

Daniel Cook and Nicolas Seager, eds. *The Afterlives of Eighteenth-Century Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. x + 304pp. £65.

A text's afterlife is often multifarious and slippery, encompassing adaptations, appropriations, borrowings, translations, allusions, piracies, sequels (authorized and unauthorized) and plagiarisms, and potentially spanning a huge range of interconnected media, including the literary, the visual, the performed, and the musical. Adaptation has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years in books such as Julie Sanders's *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2006), or Linda Hutcheon and Siobhan O'Flynn's *A Theory of Adaptation* (2013), as well as a host of author-specific studies, and studies of novel-to-screen adaptations. This collection builds on the work of these scholars, but in choosing "afterlives" over "adaptation", and in charting these afterlives across media including poetry, prose, plays, film, opera, theatre, and caricatures, it widens the scope of the field. "Afterlife," explain Cook and Seager, "is a capacious term that includes critical reception, remediation, and creative appropriation" (p. 5). Rather than being overambitious in trying to provide any sort of comprehensive survey or theory of afterlives—a daunting because endless task—this collection's desire to eschew "the tyranny of the original" (p. 5) brings together a diverse array of approaches and subjects. It refuses a view of secondary texts as "vampiric," instead demonstrating that "where a text goes and by whom it is received matters as much as whence it originated" (p. 16). The essays in the collection focus on the afterlives of eighteenth-century novels, works which were themselves often deeply reliant on other afterlives for their own construction.

Daniel Cook establishes much of the theoretical groundwork of the collection in his essay, which explores authorship and ownership, invoking Simon Sterne's conception of literary economies of scarcity and abundance to compare Richardson and Fielding. Cook argues that "the widespread resistance to closure in major and minor works of fiction unsettles any serious claim to absolute authorship" (p. 22). Sarah Raff is also interested in authorship and agency, arguing that Charles Dickens takes from Richardson a formulation of the author as a guardian figure for both characters and readers. Some of the contributions look backwards to consider the afterlives at work in eighteenth-century fiction; Michael McKeon and Leah Orr discuss eighteenth-century uses of romance conventions, and crime biography's engagement with seventeenth-century picaresque via chapbooks, respectively. Another strand which informs most of the essays is the conversion of prose novels into other forms: chapbooks, newspapers, anthologies, and reviews. Nicolas Seager attends to the way in which, up to the 1750s, novels were republished in serial form in newspapers, and unpacks what their interactions with their paratexts can tell us about the cultural work that such novels performed. Both Michael Burden and M. C. Newbould chart the way that the changing afterlives of certain texts function as indicators of shifts in taste. Burden examines adaptations of *Pamela*, *Caleb Williams*, *Frankenstein* and *Ivanhoe* to stage musicals, whilst Newbould explores how Sterne and Fielding were decontextualized and sanitized in the *Beauties* anthologies of the late eighteenth century. Jill Heydt-Stevenson extends this concern with audience response in her reading of screen versions of *Sense and Sensibility* as evidence of changing ideas about

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happiness and pleasure. The mechanics of decontextualization and reappropriation also inform other contributions. Dahlia Porter explores how inset poems in novels by Ann Radcliffe, Matthew Lewis, and Charlotte Smith came to stand in for the novels themselves in reviews, and David Francis Taylor analyses James Gillray and Thomas Braddyll's famous caricature *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver* (1803), exploring how Swift's notoriously ambiguous *Gulliver's Travels* is reappropriated to a new set of political circumstances. Robert Mayer outlines the huge array of uses to which Defoe's narratives have been put, unpacking the ways in which his novels have enabled visual artists to reflect on feminism and capitalism (*Moll Flanders*), epidemics like SARS and AIDS (*Journal of the Plague Year*) and responses to the other (*Robinson Crusoe*). Peter Sabor's closing essay demonstrates the influence of Austen's parodic "History of England" on W. C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman's 1930 parody *1066 and all That*, claiming that the latter borrowed many of their satirical techniques from Austen. Finally, all of these essays work towards disrupting established critical narratives about authorship, and the rise of the novel. One of the most interesting on this count was David A. Brewer, whose contribution highlights how high-end puppet theatre, with its layers of fictionality and referentiality, can disrupt an idea of a smooth shift in prose during the eighteenth century from referential narratives (about somebody) to non-referential fiction (about nobody). He shows how beings could "operate on multiple ontological planes at once" (p. 174) by demonstrating how puppets can blur distinctions between animate and inanimate, and between the embodied actor, the non-bodily materiality of the puppet, and the disembodied immateriality of the script.

This collection focuses primarily on canonical authors: Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne, Austen, but its attention to a variety of forms means that much of the work in the collection demonstrates the importance of non-canonical forms such as chapbooks for an understanding both of the eighteenth century, and of our own period. The notion of a text's afterlife, the introduction claims, "gestures towards the extended, open-ended legacy of a work" (p. 5). The same is true of a critical collection like this one; it opens up possibilities for its own afterlives. Some directions are suggested in the book, including moving away from "narrative and narrative qualified media" to examine immersive experiences like theme parks (p. 5). Translation studies and material culture studies could also usefully inform future engagements with the field, and the refusal to privilege the novel form opens up a space to take into account fan-fiction, video games, and television series. On the whole, the collection succeeds in its aims to draw attention to the intergeneric development of the arts, to take full advantage of the interdisciplinary potential of this terrain, to interrogate the "simplistic linearity" (p. 2) of ideas of the rise of the proprietary original author, and, most importantly, to open up an exciting new field of study.

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