The Routledge Companion to the British and North American Literary Magazine

Edited by Tim Lanzendörfer

THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO THE BRITISH AND NORTH AMERICAN LITERARY MAGAZINE

Encompassing a broad definition of the topic, this *Companion* provides a survey of the literary magazine from its earliest days to the contemporary moment. It offers a comprehensive theorization of the literary magazine in the wake of developments in periodical studies in the last decade, bringing together a wide variety of approaches and concerns.

With its distinctive chronological and geographical scope, this volume sheds new light on the possibilities and difficulties of the concept of the literary magazine, balancing a comprehensive overview of key themes and examples with greater attention to new approaches to magazine research.

Divided into three main sections, this book offers:

- Theory—it investigates definitions and limits of what a literary magazine is and what it does.
- History and regionalism—a very broad historical and geographic sweep draws new connections and offers expanded definitions.
- Case studies—these range from key modernist little magazines and the popular middlebrow to pulp fiction, comics, and digital ventures, widening the ambit of the literary magazine.

The Routledge Companion to the British and North American Literary Magazine offers new and unforeseen cross-connections across the long history of literary periodicals, highlighting the ways in which it allows us to trace such ideas as the "literary" as well as notions of what magazines do in a culture.

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Edited by Tim Lanzendörfer

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Cover image: © Getty Images

First published 2022
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record has been requested for this book

ISBN: 978-0-367-22281-9 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-16333-8 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-0-429-27424-4 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9780429274244

Typeset in Bembo
by Newgen Publishimg UK

For Anselma, Anton, and Marlene

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been a personal journey for me. I was asked to do it by Routledge in a phase of professional upheaval, and agreed to do it with the realization that I would possibly not be able to finish it during professional academic employment. I did the editorial work for most of it while out of work—or should we say, out of gainful employment, though Germany's better-than-most, if by no means perfect, social security network helped much. I sent off the finished manuscript having taken up a research professorship that I was barely expecting to get at Goethe University in Frankfurt. The *Companion* has been my companion (sorry) throughout this journey, and an often-welcome reminder of the joy of professional academic work and of the connections that such a project brings.

It was also finished in the middle of a devastating pandemic, one which upset the lives, and sometimes the livelihoods, of the contributors of this volume. My debt of gratitude to them thus exceeds that which editors always have as a matter of course. The contributors of this volume managed to deliver their writing while worrying for loved ones, and while facing the professional upheaval of socially distanced teaching and the logistic difficulties of accessing information from closed libraries, archives, and often even their own inaccessible offices. Some faced the stress that is added when you work several jobs while laboring on a project of love, and they still managed to write outstandingly useful essays. I could not have asked for better partners in this shared venture, or for any more understanding.

I also want to acknowledge the several contributors who, for various reasons, very often tied to the pandemic, had to drop out of the project: even if their contributions did not make it into the book, they universally aided me in finding replacements for them, and thus ensured that the project could continue. With few exceptions they dropped from the project with regrets and good wishes, and I thank them for their original willingness to help with it and their encouragement of it. In this connection, I want to thank Maggie Messitt for her help in locating contributors for several chapters, late in the day, when the original contributors had gone missing for various reasons. Her help in this matter was very much appreciated. Thanks are also very much due to Mabel Keßler, who proved invaluable in copyediting the manuscript in the final month: hers was an able hand and mind to share the duties of final editing with.

I would like to thank the editorial team at Routledge, especially Polly Dodson, who initially recruited me, read my proposal, and commented usefully on the structure and plan,

while shepherding by no means an easy project through its various stages. The same goes for the anonymous reviewers of the proposal, who had uniformly useful suggestions to make that turned this project into a better book.

Lastly, I want to thank my family for their support: my wife Anselma, my son Anton, and my daughter Marlene. My wife especially bore the brunt of the pandemic-complicated child care, while I was dabbling away reading essays and drafting introductions. My love goes out to her, and my thanks as always. Anton and Marlene could have had an unemployed, fully available father but for this (and other) projects, and while I don't think they minded terribly, my thanks and love to them, too.

A NOTE ON SOURCES AND CITATION

Citing periodicals over three hundred or so years—from the beginnings of a print magazine culture to the early years of online publication—is difficult to do coherently. Early magazines insisted on their lastingness, and tended to publish in yearly or half-yearly volumes whose monthly or weekly issues had consecutive page numbers; issue numbers were infrequent, and volumes were often rendered as "Volume 2 for 1806," for instance, rather than, say, "Volume 11" of a total run of volumes. For many later magazines, especially mass-market magazines, volume numbers became irrelevant, and issues were run yearly; so magazines did not list issue and volume numbers, but generally went by publication date. The *Companion* has therefore opted for a pragmatic approach to citation.

Unless otherwise noted, periodicals referenced frequently in the text are cited by short title and year in the *Companion*, and then a combination of volume, issue, or date, as well as page number, where possible. Short title citations are not separately listed in the References sections; refer to the list below. Where this practice does not work—such as for online publications—the References sections contain the necessary identifying information. Newspapers are generally cited by short title, year, month, and date. In some cases, the *Companio*n departs from this format and cites a specific reference to an essay in the References section.

Other online sources are referenced only with the annotation "online," rather than URLs, which are often convoluted and frequently not permanent. Searching the web for author name and publication title has, at the time of publication, been able to find all of these texts much more rapidly than typing up the URL.

Many of the periodicals cited herein are available freely online, and authors note this in their references. In general, libraries with access to for-pay databases, such as the American Antiquarian Society Historical Periodicals Collection, the British Periodicals Collections, America's Historical Newspapers, and the ProQuest American Periodical Series databases, should have access to most magazines published before 1920. Free online databases are also available. The Hathi Trust Digital Library archives large numbers of magazines; the Online Books Page of the University of Pennsylvania Library is an excellent meta-search site for magazines available from a variety of sources online.

PERIODICALS CITED

A variety of access options exist for most, if not all, of these magazines, and others mentioned in the *Companion*. For-pay databases are accessible through libraries. Many of the magazines are also available for free online.

A	*The Atlantic, Atlantic Monthly*
AM	*American Magazine*
AMMC	*American Magazine and Monthly Chronicle*
AAM	*Anglo-African Magazine*
AAW	*Argosy All-Story Weekly*
AC	*Action Comics*
AD	*The Arkansas Democrat*
AJ	*Appelton's Journal*
Arc	*Arcade*
AS	*Astounding Stories*
AT	*Atheneum*
AW	*Argosy Weekly*
BWM	*Boston Weekly Magazine*
C	*The Crisis*
CC	*Charleston Courier*
Cent	*The Century*
CH	*The Cornhill Magazine*
CM	*Cosmopolitan*
CMT	*Comet*
D	*The Dial*
DBR	*De Bow's Review*
DC	*Detective Comics*
DD	*The Double Dealer*
DFP	*Detroit Free Press*
E	*The Egoist*
Esq	*Esquire*
ER	*The Edinburgh Review*

FMTC	*Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*
FQR	*Foreign Quarterly Review*
GAMM	*Graham's American Monthly Magazine*
GM	*Gentlemen's Magazine*
GMKE	*General Magazine and Impartial Review of Knowledge and Entertainment*
GR	*Georgia Review*
HM	*Heavy Metal*
HNMM	*Harper's New Monthly Magazine*
HW	*Harper's Weekly*
HWo	*Household Words*
HR	*Harvard Review*
IP	*The Inland Printer*
K	*Knickerbocker*
KR	*Kenyon Review*
L	*Life*
LM	*The London Magazine*
LMerc	*London Mercury*
LitM	*Literary Magazine and American Register*
LitMisc	*Literary Miscellany*
LR	*The Little Review*
LRe	*The London Review*
LMUR	*Literary Magazine, and Universal Register*
LWL	*The Land We Love*
McS	*Timothy McSweeney's Quarterly Concern*
MA	*Monthly Anthology*
MC	*Marvel Comics*
MFC	*More Fun Comics*
MLM	*McLean's Magazine*
MM	*Monthly Magazine*
MMC	*Marvel Mystery Comics*
NAR	*North American Review*
NE	*The National Era*
NFC	*New Fun Comics*
NM	*National Magazine, or A Political, Historical, Biographical and Literary Repository*
NMLE	*National Magazine or Lady's Emporium*
NY	*The New Yorker*
NYT	*New York Times*
PC	*Printers' Circle*
PF	*Port Folio*
PH	*Phylon*
PR	*Paris Review*
PartR	*Partisan Review*
PS	*The Post-Star*
RS	*Railroad Stories*
S	*The Soil*
SA	*The Seven Arts*
SB	*Southern Bivouac*

