regard. Features like the masthead and the column widths indicate the continuity of the articles, while shifts in typography over time can tell us what the newspaper thought of itself.

The first two chapters of the book identify some of the problems of contemporary digital methods, and the last two offer case studies of editing, studying, and teaching these works. Mussell’s argument about the need to draw attention to digital mediation, for example, is elegantly reprised in the final chapter on pedagogy; he suggests that since teaching materials have always mediated what they describe, drawing students’ attention to the process is an important part of student learning. The discussion in this final chapter of the skills and theoretical tools that students require in order to benefit from and analyze these resources is practical and coherent with the rest of the book’s argument.

Paylor and Mussell’s chapter on the NCSE outlines the project’s scope and structure in a way that not only acquaints readers of this volume with the resource itself, but also suggests methods and approaches for future digital edition projects of a similar kind. A useful table with the full metadata schema as implemented for the project is provided here and explains in practical terms what can be done with metadata to augment OCR.

This book is aimed at digital humanities scholars and nineteenth-century specialists, but Mussell’s analysis is not limited to the transmission of the nineteenth-century newspaper. Its theoretical components and practical suggestions for large-scale digitization projects will be of interest to book historians working on a variety of national and historical literatures and cultures.

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Author, Reader, Book is a rich and stimulating collection of essays whose workshop roots are evident in helpful cross-references as well as subtler forms of response and exchange among the individual contributors. Partridge’s introduction positions the volume as a
response to Alastair Minnis’s *Medieval Theory of Authorship* and to the body of work on medieval authorship published in its wake. One of the aims of the book is “to transcend certain linguistic and generic boundaries” and in this the editors succeed admirably (5). Geared for scholars and graduate students in medieval and manuscript studies, the essays range chronologically from the twelfth-century court clerk Walter Map to Erasmus in the sixteenth century; they cross devotional and secular genres in Latin and Middle Dutch, English, French, and Scots. The diversity of periods, genres, and languages covered makes this a dense but rewarding read.

The opening essay is by Minnis himself and stands alone in the collection in that it considers scriptural authority broadly defined. Minnis’s thesis is that the ethical ends and imaginative means shared by secular and Biblical poetics created anxiety for medieval theologians about the unique authority of holy scripture. The remaining essays turn from divine authority to human in a series of case studies: those by Kwakkel, Partridge, McGrady, and Vessey treat the relationship between codicology and authorship, whereas those by Coxon, Obermeier, Campbell, and Higgins focus primarily on authorial self-construction within the text. In “Wit, Laughter, and Authority in Walter Map’s *De nugis curialum*,” Sebastian Coxon discusses Map’s persona as depicted in anecdotal accounts of his wit and role at court, but also notes the codicological evidence supporting the case for Map’s authorship of these accounts, thereby suggesting that Map “created the basis and model for the later … development of his own author-mythology” (47). In the most technical piece here, “Late Medieval Text Collections,” Eric Kwakkel uses examples from Middle Dutch single-authored manuscripts to construct a typology of four kinds of collections, and he advances the modest but convincing argument that medieval scribes deliberately and creatively shaped both the structure and the contents of the texts they compiled and copied.

