumer's paradise to millions of readers throughout the republic. Financed by lavish advertising for the new brand-name goods—Ivory Soap, Campbell's Soup, Uneeda Biscuits, Coca-Cola, Kodak, and dozens more—that poured out of the cornucopia of American industry at the turn of the century, such magazines as *Ladies' Home Journal*, *McClure's*, and *Saturday Evening Post* entered middle-class homes everywhere and celebrated the progress of the age. They were pioneers of modern mass media, charting the way for radio and television with a simple formula: assemble a large, national audience with a desire for culture and money to spare, and furnish a cheap periodical attuned to its interests and needs, then market that audience to the makers of Quaker Oats, Baker's Cocoa, Royal Pudding, and Pope Bicycles, to name a few of the great many companies in quest of consumers and prepared to pay handsomely for the opportunity to woo their favor. "Why ... do men make magazines?" asked Perkins of Portland, the self-promoting huckster in a satirical novel of the 1890s. "To sell ad. space in them!" Lest anyone miss that message, he repeated, "What's a magazine? So many pages of ad. space" (Ellen Gruber Garvey, *The Adman in the Parlor: Magazines and the Gendering of Consumer Culture. 1880s to 1910s* [Oxford University Press, 1996], 100). In that exchange of audience for ads, popular magazines built America's first national mass culture, informing and entertaining hundreds of thousands of readers every month and conveying images of the good life made possible by the union of business and technology. Along the way, they prescribed gender roles, influenced family values, propagated racism, circumscribed American nationality, and joined in the creation of a consumer society.

It is no wonder, then, that these "magazines for the

millions,” to use Helen Damon-Moore’s apt phrase, are drawing increasing notice as harbingers of modern America. (*Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the Ladies’ Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, 1880-1920* [State University of New York Press, 1994]) Produced for a mass public but dependent on big business, popular periodicals were obliged to be servants of two masters, whose interests were not always the same. In the effort to straddle that divide, magazine editors finessed important issues about democracy, capitalism, and popular culture. “How does it so often and so persistently happen,” asks Richard Ohmann, who brings a cultural studies perspective to *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (Verso Books, 1996), “that commercial culture, made to earn a profit by pleasing large audiences, rather than to propagandize on behalf of capitalists ... nonetheless looks and sounds a lot like propaganda for capitalist social relations?” (345). Writing in a Marxist tradition, Ohmann develops a provocative class analysis of the cultural work performed by mass magazines. The sociologist Matthew Schneirov takes a different approach in *The Dream of a New Social Order: Popular Magazines in America 1893-1914* (Columbia University Press, 1994), emphasizing the diverse goals of the entrepreneurs who launched the magazines, the heterogeneity of their audiences, and the unanticipated consequences of their labors.

Even so, Schneirov concurs that “popular magazines, forerunners of modern mass communications, were central to the development of the new social order of corporate capitalism” (4-5). That passage installed new gender roles for women and men, which were simultaneously enforced, negotiated, and contested in the advancing media. How that happened and with what consequences are central concerns in women’s studies. Garvey traces the incursions of “the adman in the parlor.” For Helen Damon-Moore, *Ladies’ Home Journal* and *Saturday Evening Post*, in their formative years, were “prototypes that aided in the creation, development, and sustaining of the commercializing of gender and the gendering of commerce” (*Magazines for the Millions*, 3). Tracking the *Ladies’ Home Journal* in the period from 1910 to 1930, Jennifer Scanlon discerns a similar story about “women’s experiences with the developing consumer culture of the early twentieth century” (*Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies’ Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* [Routledge, 1995], 1). Seen through the lens of gender, popular magazines were a conservative force. Treating women as consummate consumers and selling them designs for modern living, these miscellanies of ads, fiction, features, and household hints updated nineteenth-century domesticity for the twentieth-century world of corporate capitalism.

