The Nineteenth Century Series

G.W.M. REYNOLDS REIMAGINED

STUDIES IN AUTHORSHIP, RADICALISM, AND GENRE, 1830–1870

Edited by
Jennifer Conary and Mary L. Shannon

G.W.M. Reynolds Reimagined

This essay collection proposes that G.W.M. Reynolds's contribution to Victorian print culture reveals the interrelations between authorship, genre, and radicalism in popular print culture of the nineteenth century. As a bestselling author of popular fiction marketed to the lower classes, and a passionate champion of radical politics and 'the industrious classes,' Reynolds and his work demonstrate the relevance of Victorian Studies to topics of pressing contemporary concern, including populism, working-class fiction, the concept of 'originality,' and the collective scholarly endeavour to 'widen' and 'undiscipline' Victorian Studies. Bringing together well-known and newly emerging scholars from across different disciplinary perspectives, the volume explores the importance of Reynolds Studies to scholarship on the nineteenth century. This book will appeal to students and scholars of the nineteenth-century press, popular culture, and of authorship, as well as to Victorian Studies scholars interested in the translation of Victorian texts into new and indigenous markets.

Jennifer Conary is Associate Professor of English at DePaul University, Chicago, USA, and author of numerous articles on Victorian literature and culture.

Mary L. Shannon is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Roehampton, London, UK, author of *Dickens, Reynolds and Mayhew on Wellington Street: the Print Culture of a Victorian Street* (2015), and co-editor of *Romanticism and Illustration* (2019), with Ian Haywood and Susan Matthews. She is currently working on her second book, *Billy Waters is Dancing: How One Black Sailor Found Fame in Regency and Victorian Britain*.

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Contributors

Stephen Basdeo is a historian of Victorian literature and culture who specialises in the study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fiction and radical politics. He is the author of numerous articles and book chapters as well as a biography of George W.M. Reynolds with Mya Driver titled *Victorian England's Best-Selling Author: The Revolutionary Life of G.W.M. Reynolds* (forthcoming July 2022).

Manon Burz-Labrande is a researcher and lecturer at the University of Vienna, Austria, where she obtained her PhD. Her work focuses on the penny dreadfuls' patterns of circulation.

Mollie Clarke is a TECHNE PhD candidate at Roehampton University, London, UK.

Jennifer Conary is Associate Professor of English at DePaul University, Chicago, USA, and author of numerous articles on Victorian literature and culture.

Ruth Doherty is the author of several articles on Victorian fiction and culture, and works in university administration at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland.

Sara Hackenberg is Professor of English at San Francisco State University, USA, and author of numerous articles on nineteenth-century transatlantic popular literature, narrative seriality, visual culture, and early film.

Ian Haywood is Professor of English at Roehampton University, London, UK, and author of many books and articles on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century radicalism, including *The Revolution in Popular Literature* (2004), *Bloody Romanticism* (2006), *Romanticism and Caricature* (2013), *Romanticism and Illustration* (2019), co-edited with Mary L. Shannon and Susan Matthews, and *The Rise of Victorian Caricature* (2020).

Craig Howes is Professor of English Literature at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, USA, where he also co-edits *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* and directs the Center for Biographical

Research. He is the author of "Comic/Satiric Periodicals" for *The Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth-Century British Periodicals and Newspapers* as well as articles on William Makepeace Thackeray, *Punch*, Mark Lemon, and Francis Cowley Burnand.

Anne Humpherys is Professor Emerita of English at Lehman College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York, USA, and author of *Travels in the Poor Man's Country: The Work of Henry Mayhew*, and co-editor with Louis James of *G.W.M. Reynolds: Fiction, Politics, and the Press* as well as articles and chapters on Victorian fiction, poetry, popular literature, and the press.

Louis James is Emeritus Professor in Victorian and Modern Literature at the University of Kent, UK, and author of many books, including *Fiction for the Working Man, 1830–50* (1963), *Print and the People* (1976), and *The Victorian Novel* (2006). He edited, with Anne Humpherys, *G.W.M. Reynolds: Nineteenth Century Fiction, Politics and the Press* (2008).

Stephen Knight is an Honorary Research Professor in Literature at the University of Melbourne, Australia, and the author of many books and articles on medieval and modern literature, including *Australian Crime Fiction: A 200-Year History* (2018) and *The Fiction of G.W.M. Reynolds—The Man Who Outsold Dickens* (2019).

Marie Léger-St-Jean is a doctoral candidate at Radboud University in Nijmegen, The Netherlands, creator of the online bibliography *Price One Penny: A Database of Cheap Literature, 1837–1860*, literary editor of the electronic edition of *The Mysteries of the Inquisition*, and a contributing editor to *At the Circulating Library: A Database of Victorian Fiction, 1837–1901*.

Rohan McWilliam is Professor of Modern British History at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK, and author of many articles and books on Victorian history and culture, including *The Tichborne Claimant: A Victorian Sensation* (2007) and *London's West End: Creating the Pleasure District, 1800–1914* (2020). He has edited (with Jonathan Davis) *Labour and the Left in the 1980s* (2017) and (with Sarah Louise Lill) *Edward Lloyd and his World: Popular Fiction, Politics and the Press in Victorian Britain* (2019).

Rebecca Nesvet is Associate Professor of English at University of Wisconsin, Green Bay, USA, and author of numerous articles on Romantic and Victorian literature and culture.

Mary L. Shannon is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Roehampton, London, UK, author of *Dickens, Reynolds and Mayhew on Wellington Street: the Print Culture of a Victorian Street* (2015), and co-editor of *Romanticism* and *Illustration* (2019), with Ian Haywood and Susan Matthews.

Foreword

Early Reynolds Research: Recollections

Louis James

Appreciation of G.W.M. Reynolds's life and work has come from different directions. In 1957, Margaret Dalziel's pioneering *Popular Fiction a Hundred Years Ago* was published, reassessing the literary qualities of Reynolds's serials. The following year, Mr. J. Reynolds, proprietor of Reynolds Midland Radio Laboratories, invited me to Birmingham, writing on business stationery headed with the crest Reynolds once used for his correspondence. He showed me an inscribed loving cup given to his grandfather by the employees of *Reynolds's News* at one of the firm's annual festivals and discussed Reynolds's literary achievements as part of British history. In Nottingham, I met a couple who, dressed in Victorian clothes on winter evenings, lit the gaslights in the drawing room of their Victorian-built house and read Reynolds's novels aloud to each other to enjoy the dramatic power of his creative imagination.

Twentieth-century interest in Reynolds has been international. A researcher in the 1960s, M. Jean Guivarc'h, posted me small, handwritten pages from Paris, crammed with bibliographic information of Reynolds's French publications gleaned from the archives of the Bibliothèque Nationale. In New York, Anne Humpherys was charting Reynolds's great 'Encyclopaedia of Tales.' In Sydney, Stephen Knight began his comprehensive survey of Reynolds's fiction and explored Reynolds's influence in Australia. From Calcutta, Sucheta Bhattacharya researched Reynolds's fiction in India, discovering that his novels were more popular than Dickens's in Benghal.

Much of this research came from outside main academic institutions and relied on materials absent from scholarly libraries. A most productive independent scholar was the indefatigable Dick Collins, who mined files of biographical material from public records to track Reynolds across Kent, Paris, and London, to his dusty tomb under Highgate Cemetery with its mysterious statuette of a praying angel.