SCWM	*South Carolina Weekly Museum and Complete Magazine of Entertainment and Intelligence*
SL	*Southland*
SLJMM	*Southern Literary Journal and Monthly Magazine*
SLM	*Southern Literary Messenger*
SM	*Scott's Monthly Magazine*
SMM	*Scribner's Monthly Illustrated Magazine*
SR	*Southern Review*
SeR	*Sewanee Review*
SS	*The Smart Set*
ST	*Strange Tales of Mystery and Terror*
TC	*The Critic*
TF	*The Fugitive*
TG	*The Galaxy*
TM	*Time Magazine*
TWS	*Thrilling Wonder Stories*
UR	*Uncle Remus's Magazine*
USMDR	*The US Magazine and Democratic Review*
V	*Vogue*
VF	*Vanity Fair*
Vi	*Visions*
VW	*The Village Voice*
W	*Wasafiri*
WCPS	*Windy City Pulp Stories*
WHM	*Western Home Monthly*
WP	*Washington Post*
WT	*Weird Tales*
YDN	*Yale Daily News*
YLM	*Yale Literary Magazine*
ZAS	*Zoetrope: All-Story*

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INTRODUCTION

The meaning of the literary magazine

Tim Lanzendörfer

What's in a "literary magazine"

On March 19, 1756, the *Literary Magazine, or Universal Review*, appeared in London, edited by none other than Samuel Johnson, the already well-known composer of the *Dictionary of the English Language* and essayist. The *Literary Magazine* lasted for three years; if not for Samuel Johnson's participation, it would today be a completely unremarkable example of dozens and dozens of periodicals published in London around the middle of the eighteenth century. For my purposes here, however, what makes the *Literary Magazine* interesting is its name—previously used only once, in a review magazine that lasted for two years, 1735–1736—a name that it pays to think about. What made the *Literary Magazine* a *literary magazine*—if anything? By extension, what makes a literary magazine today? These are the main questions that engage this *Companion*, and they are remarkably complex.

A brief glance at what the *Literary Magazine* published in its brief existence suggests that its understanding of what was "literary" was expansive. In its first offering, it included a customary address "To the Public," outlining its prospective contents. These were by no means limited to prose and poetry: the magazine would contain "the history political and literary of every month," views of "Foreign Affairs," national "transactions," as well as "Lists of Births, Marriages, Deaths, and Burials." It would not be constrained: "Our regard will not be confined to Books," Johnson wrote, suggesting that he would examine also inventions of all kinds, "the history of nature," "physiological discoveries," and other things besides. And even when it set out to discuss "literary History," Johnson's magazine would be catholic: along with "extensive extracts" and "critical examinations"—reviews, that is—it would contain "elegant trifles of literature, the wild strains of fancy, the pleasing amusements of harmless wit"—original or reprinted poetry and prose (*LMUR* 1756: iii–iv).

The point of this enumeration is not, of course, to suggest that the *Literary Magazine* was not a "proper" literary magazine—the point, rather, is to highlight the contingent meaning of both elements of its title, of the idea of the *literary* and of the *magazine*. Johnson certainly leaned heavily in the "universal review" part of his title, something that indeed echoed through the very young notion of the "magazine." When forced to define the term in his *Dictionary*, Johnson—the soon to be publisher of one—noted first the word's traditional meaning of a (mostly) military storehouse, and then that "of late this word has signified a miscellaneous

DOI: 10.4324/9780429274244-1

pamphlet, from a periodical miscellany named the *Gentleman's Magazine*, by *Edward Cave*" (Johnson 1755, n.p., original italics) published first in 1731. The "miscellany" nature of the magazine, and its storehouse character, suggested that it was broad and capacious, and in the last instance not much interested in drawing strict boundaries. And indeed, even when he addressed himself to the literary, Johnson was far from some of the meanings of the term which readers today will infer. Literature, the *Dictionary* laconically glossed, was "learning; skill in letters" (1755, n.p.). Johnson was not by any means beyond differentiating between good and bad writing—"a few only will deserve the distinction of criticism," he wrote in the *Literary Magazine* (*LMUR* 1756: iv)—but familiar distinctions between "high" and "low," between literary writing and its other, held no meaning for him; "literary," that is to say, did not suggest a particular kind of writing, it encompassed almost all of it, with the possible exception of the utterly utilitarian.

The difficulty of defining the literary magazine is well caught by Travis Kurowski and Gary Percesepe, who conclude their own effort for the contemporary literary magazine by approvingly quoting instead a definition of the magazine as such: "an object filled with objects" (2008: 8) and eliding the problem of the qualifier "literary." Kurowski and Percesepe situate the birth of the literary magazine in 1912, with *Poetry*, or perhaps in the 1920's iteration of *The Dial* (see also Bazin (Chapter 17) in this volume). Both in the tentativeness of the claim and in its chronology, Kurowski and Percesepe offer a fairly well-accepted conception of what a literary magazine is, and how it is. There were, as Edward Chielens notes in the introduction to his indispensable *American Literary Magazines*, "very few purely 'literary' magazines until the twentieth century" (1985: xiv), magazines, that is, whose major purpose was the distribution of, or at the very least the critical discussion of, "literature." But literature here already is a twentieth century, and indeed a modernist, construction. For Chielens—and, it's possible to wager, unspokenly for many other conceptions of the literary magazine—the "literary" is another name for "quality," indeed for distinction, but also, and complicatedly, more broadly for writing that is, in some way, part of canonical literary history; literary magazines, to borrow from Morris Golden's introduction to *British Literary Magazines*, are "literary in our retrospective view." For Golden, this still covered a wide array of periodicals including "writers now regarded as literary figures," important to the development of genres or to the literary canon, or with "significant" impact on literary history or "literary functions" (1982: xviii); but it all ultimately recurred to an unspecified, though largely traditional, view of what constitutes the "literary."

It's a bit flip to say that herein lies the problem: after all, both Sullivan's and Chielens's histories are, if not exhaustive, at least comprehensive, and include a great variety of periodicals within the broad category of the literary magazine, and it is inevitable that some kind of perspective is involved in deciding what to include among the history of the literary magazine. The limited intervention that this *Companion* hopes to make is to suggest that complicating the idea of the literary magazine yields a useful shift in perspective—a sense of the "literary in the contemporaneous view," shall we say, but also a hint that our contemporary view of the literary is changing, and has been for some time. The *Companion* understands the meaning of the "literary magazine" as shifting and contingent, but always as speaking to a greater societal discourse about what literature is, what work periodical culture does in the literary field, and how the interrelations between the wider field of literary production and the literary magazine as a site for the development of literature shift through the centuries. It is similarly concerned with the question of what a magazine is; and it aims to participate in the shifting of meaning to an extent. This *Companion* begins from the observation that in the name "literary magazine," neither the idea of the "literary" nor the idea of the "magazine" encode transhistorical constants. As both Johnson and the OED note, the use of "magazine" for a periodical publication is already

figurative: it is derived from a sixteenth-century adoption of the French term *magasin*, for a goods, later military, warehouse, quickly turned into a metaphor for all kinds of store (including of information and stories). When the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1731) used the word in its title, readers would have understood it as clearly metaphorical, but also metaphorically clear: they would have been quite clear about the nature and purpose of the periodical they were going to purchase. Throughout the nineteenth century, the character of the magazine as something that lasts was still very evident: monthly and weekly magazines were usually published in half-yearly volumes with running page numbers, with the final number containing an index for the whole; readers were encouraged to have these volumes bound, making whole runs of magazines staples of private and public libraries. Even a magazine such as *Cosmopolitan*, with its attention to timely concerns such as fashion, understood its role as a magazine to remain available and sufficiently useful to provide half-yearly volume indexes until 1914. If magazines were objects filled with objects, they were understood to be objects filled with valuable objects, objects worth keeping around. This changed in the course of twentieth century.