These inquiries into magazines, markets, and mores contribute to a growing body of scholarship on the history of periodicals and print culture. Once deemed a minor subject and relegated to specialists in journalism schools, periodicals are finally getting their due. In the eighteenth century, to be sure, magazines cut a small figure in the cultural landscape. Precarious enterprises, with small circulations and narrow geographical scope, few lasted even a year. “Expectation of failure is connected with the very name of a Magazine,” grumbled Noah Webster, whose *American Magazine* (1787-88) was a depressing case in point. But from the 1820s on, periodicals staked out a central place in literary history. In their pages the leading American writers—Irving, Hawthorne, Melville, Stowe, Lydia Maria Child, Fanny Fern—were first published, winning readers and building reputations before their stories were issued as books. “It is impossible to make the books of most American authors pay,” observed one publisher in 1885, “unless they are first published and acquire recognition through the columns of the magazines. “Equally important were the direct payments from magazines for such contributions. No periodicals, no profession of authorship: that axiom set the course for men and women of letters and put its impress on their writing. “By the end of the 1840s,” Michael Bell concludes in the latest volume of *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, covering the period from 1820 to 1865, “the magazine writer had become perhaps the most characteristic American literary figure, and the tastes of magazine readers were coming to deter-

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The editors welcome all news relevant to the interests of the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture.

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mine the most characteristic modes of American literature.”

That recognition has begun to reshape the study of American literature and culture. From the start, the American Antiquarian Society’s Program in the History of the Book in American Culture has considered periodicals integral to any adequate account of print culture. What else could one expect from an institution founded by the newspaper and magazine publisher Isaiah Thomas? The new historicism in literary circles has renewed interest in periodicals as well. Eager to situate poetry and prose in their “original, periodical contexts,” an energetic band of scholars founded the Research Society for American Periodicals (RSAP) in 1990 and launched an annual journal, *American Periodicals*, the following year, with the goal of providing a “specific focus on American periodicals, a central issue in American culture” (*American Periodicals*, 1 [Fall 1991], iii).

Now comes a collection of original essays on *Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America* (University Press of Virginia, 1995), coedited by Kenneth M. Price, president of RSAP, and Susan Belasco Smith. “The periodical—far more than the book—was a social text,” announce the editors, “involving complex relationships among writers, readers, editors, publishers, printers and distributors” (3). From that perspective, the essays look closely at the interplay of authors and editors of specific periodicals. We learn how various writers, such as Herman Melville, adapted their stories to suit the venue and how specific publishing practices, like the serialization of novels, affected the form and reception of texts. Each magazine, it appears, imposed its own constraints, born of politics, cultural aspirations, editors’ personalities, and readers’ tastes. Lydia Maria Child, for example, subtly infused antislavery sentiment into her children’s stories in the *Juvenile Miscellany*, Charles Chesnutt subverted the genteel racism of the *Atlantic* under Thomas Bailey Aldrich by developing the ironic voice of his conjure tales. One subject, however, is noticeably absent: money and class. *Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America* barely notices that magazines were a business, commonly sponsored by publishing houses like Harper & Brothers to publicize authors and sell books.² Nor do the contributors follow the brilliant example of Richard Brodhead’s *Cultures of Letters* and explore the alignment of genres and periodicals with class interests and circumstances. Like genteel Victorians, this collection separates culture from commerce.

No one would ever accuse Richard Ohmann of lighting the material bases of cultural life. “Like mind and body,” he writes, “mass culture and advanced capitalism evolved together” (12). *Selling Culture* documents that development by reconstructing the “magazine revolution of 1893,” when amid a severe economic depression *McClure’s*, *Munsey’s*, and *Cosmopolitan* discovered the modern magazine’s formula for success—low prices, huge circulations, lucrative advertising—and gave the United

States its first “national mass culture. “Perfecting techniques initiated by others, notably, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, the newcomers overshadowed the older, pricier, “quality” monthlies—*Atlantic*, *Harper’s*, *Scribner’s*, and *Century*—and inaugurated a new era of magazine journalism. With their half-tone photographs, display ads, reports on the latest trends in business, science, and the arts, notices of celebrities, and “realist” fiction by such writers as Cather, Crane, Dreiser, and O. Henry, the mass circulation periodicals had a fresh, contemporary look, in sharp contrast to the elite monthlies, which saw themselves as custodians of culture, offering a leisurely, touristic view of the world, past and present, to like-minded “persons of highest cultivation” (114).