British research came together in July 2000 when Sarah James organised a day conference in Birmingham attended by many current Reynolds scholars. The first essay collection devoted to Reynolds was celebrated at Birkbeck College in 2008. In 2014, an event at the Westminster Archives

Centre organised by Mary L. Shannon marked the 200th anniversary of Reynolds's birth, followed by another in 2019 at which the editors of this new volume launched the G.W.M. Reynolds Society. The discussions which eventually led to *G.W.M. Reynolds Reimagined* were begun that day.

Reynolds scholars have used different approaches to explore the diverse genres and styles of his fiction. Some works offer fantasy and melodramatic intrigue, others are documentary and campaign against social injustices. In settings, they range from London to provincial Britain, and abroad to Europe, India, and the Crimea. But, as Stephen Basdeo argues, throughout his writings, Reynolds maintained the Red Republican socialist beliefs that once inspired the French revolution. Even in works he wrote for entertainment, he never betrayed his humanitarian integrity.

Questions remain. What was Reynolds's relationship with the London underworld of radical publishers when Richard Carlile published his *Errors of the Christian Religion Exposed* in 1832? What events surround Reynolds's sudden marriage to Susannah in Paris in 1835? Did these events shape the Gothic heroines of his early fiction? We may never know all the answers. This new volume, however, offers both some new approaches and (importantly) new questions that will generate more research into this endlessly fascinating and important nineteenth-century figure.

Editors' Acknowledgements

The idea for this collection grew out of a symposium we hosted in London in July 2019 to mark the official launch of the International G.W.M. Reynolds Society, five months before the emergence of Covid-19 and eight months before all our lives were suddenly turned upside down as we moved in and out of various levels of lockdown—an uncertain form of existence from which we are just now beginning to emerge. As you might imagine, the past few years have affected our contributors in many different ways, and there have been many changes in their lives during the course of this collaborative effort. Some were good changes (new parenthood, new jobs, new research grants), and some were less so (illness, isolation, Long Covid, redundancy crises). We are sincerely grateful to our contributors for their dedication, tenacity, and excellent electronic communication throughout this difficult period. We owe you our deepest gratitude for sticking with this project, and with us, through thick and thin.

A Research Support Grant from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Roehampton and a Late-Stage Research Grant provided by the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at DePaul University enabled us to turn this book into reality. Thank you to our superb Research Assistant, Ardyn Tennyson, without whom this book would quite simply not have been ready for press. Thank you also to Allison Scott for her last-minute help in getting us across the finish line.

Introduction

Reynolds Reimagined—Locating Reynolds in Victorian Studies

Jennifer Conary and Mary L. Shannon

Imagining and Reimagining Reynolds

To reimagine an author is to rethink them; to look at them through new eyes and from new perspectives; to reinterpret them, perhaps in creative ways. R. Mudie in 1825 wrote of the ancient past that '[b]y being forgotten, and as often reimagined or re-discovered, its value as original may be multiplied till it exceed any fixed quantity of originality that imagination can invent' ('reimagine, v.'). Although G.W.M. Reynolds was hardly a denizen of the ancient past, he was, nevertheless, largely forgotten, erased from the annals of literary history after his death. It has fallen to scholars in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries to attempt to excavate Reynolds from obscurity, an effort to which this volume contributes. We believe, however, that Reynolds is more than just another non-canonical author of whom scholars might like to be aware; the astonishing popularity he enjoyed throughout his career despite—or because of—his radical views on politics, class, race, and gender marks his work as critical to expanding and correcting what we know about the Victorians. Through reimagining Reynolds, we demonstrate that Reynolds's fiction and nonfiction are essential resources for a more complete understanding of key issues of importance to Victorian Studies scholars. Reynolds's work provides an opportunity to rethink questions of authorship, radicalism, and genre in the nineteenth century while also enabling us to draw connections between the Victorian world and our own.

The title of this volume comes from our sense that much has changed in the field of Victorian Studies since 2008, when Louis James and Anne Humpherys edited *G. W. M. Reynolds: Nineteenth-Century Fiction, Politics, and the Press*, the only other collection of essays dedicated solely to G.W.M. Reynolds. *G.W.M. Reynolds Reimagined* argues that the time is now ripe to re-evaluate Reynolds's work in the context of new debates in both Victorian Studies and wider culture. Victorian popular fiction has become a serious area of study with its own association, annual conference, and peer-reviewed journal. Interest in working-class literature has grown, particularly in recent years as the rise of populist movements in

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Europe and the United States has moved radical politics into the international spotlight. Questions of authorship and originality in the field of popular fiction and periodicals have also become important areas of study as scholars seek to move beyond simplistic divisions between 'original' and 'imitation', 'literary' and 'popular', and 'global' and 'local' perspectives on authorship. We bring together these three topics—popular genres, radicalism and populism, and authorship—through the study of Reynolds, a best-selling author of popular fiction marketed to the lower classes, and a passionate champion of radical politics and 'the industrious classes.' It is our contention that it is only possible to fully account for the workings of popular culture when questions of genre and audience are placed in dialogue with new approaches to the study of authorship and the thorny issues of originality, imitation, and plagiarism to which so much of Reynolds's work in particular, and Victorian popular culture in general, give rise.

This book approaches Reynolds's novels and journalism from a historicist perspective, but its focus on topics that are still very much a part of current political and aesthetic debates shows how the study of the nineteenth century can provide useful context for understanding issues that are of contemporary interest. Reynolds and his work demonstrate the relevance of Victorian Studies to topics of pressing contemporary concern in a climate when the relationship between the people and the state is under unique scrutiny. Reynolds's remarkable ability to reimagine popular genre tropes in a way that spoke to the concerns and interests of his largely working- and lower-middle-class readership; his dedication to using his newspapers, journals, and fiction to expose the economic and political injustices that his readers faced; and his advocation of pan-European political and cultural exchanges illustrate that he was a man whose work both illuminates his own time in new ways and speaks to issues of pressing relevance to our own historical moment.

While using Reynolds's work to understand the connections between popular culture, radicalism, and authorship for the Victorians, this book also continues the recuperative work of recognising Reynolds as a major player in the early- to mid-Victorian literary marketplace. Reynolds is no longer a brand-new entrant onto the scholarly stage. With one edited collection, a monograph, and a growing number of book chapters and journal articles exploring his work, Reynolds is an established object of scholarly interest and attention. Yet most attention is still paid to the first series of *The Mysteries of London*; few scholars and students are aware of the vast range of other characters, fiction, and journalism that poured out from Reynolds's pen and publishing house. Each essay in this volume progresses not only our understanding of Reynolds's work but also his position and usefulness for Victorian Studies scholars more broadly. We have deliberately included work from contributors across a range of career stages, from those still studying for their PhDs to Emeritus Professors, and from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, to show the wide array

of approaches currently being taken. We reimagine Reynolds as a figure with the potential to speak not just to aficionados of Victorian popular fiction, journalism, and politics, but to a wider scholarly audience.

