Alexis Weedon, ed. *The History of the Book in the West*. Vol. 5, 1914–2000. Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2010. xxvii, 611 pp.; £130.00 (\$250.00 US) ISBN 9780754627838

The five volumes in *The History of the Book in the West: A Library of Critical Essays* cover the millennia in which the “book” has mutated from the handwritten codex of the first volume (400–1455 AD), into the printed materiality of the next volumes (1455–1700; 1700–1800; 1800–1914), and into the computer-generated e-book at the end of this volume, 1914–2000. Under the general editorship of Alexis Weedon, the series assembles a wide selection of recent approaches in book history and publishing studies; most of the papers of volume 5 were published in the last twenty years. Weedon, who also edits volume 5, notes that the period 1914–2000 “frames the history of the book within the globalisation of the media industries and the challenges to the cultural status of the book from electronic media in the twentieth century” (xii). Don’t look for the publishing history of individual countries here because the emphasis is on post-nationalist book history and the way globalization has affected everything from the creation of a text to its reception.

Weedon’s excellent introduction surveys the political and technological contexts that underpin the twenty-three papers in the six sections: “Issues of Cultural Impact”; “Literary Property”; “War, Censorship and Post-Colonialism”; “Marketing and Reading”; “Bookselling and Design”; and “The Digital Book.” They range from the structure of publishing companies to case histories such as the careers of individual authors. One paper explains the role of cover design in the marketing of John Hersey’s bestseller, *The Wall*; another analyses reading tastes in Welsh miners’ libraries. Rather than depth, we get overlap in the papers because the twentieth-century book world was characterized by “interlocking developments,” in Elizabeth Long’s phrase (50), in international copyright, corporate acquisitions, professional authorship, and advertising.

Philip G. Altbach notes how the British, the Americans, and the West framed copyright for trade protection and profit. Lewis A. Coser divides twentieth-century publishing houses into “producer-oriented” and “distributor-oriented” concerns, any of which could be targeted by global corporations. We are continually reminded how globalization of the media is dominated by “Western”—read British and American—corporations that retain control over ownership and distribution. In post-colonial Africa, for example, Caroline Davis describes how

Oxford University Press and British publishers continued their economic and cultural hegemony. Elizabeth Long notes that the shift from a small group of middle-class readers to an ever-widening audience has led to fears of “cultural ‘massification’” (49), a process she suggests has been evolving since the eighteenth century. This process also introduced middlemen who managed authors’ careers, as in Mary Anne Gillies’ account of how J.B. Pinker provided Joseph Conrad with financial security while developing his author’s reputation as a modernist. Janice Radway describes the success of The Book of the Month Club, and Jay Satterfield reports how Bennett Cerf’s Modern Library editions bridged the gap between high- and middle-brow culture with affordable, attractive volumes. Cerf was one of the first of that emerging professional-managerial class of literary facilitators who help us navigate the reviews and the bookstore shelves.

Other marketing ploys are the updated “crossovers” listed by Claire Squires (e.g., the references to *Pride and Prejudice* in *Bridget Jones’s Diary*); the shifting of a book into a television program, a film, or a translation; or even its simultaneous marketing in different covers and prices. Although the increasingly cosier partnerships among publishers, book chains, television networks, and Hollywood, along with circus-style promotions, have raised cries of dumbing-down, Graham Huggan explains how the Booker Prize brings together international conglomerates working in tandem with editors, literary agents, and prize juries in order to saturate international mass-market readers with quality books.

Not everyone embraced commercialization and globalization with open arms. In the 1920s, B.W. Huebsch, according to Catherine Turner, resisted being swallowed up by corporations. Unlike Horace Liveright, Huebsch also refused to use D.H. Lawrence’s personal life as promotions for his books, and he was unable to convert James Joyce’s “symbolic” or “cultural capital” into economic capital, to use Pierre Bourdieu’s terms. In Canada, for example, small operations like Gaspereau Press and Doug Minett’s Bookshelf in Guelph survive in the face of competition by conglomerates and big-box stores.

As a challenge to book culture, the e-book’s apologists in the final section describe it as merely the latest technology beyond the pen and the printing press to reach mass audiences. George Landow observes that we already accept online schedules and directions that save paper, time, and energy. The shift from “physical” to “code” also has the advantages of easy text changes and economies of scale. Angus Phillips predicts that the traditional “value chain” will lead to

further efficiencies in archiving texts and insists that the author will still have value in his property and its adaptations. Simone Murray even proposes an extension to Robert Darnton's famous circuit, to include authors, agents, editors, publishers, literary prize committees, film/TV producers, and screenwriters.

Who is this book for? These previously published papers are reproduced in their original format, a nuisance only in Simone Murray's paper, which is set in two columns of very small type. The original illustrations, unfortunately, are not in colour in this book. The index omits many names in the papers—no mention of Chapters or Indigo (492–93) but Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan are there at least once (577). More frustrating, however, is that some endnotes in papers that are chapters from other books lack full bibliographical information. For instance, in Mary Anne Gillies's paper, "Building a Career: Joseph Conrad and Pinker," note 1 cites Joyce Wexler's *Who Paid for Modernism?* and note 72 cites Ian Willison, Warrick Gould, and Warren Cherniak's *Modernist Writers and the Market Place*: neither citation is complete in its information, nor are the cited works listed in the valuable bibliography at the end of the introduction. The price precludes this book from purchase as a graduate student's anthology, but it serves as an expensive yet handy guide to those interested in post-national book history. Meanwhile, Canadian scholars can take heart that our own book history is still a work in progress.

GEORGE L. PARKER

Halifax