development of the Unitarian religion. Medically, it provides the first accurate description of pulmonary circulation through the heart and lungs. Clearly based upon Servetus’s anatomical work and dissections in Paris, the description improved upon Vesalius and predated William Harvey by 75 years.

Concerning the three surviving copies – Bibliotheque nationale de France, National Library of Austria, and Edinburgh University Library – their vicissitudes over time before finding permanent homes are well recounted by the Goldstones. Attention is also paid to the 1790 Murr reprint that is nearly as rare as the original. An important Canadian connection occurs with various attempts to ensure Servetus’s being recognized for important medical contributions, by Sir William Osler whose copy of the Murr reprint is now in McGill University’s Osler Library.

Although a serious scholar will undoubtedly wish to consult other sources, this study will provide the non-specialist with an easily accessible and readable introduction to one of the most intriguing stories in book, medical, and religious history. It is illustrated and indexed.

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Scholars and students of nineteenth-century print culture will find themselves largely intrigued by Gerard Curtis’s valuable and enjoyable, if flawed, Visual Words: Art and the Material Book in Victorian England. Curtis’s study examines the convergence, in the Victorian period, of print/literary and visual culture, and ranges broadly from discussions of the “sister-arts” tradition in Victorian typography and illustration, to narrative painting and the commodity culture of author portraits, to cultural colonialism, library design, bookbinding trends, and finally to the erotically fetishized “objectness” of the nineteenth-century book. While the ambitious inclusiveness of this study is undeniably impressive, permitting Curtis to draw illuminating parallels between seemingly disparate areas of Victorian literary and
material culture (relating, for instance, the cultivation of an idealised Ruskinian "art of seeing" to the robust growth of consumerism, literary and otherwise), the diffuse, digressive, and vaguely repetitive structure of the book plainly displays some of the weaknesses, as much as the strengths, of its interdisciplinary approach.

The textual history of Visual Words is itself not unusual, with large portions of the present book (three out of its five chapters) originating as discrete articles. Their reconstitution as chapters here is not entirely successful, however, and both the book's prose and the level of critical analysis deployed within it are notably uneven in quality, burdening the study as a whole with the feeling of being simultaneously disjointed and repetitive. What it lacks in subtlety Visual Words recovers in ideas and linkages between ideas: some are more fully developed than others, perhaps, but they are certainly numerous and varied, as Curtis links the visualization of textuality to a host of Victorian cultural concerns including education, religion, class, nationalism and imperialism, gender and sexuality, and consumer economics.

Curtis takes some rhetorical risks as a practitioner of cultural studies, demonstrating a tendency to extrapolate the generalized behaviour of a culture or period (so as to "fit" with an often very compelling argument or theory) from too-perfect documentary or artifactual evidence. As manifold arguments about the centrality of textuality to Victorian culture progress through Visual Words, often via an image or a series of images (and there are many of them), the palpable anticipatory excitement of the researcher in possession of the ideal piece of material evidence can occasionally overwhelm the argument itself. Sometimes the congruency between image and theory works beautifully, as in the image of the 1901 "Literature" biscuit tin, which becomes the extended metaphor of the "empty biscuit tin," representing the Victorian book's transcendence of textuality into another realm of wholly material signification, and in the spectacular 1866 photograph of Haida artist Johnny-Kit-Elswa, whose culture is seen to be threatened by the looming cultural imperialism represented by the portrait of Dickens captured in the background of the photograph. Elsewhere, even Curtis himself concedes the tenuousness of some of his arguments, admitting in the course of making a provocative case (with appropriate nods to Barthes and Foucault) for the disappearance of the Victorian author into his own textuality, that perhaps "this is making too much of one missing portrait and a vacant chair, or a disembodied hand." But the images
are all part of the fun, and many of the pictorial readings of Victorian culture provided here are just that: brilliant, and eloquently serious, fun.

Befitting a study of the visual and material in Victorian literary culture, *Visual Words* is lavishly illustrated by a splendid 77 images reproduced, as one might expect, from diverse sources (though it refers, with irritating frequency, to a great number of invisible ones), amplifying its overarching focus on the potent (and profitable) amalgamation of the visual and the textual during the Victorian period. At its most basic level this amalgamation can be observed in the Victorian interest in the line, and line-work, where the semiotic possibilities of mark-making in the drawn or written line “constituted a point of meeting for visual and textual systems.” Taking account of such diverse instances of “the line” as penmanship instruction manuals and serial-novel illustrations and advertisements, Curtis’s analysis of the processes of inscribing meaning (and of the attendant concerns about regulating those processes) in the book’s opening chapter is one of its strongest and most satisfying components, stimulating valuable theoretical speculation about the historically and culturally conditioned moment of high Victorian affinity between “pen” (the written/textual) and “pencil” (the drawn/visual). Moreover, Curtis suggests convincing and quite tantalizing answers to more basic questions one might have about the disparity between Victorian and early twenty-first century print cultures, locating, for example, in the growing valorization of the textual over the visual in the nineteenth century the seeds of the decline of popular illustration; further along, in a fascinating chapter entitled “Portraits of the author,” he chronicles the demise of the frontispiece, a common element in Victorian books so often absent in contemporary ones (though not, to be sure, in this one, with its magisterial image of Dickens).

Dickens is quite conspicuous here, and much of Curtis’s argument is mediated through an extended investigation of Dickens as an icon of authorship, the Victorian period’s supreme textual man. It is when focused on Dickens that *Visual Words* is at its most confident and comprehensive, and where its scholarship (while scrupulous throughout) is at its most solid and sound. That said, Dickens has a tendency to invade (colonize?) chapters where his presence might not be warranted. The low point of the book comes in one of these Dickensian eruptions, with the apparently irrelevant speculation that Ford Madox Brown’s *Work* partly derives its premise from a
passage in *Bleak House* (and at this point I caught myself wickedly muttering “so what?” under my breath). The “iconographic analysis” of Brown’s painting, stimulating in and of itself, occupies nearly a whole chapter, but unfortunately remains an incongruous article relating to little under discussion elsewhere in the volume, apart, I suppose, from its subject’s status as a “picture” making peremptory interpretative demands to be “read.” Worse yet, the reader has to make do with a small black-and-white reproduction of this large, colourful, and complex artwork, the one image in an otherwise luxuriously illustrated volume that is completely inadequate for the purpose of “visual reading” it is called upon to exemplify.

Despite its many shortcomings, *Visual Words* shares one of the inspiring characteristics of truly great critical work: its judiciously observed perspective suggests novel interdisciplinary approaches to the study of Victorian print and material culture, valorizing work already done, and work yet to be done, in the field of book history.

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Ce collectif nous convie à l’exploration de la sociabilité littéraire qui se pratique au Québec, avec les usages internes et l’évolution qui la caractérisent. L’autonomisation du champ littéraire – une approche théorique définie par Bourdieu qui fait sa marque dans les études littéraires depuis le milieu des années 1980 – apparaît ici comme un mouvement tant souhaitable qu’inéluctable, comme un véritable processus d’émancipation. Il s’agit ensuite de décrire cette sociabilité bien à soi, dans un geste qui relève de l’analyse, mais aussi de l’appropriation.

Le titre général du livre définit bien le cadre spatial – québécois – de la recherche, qui, sur l’axe temporel, va du projet avorté de l’Académie de Montréal (1778) à la création de la maison d’édition féministe du Remue-ménage (1976). Les chercheurs réunis ici sont tous étudiants ou professeurs à l’Université de Sherbrooke, ce qui constitue un bel exemple de la vitalité de la recherche sur le livre