Reimagining George William McArthur Reynolds

In their 2008 volume of essays on Reynolds, Anne Humpherys and Louis James began by performing the important and difficult work of piecing together what we know about Reynolds's life as a way of introducing readers to his importance within the early to mid-Victorian literary milieu. To inaugurate a new direction in Reynolds Studies, we will begin by presenting new biographical research to argue, paradoxically, that the most productive way of reimagining Reynolds is through focussing on texts not biography; on authorship rather than on the author himself. In this, Reynolds provides a useful case study for all scholars of nineteenth-century popular fiction and journalism, many writers of which have similarly limited historical archives. Though some basic biographical work was most necessary when Reynolds first came to full scholarly attention, in this next phase of Reynolds Studies it is likely to be close attention to the works themselves that will bear most critical fruit.

The gaping archival spaces where basic biographical information on Reynolds should be means that reimagining Reynolds is a very different critical activity to reimagining a canonical author from the period, such as (say) Dickens. Biographer Rosemary Kay formulates the process of critical (and creative) reimagining that can be facilitated by biographical research as a layering of new versions and new meanings—rather than an undoing or a redoing—as new material is found and (crucially) interpreted. Kay points out that 'we can never "go back" to the lived life under investigation, only forwards to a composite version which continually evolves in relation to our current culture' (199). Her example for this process is Dickens, as she states that '[e]ach new version of Dickens is written in the context of previous versions' (199). This process of continuously reimagining an author's life creates the possibility of endlessly reinterpreting that author's work given our tendency to rely on biography as a starting point for critical assessment of literary texts. The novels of the Brontës, Dickens, George Eliot, and nearly every other canonical Victorian author are supported by a rich archive of biographical information that provides an enticing lens through which their work can be reinterpreted. This, however, is not the case for Reynolds. It is our sense that Reynolds Studies is beginning to grapple in multiple ways with the theoretical and methodological implications of absences in the historical and archival record. The absence of so many biographical certainties sends us back to the works and their conditions of production in ways which refocus Victorian Studies (with its growing appreciation of non-canonical popular texts) productively on authorship rather than the author.

Like many other figures in nineteenth-century print culture, Reynolds is an author at once widely available through his numerous works, and yet largely unknowable in terms of his biography. Despite having his name in the titles of multiple major periodicals that ran for decades, Reynolds himself remains a shadowy figure visible only through a few biographical threads woven together by a handful of tenacious scholars. We have no letters or papers from Reynolds to speak of: there is his application for a readers' ticket to the British Museum Reading Room, and a few other manuscript items (enough for us to know what Reynolds's signature looked like). But though the archive of *Reynolds's Newspaper*, for instance, must have been rich and full, it does not appear to have survived (though there is always the possibility that one day it might surface). The most detailed biographical accounts of both George and Susannah Reynolds that we have to date are the short 'Biographical Sketch' by Dick Collins, and Stephen Basdeo and Mia Driver's 2022 trade biography, which, although brief, presents some fascinating new details as well as usefully synthesising the snippets that we know so far. However, as Basdeo freely states,

> what is available to researchers today is but a *partial* glimpse of his life. The sources which historians have to draw upon to write about Reynolds's life is the very public image he cultivated through his writings, as well as the writings of his rivals and detractors.
>
> (114)

Reimagining Reynolds's life remains a painstaking process that tends to unearth more questions than answers about his beliefs, relationships, and everyday existence.

This is not to say that further investigations into Reynolds's biography are not warranted or useful. The hunt for biographical details about popular writers such as Reynolds should not, however, be undertaken in the expectation of definitive answers about Reynolds-the-man; rather, it should be used to raise new questions about the nature of Victorian popular authorship and, in the case of Reynolds at least, the relationship between authorship, radicalism, and popular genres. For instance, newly uncovered traces of Reynolds's life complicate our image of him and his ties to radicalism. Chris Anderson's discovery of a diary entry by the Tory politician Lord Stanley (son of Tory leader Lord Derby and friend to Disraeli) has recently thrown up several new and intriguing questions about Reynolds's exact relationship to Chartism and to ex-Chartist leader Ernest Jones in particular. Stanley's diary entry for 29 July 1860 discusses the recent financial misfortunes of Ernest Jones and mentions 'one Reynolds, who is believed to have given Govt. information of the plans to which he was privy in Feb and March 1848.' As Anderson points out, this could only be a reference to George W.M., recently sued by Ernest Jones for libel in 1859. Anderson sums up as follows:

> Was Reynolds a conduit for inside information on the likes of Cuffay, and the plans and moods of the Chartist National Convention? Stanley's diary entry suggests so, and it is an entry with no audience nor axe to grind. Tensions with committed activists as diverse as the militant Cuffay and the genteel Jones, raise questions about what Reynolds' own motives were in the cause. Not to say he may not have had a genuine commitment to the people. But it is not unheard of for different factions within a progressive movement to play off against each other by feeding information to the nominally opposite side… . Did Reynolds believe in the cause but fear a more militant approach would just result in mayhem? Or was Stanley simply wrong?

If Reynolds the ardent Chartist (as depicted in *Reynolds's Political Instructor*, *Reynolds's Newspaper*, and *The Mysteries of London*) was in fact Reynolds the traitor, this might lead us to approach his published works with some scepticism. At the very least, this newly discovered diary entry is a salutary reminder that all text is representation and must be treated with a healthy amount of critical distance and thoughtful questioning. Rather than adding any biographical certainties to our snippets of knowledge about Reynolds, this small trace has the effect of sending us back to the published texts.

Reynolds's relationship to radicalism is the subject of another biographical mystery regarding the last decade of his life, a mystery which Collins raises in his 'Biographical Sketch' when he acknowledges that '[t]he story persists that after he retired from writing GWMR was Church Warden for the Church of St Andrew, Wells Street' (xlix).[1] This 'story,' which appears in passing in several early accounts of Reynolds's life, is dismissed by Collins in the following way:

> Reynolds's reputation as a sensational novelist, as a Chartist, a Republican, and indeed as a writer of 'indecent' novels, may well not have made him the first choice of the Vestry. And there is still more: as well as being a communicating Anglican, a church warden is chosen from amongst those who live in the parish, or at least have a long-standing connection with it. GWMR lived in Bloomsbury, and the district of St. Giles. St. Andrew's Church, Wells Street, is in St. Marylebone, a quite distinct borough, and in parochial terms there is no connection. His daughters may have been married there, but that was through the Lamb family. GWMR was never a parishioner of St. [Andrew's], and we should take with a large spoonful of salt the idea that he would have been invited to hold office within it.
>
> (li)

So far, so logical. Indeed, Collins goes so far as to speculate that the George Reynolds connected to St Andrews must have been a corn-chandler living on the Edgeware Road, who was married in the church

and also originated from Kent. Perhaps, suggests Collins, this man recorded in the census was G.W.M. Reynolds's cousin. The popular writer of radical fiction, and editor of several radical publications, could not, the implication seems to be, have played any kind of significant role in what surviving church records reveal to have been a place known for its aristocratic and high-Anglican congregation.

Yet our own new investigations into these church documents forced us to think again. Two surviving sources hitherto unknown to scholars, the journals of Benjamin Webb (vicar 1862–85) and the Church Scrapbook (probably compiled by Webb), reveal intriguing contacts with Reynolds. While Reynolds does not seem to have ever been a Church Warden (this office appears to have been held between the deaths of Susannah and George by a Henry Lang and an F.I. Nicholl), Reynolds was definitely an active member who was seemingly trying to ingratiate himself with church society. We find 'Reynolds, GWM Esq' or 'George WM Reynolds, 41, Woburn Square' on the District Visitor's Committee, on the committee for setting up a memorial to the previous incumbent of the parish, and on numerous subscription lists in the Summaries of the parish accounts for generous sums.[2] Reynolds is also a regular supporter of the Parochial schools, including the new school building fund. There is no suggestion that this is Collins's corn-chandler from Edgeware Road.

