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A NOVEL IDEA

BRITISH BOOKSELLERS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE, 1745-1775

By

Amy Frances Larin

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the central figures of the mid-eighteenth century book trade and places them within the broader historical moment by exploring booksellers as individuals in Hanoverian society as well as principal actors in the proliferation of printed material during the mid-century period. It argues that booksellers of the mid-eighteenth century were instrumental in cultivating the widespread fascination with books within Hanoverian society. During the mid-eighteenth century period, Britons enjoyed an unprecedented array of readily available titles, and this dramatic increase in published material available for consumption owed much to the activities of the booksellers in the literary marketplace.

The lapse of the *Licensing Act* in 1695 made it considerably easier for Britons of the middling ranks to set up book businesses, resulting in an increasingly competitive book trade throughout the eighteenth century. By the 1730s, the trade was in a state of flux, the initial cohort of post-1695 booksellers was leaving the trade, creating a particularly lucrative market for newcomers. In the years that followed, many new booksellers, including Robert Dodsley and Andrew Millar, established successful shops founded on business principles. The activities of these booksellers shifted principles of the book trade from the literary merits to the profitability of a title. Through publishing catalogues and advertisements, booksellers promoted books as fashionable commodities

and offered features that emphasized the novelty of each edition, such as paper, art, and additional chapters.

Profitability permeated the mid-eighteenth century trade, as it shaped the manner in which booksellers marketed their titles to the literate and book-buying public, as well as the way booksellers understood their own copyright property. Appeals for further protection of their non-traditional forms of property culminated in the landmark *Donaldson v. Becket* legal decision of 1774 that abolished the traditional concept of perpetual copyright and resulted in further changes in the book trade of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In addition to its influence on concepts of property, the commercial book trade encouraged Britons, including women, to both produce and to consume literature. In transforming the literary marketplace, booksellers of the mid-eighteenth century fostered the development of a discerning book buying public craving literary commodities of all sorts.

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PLACING THE HISTORY OF BOOKSELLERS IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BRITAIN

In his publication *Advice to His Son on Men and Manners* (1788), Lord Chesterfield noted:

> There are many short intervals in the day, between studies and pleasures: instead of sitting idle and yawning in those intervals, snatch up some valuable book, and continue the reading of that book till you have got through it....[1]

Lord Chesterfield's counsel for the productive use of leisure was hardly extraordinary. Many Englishmen and women found similarly productive use of their spare time, turning to the ever-expanding world of print for entertainment as well as knowledge.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the book market was in a state of flux. In the late 1730s, a new breed of booksellers entered the market and subsequently transformed books, which had been relatively expensive until this point, into popular commodities. The book trade became a vehicle for the dissemination of intellectual goods and culture

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[1] Philip Dormer Stanhope Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Advice to His Son on Men and Manners: In Which the Principles of Politeness, and the Art of Acquiring a Knowledge of the World, Are Laid Down ... To Which Are Added, Extracts from Various Books, ... Lord Burghley's Ten Precepts to His Son, and Dr. Franklin's Way to Wealth*, (London: printed for W. Richardson, 1788), 113.

too. Savvy, industrious entrepreneurs, seeking to fulfill and cultivate the desires of their customers and the society at large, refashioned the book trade. Very rapidly, the control over books was handed to a new generation of Britons and a breed of bookseller primarily concerned with the profitability of books. Over the next three decades, the middling sorts became the supporters of literary culture, as the market shifted from a system of patronage to a publisher-based print culture.[2] The roughly thirty-year rise of the booksellers lasted until the major legal determination in 1774 when the *Donaldson v. Becket* decision dismantled the traditional principle of perpetual copyright.[3] The proliferation of sellers and the marketplace reached its apogee with the Victorian appetite for all forms of print culture.

One often overlooked and misunderstood factor in the rise of British print culture is the contribution of booksellers themselves in the dissemination of books in this transformative period.[4] While some research has been undertaken, an important question

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[2] James Raven, *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750-1800*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 19-60.

[3] See: John Feather, "The English Book Trade and the Law: 1695-1799," *Publishing History*, no. 12 (1982), 51-75; John Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, (London: Routledge, 1991); John Feather, "Publishers and Politicians: The Remaking of the Law of Copyright in Britain 1775-1842. Part I: Legal Deposit and the Battle of the Library Tax," *Publishing History*, no. 24 (1988), 49-76; John Feather, "Publishers and Politicians: The Remaking of the Law of Copyright in Britain 1775-1842. Part II: The Rights of Authors," *Publishing History* 25 (1989), 45-72; John Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates: British Copyright Law in Theory and Practice, 1710-1775," *Publishing History*, no. 22 (1987), 5-32; John Feather, *Publishing, Piracy and Politics: An Historical Study of Copyright in Britain*, (New York: Mansell, 1994), 64-96.

[4] Although print culture includes newspapers, this analysis will focus on books, pamphlets, and other non-periodical literature. For more information on newspapers during the period, see: Hannah Barker, "Catering for Provisional Tastes: Newspapers, Readership and Profit in Late Eighteenth-Century England," *Historical Research* 69, no. 168 (1996), 42-61; Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows, *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America,*

remains to be addressed: what role did their motivations play in the dramatic increase in the book trade? This thesis will examine selected booksellers, operating in the mid-century period, and argue that the often-overlooked contribution of the booksellers and publishers is fundamental to the popularity of books in eighteenth century Britain. By developing the business of books, booksellers ultimately played a major role in influencing the literary market.

Approaches to the eighteenth century, including the book trade, can be categorized by change and continuity.[5] Small, incremental changes to the trade and to the marketplace were taking place. In terms of publishing, the technologies and techniques remained unchanged. Yet, the number of books printed and available for consumption increased dramatically over the century.[6] This expansion of print culture and the book

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1760-1820, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987); John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 136-160; C. Y. Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins and the Provincial Newspaper Trade in the Eighteenth Century*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[5] Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus refer to "change and continuity" as a method of understanding women's history in the long eighteenth century, in the Introduction to their edited volume: Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, (Addison Wesley Longman, 1997), 8.

[6] For a discussion of the number of titles published during the eighteenth century, see: John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1997), 171. For the voluminous subject of the print culture in eighteenth century Britain, see: Barker, "Catering for Provisional Tastes."; Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion*; Hannah Barker, "Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution: Female Involvement in the English Printing Trades, C.1700-1840," in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (New York: Longman, 1997), 81-100; Barker and Burrows, *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere*; John Feather, "The Commerce of Letters: The Study of the Eighteenth Century Book Trade," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 17, no. 4 (1984), 405-424; John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates."; Michael

trade has often been attributed to the rise of the middling sorts, and the increase in general literacy; these characteristics, however, do not adequately explain the commodification of the book. One underdeveloped aspect is the contribution of the bookseller in the rise of books as material goods and the transformation of the literary marketplace.

Although the process continued throughout the rest of the century, the period, 1740-1770, marked the important transition towards the business of books; the formative years of the new bookseller. By 1774, the majority of the mid-century booksellers had retired or abandoned the trade, but the *Donaldson v. Becket* decision originated in the complex legal questions concerning copyright and property that were precipitated in the mid-century.

Paul Langford, John Brewer, and Roy Porter have endorsed the interpretation of the eighteenth century as one of dynamism and social change.[7] This school of thought

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McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); Michael McKeon, "The Secret History of Domesticity: Private, Public, and the Division of Knowledge," in *The Age of Cultural Revolutions: Britain and France, 1750-1820*, ed. Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 171-189; Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Raven, *Judging New Wealth*; James Raven, "New Reading Histories, Print Culture and the Identification of Change: The Case of Eighteenth-Century England," *Social History* 23, no. 3 (1998), 268-287; James Raven, "The Noble Brothers and Popular Publishing, 1737-89," *Library* 12, no. 4 (1990), 293-345; James Raven et al., *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 265-236; Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, (London: Hambledon and London, 2004); Rosemary Sweet, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[7] John Brewer, *The Common People and Politics, 1750-1790s*, (Cambridge Chadwyck-Healey, 1986); Brewer, *Party Ideology*; Brewer, *Pleasures*; John Brewer, *The Sinews of*

sees the rise of commerce as vital to any analysis of eighteenth century Britain, as an extraordinary expansion of wealth permitted a considerable portion of the middling ranks to participate more fully in the governance of society and the articulation of political culture.[8] The changes were neither immediate nor radical; instead, the transformation was incremental. For instance, improvements in transportation networks facilitated the spread of goods, throughout the realm, making it easier to both acquire and sell material goods.[9] By the mid-century, the age of Robert Dodsley, Andrew Millar and other principal booksellers, the changes were taking effect, and the increasing prosperity created a market conducive for businessmen, as a cohort of booksellers entered the trade, belonging to the commercial middling ranks of polite society.[10]

Whereas Langford has posited the growth of a commercial order, J.C.D. Clark has conversely articulated a vision of the eighteenth century founded upon an *ancien régime*, a hegemonic structure based upon aristocratic title and the continued authority of the Monarchy and the Church of England, which was generally unfavourable to businessmen. Although he acknowledged the dynamic figures and the novel secular ideas

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Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837*, (Yale University Press, 2005); Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650-1850*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Neil McKendrick et al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Penguin Books, 1991).

[8] See: John Brewer, "Commercialization and Politics," in *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Neil McKendrick, Brewer John, and Plumb J. H. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 197-262; Brewer, *Party Ideology*, 136-160; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, 59-121; Langford, *Public Life*, 206-187.

[9] Porter, *English Society*, 191-193.

[10] Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, 123-182.

that emerged during the period, Clark argued that the influence of these processes (proto-industrialization, and the financial, scientific, and consumer revolutions) have been overstated and have dramatically misrepresented the period.[11] According to Clark, the traditional hierarchy existed throughout the long eighteenth century until 1832, when the ruling elites lost their nerve and surrendered their religious and political exclusive order in the face of demands for religious toleration and political reform.[12]

This thesis seeks to reconcile these competing interpretations of the eighteenth century (static and dynamic) by placing booksellers within the commercial society, Langford's approach, and carefully pointing out the sustained importance of traditional structures within the society. Booksellers and the book trade were tied both to innovation and to tradition. Moreover, the book trade of the eighteenth century was rooted in the approaches identified by both Langford and Clark, as the conservative, religious traditions operated alongside and within the new commercial society. For instance, businessmen of the middling ranks populated much of the trade; meanwhile, religious titles enjoyed the greatest success, as more religious material was produced and sold than any other genre.[13]

Over the course of the eighteenth century Britons became fascinated with books. The rise of the commercial, popular print culture ushered in a new era of British intellectual life.[14] Many savvy entrepreneurs entered the book trade, as publishers and sellers, developing a new and innovative book trade. The commercial book trade first

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[11] J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832: Religion, Ideology, and Politics During the Ancien Regime*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 25-34.
[12] *Ibid*, 181.
[13] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 172.
[14] For a comprehensive discussion of publishers and the enlightenment in England and Scotland, see: Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 265-440.

appeared, though briefly, during the English Civil War.[15] The book trade monopoly, in the hands of the university presses of Oxford and Cambridge and the select members of the Stationers' Company, was dismantled, and many new printers and booksellers entered the market, resulting, as John Barnard explained, in a book trade built on innovation.[16] However, the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 signalled a return to increased government censorship.[17] The *Licensing Act* of 1662 reaffirmed the publishing monopoly for the next three decades. Following the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the lapse of the *Licensing Act* in 1695, the traditional monopoly publishing system crumbled, allowing for the emergence of a competitive, entrepreneurial, book trade in the eighteenth century.[18]

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[15] For information on the voluminous subject of print culture and literature in the early modern period, see: John Barnard, "London Publishing, 1640-1660: Crisis, Continuity, and Innovation," *Book History* 4 (2001), 1-16; David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 7-63; Feather, *Publishing, Piracy and Politics*, 10-63; Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Adam Fox and D. R. Woolf, *The Spoken Word: Oral Culture in Britain, 1500-1850*, (Manchester Manchester University Press, 2002); McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel*; Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and Its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); D. R. Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England: Erudition, Ideology, and the 'Light of Truth' from the Accession of James I to the Civil War*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); D. R. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); D. R. Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture, 1500-1730*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[16] John Barnard, "London Publishing, 1640-1660: Crisis, Continuity, and Innovation," *Book History* 4, (2001), 11. For information on the publishing monopoly during the Restoration, see: Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 50-63.

[17] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 43-63.

[18] Despite several attempts, the *Licensing Act* was never reintroduced. In fact, the failure to renew the Act correlated with the passing of the *Copyright Act* in 1710, which

Throughout the eighteenth century, the middling sorts became the enthusiastic supporters of literary culture, as the market shifted from a system of patronage to a commercial, bookseller-based print culture. As the book trade became increasingly commercialized, booksellers refashioned the trade to one based on innovative and new business principles, incorporating techniques such as price points and advertisements in newspapers.

Book history provides an important and helpful field of study by which to enhance our understanding of British culture.[19] However, the literary marketplace is often placed at the intersection of culture and consumption historiographies, on the periphery of broader ways of describing the eighteenth century.[20] Studies of consumption generally focus on the goods being consumed, and so the seller is often overlooked in favour of consumer trends. Many historians have been captivated by the cultural implications of

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officially recognized the intangible concept of copyright as an asset. Although the expiration of the *Licensing Act* afforded booksellers some liberty in printing, they were still liable for any scandalous material. See: Feather, "The Commerce of Letters."; Feather, "The English Book Trade and the Law."; Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 50-63; Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates."; Feather, *Publishing, Piracy and Politics: An Historical Study of Copyright in Britain*, 37-63.

[19] For details on the history of book, John Feather provides the most comprehensive discussions, see: Feather, "The Commerce of Letters"; Feather, "The English Book Trade and the Law."; Feather, *A History of British Publishing*; Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade*; Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates."; Feather, *Publishing, Piracy and Politics*; John P. Feather, "The Book in History and the History of the Book," *Journal of Library History* 21, no. 1 (1986), 12-26.

[20] For material on consumption in eighteenth century Britain, see: Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, (London: Routledge, 1995); Brewer, *Pleasures*; John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods*, (London: Routledge, 1993); Langford, *Englishness Identified*; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*; McKendrick et al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society*; J. H. Plumb, *The Commercialisation of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Reading: University of Reading, 1973).

literature, but few have considered how the modern market for books and the ideas they embodied emerged.

As more historians acknowledge the importance of print culture in developing our historical understanding, book history has become, in recent decades, a growing field of inquiry. Robert Darnton's work on the subterraneous literature in *ancien régime* France confirmed the significance of print culture in understanding the society.[21] In the case of France, with its censored, guarded literary trade, historians were keener to accept its importance in spreading ideas. Certainly, John Feather's work, over the past two decades, has enlightened historians concerning the history of the book and the history of the British book trade. In understanding elements of copyright, licensing, and publishing techniques, Feather is an invaluable resource, but the field remains in its infancy.

The recent surge in book history, as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry, has highlighted its significance in the academic study of the eighteenth century.[22] In the study of booksellers, James Raven's *Judging New Wealth* remains the principal study of booksellers in the mid-to-late eighteenth century.[23] In the book, Raven focuses on the

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[21] See: Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie, 1775-1800*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995); Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche, *Revolution in Print: The Press in France, 1775-1800*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

[22] For a comprehensive examination of book history in recent years, see: Richard Sher's "Introduction" in Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 1-40.

[23] Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 132-182. Also, see: James Raven, *Free Print and Non-Commercial Publishing since 1700*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); James Raven, *London Booksellers and American Customers: Transatlantic Literary Community and the Charleston Library Society, 1748-1811*, (U. of South Carolina Pr., 2002); Raven, "The Noble Brothers and Popular Publishing, 1737-89." Please note that Raven's most recent book was not yet released at the time this thesis was completed, and therefore, it was not included in the historiographical discussions: James Raven, *The Business of Books:*

social constructions of commercial men, and posits booksellers promoted polite literature to influence attitudes to their trade. While agreeing with Raven's general business history concepts, this thesis will explore booksellers, and their relationships to the book trade, from a slightly different perspective.

Whereas Raven concentrates on the bookseller as a businessman, this examination focuses on how the booksellers' own attitudes and tastes influenced the marketplace. Currently, this area of historiography remains largely underdeveloped. While many studies detail the products purchased, emphasizing the print culture, this work, in contrast, will focus on the important, though neglected, issue of the bookseller's role in popularizing books over the course of the century. The mass popularity of books was intimately linked to the booksellers themselves. By developing the business of book, they ultimately played a major role in influencing the literary market.

Generally, booksellers were indicative of Paul Langford's commercial people; most came from middle ranks and amassed considerable fortunes over a few decades.[24] In addition to their financial successes, booksellers were satisfying the polite desires of their contemporaries. If booksellers behaved politely, they could easily find success and acceptance among the burgeoning middling ranks.[25]

The thesis has been divided into thematic chapters that consider particular facets of the mid-century trade. Chapter one, "Booksellers and the Literary Marketplace", examines the principal figures of the mid-century trade, using correspondence, memoirs,

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Booksellers and the English Book Trade, 1450-1850, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

[24] See: Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People.*

[25] James Raven posits the acceptance was related to the material booksellers chose to publish, as they sought to influence public opinion towards business through the print culture. Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 132-182.

and other contemporary accounts. By the 1730s, the initial cohort of the post-1695 booksellers was leaving the trade, creating lucrative opportunities for new booksellers to establish their shops.[26] Over the following decade, many new shops were founded, particularly in and around London.[27] Many of these shops were remarkably successful, including those of Robert Dodsley and Andrew Millar, key figures of the mid-century trade. Using historical records, including their business records and personal correspondence collections, and examining booksellers as individuals, historians can further understand the attitudes of the booksellers and their influence on the trade.

After discussing key booksellers and their attitudes, the thesis shifts focus from an isolated discussion of booksellers as individuals to the broader implications of their attitudes and activities in the marketplace. The second chapter, "A Novel Commodity" analyzes the innovative techniques adopted to promote and disseminate booksellers' goods. Booksellers cultivated consumer desires, fostering an interest in literature of all sorts, while also promoting the fashionable qualities of the book, such as newly added chapters, types of paper, binding, and art. In doing so, booksellers created a fascination with all things literary. Successful booksellers were masters of publicity, as catalogues and advertisements sought to generate interest in the newly published titles and foster the consumption of literary goods.

The literary marketplace, with its exceptional quantity of readily available printed material, encouraged society to both consume and to produce printed material. The

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[26] In 1736-7, when Robert Dodsley entered the trade, several key figures had retired or died. Harry M. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley: Creating the New Age of Print*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 51.

[27] By the mid-century, the provincial trade had dramatically expanded. See: Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 98-99; Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade*; Porter, *English Society*, 233-236.

appearance of the commercial trade and the accessibility of books, through the literary marketplace, had remarkable results, as it engaged new sections of society, including women, to participate in central political, social, and theological debates. The emergence of the commercial trade presented lucrative opportunities for men and women to further participate in the literary marketplace. The popularity of books and the expansion of literacy, of both genders, made it an imperative that booksellers offer titles for all sorts of customers. As a result, by the mid-eighteenth century there was an unmistakeable rise in the amount of literary goods that were promoted specifically to women. Therefore, the third chapter, "Selling books to women" explores the titles offered for women and the ways in which booksellers balanced the literary appetites of Englishmen with the tastes of the often more conservative Englishwomen.