Similar shifts are evident, of course, in the notion of the literary. Johnson's compatriots might have grasped the idea of the magazine, but they would have been less clear on distinctions between the so-called literary and other magazines. Throughout the eighteenth century, literary denoted little more—or, perhaps more properly, little less—than what Johnson called "learning," a term which encompassed all "classical, historical, poetic, and scientific knowledge" (see also Jost (Chapter 12) in this volume, 140). Through the early nineteenth century, it began to name instead an aesthetic category, and more particularly, began to involve aspects of cultural distinction. This vital distinction took shape, in the United States (US), with force in the wake of the Civil War: "an *Atlantic Monthly* culture of high aesthetic values versus a story-paper culture of factory production and prescribed generic conventions" (Harrington-Lueker 2019: 9), but looked similar across the larger "literary field," as Pierre Bourdieu has dubbed it (1996). The "taste-making" (Harrington-Lueker 2019: 12) of the so-called quality monthlies (see also Kane (Chapter 27) in this volume) produced fiction that was directed both at a large audience and insisting on this audience's distinction from the untutored masses. In the early twentieth century, modernist theorizing and modernist practice exacerbated this incipient hierarchy of taste, in producing the still-familiar distinction between the high "literary" and its low other. This was very much driven by literary magazines. The modernist little magazine has come to stand for the "literary magazine" writ larger, where "literary" takes on of a sense of "high" cultural achievement against the more properly "mass" audiences of popular fiction. Focusing on avant-garde literary production and ostensibly indifferent to market pressures, the little magazine has also become associated with a similar understanding of modernism as such as a high-cultural, autonomous movement (Bazin 2019: 38).

By some accounts it was the publication of T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land," in *Criterion* and the *Dial* in 1923, that "announced modernism's unprecedented arrival on the scene of public debate" (Rainey 2008: 71); in Lawrence Rainey's words, a publication effort less of "a specific poem, [and] more a bid for a preeminent position in the field of cultural production" (82). In the wake of modernism, literary works came to be distinguished by their "strangeness and difficulty" (Frow 1986: 87). This explains, in part, Kurowski and Percesepe's claim that "literary magazines are more of a twentieth-century phenomena than any other time" (2008: 8): for given values of the "literary," a value reproduced by the academy, they might even be called an exclusively twentieth-century phenomenon. This has been changing; much recent work has tried to exhume the mass appeal and mass audiences even of modernism (see, *inter alia*, Earle 2009; Bazin 2015); but the notion of literary as a privileged category has stuck, even as it has been shown to be a social, rather than a formal, category. The radical shift in the sense

of what is "literary" that we are living with in the wake of this cultural moment is, of course, part and parcel of the "retrospective view" which Alvin Sullivan invoked: the academy's various versions of the canon have shaped the notion of the "literary" in the magazine as elsewhere. At the same time, as Matthew Vechinski notes, "now, with a few exceptions, fiction appearing in periodicals is limited to strictly literary magazines or occasional special issues of certain titles" (2020: 176): the kind of wide distribution of fiction that general news and social magazines carried is no longer with us. In its place, the frontier of digital publishing asks new questions about what the nature of a magazine is.

I have opened here with the *Literary Magazine* not to suggest that it was the "first" literary magazine, precisely because any claim of being "first" hinges on the kind of definition of the literary magazine this *Companion* wishes to avoid. Instead, I want to claim for it a useful place in an open history of literary magazines: in lieu of an exhaustive list of transhistorical traits, the *Companion* emphasizes a sense of the variety that is involved in calling periodicals "literary magazines" and the sort of connections that can be formed through inclusions and exclusions from such a history. In its specific case, the intervention the *Companion* makes should be clear from a glance at the table of contents. For the *Companion*, the history of the literary magazine begins with the history of the magazine in English, in the eighteenth century, in an effort to avoid simple conceptions of "firsts," and to trace the furthest chronological boundaries of the idea. It also attempts to situate and expand its generic and indeed medial boundaries, asking about both the role of the comic book and the popular fiction magazine in the larger history of the "literary" magazine, and raising the issue of what the role and place of the digital is today—and how vital being printed on paper is to the constitution of a magazine. It does not distinguish between reviews, journals, and magazines (though it does not include newspapers; cf. Scholes and Wulfman 2010: 46), categories whose boundaries always were, and still are, fluid. In lieu of setting out with a concrete definition of the literary magazine, and the inevitably exclusionary practices of determining what periodical does and does not belong, the *Companion* aims to propose an idea of what it means to read a magazine—perhaps not quite any periodical, admittedly—as a literary magazine, as engaged in the practices of disseminating, judging, noticing, advancing, shifting, and canonizing discourses about the literary, about what people do and should read and why.

It also aims to bring out the complexity of writing in and for magazines. More than mere outlets for authorial production, magazines have always shaped fiction through editorial selection, and sometimes outright editorial intervention—and also in the prospect of editorial intervention, in subtly nudging authors to write with specific outlets in mind. We are very familiar today with the notion of the "*New Yorker* story":

> carefully wrought, many-comma'd prose; its long passages of physical description, the precision and the sobriety of which created a kind of negative emotional space, a suggestion of feeling without the naming of it; its well-educated white characters, who could be found experiencing the melancholies of affluence, the doldrums of suburban marriage, or the thrill or the desolation of adultery; and, above all, its signature style of ending, which was either elegantly oblique or frustratingly coy, depending on your taste.
>
> *Franzen 2015: 597*

Against the backdrop of an entire industry of MFA programs producing ever more capable writers whose first sanctioned creative outlet is the short story, and whose aesthetic regime is shaped precisely by the idea of writing what you know that drives the domestic realism of the

New Yorker (by and large), writing for the *New Yorker* and being edited to fit the *New Yorker* is part of making contemporary "literary" writing. This is as it has been for a long time: as Mark Parker points out, even in the early 1820s, "editors routinely changed and at times substantially rewrote contributions. Moreover, we know that contributors wrote for particular periodicals, shaping their remarks for the particular tenor of a magazine or review" (2001: 5). Given the prevalence of canonical authors among the writers for magazines, this takes on added importance. Washington Irving and Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Herman Melville, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Martin Delany, Arthur Conan Doyle and H. Rider Haggard, T.S. Eliot and Gertrude Stein, Dorothy Parker and William Faulkner, H.P. Lovecraft and Djuna Barnes, Annie Proulx and Amy Tan, Octavia Butler and Don DeLillo, Alan Moore and Junot Díaz: literary careers have almost always been founded on writing for, with, and in magazines, often in surprising conjunctions such as Faulkner's writing for the *Saturday Evening Post* (see Verchinski 2020).

To understand a little better, then, the history of the literary magazine—the ways in which periodicals acted on and in a larger cultural framework of literary production—permits us a better understanding of literary history as a whole; and reframing the history of the literary magazine may be a way of also reframing the boundaries of literary history. The *Companion* seeks to do that: by expanding the boundaries of what is literary—and what a magazine—and by at least probing the reach of the literary magazine as a name for certain practices of publishing, writing, and reading. It aims to be a guide to much that is already accepted as part of the enmeshed history of literature and the literary magazine, but it also goes out to ask questions: what happens when we include comic books in the history of literary magazines? What happens when we expand our notion of the literary magazine to the eighteenth century? How does anything about our understanding of literature change when we set *Weird Tales* (see Carney (Chapter 33) in this volume) alongside *The Little Review* (see Matchett (Chapter 29) in this volume)? Questions such as these frame the *Companion*'s contributions.

The essays not in this volume

It is customary to conclude a collection's introduction with a brief nod towards the essays collected here. I want to briefly acknowledge instead this *Companion*'s limitations. It is obviously inevitable that the vast majority of literary magazines will not find mention here, even after limiting it to the Anglophone North Atlantic. This limitation itself was made for space reasons: both the reviewers and I felt that it was justifiable by the historically strong transatlantic connection and shared language to limit the *Companion* in this way, to not include other Anglophone countries, and especially not other languages. I hope that future *Companions* will pick up this slack. In the Anglophone North Atlantic, there is a distinct favoritism toward the US, and a distinct lack of favor shown to Canada, not all of which happened by design. Yet even the American magazine tradition suffers in here. There is no essay on *Cosmopolitan*; none on the *Port Folio*; none on *Putnam's*, none on the *Saturday Evening Post*; none on the *Southern Literary Messenger*; none on the *Suwannee Review*, on *M.A.D.* In the United Kingdom (UK), there is nothing explicitly on *Household Words*, nothing on *Cornhill Magazine*, nothing, sadly, on *Granta*, and only a smattering of entries on the little magazines. The mid-to-late twentieth century in the UK is barely touched on by any of the case studies, although the *Companion* devotes what some must take to be an inordinate amount of space to comics: *RAW* in the US, *2000AD* in the UK. Nonetheless, the *Companion*'s comics coverage, for all its effort to include the form, is fairly sparse itself. There is not much on science fiction, fantasy, or romance magazines—though there is a little, at least. There's nothing on literary annuals such as the Best American

Short Stories series ongoing since 1915, and certainly a key delivery medium for the form. There is nothing on children's literary magazines, and very little on the many magazines explicitly aimed at a female audience, such as *Godey's Ladies' Book*. There is, neither, any attention paid to LGBTQI magazines; and as we move on into the twenty-first century, very little (though at least not nothing) on digital magazines. There is very little indeed on zines, despite their importance from the mid-twentieth century onward as distributors of popular cultural texts; and no case study of a contemporary little magazine.