What accounts for the popularity of the new magazines? *Selling Culture* finds the answer in the unprecedented social and economic circumstances confronting Americans at the turn of the century, as the world of corporate capitalism was taking shape. Having achieved the power to make and market goods on a continental scale, big businesses still grappled with major uncertainties: labor unrest, fierce competition, falling profits, and, most important, inadequate demand. To drum up sales, manufacturers relied on department stores, chain outlets, and mail order houses, but that was not enough. It became imperative for “the masters of production [to] become engineers of consciousness” (57), to take their message directly to consumers and encourage desire for their wares. Out of that necessity modern advertising was born, and to serve its needs, the mass circulation magazine soon followed. Though they accepted advertising, the quality monthlies reached a restricted readership, and their editors pretended to be above trade. Too many ads, *Harper’s* editor George William Curtis inveighed, would degrade his periodical into a “cheap circus magazine” (105). Popular magazines were happy to fill that bill. Advertising enables readers to “keep abreast of the times,” Frank Munsey declared. “It is through [the advertiser] that the reader keeps in touch with progress, with the trend of prices, with inventions and improvements and these mean something to the man who would spend his money wisely” (Schneirov, 88-89).

Where would those readers come from? Fortunately for advertisers and publishers, corporate capitalism, in Ohmann’s analysis, created both the problem and the solution. The expanding economy, driven by big business, cast up a large, professional middle class to interpret, manage, regulate, and service the new society it had begotten. The yuppies of their age, the PMC, as Ohmann calls them, were corporate managers, government bureaucrats, skilled technicians, lawyers, doctors, architects, and other intellectual workers, not to mention publishers and advertising agents, all engaged in the challenging project of reforming and regulating “monopoly capitalism. “They were also pioneering a new style for the middle class. Based in the suburbs, they sought a simpler, more informal way of living than their

Victorian parents had sustained. In that pursuit, the new mass magazines proved an indispensable guide. In the periodicals, "PMC people" encountered a world of goods to make life easier, healthier, and more fun; a chronicle of fashions and progress, at home and abroad; an aura of high culture; and stories of adventure and courtship, in which earnest young men, just embarking on careers, proved their manhood, defeated upper class rivals, and won the New Women of their dreams. The magazines' claims to realism notwithstanding, theirs was a sanitized society, "white and right" (265), purged of anything that stirred conflict—workers and strikes, immigrants, religion, politics, sex, and race. Even when *McClure's* and *Cosmopolitan* turned to muckraking and exposed "lawlessness" by big business, labor unions, and political machines, they did so, Ohmann argues, on behalf of a nonpartisan, managerial class "asserting its particular right to know" (286). In sum, popular magazines sold not only commodities but "consciousness," they "helped stake out and survey the cultural ground being settled by the PMC, even as they made themselves a class" (220).

It is always risky, Roger Chartier reminds us, to identify a cultural product with a social class. Printed texts are escape artists, with a remarkable talent for slipping the clutches of any single group and for breaking into realms for which they were never intended.³ If that was the case in early modern France, as depicted by Chartier, it holds even more strongly for the dynamic world of turn-of-the-century America. How can we determine, in the absence of market surveys, which groups predominated among the 590,000 readers of *Munsey's* and 369,000 of *McClure's* in 1900? Ohmann concedes the difficulties: "I have found no evidence that McClure, Bok, Walker, or Munsey intended a role for their magazines in the construction of PMC identity." Nonetheless, "the very logic of the publishers' project drove them" to perform that part (222). Ohmann builds this argument by deduction. From social histories of the era, he draws a profile of the "new middle class," finds its likeness in the magazines, and interprets that resemblance according to the presumed interests and needs of the PMC. Like Michael Denning's *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America*, a companion volume in "The Haymarket Series" issued by Verso Books,⁴ Ohmann derives the audience from the texts and reads the texts in light of the audience. It's a creative performance, built on a sophisticated synthesis of the historiography, full of rich insights into such subjects as the new visual culture of advertising, and presented with impeccable rigor. But it rests, in the end, on the assumption that when PMC people opened the latest issue of *McClure's* or *Cosmopolitan*, they saw a mirror of their thoughts, their aspirations, and their lives.