In the first of two powerhouse essays on Chaucer, Anita Obermeier traces many symbolic parallels: between Chaucer and Ovid; between the crow and “the medieval author generally, and [Chaucer] and Gower specifically”; between Phebus of the *Manciple’s Tale* and the God of Love in the prologue to the *Legend of Good Women*; and between the historical “tyrants” Richard II and Caesar Augustus. The central focus among all of these parallels is Chaucer’s double strategy to use “self-criticism as a mechanism to circumvent censorship” (81) and to model this self-criticism as a prudent example for the more outspoken, less politic Gower to follow. Stephen Partridge
ambitiously weighs in on two longstanding debates: the status of the *Retraction* and the possibility of Chaucer’s involvement with the *ordinatio* of the Ellesmere manuscript. Partridge first traces the “career” of the *Retraction* in the *Canterbury Tales* manuscripts; he then reads the rubrics to the *Retraction*, the *Retraction* itself, and Chaucer’s relationship with Adam Pinkhurst in the context of late medieval French literature to argue that Chaucer, like Christine de Pizan, “developed a system of self-reference” through book making (138). This is brilliant work, meticulously researched and persuasively presented, but it is also too much ground to cover in one essay and, indeed, at forty-seven pages, Partridge’s piece dwarfs the others in the volume. McGrady’s elegant essay follows seamlessly from the Chaucer duo, tracing Christine de Pizan’s self-presentation not only in her prologues and poems but also in paratextual commentary, manuscript illustrations, and redactions. According to McGrady, Christine consistently used the image of herself as a reader to “validate her authority” as a writer (157). McGrady concludes on a particularly strong note when she explains how, as Christine’s own authority grew, “her books reveal efforts to reshape her audience as book-bound students” – that is, as readers rather than listeners or mere collectors of books, through the use of rubrics, anagrams, and layouts that privileged careful attention to the written text. Impressively, codicology here reveals audience interpolation (168).

The next two essays take as their subjects the authorial self-fashioning of two fifteenth-century writers working in Middle English and Middle Scots, respectively. Campbell’s “Vernacular *Auctoritas* in Late Medieval England: Writing after the Constitutions” re-evaluates the binary of Lollardy and orthodoxy after 1409 by arguing that, for Reginald Pecock, the distinction between religious writing in the vernacular versus Latin was not of central importance. Rather, Campbell concludes, Pecock was less anxious about official censorship than he was about competing with the growing body of spiritual writing in English in a “burgeoning” marketplace of vernacular books and ideas (192). In “Master Henryson and Father Aesop,” Higgins sets out to redress editorial and scholarly neglect of Henryson’s *Moral Fabillis*. In Higgins’s reading, the *Moral Fabillis* is both “a complex, critical homage to Aesop” and a powerful appropriation of Aesop’s authority in Henryson’s assertion of his own: Aesop is the “source that needs to be supplemented,” the father to be supplanted by “master Henryson” (225). The collection’s final essay by Mark Vessey performs a clever codicological analysis of the 1515 Strasbourg edition
of Erasmus’s *Lucubrationes*, telling us the “story” of “the book itself” as he takes us through lexicography, bibliography (with reference to the book’s “ancestor,” the *Lucubratiunculae*), and the biography of the man who wrote it (233).

Nearly all of the essays explore in some way the use of codicology to create in the reader an experience of the author’s presence in the text and the delicate play between that presence and the absence that makes reading possible. Minnis’s opening survey of medieval theology considers the interrelation of theological and secular modes of authorship and authority operating “outside the book,” but the fruitful connections between his piece and those that aim their focus “inside the book,” to borrow Vessey’s phrasing, are left largely for the reader to trace for herself (233). Because the dialogical aspect of *Author, Reader, Book* is one of its greatest virtues, the editors could have condensed the detailed summaries of the essays in the introduction to make room for theoretical reflection on these themes that tie the pieces together in fascinating and sometimes surprising ways. On the other hand, we might say that the omission of such unifying, theorizing commentary makes this a book that demands to be read slowly and imaginatively in the way of Christine’s *Epistre Othea* – a book that demonstrates the reading skills of its multiple authors while it respects those of its audience.

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Featuring a unique collection of rare printed material and ephemera, Victorian Popular Culture offers a glimpse into the exciting and intriguing world of Victorian-era popular entertainment. Opening with a promotional theatre poster featuring a magician and devilish character, the database produced by Adam Matthew Digital invites “readers into the darkened halls, small backrooms and travelling venues that hosted everything from spectacular shows and bawdy burlesque, to magic and spiritualist séances.” Capped by plush red curtains, accentuated by the circus-themed font, the interface uses