There is not much coverage of reviews. As Keri Holt points out in this volume, a magazine such as the *Southern Literary Messenger* was not "literary" on the strength of its fiction and poetry so much as it was on the strength of its reviews—here, Edgar Allen Poe's. The idea of using magazines as vehicles for criticism, for reviews, is as old as the literary magazine itself, as the Johnson quotes above show: indeed, reviewing is one feature of literary magazines which has largely escaped much historical change, details of style excepted; today, review magazines remain important in curating reading material against the backdrop of ever-increasing production figures for fiction and poetry. But the *Companion*'s readers will not find entries here for the *London Review of Books* or the *New York Times Book Review*, arguably the most important literary magazines publishing today, or the *New York Review of Science Fiction*. At least there is a chapter on *Los Angeles Review of Books*.

The point of this is not to disparage the project of the *Companion*—of course—or to shield it from criticism. Rather, it is to highlight the contingencies of selection that play into the construction of a project such as this, and to caution readers against taking it for any sort of canon. The hope is that the chapters collected here together offer some sense of the overarching thesis of the book, namely that it makes sense to offer a three-hundred-year history of the literary magazine even while we recognize that there is no such thing as *the* literary magazine. To the extent that it manages that, it may cushion some of the obvious limits of its selection. I hope the general bibliography offers some useful starting points for further exploration, say, into British modernist magazines missing from this book. Inevitably there are literary magazines missing here, though, which properly should have been in here; and inevitably, this particular presentation of the history of literary magazines is not the only one possible—maybe not even the best possible. It is, however, I hope, a useful starting point.

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PART 1

Theory

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1
THE MAGAZINE IN THEORY

Patrick Collier

To theorize magazines is to ask the most fundamental questions about their nature and function. What makes something a magazine? From where did this resilient and multiplex cultural form come? What purposes did and does it serve for its many constituencies (readers, writers, editors, publishers, advertisers, and, now, scholars)? How does the individual magazine come into being, and how does it move through the world? What are its genres, and how does its generic (and intergeneric) nature influence its functions, its value, its movement, and its chances of success? And what effects does it have in the world, including but in excess of the intentions of its producers and consumers?

Magazines emerged in the eighteenth century and became one of the most powerful and ubiquitous cultural forms in the second half of the nineteenth century; one could argue that magazines contend with newspapers and later with the cinema as the most powerful media forms in the West for the century stretching from about 1850 to 1950. The term "magazine" came into European languages from Arabic, originally meaning "storehouse," and it was first applied to print objects in the seventeenth century to denote books gathering information of interest to narrow groups of people, such as R. Ward's "Animadversions of Warre, or a Militairie Magazine of the truest rules … for the Managing of Warre" (OED). From the early eighteenth century the term has denoted magazines in recognizably contemporary form, "containing articles by various writers, especially ones with stories, articles on general subjects" (OED; Scholes and Wulfman 2016: 45–46). Since the term stabilized in this way, then, one definitive characteristic of magazines as a form has been variety, both internally, in the heterogeneity of even the most cohesive single magazine, and externally, among the tens of thousands of magazines that the print industries of western nations produced in the magazine's heyday and thereafter.

Questions of genre

These two elements—the magazine's status as a container or "storehouse" of miscellaneous individual texts and the plenitude and variety of individual magazine titles—have made genre a vexed issue for scholars of magazines. Magazines contain texts that embody a wide variety of preexisting genres (essay, poem, review, and short story); they also create new internal genres (the "symposium," the "agony aunt" column, the combined book review/essay). And they

DOI: 10.4324/9780429274244-3

sort themselves and are sorted into magazine genres. In recent years, leading scholars have sought alternately to firm up and to deconstruct such generic categories as "little magazine," "literary magazine," and "mass-market magazine." Such arguments register the exceptions and outliers that undermine any hard-and-fast definition of a magazine genre: are little magazines little in size? Little in circulation? Or little in having had a short print run? Do only aesthetically experimental or politically radical magazines count as "little"? Does the term "literary" in "literary magazine" denote the genres it publishes (fiction, poetry, and criticism)? Or does it denote the high quality of all its writing? Alternatively, how much of a magazine's content must consist of texts in identifiable literary genres for the periodical itself to be dubbed "literary"?[1] Donal Harris has suggested that terms such as "little" and "literary" more meaningfully denote "attitudes towards readership" than "size or content" (2016: 11). The incommensurabilities these questions reveal drove Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman to suggest the study of magazines move beyond genre; advanced databases and machine reading capabilities would enable scholars to chunk the universe of magazines provisionally by strategically linked features such as print run, percentage of advertising, size, and so forth, discerning more useful and meaningful commonalities among magazines than necessarily reductive genre designations can offer (2010: 69–70).

Others in this volume grapple with the tensions around the concept of "literary magazines," so I will confine myself here to the broader complexities of genre and purpose. But it is worth noting here that the concept of genre faces at least two ways: first, genre is something that happens when the observer (newsstand owner, reader, and scholar) tries to position an object within a larger classification. In this sense it is a critical and analytical category; second, genre is also a historical phenomenon (albeit a contestable and unstable one): magazines from the past existed in a landscape of existing genres that their constituents used to make sense of them. Indeed, evolving, historical genres enabled the creation, distribution, and purchase of magazines, with each new magazine title both partaking of and exerting its own influence on the always-shifting landscape of print genres. Genres, in other words, are not simply analytical categories imposed on a set of objects after the fact; they are also categories that had specific cultural functions in the periods we study, categories that emerged in a complex give-and-take between editors, publishers, readers, and critics in their historical moment—and very useful categories, at that. Genre allowed writers to select their platforms and take aim at specific audiences and pay scales; they allowed editors and publishers to stake out a position in a crowded field; and they simplified the almost daily decisions readers made about what to read and where to find it. As Daniel Chandler has observed, "Defining genres may be problematic, but even if theorists were to abandon the concept, in everyday life people would continue to categorize texts" (1997: 3). Thus, while disaggregation, machine-reading technology, and database development do indeed empower scholars to group magazines in newly productive and provisional ways, genre as it functioned historically will remain central to our conceptions of how magazines operated and signified in the past.

In the broadest sense, magazines are an instance of the wider class of textual objects known as periodicals and share their definitive properties: seriality and periodicity (Hammill, Hjaratarson, and McGregor 2015: 6–7). Periodicals, Matthew Levay writes, are

> constituted by the regular (and occasionally irregular) appearance of successive installments, the links and gaps that emerge between the form and content of those installments, and the ability of readers to devote the time necessary for repeated, continuous reading in order to possess a coherent sense of a periodical's identity or ethos.
>
> *2018: v*

A large majority of magazines appear serially at set intervals (or at least aspire to do so); therefore, the text of the magazine (if we take "text" in Roland Barthes's sense as the "methodological field" or object of study) is relatively unbounded compared with most films, novels, and poems—the forms from which genre distinctions have historically been drawn and in which the individual instance presents itself as a unified text. The single issue of a magazine, in contrast, gestures fundamentally beyond itself to its other instances: to the promise of the next issue and to the archive of issues in the past. The reiterated relationship between "the novelty of the current issue" and "the archive that the periodical leaves in its wake" strikes a balance between newness and repetition, with elements such as format, design, recurring features, and the periodical's title providing a framework of continuity within which the current issue's freshness is expressed and contained (Mussell 2015a: 69–70). To paraphrase Levay, serial repetition thus tempers and augments the "chaos of the magazine," giving form to its plenitude and promising more (2018: vii). Magazines have historically perpetuated themselves by underscoring and capitalizing on this serial nature, publishing stories in parts, promoting future content, and using other, sometimes gimmicky, devices such as contests and surveys to keep readers coming back. As James Mussell has shown, this orientation writes itself into magazine discourse, as editors and feature writers inscribe the current moment and the magazine's past and future issues with phrases such as "in our last issue" and "regular readers of this magazine will recognize"; such phrases inscribe the magazine's serial nature, "presupposing … a place from which to look backwards while implying that there is something more to come" (2015b: 345).