Sociologist Matthew Schneirov discovers far more diversity in those periodicals and their audience. "Popular magazines had a broad national base of readers," he argues. "They were neither limited to one subgroup or status group

... or intended for one limited purpose.... Popular magazines ... became a regular form of information and entertainment to a broad segment of the American reading public" (6). Unlike earlier studies of the "magazine revolution,"⁵ *Dreams of a New Social Order* looks closely both at the established monthlies and at their upstart rivals and detects significant continuities between them. The "family house magazines," so-called because of their sponsorship by such publishing dynasties as Harper & Brothers and Scribner's, left their mark on popular periodicals. Mugwumps in politics, alienated from the emergent "mass society" of the Gilded Age, genteel editors sought to "elevate the tastes of their middle class readers" by exposing them to great achievements in art and literature and thereby inoculating them against the tawdriness of the times (28). This elitist outlook, reminiscent of Alan Bloom's *Closing of the American Mind*, reached a surprisingly large readership in the Northeast, notwithstanding the stiff price for a subscription; by the mid-1880s, *Harper's Monthly* had a circulation of 150,000, *Century* a quarter-million. In turn, the quality monthlies became more timely, running pieces on science and technology, commenting on "Topics of the Times," and carrying the latest stories by Kate Chopin, William Dean Howells, and Henry James, among others. Despite their conservative reputation, Schneirov concludes, "the quality family house magazines did change with the country" (59).

It was, in fact, a version of the genteel persona that *Cosmopolitan*, *McClure's*, and *Munsey's* first presented in public. S. S. McClure took *Century*, his one-time employer, as the model, when he launched his magazine in 1893; his goal, according to Schneirov, was to popularize the *Century* style to the masses, with "elements of entertainment" added in (86). Similarly, *Cosmopolitan* began in 1886 as a "quality publication that made itself accessible to a wider audience" (87). The new magazines took a nonpartisan stance, supported the mugwump agenda, and drew on the same stable of writers and staff members as did the quality periodicals. They also kept the ads separate from the articles.

For all they borrowed from the older magazines, the newcomers had a "different appearance and tone" (78). Eager to connect with "the moving spirit of the times" (87), McClure and his compatriots threw themselves into the "whirlpool of real life" (104). "Dead subjects are good enough for dead people," Frank Munsey told readers, "but not for the wide awake American. Live subjects appeal to the man and the woman who live in the present" (85). To that end, the magazines imitated the "sensationalism" of the mass circulation dailies, played up "human interest" stories, advertised themselves shamelessly, and constituted a forum for appraising the "new social order" in the making. In Schneirov's view, the audience for popular periodicals was diverse, including the professional middle class, to be sure, but also the burgeoning ranks of "shop girls" and white-collar workers in the expanding cities and the narrower circles of the urban elite. Eschewing the language of

class, editors construed their readers in three “social identities”—as consumers, as clients, and as citizens—and provided a mix of articles and ads to address their concerns. In the mass circulation magazines, Americans could indulge their dreams of a new social order and envision a future world of “abundance, social control, and social justice” (258). Far from offering a coherent perspective, popular magazines were “multivocal” (261). Their historical mission, Schneirov concludes, was to provide a space where diverse ideas could compete for popular allegiance and “cultural hegemony.”

Well before *McClure's* and *Munsey's* found their audience, *Ladies' Home Journal* had developed the model of the mass circulation magazine in a consumer society. Originating as a “Women and Home” column in a weekly newspaper aimed at farmers, the *Journal* emerged as a separate ladies' supplement in 1883, attracted upscale readers and advertising, and became a fullfledged magazine with a circulation of 400,000 in 1886. By 1903, it had surpassed one million readers, the first periodical in the United States to do so. Initially edited by women for women in a sisterly conversation, the *Journal* got a male editor, Edward Bok, in 1890, who viewed the enterprise as “an authoritative clearing-house” of information and as a source of “uplift and inspiration” for women in need of help to run modern homes (Damon-Moore, 81). The magazine also enjoyed a bonanza of ads, thanks to Bok's readiness to tailor the editorial matter to commercial needs. “The woman who will not read advertisements is not a woman—consequently all women read advertisements” (Garvey, 175). That credo, set down by ad man Nathaniel Fowler in 1897, guided Bok and succeeding male editors of the *Journal* and other women's magazines down to the 1960s. Defining married women as consumers and circumscribing their lives to the “large family circle” (Damon-Moore, 66), the magazines profited from the perpetuation of separate spheres. With good reason Betty Friedan indicted the women's magazines of the 1950s for fashioning the “Feminine Mystique,” and with equal justification, some two hundred women seized the offices of *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1970 and demanded the replacement of the male editor with a female senior staff. They eventually settled for an eight-page supplement to the August issue, setting forth feminist perspectives on sexism, women's work, health, and marriage.⁶