While booksellers continued to promote sales and develop markets, they also faced the crippling uncertainty of the instability of their new conceptions of property and the place of book within the temperamental economy. The fourth, and last, chapter, "Broadening the Scope of Property", explores these notions as they affected the booksellers and the book trade of the mid-to-late century. For booksellers, the purchased right to exclusively print a title was fundamental to their financial well-being, and it was considered their private property. However, the *Copyright Act* (1710) failed to elucidate the specifics of the term copyright, presenting additional obstacles for booksellers. Concepts of property fuelled the ensuing debates, as English booksellers appealed to the common law to protect their non-traditional property.

The effects of the transformation of the literary marketplace were not confined to booksellers, as eighteenth century Britons on the whole, enjoyed a plethora of published

material. However, the rapidly expanding world of print made it remarkably easy for Britons to enjoy, and participate in, the print culture. In this literary marketplace, booksellers fostered the desires of the public and cultivated a discerning consumer craving literature of all sorts.

CHAPTER 1

BOOKSELLERS AND THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE IN MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BRITAIN

In 1728, Andrew Millar assumed control of his master's London bookshop, and it proved a profitable venture, as at his death forty years later, Millar was worth well over £60,000.[1] Millar was not alone; the lapse of the *Licensing Act* in 1695 resulted in a striking increase in booksellers and printers establishing shops throughout England.[2] And so by the time Millar established his shop, the book trade was dramatically changing. The earlier growth of the book trade was slowing, and many established booksellers were leaving the business. By the time Robert Dodsley opened his shop in 1735, an entirely new trade primarily concerned with the profitability of books was emerging. In this new trade, Millar and Dodsley were at the forefront, successfully promoting books as

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[1] Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 279.

[2] Because of the breadth of the trade in the mid-to-late century, most of the booksellers discussed in this chapter were London-based, but the provincial book trade was also expanding rapidly, during the period. See: John Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 98-99; John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 233-236.

commodities. As actors in the marketplace, Andrew Millar, Robert Dodsley, and their contemporaries were central figures in the growth of the book trade and the development of a fascination with print culture that came to characterize eighteenth century British society.

The commercial revolution and commodification of the book was integral to the success of the literary marketplace in the period.[3] *The Birth of a Commercial Society* posited in 1982 that a commercial revolution took place over the course of the eighteenth century, which allowed Britons to consume goods to an unprecedented degree. In these processes, books were central, as the increasingly literate public both sought-out and were encouraged to consume literary goods. Booksellers generated interest in their titles and fostered the growth of a literate, discerning literary consumer. Although the rise of the commercial book trade marks a new period in book history, it remains underdeveloped in historical perspectives, and it is most often linked to broader concepts of culture and taste. Historians have generally acknowledged the importance of the print culture in developing our understanding of the period, but few have found booksellers and the book market worthy of historical analysis. This chapter examines eighteenth century booksellers, places them within the broader historical period of the mid-eighteenth century, and demonstrates their influence in the commercial book trade. Booksellers were vitally important to the period, as they not only facilitated the growth of

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[3] For more information on approaches to the commercial world of the eighteenth century, see: Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, (London: Routledge, 1995); John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods*, (London: Routledge, 1993); John Brewer and Susan Staves, *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, (London: Routledge, 1995); Neil McKendrick et al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); Porter, *English Society*.

the commercial market but also generated a strong interest in the world of print, resulting in an unmistakable rise in consumption of print culture.

The increase in printed material correlated with the growing literate public and presented lucrative opportunities for enterprising businessmen.[4] But it was not a period of cooperation, particularly between the English, Scottish, and Irish trades, which were in fierce competition—so much so that booksellers turned to the courts to resolve on-going disputes over copyright that plagued booksellers both in England and in Scotland, throughout the century.[5] To appreciate booksellers' importance in the trade and the commercial world of the eighteenth century one must first examine the bookseller, addressing issues such as: why did they enter the trade? Where did they come from? And how did they perceive their role within society?

In addressing these questions, historians are fortunate, as many prominent booksellers from the second half of the eighteenth century enjoyed boasting of their success, often using their literary connections to print and sell their own memoirs.[6] These

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[4] Women were involved in the printing trades, enjoying a limited but yet notable position within the business of print, which will be discussed in a following chapter. . The most prominent woman among the booksellers discussed in this chapter would certainly be Mary Cooper, as she regularly worked with Robert Dodsley, see: Robert Dodsley to Joseph Warton, April 8, 1756, Robert Dodsley, *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley, 1733-1764*, ed. James E. Tierney, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 222. "Mary Cooper" in Henry Robert Plomer et al., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1726 to 1775*, (London,: Bibliographical Society, 1968), 60-61.. Also see: Hannah Barker, "Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution: Female Involvement in the English Printing Trades, C.1700-1840," in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (New York: Longman, 1997), 81-100.

[5] The changing nature of copyright as it affected the bookseller will be discussed in chapter four.

[6] James Raven, "Selling One's Life: James Lackington, Eighteenth-Century Booksellers and the Design of Autobiography," in *Writers, Books and Trade: An Eighteenth-Century Miscellany for William B. Todd*, ed. O. M. Brack (New York: 1994), 1-24. John Almon,

autobiographies, often consisting of personal correspondences, assist in the recreation of the period, but many earlier historians misunderstood the trade in trusting the authenticity of the accounts. For some were private records, but the majority were written solely for public consumption, after the fact. Despite its weaknesses as a 'true account', memoirs and correspondences offer principal material to understand and incorporate booksellers into historical narratives. For years, booksellers were ranked and classified by their products for sale. Certainly, the types of printed literature are inescapably part of booksellers' legacy, but it inadequately represents booksellers and their importance in the book trade.

James Raven's *Judging New Wealth*, the leading work on the subject of booksellers, examined booksellers between 1750 and 1800, and demonstrated that they cleverly used their influence on print culture to promote politeness and in turn, influence popular attitudes towards business.[7] Raven posited that middling bookseller-businessmen used books to justify their own position and wealth.[8] The continuing increase in conduct and didactic literature was due largely to the choices of the booksellers, as they sold these moral titles in hopes of transforming attitudes towards their trade. To this end, Raven explained, "Literature was marketed as an antidote to prevailing irresponsible fashions,

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Memoirs of a Late Eminent Bookseller, (New York: Garland Pub., 1974); Thomas Gent, *The Life of Mr. Thomas Gent, Printer, of York*, (New York: Garland 1974); James Lackington, *Memoirs of the First Forty-Five Years of James Lackington*, (New York: Garland, 1974). Also see the following correspondence, Dodsley, *Correspondence*; Samuel Richardson, *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson*, ed. Barbauld, (New York: AMS Press, 1966).

[7] James Raven, *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750-1800*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). Also, see: Feather, *A History of British Publishing*; Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade*.

[8] Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 136-156.

while fashion itself remained the leading commercial ploy of the controlling booksellers."[9]

While Raven focussed on the works being published, this work will examine booksellers, and providing a more complete, well-rounded understanding of the literary marketplace in the period. Despite the subsequent generations' perpetuation of certain erroneous constructions, booksellers were not merely auxiliaries to the broader trends in the marketplace but instead, as the records indicate, central figures in defining commodities for sale, affecting customers' tastes and perceptions towards the book.

Although booksellers' contributions have been often understated, booksellers have not been completely excluded from the historical record. For instance, the nineteenth century antiquaries were particularly keen to acknowledge their presence, presenting booksellers as bit players for the major artistic minds of the eighteenth century.[10] Boswell's *Life of Johnson* became an invaluable resource for the early antiquaries, providing records and discussions of many booksellers of Boswell and Johnson's circle, but the work continued to perpetuate the myth that booksellers were

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[9] *Ibid*, 69.

[10] James Boswell, *James Boswell's Life of Johnson: An Edition of the Original Manuscript, Volume 1: 1709-1765*, ed. Marshall Waingrow, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); James Boswell, *James Boswell's Life of Johnson: An Edition of the Original Manuscript, Volume 2: 1766-1776*, ed. Bruce Redford and Elizabeth Goldring, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); Henry Curwen, *A History of Booksellers, the Old and the New*, (Detroit,: Gale Research Co., 1968); John Hawkins, *Life of Samuel Johnson*, ed. Bertram H. Davies, (London: Jonathan Cape 1961); Charles Knight, *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, (London: G. Routledge, 1908); E. Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers of the Time of Dr. Samuel Johnson*, (Clifton A.M. Kelley, 1972); John Nichols and Samuel Bentley, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century: Volume III*, (New York: AMS Press, 1966); Charles Welsh, *A Bookseller of the Last Century; Being Some Account of the Life of John Newbery and of the Books He Published with a Notice of the Later Newberys*, (Clifton A. M. Kelley, 1972).

rarely actors in the print culture.[11] As a result of these misrepresentations, booksellers have been largely misunderstood.

Further convoluting the role of booksellers in the eighteenth century, few sellers kept their business strictly to print publications, and so 'bookseller' is, in many respects, a misnomer. In a bookshop, eighteenth century Britons could often find stationary, periodicals, insurance, and even medicinal treatments.[12] As well, bookseller and publisher were often used interchangeably, because of their proximity in the trade and since individual printers and booksellers regularly moved between the two career fields, depending on their financial situation. Robert Dodsley and Andrew Millar were both publishers and sellers for most of their careers.[13] Conversely, William Strahan, a colleague of Dodsley and Millar, was exclusively a printer. Despite their many hats, most

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[11] For more information on the *Life of Johnson*, see: Boswell, *James Boswell's Life of Johnson: An Edition of the Original Manuscript, Volume 1: 1709-1765*; Boswell, *James Boswell's Life of Johnson: An Edition of the Original Manuscript, Volume 2: 1766-1776*; James Boswell and Marshall Waingrow, *The Correspondence and Other Papers of James Boswell Relating to the Making of the Life of Johnson*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); James Boswell and Marshall Waingrow, *James Boswell's Life of Johnson: An Edition of the Original Manuscript*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994); J. C. D. Clark and Howard Erskine-Hill, *Samuel Johnson in Historical Context*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002); Greg Clingham, *New Light on Boswell: Critical and Historical Essays on the Occasion of the Bicentenary of the Life of Johnson*, (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1991); Hawkins, *Life of Samuel Johnson*; Alvin B. Kernan, *Printing Technology, Letters, & Samuel Johnson*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987); John A. Vance, *Boswell's Life of Johnson: New Questions, New Answers*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985).

[12] John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1997), 174-176; Welsh, *A Bookseller of the Last Century*, 20-30.

[13] The designation publisher was also muddled in the eighteenth century, as it was common for booksellers to have someone else print the title, but the book would hold the bookseller's imprint. That is also why the imprints during the period commonly featured 'printed for'. Millar and Dodsley worked quite regularly with William Strahan.

individuals identified themselves as a bookseller, placing that designation above all other endeavours, as it carried a cachet, through its affiliation with the arts

Further complicating matters, the surviving material, such as ledgers, correspondences, and memoirs are unavoidably skewed towards the successful booksellers.[14] Indeed, some were enormously successful, but bankruptcies were nonetheless common. Therefore, the surviving records and the booksellers, upon which this study focuses, are not entirely indicative or representative of the entire trade. It is a study of the successful booksellers whose contributions were preserved for posterity. . Thomas Gent entered the book business around 1711, but following several failed attempts to expand his business, he retired in 1760.[15] Thomas Osborne Jr. began working at his father's bookshop in the mid-1730s. During that same period, Robert Dodsley opened his Tully's Head shop at Pall Mall. Moreover, in 1742, Andrew Millar relocated his shop and restructured his business, becoming a leading figure in the book trade. For these men the mid-century proved a period of opportunity.

By the 1730s and 1740s, the trade was in a state of flux; the older, established booksellers and printers of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were leaving the trade, creating a considerable vacuum for up-and-coming sellers. For instance, Harry Soloman pointed out that when Robert Dodsley opened his shop several central figures of the book trade "retired or died within a year of Dodsley's

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[14] Thomas Gent did publish his memoir despite his limited success, and they were apparently published exclusively for public consumption. However, memoirs from "unsuccessful" individuals were rare

[15] According to reports, Gent lived out his retirement fighting poverty and illness. H. R. Tedder and rev. C. Bernard L. Barr, "Gent, Thomas (1693-1778)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

opening...Jacob Tonson, Bernard Lintot, and James Knapton all died in 1736."[16] Similarly, the annual register of the Stationers' Company, a livery company of printers and publishers, "A List of the Names of the Master, Wardens, Assistants, and Livery of the Worshipful Company of Stationers", illustrated the turnover of members in the same period, with the departure of twenty-one members between 1737 and 1738.[17] In some instances, the closing of one shop directly resulted in the establishment of another. For instance, Thomas Payne established his bookshop following the closure, because of bankruptcy, of his older brother's shop.[18]

With the literary marketplace's slight slump in the 1730s, as the earlier establishments closed, changed hands, it created a more inviting market for newcomers. In addition to the vacuum of the 1730s, publishing houses such as the Longmans, the Rivingtons, and the Tonsons were gaining prestige through their continued existence, as the family-owned publishers encouraged sons to continue the business. The entire publishing and bookselling market gained further esteem with each passing generation.

The development of new, commercial identities mirrors the growth of the literary marketplace. Paul Langford demonstrated, in his book *Polite and Commercial People*, that English identities shifted over the course of the eighteenth century; the new identity

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[16] Harry M. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley: Creating the New Age of Print*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 51. James Tierney makes a similar observation, James E. Tierney, "Introduction," in *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley, 1733-1764* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3-61, 22-24.

[17] During the 1730s, the Stationers' records crossed-out names of deceased members; in some instances, the list would include 'dead' beside the individual's name, but that was rare. The figure of twenty-one was generated from the blacked-out names on the register for the two years. All but five of the names were an Assistant or above. Stationers' Company (London England), *Records of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, 1554-1920* (Cambridge Chadwyck-Healey, 1985), microform, Reel 44.

[18] David Stoker, "'Payne, Thomas (1716x18–1799)'," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: 2004).

incorporated the growing commercial interests, but also curbed the commercial with the promotion of a polite culture, as middling rank participation in the commercial sphere was regulated with normative modes of behaviour founded upon politeness.[19] With respect to the book trade, the connection was two-fold: first, booksellers represented the middling, commercial identities; secondly, they fulfilled the polite ambitions of their contemporaries, encouraging the world of print as a respectful past-time, and offering literature for consumption.

Many of these booksellers migrated to London to ply their trade and used their business to enhance their status, as did Thomas Gent when he raised himself from the rank of servant to a businessman through his publishing business.[20] Originally, he was apprenticed to an Irish publisher, but ran away, arriving in London around 1711, and thereafter moving to York about four years later.[21] But unlike many of his contemporaries, he did not find success. Owing to his forced retirement from the trade, Thomas Gent's recollections were markedly negative, as Gent described a world of petty, malicious adversaries set upon his ruin. Soon after his marriage, Gent and his wife Alice, who had inherited a printing business from her first husband, suddenly found their business threatened by their cut-throat competitors.[22] Although Gent's story was intimately linked to his personal affairs, as his wife's uncle, Mr. White, took it upon himself to ruin Gent's printing business, it provided a hefty warning to his

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[19] Anna Bryson presents a similar conclusion in her work. Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
[20] Gent, *The Life of Mr. Thomas Gent*, 151.
[21] Knight, *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, 66-73.
[22] Gent, *The Life of Mr. Thomas Gent*, 160; Tedder and Barr, "Gent, Thomas (1693-1778)."

contemporaries and demonstrated the vicious competition, particularly in the smaller, provincial markets. In dire straits, Gent resorted to printing books and other non-periodic literature to keep his business afloat.[23]

Increasing his catalogue of printed books, Gent turned to the antiquary market, publishing local histories of his area, York. His foray into the antiquary market brought on more rivals, as he explained a neighbouring bookseller, upon hearing of Gent's intention to publish a local history, sent his son to warn, "If I printed any thing related to the city, he would sue me in an action of two thousand pounds damages."[24] A beaten man, he conceded, "I had studied and endeavoured, to my utmost ability to make it bear, but the strength of the craftsman, with my misfortunes, had now quite overcome me."[25] Originally published in 1746, his memoir offered a caveat for all entering the trade, as it demonstrated that the competitive nature of the business could be ruinous.

Of the eighteenth century booksellers, few have been as poorly treated by posterity as Thomas Osborne.[26] Immortalized in Pope's satirical poem, *The Dunciad*,

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[23] Gent, *The Life of Mr. Thomas Gent,* 173.
[24] *Ibid*, 175.
[25] *Ibid*, 193.
[26] As O. M. Brack noted in Thomas Osborne's *Dictionary of National Biography* entry, Thomas Osborne inherited the book business at Gray's Inn from his father in 1744, and so the Thomas Osborne of Pope and Johnson was most certainly Thomas Osborne, Jr., though historians have yet to determine, with any certainty, Osborne Jr.'s year of birth. O. M. Brack, "Osborne, Thomas (Bap. 1704?, D. 1767)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford Oxford University Press, 2004). Also, Thomas Osborne, senior and junior are listed in "A List of the Names of the Master, Wardens, Assistants, and Livery of the Worshipful Company of Stationers" from 1734 to 1744. In 1755, Osborne becomes an Assistant of the Stationers' Company; he remains an Assistant until his death in 1767. Stationers' Company (London England), *Records of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, 1554-1920*, Reel 44. For more information on Thomas Osborne, see: Brack, "Osborne, Thomas (Bap. 1704?, D. 1767)."; Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers of the Time of Dr. Samuel Johnson*, 45-55; Plomer et al., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers,* 185-186.

"Osborne, through perfect modesty o'ercome/ Crown'd with the Jordan, walks contented home," his reputation was despised, at best.[27] Often accused of profiteering, Osborne was known to pay authors scarcely while charging his customers excessively, though these accusations, perpetuated by Pope and Johnson, were certainly exaggerated. Marston claims Osborne responded to these criticisms as follows:

> If I have set a high value upon book, if I have vainly imagined literature to be more fashionable than it really is, or idly hoped to revive a taste well-nigh extinguished, I know not why I should be persecuted with clamour and invective, since I shall only suffer by my mistake, and be obliged to keep the books I hope on selling.[28]

Using his high prices as evidence, many of his contemporaries and later antiquaries, illustrated Osborne as the epitome of the new, mercenary bookseller.