If, at the highest level of abstraction, the magazine is a subgenre of the periodical, its peculiarly modern history has also made it prone to the spawning of generic divisions and subdivisions. The magazine emerged later than the newspaper, and it is thus more fully enmeshed in vigorous, industrial capitalist economies and expanding literacy in Western nations. Magazines also, for the most part, capitalized upon and came to rely on advanced print and photoreproductive technologies, even more so than newspapers and books. All this made the magazine the definitive print object of mass publishing in an era when mass publishing was the leading purveyor of entertainment in Western societies. As such, and in ways prescient of how the film industry would develop in the first third of the twentieth century, the universe of magazines became (and remains) relentlessly genre-driven, with successful innovations rapidly spurring imitators, and with editors and publishers who seek to enter the field looking for models to adopt and adapt. Well-historicized work on magazines thus has to be grounded in an understanding of the contemporary landscape of genres in which a magazine functioned. And, as magazines communicated with and positioned themselves relative to other magazines, especially within their own genres, historicizing them also requires attention to such "magazine dialogism"—the ways in which titles sought out a space within a market and a micro-public sphere through evocations of and interactions with competitors, collaborators, and rhetorical enemies within and across genres (Ardis 2008: 30–47). Genres are fluid, of course, sometimes being consciously declared in manifesto-like statements, at other times being identified after-the-fact by observers, and only gradually and incompletely hardening into iterative categories. In a way again resonant with films during the rise of the Hollywood studio system, magazines in the age of mass print tended to generic hybridity (combining, say, political commentary and literature, or physical culture and confessional self-help) and to frequent subdivision.

In such functions we see the historical face of genre. It also has a scholarly face, in which scholars categorize (sometimes without due articulation) magazines according to their own interests. In mid-twentieth century Victorian and Romantic scholarship, it was commonplace to treat the *Edinburgh Review* or the *Quarterly Review* primarily as sources of historical context for literary studies—in effect as literary magazines. This treatment would have surprised their

founders, for whom the word "review" in the title categorized them as having the historically specific task of keeping well-educated middle and upper-middle class males abreast of matters of public import via the discussion of books, with literature and its traditional genres as important but not primary. In the study of magazines, then, it is perhaps best to view genre as a supple and dynamic process through which all of the print artifact's constituencies place it and assert its significance and value. Among these constituencies is the contemporary scholar, who both discerns genre as a historical condition and deploys it as a critical tool. We see both of these usages at work in Donal Harris's framing of his inquiry into "big magazines," in which he constructs a provisional super-genre by linking together a set of historical ones: "I use the term 'big magazine' to draw together examples from an eclectic range of periodical genres: the muckraking journal, the African American monthly, the newsmagazine, the photomagazine, and the men's fashion monthly" (2016: 6).[2]

Questions of purpose

Exceeding genre are questions of purpose that, though broad, are useful in schematizing the vast universe of magazines. One is the degree to which the profit motive drives the energies that produce a magazine and its importance in relation to other motives such as swaying opinions, supporting careers, and disseminating literature, or advancing aesthetic agendas and theories. As Margaret Beetham observed, periodicals are both economic entities and competitors in cultural struggles over meaning, both commodities for sale and players in social "processes of making meaning—both individually and socially," processes that are "difficult and cut across by conflict." Magazines are produced by a specialist sector of the economy and are the product of a wide variety of labor—intellectual, manual, and technical—and their survival depends upon their success in a competitive field. But individual magazines and even classes of magazines may exist primarily for noncommercial purposes, securing their (usually short-lived) survival through the patronage of individuals or institutions. Beetham's work implies that we might view magazines as existing along a continuum between those that are almost purely commercial objects and those (such as subsidized, small-circulation "little magazines") whose aims are almost entirely political or aesthetic. Cases where motives are entirely unmixed are exceptional; even the most purist magazine cannot be "indefinitely sustained against economic loss" (1990: 21). All periodicals and all magazines have what Beetham calls an "economic function" and a "signifying function." When starting to size up and sort magazines, we could do worse than to situate them on this continuum between the desire to turn a profit and the desire to "make their meanings stick" (20).

A related classification, which Beetham also suggests, would position magazines between the poles of open and closed form. Early media studies, influenced by psychoanalysis, distinguished closed (or "masculine") forms, those that "assert the dominant structures of meaning by closing off alternative options and offering the reader or viewer only one way of making sense of the world" and open or "feminine" forms which "refuse the closed ending" and thereby allow "for the possibility of alternative meanings." Beetham argues that these two orientations exist in tension in the periodical as a form. The periodical tends toward openness in its typically multivocal character, its serial format—it is always gesturing toward an open present because it needs its readers to return for the next issue—and its perpetual need to refer beyond itself to other publications. Further, readers exercise considerable agency and improvisation in how they read magazines: as I discuss below, there is no implied generic injunction to read a magazine from start to finish, or in any particular order. At the same time, Beetham argues, periodicals may tend more powerfully toward broadly conservative ends—toward closure of meaning—because

each issue is self-contained and most contents are end-stopped and, more profoundly, because modern periodicals seek to address a consistently imagined reader. Magazines typically evolve a "deep regular structure," which is part of their effort to offer readers "a recognizable position" from which to consume the magazine, thereby creating "a consistent 'reader' within the text." This reader is "addressed as an individual but is positioned as a member of certain overlapping social groups" (1990: 28). Arriving at predictable intervals on newsstands or via the mail, the periodical takes part in the regulation of time in modern societies, hailing and thus working to construct and stabilize subjectivities—all of this, Beetham opines, tending to make the periodical a more conservative force, one whose default effect is to reinforce dominant narratives.

We need not share Beetham's adjudication to recognize the usefulness of this model, from whose broad typology we can unfold a set of useful, specific questions: how coherent is the voice or tone of a magazine? Where would it rest on a continuum between a closed monovocality (characteristic of a single-editor/author magazine, a rare but not unheard-of species) and an open heteroglossia? What forms does the multi-vocality of a magazine take? Does it publish writing by readers, in the form of letters, surveys, and contests? Does it have a small stable of recurrent writers, and to what degree do they dominate its pages? How varied are the aesthetic or political views expressed in the magazine, and to what degree are differences of opinion spontaneous or orchestrated? How much control does a single editor or small, central brain trust exert over publishing and design decisions or political or aesthetic opinion? As these questions show, the point becomes not to definitively position the magazine as "open" or "closed," but to use that heuristic to forge concrete paths of inquiry into the magazine's specific ways of functioning, as both a commodity and a participant in the cultural construction of meaning and value.

Bringing these questions to bear on any specific magazine will reveal the paradoxes and complexities of its cultural work. It might reveal, for instance, that an avowedly radical magazine such as *Blast*—dedicated to the tearing down of political, cultural, and (especially) aesthetic pieties—falls far to the "closed" end of the spectrum, with the overweening voice of Wyndham Lewis driving its lengthy manifestoes, to which most of its contributors were signatories. *Blast* was an editor-dominated magazine with a small cohort of largely like-minded writers and a pugnaciously exclusionary and oppositional stance, which did not publish letters to the editor. Its relatively minimal openness lay in the ambiguity created by internal contradictions within its logorrheic proclamations. *The New Age*, like *Blast* one of the most read and commented-upon of early twentieth century magazines, might seem at first glance to be its polar opposite. Upon taking it over in 1907, celebrated editor A. R. Orage conceived the magazine as a staging ground for opposing opinions and analysis of politics, culture, and the arts. The result certainly gave voice to more varied perspectives than one would find in a magazine dominated by a single voice or devoted to a party platform. And yet, Orage and Beatrice Hastings, his erstwhile lover and right-hand woman, assertively orchestrated this apparent cacophony, with Hastings writing pseudonymous letters to the editor that took provocative and mutually opposed positions and Orage's regular "Notes of the Week" privileging the magazine's (which is to say, his) positions in the many political and aesthetic debates the magazine aired (see also Ardis 2007; Snyder 2016). (Letters to the Editor, of course, are both ways that magazines open themselves to multiple voices and functions of seriality; see Snyder and Sorenson 2018).