The three books by Damon-Moore, Garvey, and Scanlon take us back to the crucial era from the 1880s to the 1920s, when advertisers joined with popular magazines to make consuming a woman's purpose in life. That message promised new freedom and authority in women's lives. To *Journal* editor Knapp, consumer goods offered relief from domestic drudgery; they were also an aid to efficient housekeeping. Where Knapp emphasized women's work, advertisers linked consumption to leisure and fun. If that vision fell short in real life, it remained a refrain in the ads. The *Journal* conveyed its own mixed

messages. Though Bok opposed the suffrage movement and derided women's clubs, the pages of the magazine were open to a variety of voices. Advertisers hailed women as citizens, even when Bok did not. Columnists offered advice to working women on “Dressing for Business” and to homemakers on how to professionalize their work (Damon-Moore, 95). In the fiction of the *Journal*, wives could envision more companionate marriages and dream of greater independence, sensuality, and social esteem. The *Journal* thus offered a space for the continuing renegotiation of women's roles. All they had to do in return was read the ads and buy the goods.

Edward Bok once claimed that the *Journal* addressed two classes of women: “the rich and the ... great majority” (Damon-Moore, 73). From the magazine's early forays into market research, it appears the most readers lived in modest middle-class homes. In this vast audience, Ohmann's PMC was but one constituency. Readers could appear in the most unlikely locations. Garvey discovered a poor white farm woman in rural Georgia, who eked out a living, with three small children, on a hardscrabble farm, but still managed to subscribe to the *Journal*, her “favorite magazine.” Isolated on the land, Magnolia LeGuin welcomed its monthly arrival as a comfort and a lifeline to a wider female world (Garvey, 152).

Women's reading was never restricted to domestic magazines. Defined as wives and mothers in the *Journal*, they could see themselves as citizens in *McClure's*. So long as advertisers directed their messages directly to women, no periodical could afford to ignore its female audience. How did that necessity affect the publishing strategies of the mass circulation magazines? And how, in turn, did women make sense of their different social identities as readers? Such questions may form an agenda for future scholarship in this field.

A permanent memory of my childhood in Bridgeport, Connecticut, during the 1950s is the image of my mother, sitting in the den, surrounded by copies of *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Redbook*, to name just a few. What did those periodicals mean to her? Alas, an active boy, unaware of his future as a historian of the book, never thinks to ask. Instead, he grows up, subscribes both to *The Nation* and *Food and Wine*, and still waits for Ed McMahan to show up at the door.

R.A.G.

NOTES

1. Kenneth M. Price and Susan Belasco Smith, eds., *Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 4, 7, Michael D. Bell, “Conditions of Literary Vocation,” in *The Cambridge History of American Literature*. Volume 2: 1820-1865, eds. Sacvan Bercovitch and Cyrus R. K. Pattell (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 77.

2. To be fair, I should acknowledge that several essays mention the literary marketplace, only to emphasize the ways writers gained independence from its constraints. With a family income, Emily Dickinson had no financial need to publish, Fanny Fern proved so popular that she could speak her mind freely in Robert Bonner's mass circulation *New York Ledger* and profit the paper. See the essays by Robert Scholnick and Joyce Warren in *Periodical Literature in Nineteenth Century America*.
3. Roger Chartier, *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 83-97.
4. Michael Denning, *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* (New York and London: Verso Books, 1987).
5. See, in particular, Theodore P. Greene, *The Changing Models of Success in American Magazines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970) and Christopher P. Wilson, *The Labor of Words: Literary Professionalism in the Progressive Era* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985) and "The Rhetoric of Consumption: Mass-Market Magazines and the Demise of the Gentle Reader, 1880-1920," *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 39-64.
6. Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 288.

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS BY DAVID D. HALL

Seven essays written by David D. Hall between 1983 and 1995 have been collected and published as *Cultures of Print: Essays in the History of the Book* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996). Hall has been a major force in the evolution of the study known as the history of the book in the United States. The first chairman of the AAS Program in the History of the Book, he is now general editor of the Society's forthcoming five-volume series, *A History of the Book in America* and coeditor with Hugh Amory of Volume 1, *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*. Hall articulated his vision—to "suggest interpretative frameworks that link the history of the book to social and cultural history"—and invited such international scholars as Roger Chartier in an effort to "transmit themes and methods from one side of the Atlantic to the other" to the 1983 AAS conference "Needs and Opportunities in the History of the Book in American Culture."¹ Is it fortuitous synergy that the goals that shaped that seminal conference also characterize the significance of David Hall's own work in the history of the book and in the history of New England? Or is this the force of Hall's vision as it continues to guide the developing field of book history in America?