Reynolds's immediate family also appear from these records to have played a part in instigating or developing connections with St Andrew's. Webb calls on Reynolds at 41 Woburn Square relatively regularly throughout 1863, 1864, 1865, and 1866, during the course of which period two of Reynolds's daughters, Theresa and Joanna, were married at St Andrew's to two brothers from the Lamb family (twice Webb mentions that he visited 'about choral wedding'). In the Accounts, a Miss Reynolds and a Miss Emily Reynolds feature between 1871–4 and 1871–2, respectively. They give the same amounts to the same funds, so it seems logical to assume they are Reynolds's as-yet unmarried daughters Louisa and Emily. Apart from the Accounts, Reynolds turns up yearly on the St Andrew's Day luncheons, as a Steward. This meant that he paid one guinea to host a table at the big luncheons, attended by all kinds of dignitaries, where a toast was made to 'Church and Queen, and long may they flourish together.' He does this every year from 1864 to his death (he disappears from the scrapbook in 1879), and he was paying quite a bit for the privilege. Perhaps most significantly, other members of his family also got in on the act. An E. Reynolds (his brother Edward?) also hosts a table every year from 1867 to 1879. An F. Reynolds hosts a table in 1867 (potentially his son Frederick). Neither E. Reynolds nor F. Reynolds reappear on their own after George Reynolds's death. Reynolds, who during the 1860s and 1870s was still delivering radical speeches at the annual *Reynolds's News* festivals (as Anne Humpherys's essay in this volume makes clear), was socialising on at least an annual basis in the company of such church notables as a Viscount Dillon and one Anthony Beresford-Hope MP,

despite his home address not being on the map of the parish. Was he trying to establish his children in "good" circles? Was he seeking respectability and comfort after the death of his wife? We cannot know. At best, these small traces invite us to head back to Reynolds's texts to consider the relationship between respectability and radicalism in his work.

As with many writers of popular fiction and journalism, the small amount of information we have about Reynolds's life does not reflect the massive popularity and reach of his work during his lifetime, and the absence of a biographical archive risks giving the impression that Reynolds was less important to the world of mid-Victorian publishing than was in fact the case. This volume provides some alternative approaches to Reynolds's work—ones that offer new ways of reading his fiction and nonfiction while simultaneously establishing his significance to important areas of study for scholars of nineteenth-century literature, working-class politics, and popular genres. It is shaped by the new directions in Reynolds scholarship that are revealed by the contributions themselves. The three distinct sections of this volume are intended to highlight what we believe are currently some of the most important areas of Reynolds Studies. The individual essays, however, demonstrate the artificiality of such divisions. Our authors show again and again that ideas about authorship and originality, radicalism, and popular genres are intertwined—even interdependent—in Reynolds's work and career. Reynolds's approach to authorship—one defined by his ability to take on a variety of writerly roles and to embrace techniques such as appropriation and remixing—succeeded because of the broad working-class audience that was eager for a type of literature that privileged lively entertainment over originality and sophisticated prose. That audience was also hungry for Reynolds's radical politics; indeed, it is difficult to imagine any author having achieved Reynolds's level of commercial success without some degree of populist appeal. That Reynolds would turn to creative twists on popular genres as a vehicle for his radical views is, then, not surprising, for a less thrilling, more sober form would have had much more limited appeal. In reimagining Reynolds, this volume contributes to the work of reimagining the Victorians, illuminating aspects of Victorian print culture and politics that are otherwise difficult to access. The next sections of this Introduction explore recent arguments on authorship, radicalism, and genre to argue that Reynolds's work challenges us to rethink these key scholarly debates.

Authorship

Instead of attempting to illuminate who George William McArthur Reynolds was, the essays in the first section of this volume investigate what his broad range of literary pursuits reveals about authorship in the early to mid-Victorian period. Defining Reynolds as an author is itself problematic, for that term is surely too narrow for someone who was also

an editor, journalist, and translator. What, indeed, was 'an author' during the time Reynolds was writing? Taking a cue from Michel Foucault, we have 'set aside a sociohistorical analysis of the author as an individual' (300), but instead of formulating a general theory of the relationship between author and text, our contributors examine different forms of Reynolds's authorship in a way that reimagines what that term means in a Victorian context. Considering the questions Foucault lists as relevant to traditional studies of authors as individuals—

> how the author was individualized in a culture such as ours; the status we have given the author, for instance, when we began our research into authenticity and attribution; the systems of valorization in which he was included; or the moment when the stories of heroes gave way to an author's biography
>
> (300)

—through the lens of Reynolds reveals how complex the concept of Victorian authorship truly is.

Reynolds was an indisputably famous author, yet his name cannot be substituted for the word 'author' in any of Foucault's questions. Reynolds has never been treated as an 'individualised' author: he was frequently dismissed as a plagiarist by his contemporaries, a trend that scholars of Victorian literature have continued. Indeed, when he enters scholarly discussions of Victorian fiction, it is almost always alongside other writers of working-class literature rather than as a major figure deserving of the spotlight. Authenticity and attribution have long been problematic in considering Reynolds's work (how much of his work was original? how many of the articles in his journals did he write?), and he has certainly never been slotted into conventional 'systems of valorisation' in any reliable way. His biography, as we have discussed, is still being pieced together from what traces of evidence remain, and he appears not to have cultivated a memorable persona given that we have no accounts from his friends about their memories of him. If the qualities that Foucault lists are what are most commonly associated with authors, then Reynolds hardly qualifies.

Yet what prevents Reynolds from meeting conventional ideas about authorship is precisely what makes his career a useful lens for exploring the range of authorships that were widely practiced in nineteenth-century England, and that are still largely overlooked within Victorian Studies.[3] Bradley Deane identifies the complexity of discussing Victorian authorship:

> It may be that in earlier periods, to be 'a man in print' might have meant much the same thing whether one wrote poetry, drama, criticism, or all of these, but…by the beginning of the nineteenth century these different genres were associated with different audiences,

> different modes of production, and, in effect, different author-ships. The study of nineteenth-century authorship must therefore begin with the recognition that, in practical terms, no such monolith existed.
>
> (x–xi)

From this perspective, Reynolds is a consummate author, for he wrote in many different genres and modes. It is only possible to develop this view of Reynolds—as the essays in this volume do—by looking not only at his novels and political writing but also at his editorial work and translations.

Deane focuses his analysis of Victorian authorship on novelists, and he begins, not surprisingly, with Dickens, who, he argues, crafted a new image of the author in *Pickwick Papers*: 'the reading public's best friend' (28). Deane identifies this as the dominant authorial and narrative model for novelists at least up to the 1860s, and one that served a distinct ideological purpose: 'The sympathetic friendliness attributed to novelists was not perceived as an end in itself, but as the fountainhead of a great current of social sympathy, which would in turn work to promote public stability and naturalize class divisions' (28). He goes on to associate this model of authorship with 'the author-centered aesthetics elaborated by the Romantic poets' and labels the ideology of the author-as-reader's-friend 'Industrial Romanticism' (29). As with so many histories of the Victorian novel, Deane's account of Victorian authorship focusses on canonical middle-class fiction. It is not surprising, then, that his theory of the author-friend does not fit Reynolds. The ideological work that he argues this authorial persona accomplished is also inapplicable to Reynolds, whose fiction aimed to expose class divisions and challenge power structures. Indeed, it is this radical, revolutionary aspect of Reynolds's work that ties him to the Romantics, not any infatuation with authorial genius.