Thomas Osborne remains an enigmatic character, and based upon Pope and Johnson's caricatures and anecdotes of him, his historical legacy remains exclusively negative.[29] According to the accounts, Osborne was a tyrant, pressuring his colleagues, and illustrating a shocking ignorance of the titles in his shop. "Osborne was an opulent tradesman;" Johnson's biographer Sir John Hawkins explained, "his insolence to his

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[27] Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad. From the Text of Dr. Warburton. With Advertisements, Prefaces*, (London: printed for J. Bell, 1788), 139. Originally, Edmund Curll and Samuel Chapman were the satirized booksellers, but Pope was so disgusted with Osborne's reputation that he included Osborne's name, instead of Chapman's name, in the subsequent printings of *The Dunciad.* However, it is unclear whether it was Thomas Osborne Jr or Sr to whom he referred. Brack, "Osborne, Thomas (Bap. 1704?, D. 1767)."

[28] Marston cited numerous documents within the book, but does not provide the original source citation, making it very difficult to determine its originating source. Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 48.

[29] Osborne appeared in most biographical works of Johnson, but his negative image originates in James Boswell's biography of Johnson. Generally, the statements and attitudes attributed to Johnson derive from Boswell's work. Boswell, *James Boswell's Life of Johnson: An Edition of the Original Manuscript, Volume 1: 1709-1765*; Hawkins, *Life of Samuel Johnson.*

customers was also frequently past bearing."[30] Most incriminating, however, was his treatment of authors, paying them meagrely and forcing unworkably short deadlines upon them.[31] His ill reputation was most likely linked to his speciality within the trade, as he often purchased extensive and distinguished libraries, most commonly from gentlemen, which he would break up and resell to his advantage. From these libraries, he would commission authors to produce detailed catalogues, which he also sold.[32] Most notably, he purchased the Earl of Oxford's library in 1741 for £13,000—a sum many deemed insultingly small, as contemporary accounts appraised the binding alone at £18,000.[33] Lord Oxford's library was one of many Osborne acquired throughout his tenure in the trade, but it remains the stereotypical benchmark of Osborne's business dealings.[34]

Many denounced the practice of buying and marketing these prestigious libraries, and Osborne usually bore the brunt of this criticism. Since the majority of material on Thomas Osborne remains the secondary accounts, it is difficult to trace his experience and reintegrate his story into the historical narrative. Certainly, he was noteworthy, but

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[30] Hawkins, *Life of Samuel Johnson*, 62.
[31] *Ibid*, 61.
[32] Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 49.
[33] *Ibid*, 47. Also see the original catalogues of Thomas Osborne: Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number I*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number IV*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number V*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1748); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of the Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number II*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of the Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number III*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747).
[34] The title page of the catalogue for Oxford's library advertised the recent acquisition, and upcoming sale, of the libraries of Nathaniel Booth and Mr. Pate. Osborne, *A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number I*, 1.

the validity of the sources attesting to his significance remains suspect. Whether he was the tyrant some claimed has yet to be fully understood. The eighteenth century book trade was ruthlessly competitive with many booksellers "eager to see his [Osborne's] power and influence diminished", which may explain Osborne's precarious position in the historical record.[35]

Despite his tenuous position within the historical narrative, Thomas Osborne's experiences illustrates well the shifting attitudes and the gradual acceptance of books as a business. Even though he was considered a ruthless, crass businessman, he did employ Johnson and fall into the circles of most leading literary figures of the mid-eighteenth century.[36] Osborne was primarily concerned with the business of books, rather than the artistic, cultural value of literary property, but this attitude seems to have had little influence on his ability to secure authors and sell his goods. Books were becoming increasingly associated with commodities and property. For Osborne, foundations of the trade were in business. Firmly believing in the power of the market, Osborne focused his trade not on his contemporaries' opinions, but rather on his ability to effectively sell goods. His ignorance of literature and literary value were inconsequential within his perspective, as the books were merely items to market and sell.

In contrast to Thomas Osborne, Robert Dodsley has been widely celebrated in historical records.[37] Dodsley was a principal figure in the eighteenth century book trade

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[35] Brack, "Osborne, Thomas (Bap. 1704?, D. 1767)."

[36]Marston claimed Thomas Osborne, along with Charles Rivington, encouraged Richardson to write *Pamela.* Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 52.

[37] See: Knight, *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, 165-186; Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 72-86; Nichols and Bentley, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century: Volume III*; Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*; Ralph Straus, *Robert Dodsley: Poet, Publisher & Playwright*, (New York: B. Franklin, 1968); Tierney, "Introduction,"; James

whose significance was two-fold: first, he rose from the rank of footman into an established bookseller; secondly, he was an established and well-respected author, poet, and playwright. Most importantly, he was a recognized author before he entered the book trade, unlike many publishers and sellers who commonly would foray into authorship after the establishment of their shops. A well-known example of such an entrepreneur was the printer-turned-author Samuel Richardson.[38] As a well-documented and well-known eighteenth century bookseller, Robert Dodsley is central to discussions of booksellers in the period.

Robert Dodsley was born in Nottinghamshire, the first son of a dissenting schoolmaster.[39] It is believed he was apprenticed to a stocking-weaver, but ran away soon after beginning his apprenticeship.[40] Leaving for London in 1729, he became a footman for Charles Dartineuf, but he did not remain very long in that station, as he soon found

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E. Tierney, "Robert Dodsley," in *The British literary book trade, 1700-1820; Dictionary of literary biography ; v. 154.*, ed. James K. Bracken and Joel Silver (Detroit: Gale Research, 1995).

[38] Samuel Richardson was more a publisher than a bookseller, and since his life and contributions have been widely studied, it not be repeated here. See: R. F. Brissenden et al., *Samuel Richardson*, (London: Published for the British Council and the National Book League by Longmans, 1965); Austin Dobson, *Samuel Richardson*, (New York,: The Macmillan Company, 1902); T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971); Jocelyn Harris, *Samuel Richardson*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Knight, *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, 109-133; Richardson, *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson*; Clara Linklater Thomson and Samuel Richardson, *Samuel Richardson; a Biographical and Critical Study*, (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1970).

[39] Tierney, "Introduction," 4. Tierney stated the family dated from the thirteenth century (in the Midlands). But Soloman points out Dodsley's relatives most likely arrived in the 1750s, as the Dodsley name appears "with increasing frequency beginning in October 1750", 8. Moreover, Soloman stated the Dodsley family was involved in the trade, but does not provide any specific evidence to support his assumption. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, 8. For details on Robert Dodsley's early years, see: Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 3-35.

[40] Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 73; Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, 9; Tierney, "Robert Dodsley," 106.

success as a poet, publishing *Servitude: A Poem* that same year.[41] He used his earnings from these pursuits, as well as a £100 loan from Alexander Pope, to set-up his own bookshop at Tully's Head in Pall-Mall around 1735.[42] Dodsley's location in Pall Mall was aptly suited to his success, "a better position could hardly have been chosen," Dodsley's biographer Ralph Straus explains, "The old Smyra Coffee House was within a few yards, and although there were at least two pamphlet shops in Pall Mall itself, no bookseller of repute was in the vicinity."[43] Through his connections with Pope and Johnson, his shop quickly became a central part of the metropolitan book trade.[44]

According to his biographer James Tierney, Robert Dodsley was listed as the publisher on 468 first editions and the seller on 135 titles.[45] Most commonly, Dodsley would publish the titles, resulting in an imprint of 'published for' and then sold them in

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[41] Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, 14.

[42] Tierney, "Introduction," 5. According to Tierney, the first reference to Dodsley's shop was May 6, 1735, when Pope wrote to William Duncombe stating, "I beg you to accept of the New Volume of my things just printed, which will be delivered to you by Mr. Dodsley, the Author of the Toyshop, who has just set up as a Bookseller...." Alexander Pope, *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope, Volume Three*, ed. George Wiley Sherburn, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 454. Marston claims Alexander Pope gave a £100 loan to Dodsley. Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 75.

[43] Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 38.

[44] Pope first took interest in Dodsley's work, connecting him with printers. See: Pope, *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope, Volume Three*, 454. Alexander Pope to Robert Dodsley, February 5, 1732/33, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 65.; Robert Dodsley to Alexander Pope, May 8, 1734, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 66-68.; Robert Dodsley, "An Epistle to a Friend in the Country [to Mr. Wright of Mansfield], Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 68.

[45] Tierney, "Introduction," 23-25. See Tierney's footnote 53; Tierney cautiously noted his figures are based on contemporary listings of surviving publications, but it is quite possible the actual number could be considerably higher. These figures also included imprints featuring both Robert and James Dodsley's names. Dodsley was also listed as the sole publisher on 233 titles, Tierney, "Robert Dodsley," 114. For more information on Robert Dodsley's publications, see "Appendix B: A Chronological List of all the Books Published by Robert Dodsley, or bearing the name on the title page (1735-1764)" Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 316-383.

his shop, but also often with other booksellers, particularly those outside of London.[46] Opportunely placed within the artistic and commercial spheres, many authors sought out Dodsley, but he carefully considered the titles to print, and authors to sign.[47] His discriminating tastes upheld his reputation as the supporter of purely literary works.

Booksellers could not afford to publish sub-standard, poor-selling titles, and so they skilfully balanced their commercial interests with the trends in the marketplace. For instance, Robert Dodsley seriously hesitated in printing Laurence Sterne's, now classic, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy,* stating "it was too much to risk on a singly Vol."[48] Eventually, Dodsley consented, but only after Sterne offered to print the first volume at his own expense, "merely to feel" as Sterne explained, "the Pulse of the World--& that I may know what Price to set upon the Remaining Volumes, from the reception of these."[49] Based upon the reception of the volume, Dodsley offered him "six hundred and fifty pounds for the second edition and two more volumes."[50]

The early historical treatments of the eighteenth century booksellers gauged them based upon their treatment of authors, as voracious book reading Victorians were evidently aghast with the eighteenth century trend of booksellers profiting, while authors

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[46] Robert Dodsley to John Baskerville, April 7, 1757, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 273.

[47] In some instances, the market influenced his choices, such as when he chose to not publish Thomas Hooke's translation of Tasso stating, "I cannot be concern'd in that Work, but the late publication of a New Translation of y^{e} same Author, w^{ch} hat not been ill receiv'd, seems to me to render y^{e} success of another, even tho' it sh^{d} be better, at best very uncertain." *Ibid*, 69-70.

[48] Letter: Laurence Sterne to Robert Dodsley, October 5, 1759, *Ibid*, 421.

[49] *Ibid.* For additional correspondence regarding *Tristram*, see Sterne's letter that enclosed the first volume of the book. Laurence Sterne to Robert Dodsley, May 23, 1759, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 415.

[50] Horace Walpole to David Dalrymple, April 4, 1760, Horace Walpole, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. W. S. Lewis, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), 66; Horace Walpole, *Selected Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. William Hadley, (London: J. M. Dent & sons, 1926), 198.

starved. In this respect, Robert Dodsley was recognized as a fair, amiable character, championing the author within a growing environment of avarice and greed. First, the dictum of the starving artist, though it doubtlessly occurred, was not nearly as prevalent as some suggested.[51] Second, booksellers' profit margins were hyperbolized; as it was suggested these shameless booksellers and publishers amassed stunning wealth on the backs of the starving, ill-treated authors.[52] Indeed, authors were not paid generously and in some cases clearly inadequately, but most booksellers could not pay them more without eroding their already limited profits.[53] For example, in a letter to Robert Dodsley, John Brown stated, "I am sorry to find, in these upon which my other little Poem was printed, that the Interests of the Author and Bookseller are so weakly connected."[54] Dodsley's offers to authors were not exceedingly generous, yet, according to James Tierney, the agreements were "typical of their times."[55]

A common or base rate for authors was not established. Unlike book prices, which were unofficially regulated within the trade as booksellers avoided price wars, the payment of authors varied greatly.[56] Generally, Dodsley would offer a conservative sum, but included the prospect of additional payment if the title reached a second printing. For

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[51] As Roy Porter pointed out, "whereas Milton's reward for *Paradise Lost* had been £5 down and £5 at the end of the first edition, just after half a century later the astute Alexander Pope made £4,000 each out of his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*." Porter, *English Society*, 242.

[52] Dodsley's friends Johnson and Shenstone "were incessantly in debt", but they were not impoverished, as both enjoyed the luxuries of the period. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, 228.

[53] Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 59.

[54] John Brown to Robert Dodsley, February 18, 1744/5. Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 83.

[55] Tierney, "Introduction," 33. Arthur Simons Collins, *Authorship in the Days of Johnson; Being a Study of the Relation between Author, Patron, Publisher, and Public, 1726-1780*, (Clifton, : A. M. Kelley, 1973).

[56] See "Appendix B, Abstracts of Robert Dodsley's Publishing Agreements, Receipts, and Bills." Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 506-533.

instance, Dodsley signed an agreement with Edmund Burke respecting *A Vindication of Natural Society (1756),* offering £6.6.0 and Dodsley agreed "to pay an additional six guineas if [a] second edition is printed."[57] With poetry, Dodsley would commonly publish titles at the author's expense.[58] In other cases, authors would seek out Dodsley to sell their book after it had been printed. For instance, in 1746, Christopher Smart sent Dodsley one hundred copies of his title to sell in his shop.[59]

By the time Robert's brother James had entered the business around 1755, Dodsley's reputation was secure.[60] Almost simultaneously, Robert Dodsley became involved in the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, which later became the Royal Society of Arts. During Dodsley's tenure as the society's publisher, he encouraged the development of British-made paper, which would lessen Britain's dependence on imported goods.[61]

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[57] The agreement also stated 500 copies would be printed. "Burke, Edmund: Appendix B, Abstracts of Robert Dodsley's Publishing Agreements, Receipts, and Bills." *Ibid*, 510.

[58] Robert Dodsley published the poetry of Thomas Warton and Joseph Warton at their own expense. Robert Dodsley to Thomas Warton, the younger, January 29, 1747. *Ibid*, 108.

[59] Christopher Smart to Robert Dodsley, August 6, 1746, *Ibid*, 100.

[60] James had been involved in the business for several years before Robert's death. James's name first appears in the Stationers' records in 1755. "A List of the Names of the Master, Wardens, Assistants, and Livery of the Worshipful Company of Stationers', 1755" Stationers' Company (London England), *Records of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, 1554-1920*, Reel 44. According to Strauss, James Dodsley witnessed (signed as) the June 3, 1742 agreement between Robert Dodsley and Henry Baker. Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 87.

[61] Tierney, "Introduction," 22. Also see: Robert Dodsley to William Shipley, Secretary, Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, October 1, 1755. Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 208-209. Robert Dodsley to Lord Viscount Folkestone, President, Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, March 17, 1756. *Ibid*, 220-221. Robert Dodsley to George Box, Secretary, Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, June 21, 1757. *Ibid*, 281-282.

When Robert died in 1764, he left the business to his brother and business-partner, James, bequeathing him the surprisingly small sum of £500.[62] The small amount owed much to the fact that Robert Dodsley's assets were tied up in copyright ownership, and so James Dodsley's inheritance was in fact worth considerably more than that amount indicates. Many of the copyrights continued to appreciate over the century, and by James's death in the late-eighteenth century, the business was worth well over £60,000.[63]

The accruing fiscal success of booksellers did not go unnoticed. Many Britons were acknowledging the increasing role and power of the booksellers in the trade. Booksellers often held the copyright, negotiated payments and contracts with the authors to reflect business interests.[64] Some felt the change was detrimental for authors, the creators of the literary property. To combat the perceived inequalities, a group of 102 prominent gentlemen in 1736 established the Society for the Encouragement of Learning a printer-author collective, mandated, "to assist authors in publication and to secure them the entire profits of their works."[65] Despite its stance on equality, its influence on the trade was negligible. In its time, the Society represented a small sect of the book business. In a 1736 letter, the author refers to a recent incident involving Dr. Bentley:

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[62] Appendix A, Will of Robert Dodsley, *Ibid*, 503-505.
[63] Appendix A, Will of Robert Dodsley, *Ibid.* Copyright offered as property assets was common in the trade at the time, but it also meant booksellers, although some booksellers did amass great wealth, they had little fluid capital to pay authors, expand operations, since the value of the copyright was determined by public desire to purchase the item.
[64] This was certainly influenced by the 'literary poverty' of their authors, such as Johnson, who regularly wrote because he was in dire need of money.
[65] Plomer et al., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, 233. According to Marston, individuals involved in the society included: Duke of Richmond, Duke of Richmond, Earl of Hertford, Earl of Aberdeen, Earl of Oxford, and Earl Stanhope. Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 19.

> For though his work 'Manilius' was ready to be printed and he desired by several people to have it published by the Society, he not only raised such illgrounded objections against the Society, he not only raised objections against the institution itself, but chose to throw it into the hands of a common bookseller.[66]

If authors chose booksellers despite the agreement, it points to a profound change taking place in the marketplace, in that authors too were choosing the commercial marketplace. Unable to attract authors, despite its lucrative contracts, the Society quickly eroded its finances.[67] In 1748, the swelling debts forced its closure, leaving a debt of £2,000.[68] Although it supposedly challenged booksellers and the commercial book trade, it nevertheless enlisted the help of prominent bookseller Andrew Millar to sell and market the Society's titles.[69]

Andrew Millar's continued presence in the historical records is due largely to his affiliation with Henry Fielding, Samuel Johnson, and most notably David Hume.[70] Millar was involved in the publication of Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) and David Hume's *The History of England* (1762) and he was of considerable importance during his age, working with Robert Dodsley, Samuel Richardson, William

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[66] Letter cited in Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 21.
[67] According to Carol Hall, the Society only published four books during Millar's affiliation with it. Carol Hall, "Andrew Millar " in *The British Literary Book Trade, 1700-1820; Dictionary of Literary Biography ; V. 154.*, ed. James K. Bracken and Joel Silver (Detroit: Gale Research, 1995), 184-190, 184.
[68] Plomer et al., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, 234.
[69] Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 19-22.
[70] Millar published Hume in England, but Hume continued to deal also with Edinburgh booksellers and publishers. David Hume to Andrew Millar, March 15, 1762, John Hill Burton, *Life and Correspondence of David Hume, Volume Two*, (New York: B. Franklin, 1967), 131.

Strahan, and others, but interestingly few records remain.[71] According to Carole Hall, Millar's significance was based upon "his business and marketing acumen rather than his literary taste and judgement."[72] Most scholars will concede his principal importance, but the scarcity of historical records present further obstacles for historians of the eighteenth century book trade.

In 1720, Millar, a Presbyterian Scot, was apprenticed to James McEwen, an Edinburgh bookseller.[73] McEwen had bookshops in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and London. Although it is not clear precisely when Millar moved to England, in January 1728, he assumed control of the London shop.[74] Around 1742, he moved to the Strand, opposite to Katherine Street. At this time, Millar refocused his trade from merely bookselling to include publishing, dramatically expanding his imprint over the following years.[75] In contrast to his contemporary Robert Dodsley, Millar was generally more astute to the

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[71] This was also owing to his absence from authorship; he was a bookseller, not a writer. For more information on Millar, see: Hugh Amory, "Millar, Andrew (1705–1768)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Hall, "Andrew Millar"; Knight, *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, 187-203; Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers*, 15-27; Plomer et al., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, 171-173; Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 274-294.