Meanwhile, avowedly commercial magazines, such as the women's "service" magazines that came to prominence in the 1930s, offering fashion, cosmetic, household, and personal advice and features, might seem at first glance to do the blunt-edged conservative work of disseminating a mainstream feminine subjectivity circumscribed by consumerism and heteronormative domesticity. But other factors make such magazines relatively "open," among them their reliance

on scores of paid, individual writers, their ample and miscellaneous content, and their reliance on advertising, all of which create an artifact criss-crossed with dozens of voices and agendas for readers to choose from, or ignore, as they saw fit. Indeed, the fin de siècle transformation which saw many magazines turn to advertising rather than copy cost for most of their revenues, dramatically increasing the circulation of large magazines, can be seen as simultaneously "opening" and "closing" meaning—opening magazines to scores of outside voices while enlisting them as reproducers of an expanding, consumption-driven subjectivity. Such multiple, co-existing messages have led scholars of women's periodicals to argue that commercial magazines for women often advanced progressive and liberatory visions of femininity alongside reiterations of more conservative ones, with the message to readers very much a matter of interpretation and variation from title to title and issue to issue.[3]

The magazine in the world

To speak of open or closed form in magazines is to pursue their ideological functioning: the ways they hail, construct, and complicate subjectivity, and reiterate or contest social and political norms, as well as their roles in enabling or reiterating collectivities by gathering, representing, or providing an outlet for them (Levay 2018: vii). And much of today's research on magazines does just this—parsing and contextualizing the nuances that characterize the cultural work, whether deliberate or overdetermined—of individual titles or groups of titles as contradiction and conflict play out amid the many voices within and between them.

But this ideological or "signifying" function is only part of a magazine's story: a magazine is an object in the world as well as an object that represents the world. Its signifying function is inextricable from its economic and physical existence: in order to have a chance of "making its meaning stick," supporting new writers, or achieving any other imagined purpose, a magazine has to be instantiated in ink and paper, and it has to travel, whether in physical or virtual form. For most of its history the magazine has had to circulate physically—on board trains or automobiles, and often after its unprocessed contents had similarly traveled to magazine offices via the mails or as electrical impulses on the telegraph. But the movement of ideas and objects is not identical, and both constitute fruitful fields for magazine research. As Brad Evans and Eric Bulson have separately shown, aesthetic agendas and periodical formats (the ephemeral bibelot in Evans's case, and the little magazine in Bulson's case) could circulate quite effectively beyond borders even when physical circulation of the artifacts was minimal or absent: genres, attitudes, postures, and readerly subjectivities could circulate when magazines themselves typically could not. As Bulson demonstrates, while physical copies of little magazines travelled with great difficulty, encountering tariffs, customs barriers, postal and shipping snags, and unreceptive markets, the little magazine *as a form* traveled widely in time and space, becoming the engine of avant-garde political and aesthetic energies in "countries like India, Japan, and Argentina in the 1920s, Trinidad, Jamaica, and Barbados in the 1930s and '40s, and Nigeria and Uganda in the 1950s and '60s" (2017: 3). And, as Evans shows, the oppositional, avant-garde stance embodied in ephemeral bibelots and later reconstituted in early twentieth century modernism cropped up around Europe and the United States in the late nineteenth century despite there being virtually no circulation of the bibelots themselves beyond their immediate localities. What circulated, instead, was an aesthetic posture and a practice of citation within small, tight, local networks that were not substantially connected to each other but, rather, existed like "separate network domains alongside each other in non-intersecting parallel planes," "unconnected clusters of magazines and coteries of artists" (2016: 190–191).[4] Such circulation of ideas and postures bears out Benedict Anderson's sense that periodical circulation underlies the dissemination of

"unbounded serialities"—categories that are "seemingly open to endless inclusion" such as crucially, political identities like "worker" or "activist"—while underscoring that such categories can circulate while many individual artifacts fail to do so (1998: 29–33).

This paradox is just one of the complexities beneath the seemingly simple concept of circulation, whose most frequent usage in the study of magazines consists of the (often difficult to locate) number of copies of a magazine issue typically sold at a given point in time. We know intuitively (and from historical research) that circulation and readership are not identical: individual print artifacts can be passed from hand to hand multiple times; they can also "circulate" but languish unread, like the stack of *New Yorkers* in the corner of the room where I'm writing this. We also know, despite the fact that scholarship frequently references "longevity and circulation numbers" as indexes of influence, that circulation and influence are not identical: a small circulation journal with a readership of powerful people can have more influence on a public policy matter (*Foreign Affairs*) or a literary reputation (*Paris Review*) than a popular magazine with a much higher circulation (Evans 2016: 190). Even the circulation of texts as physical objects is complex and historically/locally specific; to cite just one instance, Faye Hammill and Hannah McGregor have shown how "both forms and content were reused, reframed, or transformed" as genres of magazine and specific texts, such as serialized novels or feature stories, moved from metropolitan centers in the United States to regional locations and to Canada (2018: 79). A Canadian magazine might substantially adopt the format, look, and layout of the general interest magazine from an American source/competitor while refusing to publish American fiction out of a sense of cultural nationalism; or it might manufacture circulation by offering readers a bundling deal where they receive a Canadian magazine along with a more popular American title; or it might utterly reframe and even re-edit a serialized novel that was running concurrently in a New York periodical. Thus, while a circulation figure might seem to offer the scholar a somewhat authoritative piece of empirical data, signifying at least a sense of a magazine's success or precarity, circulation is yet another aspect of the magazine that grows more complex and convoluted the closer we look at it.

And while a magazine's creators might have designs, modest or grandiose, for changing the world by "making their meaning stick," every magazine changes, reproduces, and even helps to create the world in physical, concrete ways, no less powerful for their mundanity. Magazines are powerful material facts for the writers who earn money (or donate their labor) and the workers who manufacture and marry paper and ink, move periodicals in airplanes and trucks and trains, and sell them at newsstands or deliver them to readers' homes, to say nothing of the trees felled to enable all this traffic. In the aggregate, such transformations are profound: periodicals, Mussell writes, "move through space, helping transform it into circulation routes, spaces of commercial exchange, library space, educational spaces, etc." (2007: 2). In the realm of the literary, magazines do not merely contain, circulate, and evaluate the creations of writers, they also profoundly shape them. As Sean Latham has argued, the market for fiction in early twentieth-century magazines influenced writers' conceptions and the structure and content of the texts they produced, as when a magazine editor's formatting interventions transformed William Faulkner's draft of "Dry September" into the text many revere today (2017: 49–53). In the literary realm, then, the influence of magazines is simultaneously aesthetic, ideological, and material (not to beg the Marxist question): magazines create symbolic value but not symbolic value alone: they generate, draw upon, and expend money and resources, circulate and re-circulate the work and names of writers, provide writers with outlets (and, thus, in the era of Creative Writing programs, with lines on curriculum vitae), and—in the cases of prominent or highly selective magazines—serve as gate-keepers. Thus, in addition to their economic

functions in the narrower sense of the word, magazines are players in complex and often quite specific ways in the cultural construction of literary and cultural value.

Magazines and literary value

Approaches to how literary value functions—how author names and their texts take on and sustain (or fail to take on and sustain) cultural value—have gained in complexity since the 1988 publication of Barbara Herrnstein-Smith's galvanizing *Contingencies of Value*. Herrnstein-Smith lays out an encompassing, high-level explanation that posits the emergence of a canonical work as the aggregate effect of scores of "personal economic decisions" (1988: 48). These decisions begin with the author's decisions about whether, how, and when to finish and submit a text and extend through the choices of editors, publishers, and common readers to the evaluative acts of the culturally powerful: well-placed critics, prize granters, designers of curricula and syllabi, anthologists, etc. Cultural value emerges not from inherent features of the text but from the continuous process of economic evaluations—economic in money terms (whether a publisher should invest in a book or a reader should buy it, certainly)—but perhaps more profoundly in the sense of economic competition for the scarce resource of the potential reader's time. If a new work accords with the aesthetic values—assumptions about the appropriate functions of a literary text—of a set of readers and/or middlemen, it will have an immediate survival advantage over competing texts, as it will be

> not only better protected from physical deterioration but will also be more frequently used or widely exhibited and … more frequently read or recited, copied or reprinted, translated, imitated, cited, commented upon, and so forth—in short, culturally reproduced—and thus will be more readily available to perform those or other functions for other subjects at a subsequent time.
>
> *48*

This shift toward an understanding of literary value as a contingent, historical process established the foundation for work that views magazines as crucial participants in that process and studies the specific historical ways it has played out. For many literary texts, including novels in the age of serialization, magazine publication marked the most crucial early stages of textual survival: having made it from the author's mind and through the drafting and revision stage to the pages of a magazine, the text has not only been reproduced but also stabilized, sorted into a recognized genre, and entered into an archive with a chance of lengthy physical survival. And magazines play important roles at every subsequent stage: in reviewing and advertising books, sponsoring critical considerations of works and authors that have survived their moments of initial appearance, circulating and recirculating the titles of texts and the names of authors. Conversely, extended silence across the field of magazines can be crucial to the waning of a text's or author's visibility and availability. Magazines even, on occasion, fuel the rediscovery of a text that had fallen out of fashion or circulation, as in the surprising vogue of John Williams's 50-year-old novel *Stoner* in 2013 (*NY* 2013, October 20).

