

Spring 2004

The Manufacturers of Literature: Writing and the Literary Marketplace in Eighteenth-Century England by George Justice (review)

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But this crediting is itself something of a problem throughout the book: too much recapitulation of the well-known work of the last three decades. The author marks her territorial difference, but the differences—as well as the markings—are small and tentative. Where the claims loom larger, they have a tendency to fall into erroneous distinctions. The differences between “retirement” and “leisure” and “idleness,” for instance, are not complicated either quickly or deeply. The chapter on laborers does not quite seem to understand how class really operated: “Many eighteenth-century writers who were not by any means in favor of class equality were astonishingly willing to acknowledge that the poor worked so the rich did not have to, that the poor had not only to provide for their own needs, but also to provide surplus to meet the needs and wants of their betters.” That was exactly the point: you work for me because God made me better than you.

The greatest strength of *The Anxieties of Idleness* is its careful playing out of thematic (rather than conceptual, rhetorical, or theoretical) issues and details. But in the end it does not venture far beyond the bounds of a *terra* already well-cognita.

Cynthia Wall University of Virginia

GEORGE JUSTICE. *The Manufacturers of Literature: Writing and the Literary Marketplace in Eighteenth-Century England*. Newark: Delaware, 2002. Pp. 281. \$46.50.

Times have changed. In the mid 1980s, when I wrote my biography of John Almon, a study of the reflexive effect of politics on eighteenth-century booksellers and the literature that they published, there was only a handful of books on

eighteenth-century print culture, and on-line research in the area was practically nonexistent. The basic resources were Wing’s *Short-Title Catalogue* (1945–1951), which ends at 1700, and H. R. Plomer and E. R. Dix’s *Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers* (1932), which covers 1726–1775. Electronic library catalogues were in their infancy; Elisabeth Eisenstein’s *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1980), Terry Belanger’s “Directory of the London Book Trade, 1766” (1977), William Todd’s *Directory of Printers and Others in Allied Trades, London and Vicinity, 1800–1840* (1972), and the emerging online ESTC were as good as it got.

Fast forward some fifteen years: The history of the book has become a hot topic. (Go figure!) The proliferation of new periodicals, scholarly societies, and studies includes the recent *Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (2001), edited by Isabel Rivers, and *The Book History Reader* (2002), edited by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery. In fact, *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* just published a special double issue on fiction and print culture. Interest can also be measured by new institutions devoted to the subject, such as The Centre for the History of the Book (<http://www.arts.ed.ac.uk/chb/index.html>) and by large-scale collaborative projects that include: *The London Book Trades 1775–1800* (<http://www.devon.gov.uk/library/locstudy/bookhist/lonbktr.html>), *The British Book Trade Index* (<http://www.bbti.bham.ac.uk/BBTIsources.htm>), and new online editions of works such as *Wing* (www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/wing.html).

Not only have the Stationers’ Company apprentice registers been indexed to

1800, but biographical dictionaries of book trade personnel have been appearing. Much, of course, remains to be done.

Interdisciplinary by nature in its emphasis on society, the history of the book focuses on the material culture of the text, print technology, sociology, bibliography, production, distribution, and circulation. Not only is this field concerned with literacy and reading practices, it also investigates relations among publishers, authors, and the reading public. It is just such issues that Mr. Justice addresses in *The Manufacturers of Literature*, a welcome addition to studies of eighteenth-century cultural production.

Although Habermas's notion of the public sphere has been much debated, Mr. Justice usefully extends the concept beyond Habermas's architectural spaces (with all their gendered implications). Instead of a bourgeois "public sphere" of rational debate, Mr. Justice argues for an eighteenth-century Britain where print was the medium and literature was the public forum.

Mr. Justice, who co-edits (with Albert Rivero) *The Eighteenth-Century Novel*, brings this literary perspective to bear on his examination of authorship, publishing, and the reading public. Mr. Justice explores the relationship between the book trade and the transformation of eighteenth-century literature and its audience, and focuses on the effect of the material conditions of publishing and of professional authorship on artistic production.