Cultures of Print reveals that Hall has realized many of the goals outlined in 1983. In "The World of Print and

Collective Mentality in Seventeenth-Century New England," written originally for the 1977 Wingspread conference on "New Directions in American Intellectual History," Hall brought together methods of the history of the book and the study of popular culture in early modern Europe, in order to reappraise early New England.² He had a broader goal in mind as well. Believing that the "discovery of collective mentality" by social historians "is being used as a weapon against intellectual history, a means of restricting it within narrow boundaries," he aimed to expand the "limitations" of intellectual history by "taking up the world of the book" (80). Drawing on historians of the French *livre et société*, Hall limned a world of print whose boundaries were "fluid and overlapping" and where oral and print culture intertwined (84). In France, even the illiterate received "a bookish culture, by way of a reader or storyteller" drawing on a "whole printed literature designed especially" to be read aloud — the "Bibliothèque Bleue" printed in Troyes, France³ (85). The overlapping audiences for books in early modern Europe called forth a marketplace "crisscrossed" by two major rhythms: "a constant recycling of tried and true literary products accompanied by the publication of new styles and genres" (82).

Applying methods of book history, Hall found that "the world of print in seventeenth century New England was broadly continuous with that of Europe" (84, 91). He proceeded to sketch out a collective mentality of early New England shaped not only by Puritan doctrine but by a "traditional" world of print in which steady-selling devotional manuals such as Lewis Bayley's *Practice of Piety* and Protestant sensationalist legends like Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* were both found in booksellers' stocks and libraries all over New England and in seventeenth-century Virginia (86, 120-21). "Motifs, both literary and iconographic, seem to circulate between milieux and levels, some starting 'high' and descending, others starting 'low' and moving upward" (88). Not only did readers participate in this fluid print culture that could not be characterized by a strict division between elite and popular, but ministers in New England "who entered the marketplace as writers" published works ranging from almanacs to popular divinity and in every format from folio to broadside (93). Cotton Mather's first outing in print in 1686, "took advantage of the formulas of 'sensation' literature" in an execution sermon entitled *The Call of the Gospel*, and Hall takes note of Mather's distinct market orientation in his observation that "the Book sold exceedingly" (94).

In that essay and in *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England*, Hall rejects a model of early New England culture as dominated by learned clerics and resisted by folk-wise laity.⁴ Instead he stresses a shared culture and "a subtle process of selection between choices that the clergy helped to articulate" (*Worlds of Wonder*, 11). A literature of wonder appeared most frequently in folk legends and bal-

lads but also found voice in Increase Mather's *Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* whose pages were filled with sea deliverances, demons, apparitions, and spirits (*Worlds of Wonder*, 88). For Mather and his congregation, "prophecy, prodigy, providence — these were the stuff of everyday experience" (*Worlds of Wonder*, 89). And, in the hands of enterprising publishers like Nathaniel Crouch of London, they spilled over into stories for readers' entertainment [and Crouch's profit]. "Never, in New England, did the learned culture impose systematic order on the meaning of wonder; . . . the many levels of these texts," Hall asserts, "forbid any simple separation of elite belief from popular culture" (*Worlds of Wonder*, 115, 110). In his work on early New England, Hall sets an example, useful to social and cultural historians of all persuasions, of a nuanced negotiation between authors, publishers, and readers producing and consuming texts for a variety of purposes.