Richard Salmon, in his history of the Victorian literary profession, sees Romantic views on authorial greatness as at odds with the ephemerality of the Victorian literary marketplace. He cites the copyright reform debates as solidifying the privileging of the author's work, which needed to be preserved, over the ephemeral copies of hack writers and plagiarists, thereby banding authors together into a respectable profession distinct from a trade; according to Salmon, 'Copyright reform was, in this sense, a practical corollary of the ideological distinction between the transience of commercial success and the "permanent influence" of great writers, which Wordsworth had famously expressed…' (65). This, in Salmon's account, is how authorship emerged as a true profession—by creating a legal distinction between the author as someone whose work would withstand the test of time, and the mere writer, whose work was destined to fade quickly from cultural memory. Reynolds, however, does not fit easily into either of these categories. Much of his early work was in one way or another derivative, yet his novels and journals were not ephemeral; the *Mysteries of London* series enjoyed international success, and the newspaper that he founded bore his name until 1962.

In this volume, we use Reynolds's work to expand our understanding of the Victorian literary profession and explore what it meant to be a Victorian author outside the limited perspective of middle-class novels and periodicals. In Part I, Jennifer Conary shows how Reynolds began his career in England by distinguishing himself from Dickens. Rather than treating Reynolds's *Pickwick Abroad* as plagiarism, she illustrates how Reynolds used Dickens's characters to critique the conservative politics of *Pickwick Papers* while he at the same time established his own literary brand that combined radicalism with a Gothic sensibility. Conary argues that Reynolds's *Pickwick Abroad* can be seen as inaugurating a different tradition of the Victorian novel—one that was radical-leaning and aesthetically sensational—that has too often been left out of histories of Victorian fiction. Hardly a plagiarism, *Pickwick Abroad*, in her reading, offers a different definition of authorial originality that privileges what an author is able to do with existing material rather than the ability to invent wholly new characters and plots.

Manon Burz-Labrande and Marie Léger-St-Jean bring a different type of writing—translation—into the conversation about Victorian authorship. They argue that Reynolds's English translations of French literature are an important component of his authorial career. In employing multiple forms of reusing literary material—essay collection, scissors-and-paste journalism, and self-plagiarism—Reynolds, they argue, created what they identify as 'remixes,' asserting authorial agency and demonstrating creativity through translating within the recirculation economy of the Victorian periodical press. Robert Macfarlane, in his book on the evolution of views on originality and plagiarism in Victorian Britain, has shown how the value placed on originality in the early and middle decades of the century—the period when Reynolds was writing his translations—gave way to an appreciation for 'literary works which exploited the creative possibilities of intertextuality' by the last decades of the period (45). Critics that he identifies as 'plagiarism apologists' 'replaced authorial inspiration with something ostensibly less glamorous: the capacity to gather, combine, and improve. So it was that, in their writings, they represented the author as a jeweller, or a flower-arranger, or a tailor' (45). Burz-Labrande and Léger-St-Jean show that Reynolds had caught on to the potential for remixing the work of other writers as well as his own previous publications through his experience as a translator decades before the new model of authorship described by Macfarlane came into fashion. In doing so, he created a new type of authorship that combined novelist, translator, and editor.

Stephen Knight takes the study of Reynolds's authorship in a more canonical direction by looking at Reynolds's career alongside that of Wilkie Collins. Deane, in his history of Victorian authorship, moves from discussing Dickens, whose 'Industrial Romanticism' endeared him to a large readership, to Collins, who fell prey to his own popularity as reviewers in the 1850s and 1860s anointed themselves the gatekeepers of

quality literature by denouncing novels that appealed to popular tastes. 'No novelist,' Deane writes, 'suffered the effects of this new critical scrutiny as deeply as Wilkie Collins' (60). In the only mention of Reynolds in his book,[4] Deane sets Collins's view of what it meant to be a popular author—to have a unique reputation that established a personal literary brand—against the approach of purveyors of cheap literature, whose work tended to be homogeneous and often anonymous (62–4). Knight, however, positions Reynolds within the model of popularity Collins applied to his own career by showing that Reynolds and Collins had a great deal in common. Through tracing these similarities, Knight restores Reynolds to his rightful place as a major novelist, placing Reynolds within a broader literary context from which he is still frequently excluded.

Mary L. Shannon takes a more unorthodox approach to understanding Reynolds's authorship. By looking at the *Madras Comic Almanac*, 'prepared by Mr. G.W.M. Reynolds,' Shannon demonstrates the importance of appropriations and misappropriations to understanding Victorian authorship in a transnational context (101). While it is possible that Reynolds had some involvement in the production of the *Madras Comic Almanac*, Shannon argues that this one-off comic magazine is nevertheless important evidence of a very different side of the Reynolds brand than scholars have previously acknowledged. Instead of being seen as a politically radical spinner of sensational tales, Reynolds is presented by the publishers of the *Madras Comic Almanac* as a comic writer and gentle satirist. Through a close reading of one sketch, 'The Sub-Editor,' Shannon shows how the appropriation of Reynolds's name and work problematises the possibility of attribution itself and complicates our understanding of the role of Reynolds's work in British India. Authorship, her analysis demonstrates, can be completely divorced from a writer's intentions or control when considered in the context of a transnational network of uncopyrighted textual circulation.

In this volume, we therefore reimagine not only Reynolds, but Victorian authorship more broadly. Reynolds's work illustrates that authorship cannot be defined by conventional notions of originality; that parody, intertextual play, translation, and remixing are laudable forms of imaginative creation; and that an author's brand can have a reach and power far beyond any connection to that writer as an individual. Although we still have much to learn about Reynolds-the-man, the analyses of Reynolds-the-author presented here offer new ways of appreciating the importance of his work to any study of the Victorian literary profession.

Radicalism

If there is ever an area of Reynolds Studies where biography might feel especially relevant, it is in the study of Reynolds's radicalism. From the earliest days of work on Victorian popular fiction, with books such as

E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) and Louis James's *Fiction for the Working Man* (1963), the origins, nature, and extent of Reynolds's commitment to radicalism (and to Chartism in particular) has been by turns celebrated, questioned, and debated. In the current cultural and political moment, the meanings and effects of different kinds of 'radicalisms' have been discussed with a new kind of urgency. This in turn has created new areas of inquiry for scholarship to address. As so many current areas of political debate found early expression in the Victorian period (the role of elected politicians with regards to 'the people'; the nature and extent of government intervention in economic and social life; the relationship between Britain and Europe), radicalism—or perhaps more usefully *radicalisms*—in Victorian print culture have much to show us about where many of these debates originated and how we have reached the current discussions and fault-lines. The study of radicalism in Reynolds's fiction and periodicals can usefully add to this conversation. This volume argues, however, that in order to unlock the true value of Reynolds's vast body of work for Victorian Studies we need to widen our consideration of Reynolds's work and place lesser-known texts in dialogue with more well-known publications.