He makes his argument through case studies. Thus, *The Spectator* is examined in terms of the relationship between the public sphere and literary tradition as printed commodity. Pope's *Epistle to Arbuthnot* and Johnson's *Life of Savage* are

viewed in the context of the publishing industry and the literary marketplace. Especially interesting is Mr. Justice's analysis of the bookseller Dodsley's wildly popular *Collection of Poems by Several Hands*, an anthology that helped to create the "modern classic," an oxymoron, for Mr. Justice, to create "literary value."

Mr. Justice illuminates Frances Brooke's *Excursion* and Burney's *Evelina*, maintaining that both authors wrote "second generation" novels that, despite assertions to the contrary in their Prefaces, attempted to succeed as commercial commodities. In a culminating chapter on *Camilla*, he argues that Burney constructs a notion of modern authorship integral both to the themes of her works and to their reception and the material conditions of their production.

Throughout, Mr. Justice deals with the effect of developments in print technology on the transmission of literature and the interaction of the marketplace and of literature. However, he avoids the nuts-and-bolts of the volatile book trade in favor of cultural analysis and (excellent) close readings.

Mr. Justice seems to pussyfoot around Marxism, flirting with the very economic/technological determinism he vows to avoid. For example, he criticizes those who "claim that they wish to avoid 'base'/'superstructure' models of Literature but then go ahead and repeat these terms implicitly." In the very next breath, however, he does just that, insisting, "Literature had an impact on the technology of writing and conversely . . . technology influenced and helped define Literature."

But these are quibbles with what is, in the end, an essential book, noteworthy for its beautiful close readings and brilliant insights. Mr. Justice compellingly re-

minds us that eighteenth-century British literature is mediated by the conditions of production and distribution and by authors, publishers, readers, and reviewers in complex relationships. Ultimately, such considerations question our notions of literature and of “high culture.”

Deborah D. Rogers *University of
Maine*

Books and Their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New Essays, ed. Isabel Rivers. London and New York: Leicester, 2001. Pp. x + 294. \$107.95.

A sequel to the influential *Books and their Readers* (1982), this collection of essays reflects the revolution in the recent study of the book. In “The Book Trades,” James Raven argues that, even though the design of the printing press “remained almost unchanged,” an increase of publication occurred in London and the market towns, because of “advances in paper manufacture and type founding and design” as well as new strategies for retailing books. Mr. Raven pays special attention to the economics of publishing, the risks involved, and the mechanics of assembling consortiums of publishers and booksellers to underwrite publishing.

In perhaps the most original essay, “The English Bible and Its Readers in the Eighteenth Century,” Scott Mandelbrote traces the elaborate politics involved in establishing and maintaining the King James Version as the Authorized Version of the Bible throughout the eighteenth century. The monopoly on printing the Authorized Version, held by the King’s printer and the two university presses, coincided with “political and doctrinal reasons for resisting attempts to rewrite the English Bible,” including attempts on the part of Dissenters and anti-trinitarians to obtain a more accurate translation. Indeed

“by the 1780s and 1790s . . . the pursuit of a new translation began to appear less like an undertaking that might favor the Church of England and more like a challenge to its reputation and authority.” The Church of England clearly had an interest in maintaining the monopoly, but so did “British and American premillennialists, who, in addition to expecting the imminent return of Christ, formulated a view of the absolute and literal truth of scripture that later came to be known as fundamentalism.” Brian Young’s capsule survey, “Theological Books from *The Naked Gospel to Nemesis of Faith*,” details the controversial writings of “representative divines,” most notably Daniel Waterland, William Warburton, Francis Blackburne, and Richard Watson.

In “The History Market in Eighteenth-Century England,” Karen O’Brien surveys the range of eighteenth-century historical writers whose “increasing popularity with consumers was also part of a more general transformation in the historical awareness of the English people.” Ms. Rivers explores a collateral interest in biography in “Biographical Dictionaries and Their Uses from Bayle to Chalmers.” These dictionaries are often a substitute for a library “both for lovers of learning who could not afford books, and for owners of books who did not have the time to consult them.” Ms. Rivers is largely concerned with three great biographical dictionaries constructed on the model first devised by Bayle: Thomas Birch’s *A General Dictionary, Historical and Critical* (1734–1741), Oldys’s *Biographia Britannica* (1747–1766), and the uncompleted second edition of the *Biographia Britannica* (1778–1795), edited by Andrew Kippis, et al. She also covers the influence of Moreri’s *Grand Dictionnaire Historique* (1674), translated and en-