[72] Hall, "Andrew Millar," 184.

[73] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 278.

[74] *Ibid.* According to Sher, Millar's affiliation with the Stationers' Company began a full ten years after his shop was established. As for the Stationers' Company, Millar's name first appears in the "A List of the Names of the Masters, Wardens, Assistants, and Livery of the Worshipful Company of Stationers" in 1739, listed as member of the Livery; in 1764, Millar becomes an Assistant of the Stationers', where his name continued to appear on the annual lists until his death in 1768. Records of the Stationers' Company Stationers' Company (London England), *Records of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, 1554-1920*, Reel 44.

[75] According to Carole Hall, Jacob Tonson (the elder) formerly occupied the building. Hall, "Andrew Millar," 184. R. Straus also mentioned Andrew Millar's shop being in the Strand, Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 38. Similarly, David Hume's correspondence with Millar was addressed "to Andrew Millar, Booksellers opposite Catherine Street in the Strand", see: David Hume to Andrew Millar, October 21, 1766, David Hume, ed., *The Letters of David Hume, Volume Two* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1969), 98-99.

prices of fiction. Whereas Dodsley hesitated in purchasing *Tristram Shandy*, Millar paid Fielding handsomely for his novels. According to Horace Walpole, Millar paid Fielding six hundred pounds for *Tom Jones*; following successful sales, Fielding was paid an additional hundred pounds for the work.[76] Millar was known to be quite generous to authors, but he was discriminating and had certain tastes. Hume, proposing Millar print Rousseau, recalled, "You have told me, that you do not care to deal in French books."[77]

Millar regularly collaborated with other booksellers and printers, in England and in Scotland.[78] Temporary collaborations were common, reducing the risks facing booksellers in stocking titles. In this trend, booksellers and publishers reached agreements to share the costs for larger undertakings. The best-known collaboration of the eighteenth century was Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*. Although Millar remained the principal figure in the publicaiton, the *Dictionary* resulted from the contributions of Charles Hitch, Robert Dodsley, the Longmans, and the Knaptons, as these booksellers divided the costs, echoing the trend of joint-stock companies.[79] Much like Dodsley, Millar would commonly carry already printed titles on consignment. Occasionally, both Dodsley and Millar would sell the same consignment titles, as was the case in 1753 when Robert Lowth sent copies of his book, *De Sacra Poesi Hebraiorum*, to

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[76] Horace Walpole to George Montagu, May 18, 1749. Horace Walpole, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. W. S. Lewis, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 84. The letter also appears in Walpole, *Selected Letters of Horace Walpole*, 197.

[77] David Hume to Andrew Millar, November 22, 1762, Burton, *Life and Correspondence of David Hume, Volume Two*, 139.

[78] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 285-286.

[79] According to Straus, Dr. Johnson's payment of £1575 as well as the costs of printing was divided up among the partners, Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 90. For further information on the process of joint-stock companies, see: H. V. Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

both Dodsley and to Millar.[80] Throughout their careers, Dodsley and Millar would collaborate on at least twenty-one publications.[81] Most notably, however, Millar worked with the printer William Strahan, a fellow Scot who, like Millar, began in the Edinburgh book trade and migrated to London.[82]

In the mid-eighteenth century book trade, Dodsley and Millar were eminently important; however, despite their equal success in the trade, Dodsley has been widely celebrated, while Millar has been largely overlooked.[83] This gulf in the historical record was certainly rooted in their reputations: Dodsley was a man of letters, a self-made and distinguished Englishman. Conversely, Millar was a notorious alcoholic, according to Boswell, "so habitually drunk that Strahan for twenty years did not know it", and as Richard Sher explains, "he was commonly said to be uncouth, and unlettered."[84] Hume's

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[80] According to the contents of the letter, Lowth sent two hundred to Dodsley and one hundred to Millar. Dodsley and Millar ordered the copies of the title before printing. Robert Lowth to Robert Dodsley, February 1753. Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 150.

[81] Tierney, "Robert Dodsley," 116. Straus stated, "Of the booksellers who became temporary partners with Dodsley, Andrew Millar is perhaps the most important, but the publishers with whom he [Dodsley] seems to have been on terms of the closest business intimacy were the Coopers, from whose busy house at the Globe in Paternoster Row went forth some thousand books of all kinds." Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 269.

[82] Strahan also worked with Robert Dodsley. Strahan joined the Livery of the Stationers' in 1743 (Millar joined in 1739) and continued to be involved in the Stationers' Company throughout this career, becoming an Assistant in 1764 (the same year as Millar), a Warden in 1774, and Master the following year. Stationers' Company (London England), *Records of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, 1554-1920*, Reel 44. For more information on Strahan, see: James Alkman Cochrane, *Dr. Johnson's Printer: The Life of William Strahan*, (London: Routledge, 1964); Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 294-306; William Strahan, *The Strahan Archive from the British Library* (Reading,: Research Publications, 1989), microform, reel 1&2.

[83] Both Millar and Dodsley left fortunes of approximately £60,000. Amory, "Millar, Andrew (1705–1768)"; Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 503-505.

[84] James Boswell, *Boswell, Laird of Auchinleck, 1778-1782*, ed. Joseph W. Reed and Frederick Albert Pottle, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), 99. The same quotation appears in Sher, 288. Sher claimed some of Millar's contemporaries believed he was illiterate. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 288. For further information on attitudes

correspondence supports this assessment of Millar's character, as Millar forgot about Hume's projects, lost his manuscripts, and most commonly never replied to Hume's letters. In fact, it became such a problem Hume began sending letters to William Strahan so he could hand-deliver them to Millar.[85] Although Millar was passionately commercial, he lacked the politeness and civility that complemented the eighteenth century business world.[86] Dodsley came from a dissenting family, but Millar was Scottish, which was, in the 1750s and 1760s, a serious offence.[87] While Dodsley underplayed his religion, Millar proudly declared his Scottish heritage, resulting in further indictments upon his character.

Millar kept his ties to Scotland throughout his career; he regularly favoured the company of Anglo-Scots and supported Scottish authors whenever he could.[88] However, like many former Edinburgh residents, he tenuously balanced his Scottish heritage with a strong belief in the English market. While he was an Edinburgh seller, Millar is said to

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to Scots in England, see: Michael Duffy, *The Englishman and the Foreigner*, (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1986).

[85] See: David Hume to William Strahan, February 1, 1757, Hume, ed., *The Letters of David Hume, Volume Two*, 240-241. David Hume to William Strahan, February 15, 1757, Hume, ed., *The Letters of David Hume, Volume Two*, 244-245. David Hume to Andrew Millar, October 21, 1766, Hume, ed., *The Letters of David Hume, Volume Two*, 98-99.

[86] See: Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*; Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800*, (Harlow: Longman, 2001); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837*, (Yale University Press, 2005), 195-319; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 59-182; Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 437-581; Porter, *English Society*, 185-310.

[87] In a letter to Andrew Millar, David Hume mentions the general anti-Scottish attitudes in England, referring to the poor sales of his book and stating, "the languishing sale of this edition makes me conjecture that the time is not yet come; and the general rage against the Scots is an additional discouragement." David Hume to Andrew Millar, March 28, 1763. Burton, *Life and Correspondence of David Hume, Volume Two*, 146.

[88] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 284.

have engaged in book piracy, a common feature of the Edinburgh book trade.[89] Conversely, once he was an established English bookseller and publisher, he fervently fought any Scottish booksellers' attempts to encroach on his copyright property.[90]

Millar's seemingly irrational Scottish-English identity points to the profound changes taking place in Britain during the mid-eighteenth century. Linda Colley has argued the Protestant Scots and the Protestant English forged a new 'British' identity over the eighteenth century, founded on patriotism, Protestantism, manliness, and empire.[91] However, with Millar, although he spent the majority of his adult life in England, he nonetheless held an affinity to Scotland, proudly recognizing himself as an outsider, using his Scottish heritage to separate himself from the majority of his contemporaries. In doing so, he sought out and supported Scottish authors and printers. Conversely, William Strachan, following his settlement in England, dropped the Scottish

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[89] Hall, "Andrew Millar," 184.

[90] Millar was involved several copyright decisions in the second half of the eighteenth century, see chapter three, also: Alexander Kincaid and Andrew Millar, *The Case of the Respondents. Andrew Millar, Daniel Midwinter, William Innys, John Knapton, Samuel Birt, Daniel Brown, Thomas Longman, Richard Hett, Charles Hitch, John Shuckburgh, Mary Senex, John Rivington, Francis Gosling, and the Executors of Isaac Clarke, John Pemberton, and Aaron Ward, of London, Booksellers...Appellants. Alexander Kincaid, Gavin Hamilton, John Balfour, John Paton, William Drummond, John Traile, William Sands, Gideon Crawfurd, Lauchlan Hunter, Janet Brown, Relict of William Brown, the Executors of Alexander Symers, Alexander Brymer, William Hamilton, William Millar, Alexander Dunning, John Yare, Andrew Beveridge, the Executors of Gavin Drummond, and John Aitkin, Booksellers in Edinburgh; John Barrie, Andrew Stalker, Alexander Carlisle, and Robert Fowlis, Booksellers in Glasgow*, (London: s.n., 1751); Andrew Millar, *The Case of the Appellants. Andrew Millar, Daniel Midwinter, John Knapton, and Others, Booksellers of London; and John Paterson, Surviving Executor of the Last Will and Testament of John Pemberton...William Elliot, Their Factor of Attorney; Appellants. Alexander Kincaid, Gavin Hamilton, and Others, Booksellers of Edinburgh and Glasgow; and Alexander Symers, and Andrew Symers...Were Booksellers of Edinburgh; - - - - - Respondents.* , (London: 1751).

[91] Colley, *Britons*, 364-375.

"c" from his name, carving out a new British, arguably English, identity.[92] At least in the case of these select booksellers, Britishness was neither apparent nor accepted, and Scottish and English identities persisted throughout the period.

Despite the unprecedented increase in the books available for sale, successful booksellers carefully chose the titles to publish, as the businessmen-booksellers realized the central importance of their assortment of titles. Most successful booksellers cornered an area of the market, offering a particular specialization. Gent focused on local history; Dodsley had *belles lettres*; Millar offered novels and histories. For instance, John Newbery established new avenues of book consumption, catering to young readers. As Newbery biographer Charles Welsh explained: "John Newbery was the first publisher who introduced the regular system of a Juvenile Library, and gave children books in a more permanent form than the popular chapbooks of the period." [93]The opening of the children's book market proved lucrative for Newbery. The proliferations of his titles were remarkable; in the span of a few years, most British children were acquainted with Newbery's books.[94]

Booksellers squeezed their products for as much profit as possible, so it comes as no surprise that they would often sell off their older stock in order to recuperate some of their loses, resulting in what was termed the 'remainder market'. When discussing the many facets of the book trade, the "remainder" market complicates historians' concepts

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[92] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 299-300.
[93] Welsh, *A Bookseller of the Last Century*, 91. For a list of Newbery's publications, see Appendix II "A List of the Books published by the Newbery's from 1740 to 1800" Welsh, *A Bookseller of the Last Century*, 168-333.
[94] Newbery also sold medicinal treatments. Welsh, *A Bookseller of the Last Century*, 20-30.

of the period.[95] In many instances, a book, which can be traced through front matter or a publishing catalogue to a certain publisher, appeared decades later in an identical edition, featuring a different imprint. In fact, it was common in the trade to buy copies of unsold editions and reprint the front matter to include the brand of the particular shop.[96] One of the most-recognized entrepreneurs in the remainder market was James Lackington. In his memoir, Lackington explained the remainder market as follows:

> When any books had not gone off rapidly as expected, or so fast as to pay for keeping them in the store, they would put what remained of such articles into private sales, where only booksellers are admitted and of them only such as were invited by having catalogue sent to them. At one of the sales, I have frequently seen seventy or eighty thousand volumes sold after dinner, including books of every description, good, bad, and indifferent.[97]

As a result, eighteenth century literature often will reappear decades after the original publication, claiming a new publication and featuring another house's imprint.

The proliferation of printed material in different price ranges allowed the literary marketplace to accommodate buyers of most social strata and income levels, ensuring the movement of their products.[98] With the amount of material printed each year, it was unavoidable that certain titles would not sell; by the mid-eighteenth century, entrepreneurs began taking advantage of the proliferation of titles, visiting printers and

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[95] Similarly, circulating libraries, membership-based bookshops, which allowed members to borrow books for a fee, are also important in the spread of cultural commodities. For brief discussions of circulating libraries, see Brewer, *Pleasures*, 177-188; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, 94-99; Porter, *English Society*, 235-240; James Raven, "The Noble Brothers and Popular Publishing, 1737-89," *Library* 12, no. 4 (1990), 293-345.

[96] Lackington, *Memoirs of the First Forty-Five Years*, 217.

[97] *Ibid.*

[98] Historians have argued price was the principal deterrent, not literacy rates, from the consumption of books. Porter, *English Society*, 235-237; Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 57.

booksellers and offering to buy up their excess stock.[99] Although some booksellers and printers occasionally objected to the practice, it was widely accepted as a way for booksellers to unload unsold stock and recuperate some of their costs. It also generated further interest in the print culture.

It is no understatement to claim the eighteenth century book trade was commercial. Even James Lackington, who scoffed at the ambitions of other booksellers, was inescapably mercantile. One of the few non-profit publishers of the second half of the eighteenth century was Horace Walpole. His press, at his residence Strawberry Hill, opened in 1757, often printing titles and offering them to the public for free.[100] "In short," as Walpole explained to Horace Mann, "I am turned printer, and have converted a little cottage here into a printing office."[101] Not surprisingly, Walpole was an anomaly: he came from an established family and did not have to rely on his printing press for his livelihood, which led him to reject the commercial ambitions of his contemporaries in the trade. However, he did occasionally sell his imprint the London shops.

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[99] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 124.

[100] According to W. S. Lewis, the famous collector of 'Walpoliana' and benefactor to Yale University, Walpole also sold titles to the London booksellers, but he offered most for free. Also, Lewis claimed Walpole's press was the first press in a private residence. Horace Walpole, *Selected Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. W. S. Lewis, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), xiii. According Dodsley's biographer, Straus, on at least one occasion, Walpole printed the title and offered it to Dodsley to sell, although it is not clear if Straus referred to Robert or James Dodsley, since Walpole did have several commercial arrangements with James Dodsley as well. Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 162-168. According to W. S. Lewis, Dodsley likely assisted Walpole set up his Strawberry Hill Press, see Footnote 1: Horace Walpole to Robert Dodsley, November 4, 1753. Horace Walpole, *Horace Walpole's Miscellaneous Correspondence*, ed. W. S. Lewis, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 78.

[101] Horace Walpole to Horace Mann, August 4, 1757, Walpole, *Selected Letters of Horace Walpole*, 148.

Although the assortment of booksellers working in the mid-eighteenth century cannot easily be characterized collectively, certain similarities emerge. Nearly all successful booksellers and printers were apprenticed to existing booksellers of the post-1695 market. Millar, Strahan, Gent, and Newbery were involved in the trade before assuming control of their shops. Robert Dodsley did not apprentice, but nevertheless enjoyed the benefices of Pope, an established figure in the early eighteenth century trade. Booksellers commonly came from modest ranks, but they were generally accepted, if they showed any positive interest in literature and culture. In short, if these mercantile men behaved properly, their affiliation with the world of business, and the stigma of the self-made man could be overlooked. The individual's disposition was valued over their rank or heritage.

Even if they abided by the codes of behaviour, booksellers could easily be maligned, which is evidenced in the cases of both Dodsley and Millar. Millar treated authors more generously than many of his contemporaries, including Dodsley, but his reputation and disposition overshadowed his contributions. Conversely, Robert Dodsley was a man of letters, well respected and acknowledged as a central figure of the trade. Consequently, Osborne's reputation persisted well beyond his death precisely because his contemporaries labelled him as coarse and ill-mannered. The partiality of the historical records remain problematic for scholars, as many booksellers were erased or intentionally overlooked by hostile contemporaries, often because they were not polite and commercial Englishmen and failed to balance their rank with a genuine civility.[102]

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[102] For more information on the changing concepts of civility and politeness throughout the eighteenth century, see: Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*; Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff, *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish*

Much like the 1730s, when Millar and Dodsley established their shops, by the late 1760s, the book trade was in flux. Dodsley died in 1764, followed by Thomas Osborne and John Newbery in 1767, and Andrew Millar in 1768. However, their shops continued, James Dodsley assumed control of his brother's shop; Millar's legacy was continued by his assistant Thomas Cadell; and John Newbery passed his business to his son, Francis. Their successful bookshops outlived them, as the booksellers of the mid-to-late century stimulated the interest in books, which continued until the turn of the nineteenth century. The inflammable political climate of the 1760s brought an increased interest in the trade, as print and the new cohort of booksellers continued to expand the trade based on the mid-century's example.[103] Booksellers of the mid-century were chiefly important in developing a new commercial trade. In doing so, their own attitudes and actions help to build a more comprehensive view of the eighteenth century literary marketplace.

Enlightenment, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650-1850*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Michael McKeon, "The Secret History of Domesticity: Private, Public, and the Division of Knowledge," in *The Age of Cultural Revolutions: Britain and France, 1750-1820*, ed. Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 171-189; Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

[103] See: John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 139-160.

CHAPTER 2

A NOVEL COMMODITY: BOOKS, BOOKSELLERS, AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BRITON

In 1758, Thomas Turner confessed to his diary he had his faults and that:

> ...I have oftentimes, to gratify that insatiable humour, been at too great an expense in buying books and spending rather too much time in reading, for it seems to be the only diversion that I have any appetite for. Reading and study (might I be allowed the phrase) would in a manner be both meat and drink to me, were my circumstances but independent.[1]

In this weakness, Turner was not alone, as many Britons suffered a similar affliction. And as Turner lamented, books and reading could be ruinous. For Turner, as for many of his contemporaries, buying books of all sorts from a local bookshop was commonplace. Britons gloried in the newly established marketplace, acquiring an unprecedented amount and a variety of material goods.[2] However, it was a new luxury afforded to Britons of

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[1] Thomas Turner, *The Diary of Thomas Turner, 1754-1765*, ed. David George Vaisey, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 143.

[2] For more information on the eighteenth century commerce, see: T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); John Brewer, "Commercialization and Politics," in *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Neil McKendrick, Brewer John, and Plumb J. H. (Bloomington:

Turner's generation. Books were nothing new; but the ubiquity of titles available for consumption in the marketplace emerged exclusively in the mid-eighteenth century.[3] Booksellers fostered customer desires and created larger markets for printed material, and as a result, they booksellers held considerable influence within society. While the previous chapter discussed booksellers as individuals within eighteenth century Britain, this chapter turns to examine the booksellers' role within Hanoverian society, demonstrating the influence of booksellers in cultivating the desires of the public and spreading awareness about the goods available. Through advertisements in periodicals and publishing catalogues, booksellers fostered interest in the world of print, while also generating demand for books as commercial goods. In doing so, booksellers were principal figures in the commodification of the book, and in turn, the commodification of culture, in the mid-to-late century.