For example, Reynolds's articles for the still under-studied *Reynolds's Political Instructor* demonstrate his pan-European understanding of radical politics and the relationship between people and state.[5] Reynolds explicitly directs his readers to consider themselves as part of a broader struggle across the continent of Europe. Sometimes, this seems to be so that he can declare Britain to be favourably placed: Reynolds asserts in 1849 that 'The people of England stand in quite a different position from the nations of the Continent' because '*Here* we can achieve all we require by moral means; *there*, oceans of blood must be waded through by the sons of Freedom' ('A Glance at Continental Europe'). Yet in the next paragraph this turns into an implicit warning: in this new era of literacy and education, 'the intellect of the masses has become agitated with new desires' and will no longer listen to the excuse that the world is governed according to 'the wisdom of our ancestors.' Facilitate the 'enfranchised intellect,' Reynolds warns the British establishment, or face the consequences. The warnings given by events on 'the Continent' are made more explicit in 1850 when Reynolds reassures readers that 'crisis' in Europe means that the British government 'will not dare refuse timely concessions to your demands' ('The Government and the People'). Set in the context of Reynolds's own political networks as evidenced by letters, articles, and notices in *Reynolds's Political Instructor*, this periodical forces scholars to ask new questions about the nature of pan-European radicalism after 1848.

How Reynolds defined his own radicalism, when and why exactly it first developed, and the reasons for the evolutions in his radical career, are not questions which critics can resolve with recourse to Reynolds's own papers or letters. Part II uses Reynolds's printed publications to

assess how Reynolds's radicalisms were represented, rather than what his radicalism indisputably meant. Gregory Vargo's 2018 book *An Underground History of Early Victorian Fiction: Chartism, Radical Print Culture, and the Social Problem Novel* argues that radical writers follow developments in fiction and print culture as a whole. Rather than reading Victorian print culture as made up of distinct groups of 'middle-class' versus 'radical' writers, Vargo suggests that any such categories are in fact formed through 'intersection and collision' rather than separation, and demonstrate 'the mutual engagement of middle-class and radical writers, the generative exchange that shaped the work of each group' (2). While Vargo only includes Reynolds as one (brief) example of radical print amongst many others, extending Vargo's arguments to detailed analysis of Reynolds would allow us to test this thesis against a writer who was both middle-class and a radical, and who was read by both constituencies. Put another way, it is precisely because of, rather than despite, the many contradictions in Reynolds's radical writings (alongside the strong consistencies) that Reynolds offers a useful body of work for scholars looking to assess the ebbs and flows of Victorian radicalisms.

Part II demonstrates these tensions and contradictions through each essay taking very different approaches to each other as they widen our consideration of Reynolds and radicalism in print culture beyond the main plotlines of *Mysteries of London*, Reynolds's participation in 1848 Chartism, and the most well-known content of *Reynolds's Newspaper*.[6] In so doing, they actively model the ways in which consideration of Reynolds's work opens up new avenues for the study of Victorian politics. Rohan McWilliam takes a theoretical approach by applying the contentious term 'populism' to Reynolds's journalism to explore how this term might resonate in a Victorian context. McWilliam argues that *Reynolds's Newspaper* deployed a very different kind of radical vocabulary to the more didactic *Instructor*, showing that the *Newspaper* was not afraid to draw upon popular culture in order to extend its constituency of interested readers. Familiar to us nowadays from political discourse on both the right and the left which labels popular politicians as 'populists,' McWilliam takes Reynolds as a case study to show us that this term epitomises the limitations of political vocabulary while simultaneously offering a way of grappling with the complexities of political communication at a popular level.

Stephen Basdeo and Anne Humpherys take a more historicised approach to *Reynolds's Newspaper*, each analysing under-researched elements of the periodical to explore their implications for our understanding of Reynolds's politics in particular, but also Victorian radicalism in general. Basdeo close-reads Reynolds's lead articles for *Reynolds's Political Instructor* and *Reynolds's Newspaper* to argue (in contrast to McWilliam) that Reynolds espoused 'Red Republican values.' Basdeo's 2022 biography of Reynolds closes with the transcripts of the

articles Reynolds wrote for the 26 issues of *Reynolds's Political Instructor*, making the implicit point that it is in Reynolds's periodical writings that we see debates about the relationship of radicalism to print culture play out on the page.[7] Basdeo's essay for the present volume demonstrates the intellectual influences beyond Britain which manifest themselves in Reynolds's journalism to argue that we should resurrect this form of 'political biography.'

Humpherys analyses the reports of the Reynolds and Dicks publishing firm's 'Annual Festival' to explore the representation and enactment of employer–employee relations. In so doing, Humpherys uncovers the extraordinary richness and breadth of Reynolds's connections across Victorian popular print culture for the first time. Andrew King, in his 2008 essay on *Reynolds's Miscellany*, revealed important material on the networks associated with the *Miscellany* by close reading the periodical for evidence of political connections and activities as part of his argument; Humpherys takes up this implicit invitation to demonstrate how these kinds of reports of events like the Reynolds/Dicks 'Annual Festival' are a hitherto-underused resource for periodical scholars in understanding how Victorian print culture played out on the ground and how political agendas shaped everyday practices and everyday lives.

Interest in networks is a key shift in the study of periodicals and of popular culture to which Reynolds Studies has a great deal to contribute; the other is the increased interest in the transnational implications of European print culture. These shifts are exemplified most recently by the work of Thomas Smits on pan-European networks of illustrated news, and of James Gatheral on print networks of cross-channel Bohemia. Smits focusses on networks created by distribution and imitation of texts; Gatheral is also interested in how networks are created and sustained by interpersonal connections. While much previous scholarship on the importance of Reynolds's radicalism to print culture has centred around Britain and its Empire,[8] Ian Haywood's essay takes the under-examined Italian plotline in *The Mysteries of London* to show how Reynolds used fiction as well as journalism to respond to both European revolution and counter-revolution. Haywood argues that Reynolds actively used his unique cultural reach to imagine and promote the idea of republican struggle in Europe as 'the only Victorian author who could deliver the gospel of international liberation to the mass reader in consumable form' (182). Reynolds's work, Haywood shows, offers exciting opportunities for scholars interested in the 'transnational turn' of radical and popular culture studies.

Reynolds's political interventions in his publications embraced impassioned commentary, imaginative renderings, and factual advertisements of events: his sophisticated blend of radical rhetoric and popular culture makes him a unique voice in nineteenth-century print. Taken as a whole, Part II demonstrates how Reynolds's work offers ways of reimagining not only nineteenth-century politics, but also ways of

understanding the relationship between political discourse and popular culture in subsequent eras right up to the present day.