Magazines do not do the work of constructing literary value singly: they exist in dialogue, and groups of magazines comprise larger circuits of literary value. Crucially, the ongoing, iterative processes these magazines execute do not constitute a single, total evaluative field—or a unified set of valued objects—but rather multiple, overlapping circuits of value: competing, provisional canons, as it were. One need only note the substantial overlap in annual "Best of" lists from the *New Yorker*, the *New York Review of Books*, and the *New York Times Book Review*

to recognize that they constitute a loose, single circuit of value, their ongoing processes and practices reproducing a set of largely shared values. But despite its apparent power, especially to readers who read mainly within it, this circuit co-exists with other circuits in what John Frow calls "incommensurate evaluative regimes" (1995: 133). These regimes sometimes clash but more frequently operate alongside each other without contact, with limited opportunities at "meaningful exchange" (151). One such separate circuit of value is the subsegment of contemporary "literary magazines" that is tied to the world of academic Creative Writing; their work, above and beyond what it does for their small number of readers, serves to credential mostly university-employed writers by maintaining high rejection rates as a marker of quality.[5] That a great number of such magazines are underwritten by universities or foundations underscores the imbrication of magazines with other institutions that "establish and normalize literary value," which also include publishing houses and prize granting agencies (Harris 2016: 9). A considerable amount of scholarship since the late 1990s has trained its eye on the functioning of such institutions—defined by Lawrence Rainey as "structures that interpose themselves between the individual and society … both social subdivisions of beings and regulative principles that organize various zones of activity" (1998: 6). Such institutions produce and reproduce texts, writer reputations, conditions of reading, and—at all levels—the authority of the sanctioning agents themselves. A magazine, in this sense, might function as a major player within a larger institution or might amount to an institution in its own right. And it does not only reproduce the literary value of an esteemed writer when it recirculates it: it also asserts and reproduces its own value, as when *Time* magazine put T. S. Eliot on its cover in 1950.[6]

But the production and circulation of literary value and reputation are only one among many ways in which the magazine takes part in making the world, and scholars trained in literary studies go to magazines for many reasons. The final section of this chapter examines the magazine as an object of study and its methodological implications.

Questions of method: who (or what) is reading? And why? And how?

What are we doing when we place magazines at the center of scholarly inquiry? What sorts of claims do we make, and what is their truth value? These questions are fundamental to periodical studies and were laid out admirably as early as the 1980s by Victorianists, who noted that the Victorians themselves had asked these questions, recognizing in their own time the unsurpassed importance of the magazine as a cultural form (Pykett 1990: 3). The primary remit of early scholars of periodical studies was to justify magazines and other serials as objects of study in their own right; magazines were to be viewed neither as containers of primary materials to be "disaggregated" into data for cultural history or literary context nor, in crude Marxist terms, as secondary effects of economic infrastructure (Pykett 1990: 16; Latham and Scholes 2006: 517–518).[7] Rather, magazines should be seen as complex and extraordinarily influential cultural texts whose meaning and functioning needed to be better understood, generally and specifically; and they were not merely symptoms or reproducers of ideology but active agents in cultural struggles for power and meaning.

Naming the magazine as the object of study enabled the creation of a vigorous subfield but entailed further complications: how was the magazine text to be defined (The single issue? The complete run? The run under a single editor or team?). On these matters, practices have not codified into rules: scholars make tactical decisions about how they are delineating their "methodological fields" and typically announce them at the outset of essays and books—here a recounting and analysis of a debate that played out within or across a set of periodicals over a short period; here a content analysis and re-historicization of a single title (or a single editor's

run); here a massive conceptualization of the functioning of a large class of periodicals. The unmanageable plenitude of periodicals as a whole (and, often, even of the single magazine) renders narrow methodological protocols untenable. The scholar's specific object of study might be framed as narrowly as a single contribution to a single periodical (for fresh contextualization) or as broadly as large, provisional, and debatable generic markers such as the "little magazine," the "big magazine," or the "service magazine." Scholars who focus on periodicals hail from a wide array of major disciplines—literature, cultural studies, history, media studies, women's and gender studies, and more—and they have come to a more or less silent consensus that the object of study shall be freshly and tactically delineated by each scholar or in each project.

Such provisional decisions speak to what we are reading for, and how, and they relate to ongoing theoretical/methodological transitions in literary studies marked by a partial decentering of "close reading" in favor of such methods as "not reading," "just reading," "surface reading," and "distant reading."[8] The latter has emerged in the last decade or so with the availability of Optical Character Recognition and machine reading and has thus far fallen somewhat short of its grandest promises to transform practices and reigning conceptions even as it has given rise to promising and well-funded projects. It is worth recounting that there was a day when close reading of periodicals needed to be defended and its objectives carefully spelled out: articulating this move in the age of high theory, Lynn Pykett insisted upon reading that bridged poststructuralist semiotics and Marxist cultural studies, so as to make visible to analysis both the deep structures of journalistic discourse and the material conditions under which texts are produced and received (16). While Pykett's terminology is somewhat dated, her evocation of semiotics and cultural studies does gesture toward enduring mainstays of scholarship on magazines: on the one hand, the identification and analysis of textual, rhetorical, and visual practices that both make magazines distinct and position them within larger interpretive communities; on the other hand, empirical research, often involving rigorous archival digging, that reveals the material histories of individual titles. Harris's *On Company Time* is illustrative, combining close reading, wide sampling, and archival digging to reveal how a set of distinct classes of magazines interacted with and influenced literary modernism. These practices allow Harris to describe, for example, "the characteristics of *Time* style, what aspects of magazine culture it responded to, and how it transformed from a specific approach to writing into the primary 'mental discipline' of working at Time, Inc." (Harris 2016: 24). Assembling a history of writers' and artists' working arrangements at *Time*, Harris suggests that the magazine pushed its contributors to develop a "uniformly stylish periodical voice" that implicitly reproduced their professional relationship with the magazine, marked by a "felt erasure between personal writing and salaried work" that helped produce "dozens of truly astounding literary and visual texts." (112–113).

The multi-pronged approach of someone like Harris reveals that, even in the moments where it can be described as "close," the reading practiced by periodicals scholars is neither New Critical nor Deconstructive but rather equal parts contextual and formal—geared toward unpacking and contextualizing distinct meanings that emerge in a specific periodical in a specific moment in time. A close reading of a literary text *in situ*, in other words, will not mainly uncover structural features, meanings, or tensions within "the literary text" but those that emerge when it is viewed within the pages of a magazine and within that magazine's material history. It will, further, seek to reveal the functioning—including meanings, tensions, and structures—of the magazine itself. As Latham and others have noted, magazines require "a new kind of formalist reading practice" that can make visible "the specific formal constraints and affordances of magazines themselves" (2015: 255). Latham emphasizes the resonance of the terms "affordance" and "emergent"—an affordance being the ways a technology cues users

to engage with it, and "emergent" signifying the complexity that arises not from individual elements of a system but from their interaction (2015: 15). That is to say, magazines produce meanings both through the smaller texts (e.g., essays, poems, stories, and advertisements) they reproduce and circulate but also through their own formal properties, and through the ways these properties interact when a reader engages them. Magazines, Latham writes, are "aesthetic objects themselves, each issue a unique iteration in a series capable of producing a set of distinct effects. … dynamic, interactive systems capable of generating emergent meanings all their own" (2015: 263).

Latham's comments underscore the more basic fact that magazines require—of all readers at all times—different reading practices than novels, essays, or poems in book form. Few people read a magazine from cover to cover in order, and the magazine as a technology has evolved formal features to assist or compel consumers in their incomplete, nonchronological reading. Such formal features, which Latham has likened to software programs running on the hardware of the magazine itself, include tables of contents, front-page teasers, section headings and subheadings, and recurrent elements of format and order (for instance, ads in front and back, and book reviews in smaller print), which regular readers internalize. In work that has often been applied to periodical studies, Jerome McGann and George Bornstein foregrounded the concept of "bibliographic code"—the formal physical features of texts as distinct from their words (or "lexical code"); McGann's (1993) and Bornstein's (2008) insistence that such nonlexical features can profoundly influence meaning and reader response underlies periodical scholars' practice on "reading" material aspects of periodicals, from structure and format to paper quality, typography, price, and—crucially—the content, placement, and amount of advertising.