During the eighteenth century, literacy rates were climbing steadily, creating a rapidly expanding market for printed material. Current estimates place literacy rates by the mid-century at about sixty percent for men, and forty percent for women; however, these figures are imprecise and inconsistent, as literacy rates are often based on the ability

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Indiana University Press, 1982), 197-262; John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods*, (London: Routledge, 1993); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 59-123; Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 510-582; Neil McKendrick et al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

[3] According to John Brewer's discussion of the Eighteenth Century British Bibliography, the published material of the eighteenth century, arranged into four main categories, as follows: "religion with more than 50,000 titles; social sciences, with more than 47,000; literature, in excess of 45,000; and history and geography, with about 25,000." John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1997), 171.

to sign one's name, and varied considerably between ranks and regions.[4] Nevertheless, Britons were moving towards print culture in droves. Despite the ballooning numbers of literate Britons, historians, such as John Brewer, argue "the transformation was wrought less by growing literacy than by an increased provision of reading matter, a development that changed the nature of reading itself."[5] In short, it was the readily available texts, offering an assortment of reading materials on many subjects and themes that ultimately transformed perceptions of the book and in turn the reading public.

Since John Brewer's 1976 book, *Party Ideology and Party Politics*, historians have been aware of the value of print culture as a central component of English eighteenth century political culture, what he termed an "alternative structure of politics."[6] More recently, Hannah Barker has further articulated this thesis, studying the newspaper culture of the mid-to-late century, linking the print culture more explicitly to the political realm and demonstrating the importance of newspapers in historical comprehension of eighteenth century Britain.[7] Conversely, this chapter will affirm the central importance of the booksellers in the commercial world, placing them within the commercial culture of

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[4] *Ibid*, 167. For literacy rates in the Early Modern Period, see: David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Also, see: Tim Blanning, *The Pursuit of Glory: Europe 1648-1815*, (London: Penguin, 2007), 3-92; T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660-1789*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 103-182; Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Roger Chartier and Alain Boureau, *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

[5] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 169.

[6] John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 139-160.

[7] Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 43-72.

the eighteenth century.[8] While they were contributing to the political culture, they were also promoting their own commercial interests.

Despite the trade's political links, booksellers were also principal figures in the development of the commercial society. John Brewer, Paul Langford, and Roy Porter have demonstrated the progressively commercial society of eighteenth century Britain, in which a variety of factors joined together to transform society.[9] For example, improvements the communication networks enhanced the spread of goods and information throughout the countryside, resulting in a staggering increase in available goods.[10] When coupled with the prosperity, resulting from similar accelerations in trade, Britons began to partake and enjoy the marketplace unlike never before.

During the eighteenth century, as Thomas Turner illustrates, there was an ever-increasing fascination with books. With the relaxation of licensing laws following 1695, there was a marked increase in the book trade, which transformed the literary marketplace. Books became commercial items to an unprecedented level, resulting in more Britons enjoying all sorts of literature. Interestingly, the growth of the literary marketplace occurred independently of technological innovation, as the publishing techniques went unchallenged and unchanged for most of the century.[11] Innovation, therefore, was restricted to the structural elements of the trade, affecting the institutions

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[8] See: Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660-1789*, 136-182.

[9] See: Brewer, "Birth of Commercial,"; Brewer and Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods*, 1-15; Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People,* 59-121; Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 185-250.

[10] Porter, *English Society*, 191-193.

[11] Roy Porter explained innovation was rare, in all trades "in the first two-thirds of the century, it was highly exceptional for technological innovations to revolutionize a trade." *Ibid*, 195.

and practices rather than the physical products or the efficiency of printing.[12] As a result, booksellers focussed their efforts and capital on publicizing their titles, while banking on features like paper quality, illustrations, and subject matter of the book to generate interest.

The absence of technological innovation fashioned the growth of business practices and principles, influencing popular attitudes to books and the book trade, culminating in the commodification of the book in the mid-to-late eighteenth century. Since booksellers and printers could not expect their expertise to carry the trade, it was the ingenuity of the businessmen that proliferated books throughout Britain. According to John Feather, the successful trade during the eighteenth century resulted from three related factors: prosperity of the market, availability of books, and efficient distribution systems.[13] These three facets were intimately linked to the lack of technological innovation, as it reinforced the importance of business techniques and pitted booksellers against one another in the fiercely competitive literary marketplace. Moreover, the absence of technological change and innovation affirmed the importance of advertising.

"Booksellers" as Paul Langford explained, "had to be masters of the art of advertising—the puff."[14] For the booksellers, books were fashionable; books were property; and books were about profit, as they were most often expensive. As a result, booksellers needed to make a profit or face ruin. Therefore, inherent costs associated with the literary marketplace prompted these businessmen to take action and ensure the sale of their goods, as well as their economic well-being.

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[12] John Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 94.
[13] *Ibid*, 97-105.
[14] Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, 92.

Advertising was multi-faceted; it involved promotional space in newspapers, book reviews, pamphlet catalogues, and catalogues appended to newly published books.[15] Within the broader context of eighteenth century society, newspapers, booksellers and books run together. The reading public stimulated the desires for printed material, and the success of the booksellers was founded on the desires and habits of the print culture-seeking Briton.[16] Booksellers were not pandering to already-established tastes, but rather they were cultivating customer appetites. Through advertisements, catalogues, and book

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[15] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 106-115.

[16] For more information on print culture and the reading public in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, see: Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England*; Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987); Brewer, *Pleasures*, 125-197; J. C. D. Clark, *The Language of Liberty, 1660-1832. Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Arthur Simons Collins, *Authorship in the Days of Johnson; Being a Study of the Relation between Author, Patron, Publisher, and Public, 1726-1780*, (Clifton, : A. M. Kelley, 1973); Jeremy Gregory, "Anglicanism and the Arts: Religion, Culture and Politics in the Eighteenth Century," in *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain, 1660-1800*, ed. Jeremy Black and Jeremy Gregory (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 82-109; Peter C. G. Isaac and Barry McKay, eds., *The Human Face of the Book Trade: Print Culture and Its Creators* (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1999); Edward Jacobs, "Eighteenth-Century British Circulating Libraries and Cultural Book History," *Book History* 6 (2003), 1-22; Robin Myers and Michael H. Harris, eds., *A Genius for Letters: Booksellers and Bookselling from the 16th to the 20th Century* (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1995); James Raven, *British Fiction, 1750-1770: A Chronological Check-List of Prose Fiction Printed in Britain and Ireland*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987); James Raven, *Free Print and Non-Commercial Publishing since 1700*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); James Raven, "The Publication of Fiction in Britain and Ireland, 1750-70," *Publishing History*, no. 24 (1988), 31-47; James Raven et al., *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and Its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); D. R. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); D. R. Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture, 1500-1730*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

reviews, booksellers exploited areas of the print culture to showcase and solicit their goods.

The similarly booming periodical literature provided another avenue for the promotion of recently published titles. The increasing market of periodical literature, including *The Gentleman's Magazine*, fostered the growth of a literate, informed public seeking printed material—a desire further cultivated by the booksellers and printers.[17] The years following the lapse of the *Licensing Act* in 1695 witnessed a marked growth in the production and sale of newspapers.[18] By 1725, the requirements of the *Stamp Act*, which imposed a duty on newspapers, resulted in a standard size of four pages per issue.[19] Physically, newspapers were generally uniform, keeping the same general appearance throughout the century. As Jeremy Black notes, "the general growth in the circulation of the press seems to have permitted more of the same."[20] As a result, despite its growing market, innovation was limited, and newspapers changed only slightly

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[17] Harry M. Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley: Creating the New Age of Print*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 52.

[18] For further discussion of newspapers, see: Hannah Barker, "Catering for Provisional Tastes: Newspapers, Readership and Profit in Late Eighteenth-Century England," *Historical Research* 69, no. 168 (1996), 42-61; Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion*; Hannah Barker, "Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution: Female Involvement in the English Printing Trades, C.1700-1840," in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (New York: Longman, 1997), 81-100; Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows, *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760-1820*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Black, *The English Press*; Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). Also, see: Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790-1860*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

[19] It was the *Stamp Act* of 1725. Black, *The English Press*, 278.

[20] *Ibid*, 290.

between 1725 and 1790.[21] However, the range and space devoted to advertisements increased considerably.

By perusing bookseller catalogues, an eighteenth century Briton had a wide range of literary choices, such as history, science, literature, entertainment, and political tracts from which to choose. In such a contemplative world, in enlightenment England, and in an age of the "natural" philosopher, it was no surprise and it was expected by Hanoverians that such a broad range of titles would be readily available. The wide range of titles and prices assured the success of these booksellers, as it created a broad, general range of sales. Often, booksellers would offer the same title in a variety of editions—some with fashionable engravings and high-quality paper, while others with cheaper, pamphlet-style features. Although they offered broad selections, the bookseller carefully selected the titles for sale; books were abundant, but booksellers were nonetheless discriminate, choosing titles for public consumption based upon their own notions of the public's desires. As James Raven explains, "the public may not always have been given what it wanted: it was given what it was said it wanted."[22] The booksellers' influential role affirms their importance in the trade, as booksellers determined the items available for consumption. Consumers may have certain tastes and ideas of reading, but it was the tangible product that ultimately determined the future course of the book trade.

By the mid-eighteenth century, advertisements were also requiring more space and attention in the periodical market. Although advertisements included a range of subjects, including employment postings, medicinal treatments, and material goods, the

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[21] *Ibid*, 279.
[22] James Raven, *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750-1800*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 69.

expanding periodical industry provided booksellers with an opportunity to announce and advertise newly published books.[23] Booksellers would commonly purchase space in local papers to publicize books currently available, announce their catalogue, and generate interest. From its inception in 1731, the highest circulated periodical in the period, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, advertised the new books to the public.[24] Initially, the new books section consisted of the title, author, price, and location; generally, a brief listing of books available with very little annotation. By the late 1750s, the new books section had expanded to include discussions and reviews of the new material. Most book publishers and book wholesalers remained in London, and so these announcements spread book sales outside of the city, and it facilitated the circulation of books into the provinces.[25] An interested reader outside of London could choose from the titles currently available, order it with their local shop, and receive the title within a week.[26]

Since booksellers were often taking risks in stocking their shelves, advertisements became an essential aspect of the trade in the period. Nearly all sellers and publishers

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[23] "The Gentleman's Magazine," (London: 1731); Isaac Kimber et al., *The London Magazine. Or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer*, (London [England]: printed for R[ichard]. Baldwin, jun. at the Rose in Pater-Noster-Row, 1747-1783). Books were only one of the many items advertised in periodicals. For example, art was also readily advertised, "Catalogue of the Pictures of the late Sir Luke Schaub, lately sold by publick auction; with the Prices and Names of the Purchasers", *Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1758, 225-227

[24] Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, 52. According to Paul Langford, Edward Cave printed 9,000 copies a month in 1734 and 15,00 a month by 1744. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, 91. Roy Porter explained "Magazines had circulations of up to a few thousand copies; the *Spectator* early in the century about 3,000, the *Gentleman's Magazine* from the 1730 up to 10,000." Porter, *English Society*, 235.

[25] The rise of the provincial bookseller and book market was a particular innovation of the eighteenth century. See: Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 98-99; John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Porter, *English Society*, 233-236.

[26] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 176.

counted advertisements as an unavoidable cost, as it was established that advertisements were vital in disseminating newly printed books. Not surprisingly, the projections and expectations of the book set the capital allotted for advertisements; a new title from a well-established author would most certainly receive more publicity and advertisement than a small poetry book from a first-time author. But the amount of publicity depended on the booksellers' own expectations for the title.[27] In some cases, authors suggested the amount of advertising required.[28]As most magazines in the period featured books section, *The Gentleman's Magazine* was one of many.[29] Occasionally, booksellers would create their own newspaper, profiting from the similarly booming periodical industry, while also ensuring a vehicle for the promotion of their titles. Furthermore, shareholders would often control the advertisements included, ensuring the titles of competitors were withheld from the publication. Therefore, it paid for booksellers to have financial interests in periodicals. In 1757, Robert Dodsley paired with William Strahan, a printer, to publish the thrice-weekly publication, *London Chronicle; or Universal Evening Post*; however, disputes, which concerned a political piece attacking Pitt, occurred shortly after its first issue, prompting Robert Dodsley to relinquish his shares less than a month after the initial publication.[30] In 1755, Andrew Millar solicited the assistance of David Hume

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[27] Robert Dodsley provided a draft format of the advertisements for John Baskerville. In the letter, Dodsley also mentioned ornamented paper. Robert Dodsley to John Baskerville, February 10, 1757. Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 264-265.
[28] Christopher Smart to Robert Dodsley, January 7, 1747/8. *Ibid*, 118-119.
[29] According to letter from John Barr to Robert Dodsley, April 9, 1749, the *Evening Post* was one of the most up-to-date announcements of publications. Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 128.
[30] See: Ralph Straus, *Robert Dodsley: Poet, Publisher & Playwright*, (New York: B. Franklin, 1968), 96-98. Robert Dodsley to William Strahan, January 14, 1757, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 258-259.; Robert Dodsley to William Strahan, January 24, 1757, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 262. Despite Dodsley's absence, the paper continued for many

on a proposed newspaper, but Hume regretfully declined, stating, "I have another Work in hand which requires great Labour & Care to finish."[31] Booksellers did not work alone on the newspapers, and would often enlist the assistance of favoured authors, as did Robert Dodsley when he recruited Edmund Burke to edit his *Annual Register.* [32]

Dodsley launched the *Public Register: or the Weekly Magazine* in 1741, but despite the magazine's initial success, readership rapidly dropped, and the paper concluded at its twenty-fourth issue.[33] Five years later, he made a second attempt, launching with Mark Akinside, the *Museum: or, Literary and Historical Register*, a bi-weekly magazine focusing on literary contributions, but it was discontinued in 1747.[34]

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years. Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 99. For further information on attitudes to Pitt during the period, see: Marie Peters, *Pitt and Popularity: The Patriot Minister and London Opinion During the Seven Years' War*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).

[31] David Hume to Andrew Millar, June 12, 1755. David Hume, ed., *The Letters of David Hume, Volume Two* (Oxford: The Clarendon press, 1969), 222-223.

[32] Edmund Burke and Robert & James Dodsley, "the said Edmund Burke doth agree to write collect & compile from such materials as may arise a work entitled the Annual register or Retrospections on men & things for the year 1758 to be printed in octavo in the manner of Millers Kalendar 800.... The said Robert & James Dodsley...agree to pay to the said Edmund Burke the sum on one hundred pounds for the first Volume of said Work, one moiety of the said payment to be made on or before Michaelmas day next ensuing, and the other on the publication of the said Volume, and to find him all books & Pamphlets necessary for his carrying on the said Work." Memorandum, April 24, 1758, Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 257-258. See also: Edmund Burke to James Dodsley, February 9, 1764, *The Annual Register or a View of the History, Politicks, and Literature, of the Year 1758*, (London: printed for R. and J. Dodsley, 1761); Edmund Burke, *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 174-175.

[33] James E Tierney, "Introduction," in *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley, 1733-1764* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3-61, 9.

[34] In a letter, John Gilbert Cooper discussed plans for an edition of *The Museum*, including the contributions to the magazine. John Gilbert Cooper to Robert Dodsley, February 11, 1747/8, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 109-110. Straus cited an agreement between Mark Akinside and Robert Dodsley, "Dr. Akinside ingages to Mr. Dodsley for six months, commencing the 25th of March next, --To prepare and have ready for the press, once a fortnight, one Essay, whenever necessary, for carrying on a work to be called *The Museum.*" Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, 82-83.

Although he had made many earlier attempts to capitalize on the market, the *Annual Register* was Dodsley's most successful periodical venture.[35] The rapid success and readership of the *Gentleman's Magazine* confirmed the viability and profitability of newspapers and magazines in the commercial trade, and most booksellers purchased shares or controlled a periodical.[36] Following his modest success in the periodical market, Dodsley began purchasing shares in existing papers, such as the *London Magazine*, a well-read competitor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[37]

The surviving publishing catalogues provide a glimpse into the eighteenth century marketplace. Booksellers frequently used publishing catalogues, as they provided an affordable, valuable means of publicizing titles in print. In many cases, as with Robert Dodsley, prominent bookseller and author of the mid-eighteenth century, catalogues assisted the proliferation of titles outside of London.[38] In the case of Andrew Millar, Dodsley's contemporary, the bulk of his catalogues are found appended to his publications. Conversely, Thomas Osborne, famed seller of renowned libraries such the Earl of Oxford's, commissioned authors to annotate his catalogues of publications, catalogues that he would additionally sell for profit. Most commonly, historians have used catalogues to date correspondence or publications, but catalogues also present a

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[35] Interestingly, Burke's business with the Dodsleys was greatly underrepresented in his published correspondence. One of the few references to the *Annual Register* is Edmund Burke to James Dodsley, February 9, 1764, Burke, *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, 174-175.

[36] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 113-115.

[37] Dodsley purchased the shares in 1748. Tierney, "Introduction," 5.

[38] For instance, in a letter dated April 7, 1757, Dodsley mentions copies of a book were sent to Bath, "I sent a sortment of it to Bath which is sold, & Mr. Leake has sent for a small parcel more; I will send it him at the reduc'd price, & will advertise [his] it to be sold by him also." Robert Dodsley to John Baskerville, April 7, 1757, Robert Dodsley, *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley, 1733-1764*, ed. James E. Tierney, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 273.

valuable resource for understanding the trade, as they demonstrate the priorities and principles of the specific bookseller.[39] For instance, Robert Dodsley focussed generally on the artistic elements, whereas Andrew Millar's catalogues made the novelty of the edition the focal point. Certainly, catalogues and advertisements as historical records, present several weaknesses as they do not indicate sales, print runs, and oftentimes, do not provide the price of the item. Therefore, historians must be cautious when gauging the significance of the catalogue; still, catalogues provide a useful resource in understanding the booksellers' function in the literary marketplace.

Despite booksellers' shares and interests in periodicals, it paled to their first trade, as most booksellers turned to newspapers predominantly to fuel their book-business. In fostering the growth of the book trade, booksellers exploited many facets of the book trade such as publishing catalogues. These catalogues highlight the ambitions of booksellers and are a significant, albeit often overlooked, facet of the eighteenth century literary marketplace. Over the course of the century, an increasingly literate, informed public began seeking printed material—a desire further cultivated by the booksellers and printers, through publishing catalogues.[40] In these catalogues, booksellers offered something for everyone. Since Britons were literate to an unprecedented degree, it presented a strong market. Although the more expensive, more celebrated titles invited a certain clientele, booksellers were largely inclusive, offering titles for literate Britons.