Genre

While Reynolds was no doubt successful in disseminating his political views to a large audience through his editorial work, his most effective means of exposing readers to radical ideas was through his wildly popular fiction. Reynolds had a keen understanding of the kind of entertainment his readers found appealing, and his talent for reimagining popular genres allowed him to package his politics in a way that was exciting, engaging, and addictive. The genre with which Reynolds's work is most often identified by scholars[9] is the Gothic[10] and its two popular subgenres: the penny blood and the 'mysteries' novel;[11] yet Reynolds wrote in a wide variety of genres, often combining different traditions and reinventing them into something new. For instance, Anne Humpherys has shown how Reynolds's *Mysteries* series includes 'every popular genre from gothic melodrama to sentimental romance, from journalistic leaders to scientific processes' (123). She connects Reynolds's *Mysteries* to the *Newgate Calendar*, silver fork narratives, 'the pursuit and escape genre made popular by *Jack Sheppard*,' sentimental romance, the oriental tale, social realism, and 'pure informational journalism' (131–3). The diverse array of genres that Reynolds utilised and his skill at transforming popular styles and literary tropes makes his work a helpful access point to the large body of fiction that was written for a popular readership during the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

Reading Reynolds through the lens of genre offers an approach to Victorian popular fiction that can be applied more broadly. In a way, Reynolds's oeuvre serves as a microcosm of Victorian popular fiction: the amount of material he published is so great that virtually no one has the time to read all of it, and even if someone did have that luxury, making sense of the breadth of topics, range of characters, and variety of forms would still be overwhelming. By focussing on Reynolds's use of genre, this volume explores not only how to read Reynolds but also offers scholars methods for working with Victorian popular fiction more generally; strategies such as tracing popular archetypes, delineating the genealogy of narrative tropes, and dissecting the workings of serial narratives are productive supplements or alternatives to close reading which allow the full richness and complexity of Victorian popular fiction to emerge.

Genre theorists have shown how useful, even necessary, a familiarity with genre conventions is to our ability to comprehend and appreciate literary texts. Alistair Fowler highlights this importance by asking us to think about what is lost when our understanding of genre traditions is incomplete; he writes, 'The value of the generic horizon is obvious from the difficulty that arises when it is missing' and cites Francis Cairns's observation that what readers today might dismiss as 'faults of composition'

are often moments when 'writers are exploiting an assumed familiarity with forgotten genres' (259). Fowler draws examples from eighteenth-century literature to show how heavily we rely on familiarity with genre conventions to make sense of what we read:

> The story of the Man of the Hill in *Tom Jones* seemed extraneous until it was construed in terms of the picaresque romance genre. Defoe's novels are still hard to make sense of, until they are viewed against the horizon of the anterior genres, rather than that of the Victorian novel. The pleasure of Gay's *Trivia* fails to be communicated unless it is seen as mock georgic.
>
> (259)

The underexplored world of Victorian popular fiction presents similar challenges to modern readers in terms of the frequency with which authors draw upon genre conventions that are no longer part of our interpretive vocabulary. This gap in our generic toolkit makes interpreting and appreciating Victorian popular fiction a difficult endeavour, for, as Fowler explains,

> The processes of generic recognition are in fact fundamental to the reading process. Often we may not be aware of this. But whenever we approach a work of an unfamiliar genre—new or old—our difficulties return us to fundamentals. No work, however avant-garde, is intelligible without some context of familiar types.
>
> (259)

This volume reads Reynolds's work through the lens of genre in order to recover some of these 'familiar types' by explaining how Reynolds transformed them. Not only do these essays provide an overview of the literary precursors to Reynolds, but they also outline Reynolds's generic transformations that future scholars can use to trace his influence on other popular novelists.

While a robust understanding of genre is empowering to readers, genre can also serve as a powerful tool for writers. At the very least, genre conventions can serve as a useful shorthand for writers to communicate with their readers. As Dallas Liddle explains, genre 'provides rich resources of meaning that increase the sophistication and depth of certain kinds of communication between a competent writer of that genre and a competent reader' (6). In his convincing analysis of the way Romantic writers used genre, David Duff argues that 'genres confer expressive power, serving the needs of writers; and that, in more tangible ways, genres also have commercial and ideological power' (8). At the same time, as John Frow suggests, genre can do more than provide us with more of what we already expect: it has the potential to construct new ways of imagining the world (1633). The essays in this volume acknowledge the commercial

rewards Reynolds enjoyed because of his mastery of genres, but they also explain the ideological work his generic innovations performed in his creative reimagining of Victorian society.

Given our interest in using Reynolds's work to offer models of reading that can be applied to other works of Victorian popular fiction, we have included several essays that explain Reynolds's use of genre in the novels with which readers are most likely familiar: *The Mysteries of London*. Sara Hackenberg shows how Reynolds transformed Eugène Sue's tropes and structures towards radical ends, exploiting the 'mysteries' genre to imagine a world in which women would be empowered and the social hierarchy would be levelled. Hackenberg both elucidates the conventions of the 'mysteries' genre and demonstrates how Reynolds developed those conventions, particularly in his representations of women. By discussing genre markers that we might not otherwise associate with the 'mysteries' genre, Hackenberg provides a framework for reading other 'mysteries' novels and for tracing the influence of 'mysteries' tropes in works of popular fiction outside the genre.

Ruth Doherty continues the exploration of women and genre in Reynolds's *Mysteries*, this time through the lens of narrative theory. By looking at the story of Lydia Hutchinson, one of the many minor characters in *Mysteries* with a convoluted plotline that was presented to Reynolds's original readers intermittently over the course of many months, Doherty explores the ideological implications of the serial form of the novel in which characters' life stories are repeatedly 'broken on purpose.' She ties the narrative necessity of repetition, particularly of traumatic events, to the Gothic themes of haunting, the irrepressible past, and the undead, demonstrating the convergence of structure, character, gender, and genre to illuminate the importance of what she calls Reynolds's 'serialised miscellany fiction' for scholars of serialisation, characterisation, and narrative form.

Mollie Clarke broadens the discussion of Reynolds's engagement with genre tropes beyond *Mysteries* by looking at how Reynolds plays with female archetypes in a way that is empowering both to the characters within his novels and to his female readers. By focussing on Reynolds's representation of female sexuality, Clarke offers a model for analysing the heroines of other popular novels while also establishing a much-needed counterpoint to the emphasis on domesticity that dominates scholarship on women in Victorian fiction.

Rebecca Nesvet takes us even further away from the genres Reynolds is known for by exploring the Christmas literature he published annually throughout his career. Using Reynolds's Christmas literature as representative of working-class Christmas print more generally, Nesvet shows the radical potential of Victorian Christmas when looked at from beyond the lens of Dickensian paternalism. By highlighting the importance of politics to the genre of Christmas literature, Nesvet provides a model for looking at the intersection of middle- and working-class genres more broadly.

Considerations of space mean that we have only been able to cover a fraction of the genres in which Reynolds wrote, and much work still needs to be done, particularly on Reynolds's historical fiction, realist fiction, and oriental tales, not to mention the short pieces he published in his periodicals. Part III offer models for how scholars might approach these other works as well as those written by other popular novelists. By placing Reynolds's work in a larger generic context, we show how Reynolds was both representative of Victorian popular novelists in his engagement with literary conventions, and exceptional in the ways in which he reimagined genres, transforming them into his own brand of radical fiction. While the fact that the vast majority of Reynolds's fiction was written in popular genres is no doubt one of the reasons why he has so long been excluded from the literary canon, this volume shows why his work is essential to an accurate understanding of Victorian literature and provides a framework for approaching the other popular authors and texts that have suffered scholarly neglect.