The fact that no two readers are likely to read the same contents of the same magazine in the same order has profound consequences for the "meaning" of a magazine and the scholar's relationship to it. Beetham argued that the magazine is perhaps "not so much a form in its own right as an enabling space for readers traversing the items they encounter" (1990: 29), and Latham and others have urged us to consider the magazine as a technology to be understood as much as a text to be interpreted. All readers, including actual historical readers and scholars, in effect create a new, unique text with each reading of a magazine as they enact self-directed, even if unconscious, reading practices. Borrowing terms from computer game theorist Espen Aarseth, Latham conceives the stable, reproducible text of a magazine as the "texton" and the reader's actual construction/consumption of the text—by skipping around, moving back and forth, browsing, and ignoring substantial sections—as the "scripton." An issue of a magazine has a single "texton" but each reader uses it to compose his/her/their own scripton with each reading (2017: 44–48).

The unpredictable and largely unrecoverable routes readers take through magazines underscore the contingent nature of all reading. Magazine reading literalizes the reader-response concept that the text is produced in the interaction between the reader and the page. In other words, when we construct meaning in interaction with a magazine, whether we hold the paper artifact in our hand or scroll through it on microfilm or read it in PDF form from a screen, we are performing a reading that is unlikely to closely parallel any other reading of the artifact (or, in the case of digitized or microfilm copies, any other reading of a *representation of* the artifact). Each of our readings produces a new scripton using the technology of the magazine's texton, as Latham would have it. As scholars we may, in the process, hypothesize previously unknown social, political, or aesthetic dynamics, and we may devise brilliant interpretations of new or obscure literary texts that emerge when we read them in context. What we are not doing is recovering, with any specificity or confidence, how "actual readers" experienced any of this,

how the text would have looked, or what it would have meant in historical context, which lies in the vast realm of the unknowable. Both our readings and the tools that enable them—digital databases, search tools, microfilm, or facsimile copies—are effectively remediations of the magazine, just as the magazine itself was a remediation of other texts, textual genres, and media.[9] While our reading practices are, of course, different from those of a magazine's original readers, they are similarly multiple and tactical—with prolonged, absorbed reading of words perhaps more exception than norm, and occurring amidst rapid shifts to visual consumption, skimming, quick perusal of details, etc.

As I suggested above, scholarly reading of periodicals is happening amidst, and in many cases exemplifying, shifts in critical reading practice happening more widely in literary and cultural studies. Rita Felski's 2015 book *The Limits of Critique*, the influential 2009 special issue of *Representations* entitled "The Way We Read Now" (Best and Marcus 2009b), and Franco Moretti's concept of "distant reading" (and the many responses it has provoked; see 2000a) all represent pushback on the business-as-usual of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century critical reading. The impetus for this reexamination has two broad aims. Critics who ascribe to the "new formalism" seek to shift critical practice away from the so-called "symptomatic reading," the high-theory-inspired practice of teasing out ideological structures from imaginative texts, in which the analyst performs a "hermeneutics of suspicion" to reveal implicit cultural values, attitudes, and narratives typically viewed as reproducing the current social order. These scholars argue for renewed attention to the complexities visible on a text's surface, a shift from "an adversarial relationship to the object of criticism" to "immersion in texts (without paranoia or suspicion about their merit or value)" (Best and Marcus 2009a: 16). Followers of Moretti, on the other hand, seek to shift focus not to immersion in single texts but to computer-assisted study of the broadest textual corpuses imaginable, "precursors to the canon or alternatives to it … all of literary history: canonical and non-canonical, together" (2000b: 207–208). Symptomatic reading still persists widely in the study of magazines, for instance, in Ilya Parkins's brilliant, recent reading of the English women's magazine *Britannia and Eve*; Parkins argues that despite the heavy visual presence of a feminine modernity, the juxtaposition of images and letterpress in the magazine reveals a masculine "defensiveness against spectacular femininity … a defense of the public sphere as masculine preserve" (2018: 151). Such a posture characterizes a great deal of scholarship on magazines, which pays heed to their formal features and their history while reading through them to larger cultural values and dynamics—in short using magazines as grist for Cultural Studies, often oriented toward power relations and the triumvirate of race/class/gender. Yet while a practice like Parkins's might ultimately conclude in a symptomatic reading that is critical in the negative sense, finished arguments about magazines and runs of magazines are, realistically, the end result of hours of reading in multiple modes: what ends in a published, "suspicious" reading is undoubtedly built on hours of surface reading, skimming, "just reading" and periodicals-specific maneuvers, such as analyzing the format, the advertisements, and the bibliographic code. And critical studies of magazines regularly turn out analyses that are congenial to their objects, such as Gerry Beegan's and Fiona Hackney's arguments for the usefulness and even liberatory energies at work in typically discounted women's service magazines.

The best readings of individual titles probably begin with relatively open curiosity and "a way of reading that suspends judgments," as Scholes and Wulfman have advocated (2010: 67). As I have argued elsewhere (Collier 2015), the multiple modes of reading that Margaret Cohen theorized as appropriate to "the archive of forgotten literature" are well-suited to critical reading in and of periodicals: these include "reading for patterns" (which may reveal practices "intuitively recognizable to contemporaries … at the time they were produced") and "just reading" (attending thoroughly to elements visible on surfaces but which other readers have

failed to notice). Such a mélange of practices might be aimed toward reconstructing "the poetic horizon"—"the possibilities that shape an individual text's construction and the range of variations within this horizon" (Cohen 2009: 59). Adapting Cohen's literature-centered methodology to the study of magazines might mean replacing "the poetic horizon" with "the journalistic horizon," "the print culture horizon," or the "mediascape" as the fundamental object of study.

Sketching out the broader horizon is, of course, also the promise of distant reading and the computer-assisted practices of machine reading, data visualization, and so forth. Network analysis and visualization, for instance, allows scholars to create images of the links between magazines and between the authors and texts they publish, revealing relationships (and the strength and weakness of relationships) that would be otherwise invisible. In a special issue of the *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* entitled "Visualizing Periodical Networks," J. Stephen Murphy points out that network analysis is particularly applicable to magazines because they are themselves "platform[s] for linking heterogenous data" (2014: 10). By generating databases of people associated with a magazine or a set of magazines, scholars using network visualization have constructed maps that show authors and editors as nodes (points in a constellation) and the links between them as edges (lines linking the nodes). Such visualizations show the relative centrality or marginality of individuals in literary-cultural networks, sparking new lines for literary historical inquiry. Network analysis typically fuels what Murphy calls "extrinsic criticism"—a focus on relationships and institutions, the empirical stuff of literary history—rather than "intrinsic criticism," the interpretation of texts (2014: 12).[10] Network visualization is thus most often a "not-reading" practice. Distant reading, on the other hand, seeks to use computers to read massive databases of literary and cultural texts and to identify features that the traditional protocols of critical reading—such as "selectivity and evaluative energy"—might otherwise blind us to (Best and Marcus 2009a: 17). As Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus argue in "Surface Reading: An Introduction," machine reading in literary criticism/history might enable a critic to "correct for her critical subjectivity, by using machines to bypass it" to "produce more accurate knowledge about texts" (2009a: 17). While many machine-reading projects thus far have taken canonical literary texts or corpuses as their objects, interesting projects have used the technique within and across magazines and have even developed functionalities for registering images and elements of page design and layout.[11] Both network visualization and machine reading, of course, will be limited by what is entered into the databases that computers "read," and thus many digital humanities projects, while they do point to new textual features and relationships, also re-enforce powerful, existing narratives about literary history. But the increasing number of magazine digitization projects—and the heterogeneity of magazines themselves—make the magazine an extraordinarily promising field for digital scholarship that moves us beyond the canon. While such projects may not quite reach Moretti's dream of establishing the entire "literary" universe as the object of study, they do promise new ways of opening the forbidding plenitude of periodical texts to analysis and new texts and writers to recovery.

This plenitude—the sheer number of magazines, and the vastness of the archive even a single, relatively long-running title creates—remains the greatest promise and the greatest challenge for the study of magazines. As primary material for scholarship, the archive of magazines would seem to be inexhaustible; while really new critical insights about major authors or major literary or historical themes or movements may be hard to come by, investigation of how these play out in specific magazines or groups of magazines would seem to offer a methodological field for years to come. Yet this plenitude can also be intimidating—to the individual scholar hoping to say something well-informed about a magazine title with scores of volumes and tens or hundreds of thousands of pages, or to the wider community of periodical studies scholars,