Robert Dodsley, like many of his contemporaries, relied on pamphlet publications, which listed and described the current and upcoming titles his press and

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[39] James E. Tierney, "Book Advertisements in Mid-18th-Century Newspapers: The Example of Robert Dodsley," in *A Genius for Letters*, 103-122.
[40] Solomon, *The Rise of Robert Dodsley*, 52.

shop had for sale. Catalogues, such as one from 1747, offered glimpses of the content and presentation of the books.[41] As many customers would choose and order books based on these catalogues, before actually seeing the book, booksellers had to be thorough and engaging in their descriptions, particularly with costlier items. For instance, he explained the fashionable qualities of the new publication of *Don Quixote,* which offered, for the price of 2*l*10*s*, luxuries such as:

> 69 copper-plates, designed by Vanderbank, and engrave'd by Vangergucht; with a curious Preface and Notes by the Translator, an Account of the Cuts by Dr. Oldfield, and the Life of Cervantes translated from the Spanish of Don Gregorio de Meyans Sifear, Library Keeper to the King of Spain.[42]

A few pages later, as the titles dropped remarkably in price, the descriptions and discussions shifted focus from the aesthetics to practical qualities. For example, the catalogue entry for the educational book, *the Child's New Play Thing*, priced at 1*s*, explained its importance in the formative years of childhood, as it was "adapted to the Capacities of Children, and divided into Lessons of one, two, three and Syllables, with entertaining Pictures to each Story and Fable."[43] Dodsley relied on the practical features for lower price items, while the artistic, aesthetic qualities justified his higher-priced items.

Andrew Millar employed similar tactics. The bulk of Millar's surviving catalogues were appended to his publications, and so the catalogue entries were no doubt chosen based on the content of the book, informing customers of similar titles available.

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[41] Robert Dodsley, *Books Printed for R. Dodsley, at Tully's Head in Pall-Mall, 1747*, (London: 1747). For more of Dodsley's catalogues, see: Robert Dodsley, *Books Printed for R. Dodsley, 1752*, (London: 1752).
[42] Dodsley, *Books Printed for R. Dodsley, at Tully's Head in Pall-Mall, 1747*, 1.
[43] *Ibid*, 5.

For instance, in *A Dissertation on Hermaphrodites* by Georges Arnaud de Ronsil, the catalogue included other books by the same author, namely *A Dissertation on Hernia's or Ruptures.*[44] In a 1742 catalogue appended to the *History of Nadir Shah*, Andrew Millar announced his recently published titles, which included:

> A Complete Collection of the Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works of John Milton. Containing several *Original Papers* of His, never *before* published. With an historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of the Author. By Mr. Birch. In 2 Vol. Folio[45]

With John Milton's book, the focus remained on the parts never before published—new elements were the principal selling point. Although Millar's catalogues were unadorned with the captivating language of the Dodsley example, it promoted the titles and fostered the literary desires of the reading public.

On the whole, Millar's descriptions offered basic information, providing only the briefest of discussions. Certainly, its placement at the end of the book influenced its length, resulting in the abbreviated descriptions. Generally, instead of relying on the adornments of the edition, Millar regularly emphasized the recently added elements, commonly claiming the book featured material "never before published."[46] The novelty

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[44] "Books printed for A. Millar, opposite to Catherine-Street, in the Strand" in Georges Arnaud de Ronsil, *A Dissertation on Hermaphrodites*, (London: printed for A. Millar, 1750), 58.

[45] "Books Printed for and Sold by A. Millar" in James Fraser, *The History of Nadir Shah Formerly Called Thamas Kuli Khan, the Present Emperor of Persia. To Which Is Prefix'd a Short History of the Moghol Emperors. At the End Is Inserted, a Catalogue of About Two Hundred Manuscripts in the Persic and Other Oriental Languages, Collected in the East.* , (London: printed for A. Millar, 1742), 250.

[46] Millar made similar assertions of revisions, never before published in "Books Printed for and Sold by A. Millar in the Strand, London" in William Robertson, *The History of Scotland During the Reigns of Queen Mary, and of King James Vi. Till His Accession to the Crown of England. With a Review of the Scottish History Previous to That Period; and an Appendix. Volume One*, (London: printed for A. Millar, 1762), 455.

of the edition was repetitiously used throughout most of Millar's catalogues. For instance, in 1750, Millar advertised:

> The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews, and his Friend Mr. Abraham Adams. Written in Imitation of the *Manner* of Cervantes, Author of *Don Quixote*. The Fourth Edition: Revised and Corrected, with *Alterations* and *Additions* by the Author. Illustrated with Cuts. In Two Vols. 12 mo.[47]

Joseph Andrews was enormously popular, selling 6,500 copies in 1742, and Millar capitalized on popular titles whenever possible, prolonging sales by offering new elements.[48] And Millar would often re-release his successful books with new, previously unpublished and unavailable chapters and essays.[49] Unlike Dodsley, who relied on the artistic elements to sell items, Millar persistently expressed the novelty of the current edition, fostering obsolescence in the literary marketplace. For Millar, books were perishable commodities with quite literally a "shelf-life", and he fostered a consumption based on the latest editions and titles.

Thomas Osborne, a generally vilified character in historical records of the eighteenth century book trade, promoted the importance of the artistic characteristics and

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[47] "Books Printed and Sold by A. Millar" in Henry St John Bolingbroke, *Letters, on the Spirit of Patriotism: On the Idea of a Patriot King: And on the State of Parties, at the Accession of King George the First*, (London: printed for A. Millar, 1750), 237. In fact, the exact same listing appeared in the 1767 publication of Bolingbrooke's publication. Thomas Cadell, Millar's successor, reprinted the exact book and did not bother to update the appended catalogue. Henry St John Bolingbroke, *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism: On the Idea of a Patriot King: And on the State of Parties, at the Accession of King George the First*, (London: printed for T. Cadell, 1767), 234.

[48] Porter, *English Society*, 235.

[49] For more examples of Millar's catalogues see: "Books Printed for and Sold by A. Millar, at Buchanan's Head, over-against Catharine-Street in the Strand, London" in David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, (London: printed for A. Millar, 1751), 255. "Books Printed for and Sold by A. Millar in David Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688. Volume Seven*, (London: printed for A. Millar, 1763), 622.

physical characteristics in a style similar to Dodsley.[50] In the 1754 catalogue appended to *The Adventures of Jerry Buck*, Osborne explained:

> A Collection of Voyages and Travels some now first printed from Original Manuscripts, others now first published in *English* with a General Preface, giving an Account of the Progress of Trade and Navigation, from its first Beginning: In Eight Volumes in Folio, Price Nine Guineas neatly bound; collected by the learned Mr. *John Locke*. Illustrated with several hundred useful Maps and Cuts. Containing Views of the different Countries, Cities, Towns, Forts, Ports and Shipping. Also the Birds, Beasts, Fish, Serpents, Trees, Fruits and Flowers; with the habits of the different Nations, all elegantly engraved on Copper-Plates.[51]

The catalogue entry focused on the content and physical presentation of the book, articulating the various conveniences contained within it, including cuts and maps. As well, the connection to John Locke would perk interest of a certain clientele.

With Osborne's catalogues, the utility of the book was paramount, but this focus was not unique in the trade. In fact, it was the most common approach used by sellers, as it both catered to and fostered the developing commercial identities, which were becoming increasingly linked to improvement and progress. Not surprisingly, then, John

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[50] See also "Books printed for T. Osborne in Gray's-Inn" in Dodsley, *Books Printed for R. Dodsley, 1752*; John Hill, *The Adventures of Mr George Edwards, a Creole. The Second Edition.* , (London: printed for T. Osborne, 1751), 283; Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number I*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number IV*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of Some Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number V*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1748); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of the Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number II*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747); Thomas Osborne, *A Catalogue of the Tracts and Pamphlets, Collected by the Late Earl of Oxford: ... Number III*, (London: Printed for T. Osborne, in Grays-Inn, 1747); Tierney, "Book Advertisements in Mid-18th-Century Newspapers: The Example of Robert Dodsley,".

[51] Further states "N. B. the Seventh and Eighth Volumes may be had alone, to complete those Gentleman's Sets which have purchased the first Six Volumes." "Books Printed for Thomas Osborne" in John Slade, *The Adventures of Jerry Buck. Second Edition*, (London: printed for T. Osborne, 1754), 220.

Newbery based a successful career on carving a market for children's books, which encouraged the development of the reading, well-mannered public. In doing so, his catalogues emphasized the book's import in the developing mind, as did his 1760 catalogue, which included "The Royal Primer: Or, An Easy and pleasant Guide to the Art of Reading" and offered "a great Variety of pleasant and diverting Stories, with suitable Morals and Reflections. Embellished with twenty-seven Cuts, and neatly bound and Gilt."[52] Priced at "only three-pence", it was a suitable choice for a young reader. And its price-range reflected the catalogue entry, as it effectively balanced the core uses of the title, while articulating its more engaging elements, particularly for its intended young audiences. Newbery offered material appealing to a wide-range of Britons and his catalogues conveyed the inclusiveness of his shop and titles, a point further demonstrated in his catalogues.

Booksellers employed many strategies in cultivating customer desires and interests, as they sought to generate interest in their titles. It was not only about fostering readership but also promoting the particular imprint, drawing the reader into the particular shop. In this process, book reviews were another means of generating interest, but it could prove problematic or even ruinous, depending on the review. Whenever possible, booksellers would incorporate book reviews into their catalogues and advertisements, as John Almon did in 1767 when he cited the *Gentleman's Magazine's* review of his 3*s* publication, *The conduct of the late Administration Examined, relative to*

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[52] "Books printed for and sold by John Newbery, at the Bible and Sun in St. Paul's Church-Yard" in *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy, and Pretty Miss Polly: With Two Letters from Jack the Giant-Killer; as Also a Ball and Pincushion; ... The Tenth Edition. To Which Is Added, a Little Song-Book*, (London: printed for J. Newbery, 1760), 91.

the American Stamp-Act.[53] Almon's bookshop and books were fervently political, much more than his many of his contemporaries.[54] As such, his catalogues reflected his politics and underscored the issues discussed in the books or pamphlets, and not surprisingly even his catalogues were overtly political.

Although many booksellers held stock in newspapers and could ultimately influence book reviews, booksellers assumed complete control over advertisements. They paid for them, and they dictated placement and appearance. Therefore, advertisements were central to the development of the literate public's book-buying tastes. A featured book in the 1756, published by Andrew Millar, *An account of conference held between Gen. Johnson and the chiefs of several Indian nations*, included not only the title, but also a detailed two-page discussion of the issues included in the title. Moreover, it also considered the merits of them too.[55] The book, the article explained, offered:

> There is also in this pamphlet an account of some conference between the Indian chiefs and the Quakers of Philadelphia concerning the hostilities committed by the *Delawares* and *Shawanese*.... There is also a compendium of Colden's account of the six nations, an account of Sir Wm Johnson, and a vocabulary of English and French names...these are therefore added, as well for the use as the entertainment of our readers.[56]

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[53] John Almon, *A List of Books and Pamphlets, Printed for J. Almon Bookseller and Stationer, Opposite Burlington-House in Piccadilly*, (London: 1767), 4-5. For other examples of John Almon's catalogues see: John Almon, *A List of Books and Pamphlets Printed for J. Almon Bookseller and Stationer, Opposite Burlington-House, in Piccadilly*, (London: 1768); John Almon, *A List of Books and Pamphlets Printed for J. Almon Opposite Burlington-House, in Piccadilly*, (London: 1769); John Almon, *A New Catalogue of Books and Pamphlets, Printed for J. Almon, Bookseller and Stationer, Opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly*, (London: 1770). Also, for more information on John Almon, see his memoir, John Almon, *Memoirs of a Late Eminent Bookseller*, (New York: Garland Pub., 1974).

[54] Brewer, *Party Ideology*, 163-200; Peter D. G. Thomas, "John Wilkes and the Freedom of the Press (1771)," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 33 (1960), 86-98.

[55] "List of Book published; with remarks" *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1756, 403-405

[56] The price of the book was 1*s* 6*d* "List of Book published; with remarks" *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1756, 403.

Following that entry, Dodsley's title, *Four letters from Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Bentley containing some arguments to prove a deity* received a similarly detailed explanation, which discussed the ideas put forth in the publication.[57] In the January 1762 edition of the *Gentleman's Magazine* readers were given an extract of "The Story of Le Fever: From the Sixth Volume of *Tristram Shandy*, lately published."[58] Just long enough to peak the readers' interest, the extract fed the public's desires for literature.

With little variation in the cost of printing, the materials ultimately determined the price point. Robert Dodsley, for instance, often based a book's importance and cost on its materials.[59] For the higher-end publications, like classical translations for instance, he would often choose a more expensive paper, and these elements, like paper, binding, and art that determined its price. As in the case of *Don Quixote*, the fashionable, aesthetic elements pushed price upwards. In a letter to John Gilbert Cooper, Robert Dodsley, discussing Cooper's book, *The Life of Socrates*, outlined the costs associated with printing and selling a book:

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[57] "List of Book published; with remarks" *Gentleman's Magazine*, August 1756, 405.
[58] *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1762, 28-32
[59] See: Robert Dodsley to Joseph Warton, January 18, 1755, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 190.Robert Dodsley to John Baskerville, February 10, 1757, *Ibid*, 264. Robert Dodsley to John Baskerville, April 7, 1757, *Ibid*, 273.

Table One: Account of *The Life of Socrates*[60]			
	£	*s*	*D*
500 printed all sold at 2s per book	50	0	0
Paper 11 Reams & 5 Quire at 18*s* per Ream	10	2	6
Printing 11 Sheets & 1.4 at 18 per sheet	10	2	6
Engraving 6 plates & making y^{e} Drawings	12	12	0
Working off do at y^{e} Rolling press	1	10	0
Advertisements	3	15	0
	38	2	0
Whole Profit	11	18	0

In this case, he notes that he, "printed 500, but there are but small Profits arising from this Edition."[61] Sold at 2*s*, it was a mid-to-lower price item. But the price breakdown helps to understand the costs associated with the trade. The *Life of Socrates* cost Dodsley and its author £38 and bringing a profit of £18 and 18*s*. Although the publication was admittedly a less-popular title, it demonstrates the limited profit margins in which booksellers operated, particularly with the lower priced items.[62]

Price points were rapidly moving upwards, and although Britons were becoming generally more prosperous, the increasing prices were indubitably recognized. A 1748 letter in *The Gentleman's Magazine* stresses the upwardly climbing prices of books and pamphlets; "Not very long since" the author explained, "a pamphlet of about 100 pages was commonly charged 1*s* for which we now have but half the number; and a sermon of

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[60] Table and data can be found in Robert Dodsley to John Gilbert Cooper, December 19, 1749. *Ibid*, 133.
[61] *Ibid*, 132-133.
[62] James Raven argues the limited profit margins meant that booksellers could not pay authors more, even if they wished to do so. Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 59.

25 or 30 pages, which was formerly sold at 3*d* or 4*d* very seldom now goes under 6*d*." [63] The writer went on to suggest the booksellers, working in communion, were fixing the prices, driving the prices up, forcing customers to pay, what he claims to be, the exorbitant prices.[64]

As materials and advertisements were inherent costs, lucrative payments to authors were often deemed unnecessary and so authors found themselves underpaid. Some authors even criticized the amount spent on advertising, claiming it was excessive and unnecessary.[65] Despite their repeated accusations of alienation and subjugation, authors were also implicated in the commercial aspects of the trade. In 1732, an essayist in the *Gentleman's Magazine* accused authors of promoting "puff" in exchange for commercial success. "Puff" they explained signifies, "the Applause set forth by Writers & c. to increase the Reputation and Sale of a Book, and is an excellent Stratagem to excite the Curiosity of gentle readers."[66] Therefore, to ensure success, authors had to produce buyer-friendly titles.

For example, Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, an erratic novel, though it quickly became popular, presented many elements that would turn off potential buyers, making it appreciably difficult for booksellers to invest their own capital on a product that would potentially remain unsold. In such cases, it was common for the bookseller, or the publisher, to require authors to swallow the costs of the first printing. Sterne was not

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[63] E. Cave to Mr. Urban. *The Gentleman's Magazine* (February 1748), 48.
[64] *Ibid.* The letter also states "A book pays now four or five taxes more than formerly, and the editor is far from paying fewer."
[65] John Brown to Robert Dodsley, February 18, 1744/5. Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 83.
[66] *The Gentleman's Magazine* 2, no. XVII, (May 1732), 760. For similar criticisms of booksellers in the Gentleman's Magazine, see: "Tricks of Booksellers: *Grubstreet Journal*, December 7 and 14" *Gentleman's Magazine* December 1732. "Universal Spectator April 29" *Gentleman's Magazine*, April 1732, 712.

alone in finding it difficult to have titles published; many budding authors faced similar pressure to succeed. [67] A few generations earlier, talented and fortunate authors benefited from the patronage of the aristocratic class. With the changing societal structures that characterized eighteenth century Britain, Britons were experiencing, suffering, or profiting in a much different social sphere. The rise of the bookseller as a purveyor of cultural commodities placed often-overwhelming pressures on authors to produce material that would foster popular consumption and some argued this public interest was at the cost of quality and ingenuity.

Booksellers employed many methods to sell their books; shops, catalogues, and remainder-books were quite common by the mid-eighteenth century. During this period, booksellers would often lend out their books to customers, in hopes that they would read a portion, and enjoy it enough to eventually buy it. By the 1760s, these commercial libraries or circulating libraries were commonplace.[68] In the libraries, patrons would pay a fee and enjoy the privilege of borrowing books, reading a newly printed title, and either purchasing it or returning it to the shop. Library rates varied according to the shop and the area, but for example the Noble brothers charged subscribers half-a-guinea a year or three shillings quarterly for the privilege to borrow from their extensive collection.[69]

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[67] See chapter one discussing booksellers. Robert Dodsley seriously hesitated in printing Laurence Sterne's, now classic, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy,* stating "it was too much to risk on a single Vol." Letter: Laurence Sterne to Robert Dodsley, October 5, 1759, Dodsley, *Correspondence*, 421.

[68] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 176.

[69] James Raven, "The Noble Brothers and Popular Publishing, 1737-89," *Library* 12, no. 4 (1990), 293-345, 311. Raven explains that around 1766 the major libraries set standards for prices.