Beyond

There are developments in Victorian Studies (notably on race and indigenous studies) to which Reynolds scholarship is only just beginning to respond. As the final essay in this volume demonstrates, the reception history of Reynolds's work as well as the texts themselves offer exciting possibilities for scholars taking up the challenge to 'widen' and 'undiscipline' Victorian Studies.[12] Craig Howes's essay brings together issues of genre, authorship, and radicalism to demonstrate how these three intertwined areas of inquiry can be drawn upon to respond to Sukanya Bannerjee, Ryan Fong, and Helena Michie's call to 'widen' scholarship beyond 'the geotemporal linkage that has largely tethered studies of the nineteenth century to the geographic confines of Britain' (2). Howes returns us to the importance of translation in understanding the significance of Reynolds's work, this time through looking at translations of three of his novels into native Hawaiian that were serialised in Hawaiian-language newspapers. By providing an overview of the mid to late nineteenth-century Hawaiian-language publishing world, Howes shows how the radical politics of Reynolds's lesser-known works about Scotland and the servant class resonated for indigenous writers who were advocating for sovereignty and freedom under very different circumstances than those in which Reynolds was writing. Howes offers insight into how future work might explore the importance of Reynolds's body of work to other national contexts as part of the collective scholarly endeavour to explore what a more 'global' Victorian Studies (to use Joshi's term) might look like.

We have positioned Howes's essay as its own section as a way of marking it as a sort of second introduction and not a conclusion. Much work remains to be done on the role of marginalised racial and ethnic

identities and religions in Reynolds's fiction and journalism, and we hope our readers will take up the challenge of continuing this important undertaking. Jewish and Muslim characters feature prominently across many of Reynolds's novels, and Reynolds's critiques of imperialism in his journalism as well as in his fiction make him an interesting counterpoint to the celebratory championing of empire in much mid-century British print. We believe that the next phase of Reynolds Studies will show the importance of Reynolds's work to our reimagining and decentering of Victorian Studies more broadly.

Reynolds Studies is an emerging field in its own right, we argue, which demonstrates why Victorian Studies needs to take account of Reynolds's work rather than positioning him as yet another minor curiosity in the vast panoply of nineteenth-century print. This volume provides new approaches and suggests new avenues for future scholars to explore: in the study of Reynolds's work, but also in the study of Victorian print culture as a whole.

Notes

1 Basdeo also notes that 'There is a rather romantic story that he apparently found God in later life and became the warder for St Andrew's Church in Wells Street' (Basdeo 110).

2 Dick Collins's biographical investigations revealed that after the death of Susannah in 1858 when Reynolds was 46, Reynolds was based in London at 41 Woburn Square, Bloomsbury. As Collins puts it, 'He had come as far from the poverty of Bethnal Green as it was possible to go, and ended his days in the wealthiest part of the City of Westminster' (xlvii). This is something of an exaggeration, as Bloomsbury was not as fashionable as St. James; however, the thrust of Collins's point about the financial success of Reynolds's radical career is well taken. The 1871 census shows Reynolds and three of his teenage children (cared for by four servants) living in Woburn Square; by the end of 1875, all three youngest children were married and living elsewhere. (xlix). See also Basdeo and Driver, 110–12.

3 The Autumn 2021 special issue of *Victorian Popular Fictions Journal* on plagiarism and authorship, edited by Monica Cohen, is a notable intervention in this area.

4 'The two men who would become the most prominent purveyors of cheap print to the mid-Victorian public both found their greatest early successes in direct imitations of Dickens's work: G. W. M. Reynolds, who would become the most widely read novelist in Victorian England, began his career with the serialized *Pickwick Abroad,* while *The Penny Pickwick* (written by "Bos") became the first triumph of the publisher Edward Lloyd' (Deane 62–3). Reynolds, tellingly, is not individuated but presented alongside Lloyd as representative of a larger cohort of popular fiction writers and publishers.

5 Basdeo and Thomas's online project to digitise Reynolds's political writings including from *RPI* will hopefully change this situation. See https://reynoldsweeklynewspaper.wordpress.com/.

6 Rob Breton's 2013 article on Chartist temperance fiction makes only passing reference to Reynolds; Jenna Herdman's 2020 article on *Reynolds's Newspaper*'s approach to the 1851 Great Exhibition points out that '[t]he role of his periodicals in pioneering new strategies of radical journalism in the context of popular culture demands more inquiry' (34) and notes that so far most scholarly attention has been devoted to *The Mysteries of London* and *The Mysteries of the Court of London*. However, her focus is on Britain. Breton's 2021 book *The Penny Politics of Victorian Popular Fiction* (Manchester UP) devotes one chapter to Reynolds but focusses on *Mysteries* Series 1.

7 Basdeo's digital transcription project *Reynolds's Newspaper: The Political Writings and other Sources*, *Written by George William MacArthur Reynolds: Transcribed and Edited by Stephen Basdeo and Jessica Elizabeth Thomas*, makes an important move in also transcribing the signed works of Susannah Reynolds. [https://reynoldsweeklynewspaper.wordpress.com/]. Accessed 13 January 2022.

8 The four essays by Andrew King, Michael H. Shirley, Michael Diamond, and Antony Taylor in the 2008 volume present a compelling account of the importance of print culture to radicalism, but the focus is mostly on Britain (with Taylor's essay looking at *Reynolds's Newspaper* and its attitudes to the British Empire).

9 Alexandra Warwick, in her chapter on 'Victorian Gothic' in *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*, identifies Reynolds as having inaugurated one of two strands of Gothic revival fiction in the Victorian period (the Brontës, she argues, initiated the other). According to Warwick, Reynolds's fiction—particularly *The Mysteries of London*—is important because of the shift it made in moving the Gothic from early modern Europe to 'the urban present of nineteenth-century London' (31). Robert Mighall also sees this relocation and modernisation—what he labels 'Urban Gothic'—as crucial to the development of Victorian Gothic (38). Alison Milbank ties this development to Reynolds's radical politics, arguing that Reynolds created 'a new Gothic of subversion' that provided 'a sense of inevitability to calls for social transformation.'

10 Whether the Gothic can be considered a genre is itself a debate. Given that eighteenth-century English Gothic fiction had a set of recognisable tropes and conventions, we will refer to it as a genre while acknowledging that "Gothic" is often identified as a mode.

11 Anna Gasperini views Reynolds and publisher Edward Lloyd as responsible for creating a new literary market for cheap serialised fiction that ran parallel to the middle-class world of the circulating library (3–4). This market, dominated by penny bloods, provided working-class readers with novels that 'were exciting, easy to read, and graphic, and they soon crystallized in a formula involving murder, betrayal, gender-shifting, and the occasional supernatural event (not to mention scantily clad damsels in distress)' (4). Jarlath Killeen takes a less generous view of Reynolds's role in developing the penny blood as a genre, arguing that his 'republican, atheist, revolutionary sympathies' resulted in his 'simply continu[ing] the kinds of chauvinistic nationalist bias found in early Gothic, using the form as a means of attacking his political opponents but also opponents of the state' (51). Reynolds holds a more esteemed position in scholarship on the 'mysteries' genre. Richard Maxwell uses Reynolds's *Mysteries* series to show how the 'mysteries' genre adapted

the Radcliffean Gothic web of secrets for a modern urban context (161). Scholars such as Sara James and Berry Chevasco, on the other hand, have debated the influence of Eugène Sue's work on Reynolds's *Mysteries* series, with Chevasco ultimately showing that Reynolds's novel had only superficial similarities to Sue's.

12 For a discussion of what it means to 'undiscipline' Victorian Studies, see Ronjaunee Chatterjee, Alicia Mireles Christoff, and Amy R. Wong's introductory essay to Vol. 62.3 of *Victorian Studies*.

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