
In this timely and thoroughly researched collection of essays, the authors consider the ways in which newspaper and magazine editors provocatively addressed national debates and thus sought to enact social and political change, from the close of the nineteenth to the beginning of the twenty-first centuries. Rachel Schreiber points out that “print activism” refers to the varieties of print publications that activists, whether conservative or liberal, used to persuade and mobilize audiences as well as enable the formation of communities with particular objectives (1). Schreiber suggests that print media enabled the creation of markets as advertisers sought to shape the needs of newspaper and magazine audiences. Schreiber draws upon the work of Jürgen Habermas (which, as she acknowledges, is highly contested) and Benedict Anderson in order to argue that print plays a fundamental role in creating group identity and local activism. For Schreiber, print culture’s connections to activism, a term, which, in the twentieth century was used to describe subversives and radicals, extended beyond simply mirroring current cultural developments. Instead, newspapers and magazines should be seen as generative spaces that enabled the spread of ideas at a time when political and social groups used a variety of methods to reach and persuade their supporters.

In “Print Culture and the Construction of Radical Identity,” Joanne E. Passet contends that print culture during the Gilded Age enabled women like Juliet H. Severance to obtain a medical degree, to become involved in third-party politics, and to bring attention to the struggles of exploited groups. By analyzing this reformer’s writings, Passet demonstrates that Severance sought to create her own identity by aligning herself with Spiritualism and practitioners of the water cure. This alignment allowed her to garner support from other men and women who shared similar views. In “Changing Feelings,” María Carla Sánchez examines the ways in which religious publications
sought to define women’s status. She also looks to understand how “fallen women” were portrayed at the end of the nineteenth century. As Sánchez points out, religious movements saw “fallen women” as socially, economically, and morally damaged. In her analysis of “A Plea for Some Girls,” an 1885 article in the Advocate and Family Guardian, an organizational newspaper established by the Female Guardian Society, Sánchez argues that its sentimental approach is surprisingly modernist. Sánchez contends that this publication reflected the concerns of reformers who sought to raise awareness among readers.

In “She Will Spike War’s Gun,” Rachel Schreiber examines the ways in which illustrations appearing in such suffragist publications as The Women’s Journal and The Woman Citizen before and during America’s involvement in the First World War signalled changes in attitudes towards the war. By analyzing the “win-the-war women” illustrations in The Woman Citizen, Schreiber suggests that while women seemed to play a central role in mustering support for the conflict, these images still reflected fixed views of women. The following essay, “Publishing a ‘Fighting Spirit,’” by Nikolaus Wasmoen considers the modernist poet Marianne Moore’s early publications in little magazines like The Egoist, as well as her epistolary exchanges with its editors, as a framework for understanding the development of a counter-public. Wasmoen instructively engages in a rich textual analysis of Moore’s wartime poetry, by taking into account her communicative actions in a variety of publications. Katharine Antolini’s “Holiday Activism” examines the Maternity Center Association’s efforts to agitate for women’s medical needs during Mother’s Day celebrations in the 1930s. According to Antolini, the MCA’s overt scientific perspective in its educational campaigns featured in Good Housekeeping failed to persuade readers of such urgent problems as the high mortality rate during childbirth.

Furthermore, the broad historical reach of this collection of essays may be seen in its treatment of radical groups like the Ku Klux Klan, which in the 1920s saw increased support from across the United States. In “Give this Copy of the Kourier Magazine to Your Friend,” Craig Fox not only demonstrates that the Invisible Empire garnered national attention because of its ability to generate propaganda, but he also argues that it developed large networks that strengthened group identity. In “Productive Fiction and Propaganda,” Trevor Joy Sangrey considers the ways in which the Communist Party USA’s
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pamphlets, including *Negroes in a Soviet America*, responded to the unjust economic conditions as well as accusations against several African-American men in Scottsboro, Alabama. These pamphlets also circulated in response to the Black Nation Thesis, by imagining better opportunities for advancement. In her essay, “Containment Culture,” Diana Cucuz perceptively analyzes the ways in which national preoccupations about the Cold War permeated stories on domesticity that were featured in the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. Just as fascinating is Whitney Straub’s essay, “Challenging the Anti-Pleasure League,” which seeks to recover the contributions of *Physique Pictorial* to gay history. Specifically, Straub examines the ways in which Bob Mizer, the magazine’s editor, and his readers negotiated the significance of a gay pleasure culture in the 1950s through the 1960s through epistolary communication.

Lían Amaris, in “Calendar Art,” uses Neil Postman’s definition of “media ecology” to assess how Julius Lester’s photographs published in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee calendars effectively communicated pride in the Civil Rights Movement. The essay also showcases excerpts from an interview with Lester, which offers insights on how his own experiences as an African-American in the segregated South shaped his determination to preserve and publicize this history. Tirza True Latimer, in “Amazon Quarterly,” considers the journal editors’ responses to the needs of the Lesbian Nation in the Bay area during the 1970s. The articles and illustrations featured in *Amazon Quarterly*, which depended on donations for its dissemination, effectively resisted consumerist culture. Fittingly, echoes of this anti-consumerist sentiment may be perceived in “Crafting Public Cultures in Feminist Periodicals,” by Elizabeth Groeneveld. Tracing the development of do-it-yourself culture in third-wave feminist publications, she argues that print culture enables a deeper recognition of the fraught relationship between market forces and political agitation. These essays cogently examine print culture’s responses to social and political movements, by creating alternative sites of inquiry.

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