Hall's James Russell Wiggins Lecture in the History of the Book in American Culture (the first in the AAS series), "On Native Ground; From the History of Printing to the History of the Book," is included in *Cultures of Print*. Adapting William James's words on pragmatism, Hall presents his vision for the program in history of the book, as not a "solution" but "a program for more work," and as a method to "unstiffen all our theories" (30). From these early beginnings, Hall has continued to expand and explore the "dynamic social processes" at work in early New England, in scribal publications of the seventeenth-century Chesapeake, and in the cultural politics of reading and writing in eighteenth-century America, all subjects of essays in *Cultures of Print*. In study after study, he has continued to challenge "the presumption that ordinary people think in different ways or possess a separate culture, from the modes of an 'elite'" (95). By displacing the constricting binary paradigm of learned versus popular culture, Hall has influenced a generation of scholars working in broadly diverse fields ranging from a cultural historian studying the influence of architectural space on social relations in antebellum Tennessee to a doctoral student studying race, kinship, and identity in colonial Louisiana. His influence on scholars is demonstrated not only in an impressive shelf full of monographs and edited volumes but also in the broader understanding of history as a process of continual reconceptualization. Hall concluded his tenure as chair of the Program in the History of the Book at AAS by extending, as a model scholar, teacher, and intellectual comrade, a call to literary critics to consider "the social history of production and consumption" and to social historians to "acknowledge the power of texts" (187). If followed, Hall's suggestions will move beyond another constricting binary division and forge a common ground, guiding us to not only rethink the past worlds of readers and print but to remake the practice of history in postmodern America.

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NOTES

1. David D. Hall and John B. Hench, eds., *Needs and Opportunities in the History of the Book in America, 1639-1876* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1987), 1, 3.
2. John Higham and Paul Conkin, eds., *New Directions in American Intellectual History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 166-80.
3. See also, Roger Chartier, "The *Bibliothèque Bleue* and Popular Reading," in *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 240-64.
4. David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989).

Research Notes

PUBLISHING IN JAPAN

A picture of contemporary publishing in Japan is provided for English-language readers in the quarterly publication, *Japanese Book News*, produced in print and online editions by The Japan Foundation to inform publishers, editors, translators, scholars, and libraries of the latest trends in Japanese publishing and note selected new titles with brief descriptions. The centennial of the birth of the poet and children's author Myazawa Kenji, the mega-seller trend, and publications commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II are the subjects of articles in a recent issue. New books are noted in such fields as history, literature, society, media/journalism, Japanese abroad, gender, and the arts. The URL for this publication is <http://www.jfp.go.jp/> and the mailing address is Yano Tomozo, Media Department, The Japan Foundation, ARK Mori Bldg. 20th Fl., 1-12-32 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107, Japan.

Call for Papers

Contributions, proposals, and comments are sought for a projected book of essays testing the influence and appropriateness of Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* as a model for the study of the advent of print in non-European cultures. The intent of the book would be dialogic as Professor Eisenstein has contingently agreed to write a coda responding to the essays occasioned by her work. Subject to customary editorial board approval, the book would be published in the series, "Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book" by the University of Massachusetts Press. For further information and submissions, contact Paul M. Wright, Editor, The University of Massachusetts Press, University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA, 02125-3393; fax: (617) 265-7173; or E-mail: <wright@umbky.cc.umb.edu>.

*AAS Reprints Gross's SHARP Keynote,
Nissenbaum's Essay on Christmas and Print*

Reading Culture, Reading Books, the keynote address by Robert A. Gross delivered at the Fourth Annual SHARP Conference held in Worcester in July 1996, has been published in the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* (Volume 106, part 1) and reprinted separately. Gross's survey of the history of reading is a prologue to an agenda for future scholarship. He calls scholars to identify the representations of reading that constitute its ideological history and to reconstruct the cultural practices, social conventions, and status differences that frame encounters with the written word. Copies (\$4.00 plus postage) may be obtained from AAS. The same issue also includes an article by Stephen W. Nissenbaum, *Christmas in Early New England, 1620-1820: Puritanism, Popular Culture, and the Printed Word*, in which he traces the struggle over the holiday as it was waged in print. This reprint may be obtained for \$15.00 plus postage from the Society's book distributor, Oak Knoll Books, 414 Delaware St., New Castle, DE. (302) 328-7232. For a com-

plete listing of reprints of *Proceedings* articles, contact the AAS Department of Academic and Public Programs.

AAS to Host 1998 Institute Conference

The Fourth Annual Conference of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., will take place in Worcester, June 5-7, 1998. Richard D. Brown, professor of history at the University of Connecticut, and a councillor of both OIEAHC and AAS will serve as program chair. The deadline for submitting proposals for papers and panels is September 19, 1997. Individual submissions should include a proposal of not more than three pages and a short form C.V. with the submitter's postal address, telephone number, and E-mail address. Proposals for panels should be submitted in one packet with a short form C.V. for each presenter and a one-page summary of each presentation. Ten copies of each submission should be sent to Brown, Fourth Annual OIEAHC Conference, Department of History U-103, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06268-2103.

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