However, these commercial libraries were pejoratively termed circulating libraries for their promotion of frivolous literature.[70]

Prices of books continued to swell as the century continued, doubtlessly linked to the increasing importance of catalogues and advertisements in the trade. Even the novel, which was promoted as a low-price item for entertainment, found its prices creeping upwards, particularly in the last quarter-century, rising from three shillings for a bound volume to three shilling for sewn paper edition.[71] The increasing prices and an increasingly literate population helped stimulate commercial subscription libraries. The literary marketplace continued, but many sought out new avenues for the consumption of literary art—and many savvy entrepreneurs, including many existing booksellers, were willing to oblige. As the century concluded, 1,000 libraries existed throughout Britain, with over a hundred in London alone.[72]

At the same time, other libraries emerged, using similar techniques, but offering different material, appealing to well-read English gentlemen. Subscription libraries offered more intellectual material, including history, theology, medicine, and philosophy.[73] The focus of the other libraries remained on titles not readily available in the more entertainment-based circulating libraries.[74] Not surprisingly, members of the subscription libraries throughout Britain were predominately mercantile and professional ranks.[75] The preponderance of titles and the increasing number of interested buyers undermined the prestige often affiliated with the book. More people were reading and

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[70] Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, 94.
[71] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 178.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid*, 180-181.
[74] *Ibid*, 181.
[75] *Ibid*, 180.

buying, changing the nature of the book. Thus, the subscription library represented a more traditional view of literature as enlightening and as a source of knowledge rather than entertainment. Generally, the publishing catalogues reflected the wide-ranging tastes and accommodated the growing interest in knowledge. Booksellers downplayed the more frivolous titles, while upholding the scientific, historical titles and providing detailed descriptions of their merits.

Circulating libraries, advertisements, publishing catalogues, and book reviews aided the proliferation of books throughout British society. Certainly, consumers did have some control over the products for sale and booksellers were definitely affected by customer tastes and choices, but booksellers determined the product. In turn, control extended to cultivating tastes as booksellers chose what to publish and sell; in addition, they determined the elements of significance with the publication, whether it was the children's primer for reading or an exquisitely printed, artfully decorated translation. The elements selected and discussed in advertisements and catalogues convey the booksellers' role in stimulating interest in the world of print.

During the mid-eighteenth century, booksellers and printers enjoyed relative liberty from government intervention, which afforded them considerable freedom in determining titles to print and sell. Despite the relaxed regulations, publishers and sellers could find themselves in trouble, such as John Almon in the 1760s and even Robert Dodsley was imprisoned for a week in 1738 for printing libels.[76] But the threat did not impede the proliferation of the print culture.

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[76] Very early in Dodsley's career, in 1738, he published *Manners* and was "taken into custody for the publication of a 'wicked, malicious and infamous libel." Straus, *Robert*

There are weaknesses in studying booksellers in society; for as Hannah Barker remarked, with respect to researchers studying newspapers in the eighteenth century, although they "are blessed with an abundance of surviving copies, they are equally cursed by the paucity of other extant material concerning the newspaper press."[77] The same is true for researchers studying the book trade: although many catalogues, advertisements, and books have survived, the scarcity of correspondence and business records, makes it virtually impossible to establish, with any certainty, sales figures, profits, and print runs for the publications—all areas which are invaluable in understanding the societal influence of booksellers within the marketplace. Nonetheless, the booksellers' catalogues provide a useful point of analysis, as the advertisements demonstrate booksellers' perceptions of and influence over consumer tastes.

With the many avenues of the literary marketplace established over the course of the eighteenth century, many feared the proliferation of books and expansion of the literary marketplace was sacrificing quality for quantity. For most of the eighteenth century, the commercial culture was a frequent concern with respect to the commercialising arts. On the one hand, books were now readily available and being printed in different styles and price ranges, accommodating most interested readers, but yet it also meant literary art was now available for sale. The proliferation of the novel made books not only about knowledge, but entertainment. Some argued booksellers, in selling these inconsequential books, were taking advantage of the un-knowing, and profiting from the eighteenth century Britons' pursuit of knowledge. As the century

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Dodsley, 49. For further information on John Almon, see Almon, *Memoirs*; Brewer, *Party Ideology*, 163-200; Thomas, "John Wilkes and the Freedom of the Press (1771)."

[77] Barker, "Catering for Provisional Tastes," 44.

continued, these fears became increasingly worrisome, as many booksellers promoted entertainment at the expense of genuine literature, making it increasingly difficult, even with preponderance of titles, to locate substantive books. However, these concerns had little impact on the book trade, as it continued to expand up until the turn of the nineteenth century.

Despite Thomas Turner's confession, he was lucky; during his lifetime, books were indeed as easily obtained as meat or drink. Books of all sizes and subjects were offered openly to all, at a price. Turner craved knowledge, but it wasn't free. For some, books were purely entertainment, and for others, books were a source of knowledge. And the eighteenth century book trade fostered desires of all things literary. By offering a seemingly ubiquity of goods, the booksellers sought to satisfy customer desires, while also influencing the market and fostering an interest in the fashionable qualities of the book.

CHAPTER 3

A WOMEN-FRIENDLY COMMODITY: SELLING BOOKS TO ENGLISHWOMEN IN MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BRITAIN

A discussion of booksellers and their role in society in mid-eighteenth century Britain is incomplete without acknowledgement of the growing importance of women within the literary marketplace. By the mid-eighteenth century, booksellers were catering not only to the enlightened Englishman but also offering extensive material produced and promoted seemingly exclusively for women's consumption, as booksellers recognized the importance of providing material to both the conservative and liberal strains of the society. In balancing these facets, booksellers were acutely aware of the increasing importance of women as readers and as consumers of printed material. As such, over the course of the eighteenth century, there was a remarkable increase in both the quantity of titles available and the amount of advertising devoted to what could be called 'domestic' subjects, such as cooking, cleaning, and entertaining.[1] While booksellers were cultivating

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[1] For a selection of cookbooks published during the period, see: Penelope Bradshaw, *The Family Jewel, and Compleat Housewife's Companion or, the Whole Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy. ... With an Index Directing to Every Receipt. By Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw, ... The Seventh Edition. With Remarks by a London Pastry-Cook*, (London:

the desires of polite Englishmen, they also developed a discerning, educated female consumer by offering literature that reflected more specifically her interests.

The preponderance of domestic titles was particularly striking by the mid-century. With more books available for sale and the increasing literacy, booksellers began expanding their catalogues to reflect the varied demands of the literature-consuming public. The women-oriented titles were clearly marketed and promoted with particular goals in mind, particularly appealing to the domestic concerns affecting women's lives. As a result, an extensive collection of titles and descriptions clearly directed towards women, as consumers, as mothers, and as central characters in the domestic area were found alongside the advertisements that occupied the previous chapter.

As books became increasingly popular, booksellers became attuned to women's buying power, and the importance of women's readership in the book business. In marketing and supplying books for female customers, the booksellers were cultivating another avenue for consumption. To effectively appeal to women, booksellers had to carefully tread between the enlightened, often secular, Englishman and the more conservative, typically religious, Englishwoman. Certainly, women were free to purchase and read any title available in the marketplace, but by the mid-century, there was a clear demarcation between appropriate books for women—literature published with a female

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printed for R. Whitworth, 1754); Charles Carter, *The London and Country Cook or, Accomplished Housewife, Containing Practical Directions and the Best Receipts in All the Branches of Cookery and Housekeeping ; ... And Illustrated with Forty-Nine Large Copper Plates. By Charles Carter*, (London: printed for Charles Hitch; Stephen Austen, and John Hinton, 1749); Sarah Harrison, *The House-Keeper's Pocket-Book and Compleat Family Cook: Containing above Twelve Hundred Curious and Uncommon Receipts ... By Mrs. Sarah Harrison, ... The Sixth Edition, Revised and Corrected. To Which Are Now Added Several Modern Receipts, ... Also, Every One Their Own Physician: ... Compiled by Mary Morris*, (London: printed for R. Ware, 1757).

buyer and reader in mind—and the titles directed towards the polite and commercial Englishman of the previous chapter. Interestingly, during the mid-to-late century, religion became a subject occupying a large quantity of these female-oriented publications. Religion became a particular concern affecting many women, as suggested in the dramatic increase in religious material, specifically devotional and behavioural subjects, seemingly published exclusively for women's consumption.

Both the front matter and catalogue entries provide a glimpse into the way booksellers sought out female customers. As Claire Walsh pointed out in her work on the retail spaces in eighteenth century England, retailers carefully decorated their shops to specifically target female customers.[2] In the case of the bookshops, the titles available were central in targeting the customer base; as such, catalogues and book descriptions were valuable in accentuating the vision and prerogatives of the booksellers, as it was the titles for sale that would ultimately draw in the female customer.

While print became increasingly popular and accessible to members of Hanoverian society, it became the mouthpiece for an exceptional number, regardless of their gender or political affiliation. Religious material remained the most-printed subject throughout the century. In fact, the *Licensing Act* was imposed with the Restoration primarily to curb the spread the diverging religious opinions of Protestants that resulted in the English Civil War. With the elimination of the licensing system in 1695, religious material abounded from the presses, and booksellers exploited the trend. At the same time, the Established Church sought a middle path, resulting in as William Gibson has

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[2] See: Claire Walsh, "Shops, Shopping, and the Art of Decision Making in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830*, ed. John Styles and Amanda Vickery (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 151-177.

explored, a period of "unity and accord".[3] The religious turmoil of the previous generations formed pleas for calm and stability, while avoiding the heated religious debates that spurred the English Civil War.[4] The pleas for acceptance among Protestants and toleration fashioned a new position for religious material in the literary marketplace. The expansion of religious material specifically affected women, as ideas of behaviour, virtues, and piety became intrinsic to the women-friendly titles that multiplied during the eighteenth century.

As women took more of an interest as consumers in the literary marketplace, a considerable number of women further engaged in the marketplace as publishers. The book trade was increasingly commercialized throughout the eighteenth century, and book businesses multiplied dramatically.[5] Consequently, the rapid expansion of businesses and trades presented many vacancies and opportunities for women, of the middling ranks, to

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[3] See: William Gibson, *The Church of England, 1688-1832: Unity and Accord*, (London: Routledge, 2001).

[4] *Ibid*, 84. During the English Civil War, the licensing system was completely removed, and a similar flourishing of printed material occurred. As Peter Marshall explains, "The virtual collapse of government censorship in the summer of 1641 resulted in a wave of popular pamphleteering, which scholars often refer to as an 'explosion' or 'revolution' in printing; more items were published in 1641 than in any preceding year in the history of the English press (well over 2,000)." Peter Marshall, *Mother Leakey and the Bishop: A Ghost Story*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 108-109. Also, see: John Barnard, "London Publishing, 1640-1660: Crisis, Continuity, and Innovation," *Book History* 4 (2001), 1-16.

[5] The period also witnessed the rise of bookshops and libraries, which soon became associated with women. For a larger discussion of libraries and the book trade, see: John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1997), 167-197; James Raven, *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750-1800*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

enter the book trade.[6] The nature of the printing trades, though it required some gendered division of labour, was not as strong as other similar industries.[7] Women, therefore, enjoyed great flexibility in defining their tasks and their participation in the business. In fact, according to Hannah Barker's research, women figured steadily in the trades throughout the century with the pinnacle of the commercial book trade in the 1780s, following the landmark 1774 *Donaldson v. Becket* decision, which decided against perpetual copyright, the number of women similarly peaked.[8] "There was a clear peak between 1780 and 1809," Hannah Barker explains, "when the proportion rose to between 10 and 13 per cent, thereafter dropping off slightly to around 8 per cent until the end of the period."[9] The preponderance of women in the trades in the last quarter of the century reflects: the rise of popular print, the continued importance of women's public lives, and the feminization of the publication.

Feminization does not mean all commercial publications, nor publishers were naturally feminine, but rather the trade and the commercialized world of print, became women-friendly and attuned to women's literary interests and buying power. Moreover, these businesswomen helped create an atmosphere conducive to the participation of women in the literary marketplace. And Englishwomen lost their reticence about commercial world of print, feeling free to engage themselves in the print culture. These women printers were not, presumably, printing only women writers, or offering special

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[6] Hannah Barker, "Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution: Female Involvement in the English Printing Trades, C.1700-1840," in *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (New York: Longman, 1997), 81-100, 86.
[7] *Ibid*, 100.
[8] James Raven cites the 1780s as the "peak" of the new eighteenth century book trade. Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 32-35.
[9] Barker, "Women, Work and the Industrial Revolution," 89.

treatment to female customers. Through their public role in the printing trades, however, they added publicity to women and print culture, further breaking down barriers, and facilitating the transition of other women into the commercial sphere.

Women's increased stature in the commercial world was by no means confined to the literary marketplace. Claire Walsh's work has illustrated that most retail spaces, during the eighteenth century, were constructed and decorated to attract female customers. Similar to the clothing retailers that occupied Walsh's research, booksellers carefully chose the products for their stores with a particular customer in mind. Meanwhile, the promotion of these titles further enforced the idea of a safe, welcome space for women and most savvy booksellers acknowledged and exploited this trend. As Walsh explains, "the gendering of a retail environment was the result of a confluence of factors: types of goods, customer use, location, sales strategy, and retailers' reinforcing signals."[10]

Many feared that the preponderance of the popular novels in the second half of the century was eroding the morality and civility of the youth. Due to these concerns about young women, there was a corresponding rise in conduct literature. Religious instructional material in the period was concerned primarily with behaviour, encouraging external, public piety, instead of an introspective devotion: "This concentration on right action and outward behaviour can be seen as a reaction to the religious upheavals of the mid-seventeenth century," explains Jeremy Gregory, "which were widely blamed on

[10] Walsh, "Shops, Shopping," 162.

misdirected inner spirituality and wrong-headed wranglings over theology."[11] Behaviour, therefore, was the necessary link to religious lives; and it became the foremost mode of devotion. The movement to transform the devotional conduct of Englishmen and Englishwomen worked closely with the growing print culture.

At the same time, English society was tenuously balancing its religious foundation with the swelling growth of commercial wealth.[12] This transformative phase

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[11] Jeremy Gregory, "Masculinity and Religion in the Long Eighteenth Century " in *English Masculinities, 1660-1800*, ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (Longman 1999), 85-110, 96.

[12] For further information on eighteenth century religious and commercial identities, see: John Brewer, "Commercialization and Politics," in *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Neil McKendrick, Brewer John, and Plumb J. H. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 197-262; John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1997); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods*, (London: Routledge, 1993); J. C. D. Clark, "Britain as a Composite State: Sovereignty and European Integration," *Culture & History*, no. 9 (1991), 55-83; J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure, and Political Practice During the Ancien Regime*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); J. C. D. Clark, *The Language of Liberty, 1660-1832. Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); J. C. D. Clark, *Our Shadowed Present: Modernism, Postmodernism, and History*, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004); J. C. D. Clark, "Protestantism, Nationalism, and National Identity, 1660-1832," *Historical Journal* 43, no. 1 (2000), 249-276; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837*, (Yale University Press, 2005); William Gibson, *The Church of England, 1688-1832: Unity and Accord*, (London: Routledge, 2001); David Hempton, *Religion and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland: From the Glorious Revolution to the Decline of Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Paul Langford, *The Eighteenth Century, 1688-1815*, (New York,: St. Martin's Press, 1976); Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650-1850*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798*; Neil McKendrick et al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, (Bloomington: Indiana

presented tremendous opportunities for women. As female literacy increased and books became more easily obtained and fashionable in society, women felt free to also engage in the world of print through the literary marketplace.[13] The role of women within this emerging literary marketplace, and their contribution to the business of books, booksellers, and literary culture are subjects that occupy this chapter. It is to them that we must turn after contextualizing the Hanoverian world in which they lived.

Despite the popularity of the natural philosopher, the importance of religion in the lives of Englishmen and Englishwomen persisted, as conservative and religious material garnered more attention in the literary marketplace than any other subject. As a result of this discontinuity, historians have presented markedly different interpretations to the period.[14] Although much attention has been paid to the growth of secularism in eighteenth century English society, the continued relevance and significance of religion in historical analysis of the period remains hotly debated.

The conservative traditions of Hanoverian society went largely overlooked until 1985, when Jonathan Clark revived the field, positing provocatively that England was, up until the late 1820s, an *ancien regime* that possessed, "a hegemonic set of ideas which provided the ideological framework within which changes happened".[15] *English Society*, originally published in 1985 and revised in 2000, presents a persuasive vision of the state.

University Press, 1982); John Walsh et al., *Church of England C.1689-1833*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[13] Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, *Women's History: Britain 1700-1850: An Introduction*, (London: Routledge, 2005). According to John Brewer, female literacy was approximately 40 percent in 1750. Brewer, *Pleasures*, 167.

[14] See: J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832*; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*. Dr. Clark's second edition of *English Society, 1660-1832* will be used for this discussion.

[15] Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832*, 25.

Within this perspective, one state, one religion, and one monarch characterized English society. Clark's interpretation offered a complete, though rather narrowly focussed, understanding of the English confessional state. Religion was the focal point of government and society. The liberal economy and politics, he posits were insignificant, as were matters such as manufacturing industry, while commercial interests paled in comparison with "patrician hegemony."[16] Religious hegemony, the confessional state, supported the continuation of the Old Order throughout the period; in effect, the ruling elite used religion to preserve their position. Religion buttressed the ruling elite.[17]

Despite its inclusive title, *English Society*'s treatment of the period focuses exclusively on high political and theological matters. In Clark's society, the Church, Parliament, and the Monarch joined together, and they provided the foundation for the entire workings of the society.[18] In this understanding, commercial wealth property remained inconsequential; wealth could not usurp station or birth, as they were the most significant sources of power. These legitimate gentlemen joined with the Church,

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[16] *Ibid,* 15.
[17] *Ibid,* 26-34.
[18] For more information on Dr. Clark's perspective of eighteenth century England: J. C. D. Clark, "Britain as a Composite State: Sovereignty and European Integration," *Culture & History*, no. 9 (1991), 55-83; J. C. D. Clark, "Eighteenth-Century Social History," *Historical Journal* 27, no. 3 (1984), 773-788; J. C. D. Clark, "England's Ancien Regime as a Confessional State," *Albion* 21, no. 3 (1989), 450-474; J. C. D. Clark, *The Language of Liberty, 1660-1832. Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); J. C. D. Clark, "On Hitting the Buffers: The Historiography of England's Ancien Regime. A Response," *Past and Present*, no. 117 (1987), 195-207; J. C. D. Clark, *Our Shadowed Present: Modernism, Postmodernism, and History*, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004); J. C. D. Clark, "Protestantism, Nationalism, and National Identity, 1660-1832," *Historical Journal* 43, no. 1 (2000), 249-276; J. C. D. Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion: State and Society in England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

ensuring the continuation of their power.[19] There were opportunities for modest social mobility, but it was not widespread.[20]

Clark posits that the eighteenth century enjoyed neither a liberal revolution nor an industrial revolution; and the disintegration of the "Old Order" was the result of changes in "attitudes, ideas, beliefs, and ultimately in the tensions within the law and religion."[21] He questions all assertions of libertarian ideology during the Glorious Revolution, claiming historians and theorists have overstated its importance, as it was, "hardly intended even by its authors to apply to their families."[22] The rhetoric, therefore, was superficial. Understanding the importance of order, following the English civil war, English elites re-asserted hierarchical theological control. Englishmen, and presumably Englishwomen, chose to return to the religiously inspired Old Order, fortifying the *ancien regime*, which continued to rule England until they "lost its nerve" in the 1830s.

Religion, he argues, permeated all areas and aspects of the society. *English Society: 1660-1832* implies, from the expansive political discussion, that religion underpinned English society, but the religious implications in society were insufficiently developed. Clark's weakness is the distance he establishes from the society to which he refers. Relying heavily on the abundance of sermons, he presents a disproportionate view of the society. The sermons, though well researched, do not adequately address concerns of readership or power of "the Word". However, his work has illustrated the continued importance of traditional institutions, namely religion, in the eighteenth century.

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[19] Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832,* 178.
[20] *Ibid,* 229.
[21] *Ibid,* 469.
[22] *Ibid,* 181.

Interestingly, these traditional institutions are particularly relevant to understanding women and the literary marketplace.

The woman-oriented material was concerned with manners, morals and behaviour of Englishwomen. The endorsement and support, through the print culture, of a public piety of women is significant. In this respect, the material and this chapter echo the tenets of Jonathan Clark's religious society; however, these elements are unnoticed in his discussion. Constructions of femininity and womanly religion in the period are important to Jonathan Clark's predominately masculine *English Society* and require further study.

During the eighteenth century period, the Church was vibrant, as well as cunning; realizing that the Church was at an impasse, officials began remodelling the traditional religious participation, using the seemingly secular arts as propaganda.[23] The Church used visual art, poetry, prose, and songs, fostering a new sociability in the Church congregations.[24] "For far from depriving the arts and culture of a religious base," Jeremy Gregory explains, "clergy wanted to use them in the programme of disseminating the faith and to build up support and affection for the Church."[25] Therefore, the rise of the novel and other commercial arts in the period was not predominately secular, as one might assume.[26] Meanwhile, the church's acceptance, and exploitation, of the commercial world of print and the proliferation of religious material fostered the women-friendly literary marketplace.

The foray of the Church into the literary marketplace, as well as the continued importance of religious material as a literary good made it an imperative that booksellers

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[23] Jeremy Gregory, "Anglicanism and the Arts," 85.
[24] *Ibid,* 85-89.
[25] *Ibid,* 86.
[26] *Ibid,* 83-84.

offer material catering to this segment of the consumer base. And by the mid-eighteenth century, the plethora of printed material attended to most consumer tastes, but also developed and defined tastes of a variety of genres. In the case of women, there was a considerable increase in the amount of devotional, behavioural, and instructional titles, which appealed to women's newfound independence in the marketplace. Women were free to enjoy and purchase books, but it was expected that the books would complement their position in society. Although the range of titles available for consumption was expansive, a particular trend appears of instructional guides dealing with the maintenance of the home, such as cooking, cleaning, and child rearing. In these guides, the descriptions are attentive to the utility of the book, promoting the title as a particular necessity for every household.

The separate spheres approach has, regrettably, delayed the development of historical studies of women and the print culture, particularly the religious, conservative facets of the print culture during the mid-century period. For many, the popularity and proliferation of these domestic titles were indicative of the emerging of what has been termed as the separate spheres. "The glorification of domestic womanhood," Amanda Vickery explains in her 1993 article, "became associated with the deterioration of women's public power, which was itself presented as a function of industrialization."[27] In

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[27] Amanda Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History," *Historical Journal* 36, no. 2 (1993), 383-414, 384. Although Dr. Vickery's "Golden Age" article is the eminent work, for addition information on the separate spheres, see: Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*, (Addison Wesley Longman, 1997); Barker and Chalus, *Women's History: Britain 1700-1850: An Introduction*; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Bridget Hill, *Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England*,

1987, Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall posited, in their famous work *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class*, that the middle class created a unique class-consciousness, based on the separate sphere ideology.[28] The rise of the industrial economy resulted in a new, conservative ideology, the separate spheres.[29] Bridget Hill concurred, finding that not only did industrialization change the workplace; it alienated working-class women from the workforce.[30] Separate spheres promoted a division of the public and private, confining women to private, domestic, sphere, while politics and commerce remained in the public sphere.[31] These analyses, however, present an approach and analysis that best explains nineteenth century women. Though the books include the late eighteenth century in their narrative, the sources and evidence are firmly rooted in the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth century may have been subject to separate spheres. In fact, a firm case can be made for its sustained relevance in nineteenth century studies, but, in the years since its implementation, the approach has failed to address questions of women, work, and social politics in the eighteenth century. In effect, the discussion of the role of women, both in the feminized Church and in the social politicking realms, invalidates the

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(Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); Jane Rendall, "Women and the Public Sphere," *Gender & History* 11, no. 3 (November 1999), 475-488; Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?*, (Longman, 1998); Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England*, (Yale University Press, 1998); Amanda Vickery, "The Neglected Century: Writing the History of Eighteenth-Century Women," *Gender & History* 3, no. 2 (1991), 211-219; Barbara Welter, "Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1966), 151-174.

[28] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes.*

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] Hill, *Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England.*

[31] Jürgen Habermas also discusses the public sphere, for more information on Habermas, see: Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989).

relevance of this approach to eighteenth century studies. Separate spheres, as Amanda Vickery demonstrated, is not relevant to women in the period, as these women regularly transcended the invisible barriers. The separate spheres approach does not offer a complete, fruitful mode of historical analysis for eighteenth century women. The separate spheres, as a gender-role ideology or historical approach, were insignificant to the eighteenth century women in this analysis.

Regardless of recent critiques of the separate spheres, most eighteenth century women are categorized with those generations earlier or several generations later. And this approach presents serious problems for historians. By 1832, the role of women had changed dramatically, making it easier for historians to understand conservative women within the context of the nineteenth century. By the 1830s, proto-Victorian women were emerging, writing on concepts associated with Victorian socio-religious identities and promoting separate spheres. [32] The growth of this literature in the nineteenth century still clouds the eighteenth century religious women, as most studies purport to examine the eighteenth century women, but become engrossed with questions of the separate spheres, and nineteenth century piety.

Ironically, the separate spheres approach has hindered the development of studies on women and politics, as well as women and religion.[33] The approach inherently denies

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[32] Separate spheres will be discussed in greater detail further in this analysis; for more a comprehensive discussion of the separate spheres see: Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*; Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*; Hill, *Women, Work, and Sexual Politics*; Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986), 1053-1075; Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-185*; Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*; Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres?"

[33] See the "Introduction", Barker and Chalus, *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England*, 1-28.

women as a political reality. It produced certain exclusivity to women's position in the period, and it deterred historians from looking at the political implications of women's actions. By holding up women as an archetype of domesticity, it confirmed the subjection of women in historical interpretations. Women were not full citizens, and their gender did fuel discrimination; but the separate sphere approach allowed women to be relegated to insignificant bystanders, continuing the misrepresentation and alienation of women from mainstream historical understandings.

By the mid-century, it was expected that women of the upper ranks could, and would, read on a variety of acceptable subjects. According to Amanda Vickery, by 1750, 81 percent of women in the gentry were able to read.[34] At the same time, women, particularly of the middling ranks, were commonly assuming the responsibility for shopping, making it imperative that businesses, including the businessmen-booksellers of this study, account for women's needs.[35] The increased importance of propriety and politeness in shaping the image of Englishmen and Englishwomen made reading an essential qualification for acceptance into polite society as well as the political culture. Appropriate literature differed markedly between men and women during the mid-to-late century period, but nevertheless they both were encouraged to consume literature. The result was an expansion of female-oriented titles, as these businessmen-booksellers sought to capitalize on both strains of the commercial society.

Admittedly, the ubiquity of behaviour manuals, household guides, and other 'womanly' publications does appear to support the separate spheres approach. However, Elaine Chalus's work on women in the background of political life, what she terms as

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[34] Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*, 259.
[35] *Walsh, "Shops, Shopping," 162.*

social politics, illustrates the principal role of women in supporting the political family through domestic duties like hosting parties and offering proper social activities.

> Politically active families were working units, which included women who were expected to contribute to the maintenance of political interests. Their personal involvement complemented and echoed that of their menfolk...this was achieved primarily by attending or supporting local events and through personal displays of hospitality, civility, and generosity.[36]

For women involved in the social realm of politics, these activities were not taken lightly. Essentially, these polite virtues, which every woman was expected to have mastered, were fundamental for success in the political arena. As Amanda Vickery explains, "manners were not empty gestures, but the sincere expression of an ethical code."[37] Just as the well-read Englishman needed to be informed of political developments, Englishwomen were expected to subscribe to the conduct material and act accordingly.

The proliferation of this conduct material was fundamental to a women's acceptance into polite society. For instance, Robert Dodsley's 1752 publishing catalogue advertised the publication *The Lady's New-Year's Gift: or Advice to a Daughter* that offered:

> Under these following Heads, viz. Religion, Husband, House, Family and Children, Behaviour, and Conversation, Friendship, Censure, Vanity, and Affectation, Pride, Diversions." By the Right Honourable GEORGE, Lord Saville, Late Marquis and Earl of Halifax. The sixteenth edition, exactly corrected. Price 1*s*.[38]

Behaviour was a subject concerning the bulk of these publications, which complements Chalus's conclusions, as there was attention paid to the importance of these womanly

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[36] Elaine Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life, C.1754-1790*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 173.
[37] Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*, 197.
[38] Robert Dodsley, *Books Printed for R. Dodsley, 1752*, (London: 1752), 12.

virtues in the social context. Whereas men were expected to be well-read on politics, women's expectations were subjected to more domestic concerns, but that did not indicate any devaluation of women's work or even their rank. In fact, women's domestic virtues were paramount especially for political wives.

While appropriate behaviour and virtues occupied a considerable amount of the women-friendly publications, there was a similar abundance of guides and resource manuals, on an assortment of subjects including entertaining, cooking, and even childbirth. Robert Dodsley's 1747 catalogue offered customers, "the Nurse's Guide: or, short and safe Rules for the Management of Women of each rank and condition in Child-bed. With directions about the choice of a wet nurse."[39] As a resource for "women of each rank and condition", at the price of 1*s*, it was intended to have a far-reaching clientele, which was a noticeable feature of most of the 'domestic' titles. When marketing to Englishmen, booksellers intuitively fostered the importance of the title in elevating station, promoting as a necessary accessory to polite society; with Englishwomen, although booksellers were clearly attuned to the domestic virtues, the descriptions and selling features were presented to appeal to a broad-base of commercial Englishwomen.

Books were rarely targeted to a specific rank, but rather the descriptions appealed more generally. Religion and morality were staples of the women-friendly publications. Even the preponderance of cooking and housekeeping guides drew upon the principles of the moral Englishwoman. For instance, the publication *The Family Jewel and compleat housewife's companion* (1754) offered:

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[39] Robert Dodsley, *Books Printed for R. Dodsley, at Tully's Head in Pall-Mall, 1747*, (London: 1747), 9.

> The whole art of cookery made plain and easy in a method entirely new, and suited to every capacity; calculated for the preservation of health and on the principles of frugality, including things useful, substantial, and splendid. Containing compleat directions in marketing and other branches of housewifry, and above 400 receipts.[40]

These manuals and guides were intended to have a broad appeal, and so the descriptions naturally sought an inclusive strategy that would appeal to most women. Elements like the title's practical uses were central, as it offered a broad appeal. Also, the novelty of the particular edition helped to reinforce the importance of purchasing that exact title.

By the mid-eighteenth century, cookbooks were a fixture of most publishing catalogues and so booksellers had to promote the unique features of each title, appealing to the novelty of each edition.[41] *The house-keeper's Pocket-Book and Compleat Family Cook* (1757) offered, according to its front matter description, "above twelve hundred curious and uncommon receipts in Cookery, Pastry, Preserving, Pickling, Candying, Collaring, with plain and easy instructions for preparing and dressing every thing suitable for an elegant entertainment, from two dishes to five or ten & c and directions for ranging them in proper order."[42] Similarly, *The Art of Cookery*, advertised in John Almon's 1770 publishing catalogue boasted that the recipes "made plain and easy...far exceeds any thing of the kind yet published. With an appendix containing 150 new receipts. By Mrs.

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[40] Bradshaw, *The Family Jewel, and Compleat Housewife's Companion or, the Whole Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy. ... With an Index Directing to Every Receipt. By Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw, ... The Seventh Edition. With Remarks by a London Pastry-Cook*, 1.

[41] A similar trend emerged with gardening books, as cookbooks and gardening books were staples of publishing catalogues during the period. For instance, Robert Dodsley's 1752 catalogue offered "A Plan of Mr. Pope's Garden, as it was left at his Death: with a plan and perspective view of the grotto. All taken by J. Serle, his gardner." Dodsley, *Books Printed for R. Dodsley, 1752*, 12.

[42] Harrison, *The House-Keeper's Pocket-Book and Compleat Family Cook: Containing above Twelve Hundred Curious and Uncommon Receipts ... By Mrs. Sarah Harrison, ... The Sixth Edition, Revised and Corrected. To Which Are Now Added Several Modern Receipts, ... Also, Every One Their Own Physician: ... Compiled by Mary Morris.*

Glasse, 5*s*, bound."[43] Most booksellers used the simplicity of the instructions and the unique recipes to sell the cookbooks. As there was such an abundance of these titles available, it was critical that booksellers articulate the novelty of the edition.

The women-friendly books were numerous and included quite a variety of subjects, cooking, child rearing, home remedies, religion and morality. However, it was also feared that flighty novels, and other types of literature, primarily concerned with entertainment rather than instruction, were also being marketed specifically towards women. With the expansion of the book trades, a superfluity of texts flooded the market. Many felt that this outpouring of available texts had the potential for disaster, particularly for women. The author of *New and elegant amusements for the ladies of Great Britain* (1772) expressed her apprehension with the popularity of books. Although she ranks reading with the highest of pursuits, she laments:

> There are many Ladies who neglect this refined Amusement, for want of proper, entertaining, and sensible Subjects: --The Press issuing forth daily such swarms of insipid Novels, destitute of sentiment, language, or moral which serve more as a reproach upon our taste than an improvement to our minds.[44]

Young women, in particular, it was feared were not reading appropriate material. The popularity of meaningless, superficial literature was a great threat. As British society became increasingly literate, reading was an appropriate behaviour, but many feared that

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[43] John Almon, *A New Catalogue of Books and Pamphlets, Printed for J. Almon, Bookseller and Stationer, Opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly*, (London: 1770), 9.

[44] Lady, *New and Elegant Amusements for the Ladies of Great Britain. By a Lady*, (London Printed for the author, and sold by S. Crowder; W. Shropshire; J. Walter, and W. Cooke, 1772), 51. Similar concerns were raised in the following texts, Lecture XII "Reading Recommended—the Utility of Books—a judicious Choise of which should be attended to—the Female sex too fond of novels—what books should be read": J Burton, *Lectures on Female Education and Manners* (Rochester Printed for the author, by Gilman and Etherington, and sold by the booksellers in Kent, James Evans, and John Murray, London, 1793).

reading was no longer necessarily enriching. In the late eighteenth century, caricatures of the flighty, vacuous female reader were commonplace.[45]

With the seemingly endless stock of behaviour, conduct, cookbooks, and housewife guides available to the eighteenth century Englishwomen at her local bookshop, it would appear that separate spheres may actually underpin the woman-friendly published material in the period, but the approach is not necessary for understanding eighteenth century women. The discourse on religion and moral behaviour does not undermine women's authority or respect, but instead, it granted them tremendous freedom. The discourse on the religious society naturally required women's participation, acknowledging women's import in the social dimension of religion.

> Women were encouraged to be good Christians, managing the household economies, while raising the children and fostering the Christian faith. ...The oeconomy of a household comes in for share in delicately amiable character of that truly valuable being, A CHRISTIAN WOMAN.[46]

Popular conservative writers like James Fordyce, Hannah More and others, were not on the vanguard of progressive thought. They were undeniably conservative, but they, nonetheless, engaged in the world of print, using publications to intensify their sermons. By the late century, print was neither liberal nor exclusive. The expansion of the world of print presented opportunities for individuals of all ranks, genders, and religious beliefs. And booksellers sought to offer goods appealing to all types of customers. The variety of titles available, particularly the conservative publications that sought to appeal to

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[45] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 193. A more recognizable discussion of literature and women (and the general state of literature in the late eighteenth-early nineteenth centuries) was Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, which explored the caricature of the female reader. Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, (London: Penguin Books, 1995).

[46] Lady, *The Female Guardian. Designed to Correct Some of the Foibles Incident to Girls, and Supply Them with Innocent Amusement for Their Hours of Leisure. By a Lady.*, (London: Printed and sold by John Marshall, 1784), 30.

specifically to women illustrates the manner in which booksellers used the broad appeal of the literary marketplace to sell their goods to a mosaic of consumers.

Using the print culture as historical evidence does present many challenges. A publication's existence does not ultimately signify society's values or even readership. In fact, the proliferation of texts dealing with women could, alternatively, be evidenced that women were not pious; and these writers were rehabilitating women into a traditional religious role, restructuring concepts of womanliness. In *English Society*, Clark employs plethora of sermons, thereby illustrating the continued importance and relevance of the Church in the period, while the text does not develop society's use or reaction to these sermons. The eminent historian E. P. Thompson, in addressing Linda Colley's *Britons*, cautions that often these moralistic, conservative publications were bought en masse to be distributed to the servants and the poor.[47] Thompson was likely correct and the importance and influence of instructional and religious material is subjective and indeterminate. Within the marketing of publications to women, many of these domestic-oriented titles were apparently promoted and used a resource guide for servants. Readership and its influence remain ambiguous and difficult to ascertain for historians. Moralistic, instructional publications presented ideal behaviours, which are not necessarily indicative of the contemporary attitudes and social norms.

Based on the material published in the eighteenth century, religion clearly persisted. In fact, the preponderance of religious-themed publications illustrates the considerable interest in religious issues. And the foray of the Church of England into the

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[47] E. P. Thompson, "Which Britons?," in *Making History: Writings on History and Culture* New Press, 1994), 319-329, 325. Also see: E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common*, (New York: New Press 1993).

literary marketplace certainly helped to reshape social constructions towards the literary marketplace, particularly with respect to women. With the remarkable expansion of literacy over the course of the century, coupled with the general prosperity of the period, more women were able to participate in the literary marketplace.

Booksellers and the book trade were particularly keen to engage women as readers and customers. With circulating libraries, booksellers would make more conscientious efforts to entice women readers by offering a safe environment for women to visit and spend their day, marketing it as a place where women could spend their time reading.[48] However, the catalogues and front matter descriptions were principal means of attracting customers and enticing a clientele to enter the store. By examining the manner in which these more conservative titles were marketed to women, it is clear that booksellers were attuned to women's fiscal position in the literary marketplace and took steps to entice women to consume literary goods.

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[48] For more information on circulating libraries in eighteenth century England, see Brewer, *Pleasures*, 167-197.

CHAPTER 4

BOOKS AS PROPERTY: BOOKSELLERS AND CONCEPTS OF COPYRIGHT IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

As booksellers enjoyed a rise in their status with the dramatic increase in the book business over the course of the eighteenth century, they expected a complementary statutory protection of their acquired property, namely copyrights, that reflected their newly acquired status in Hanoverian society. It was in this pursuit for further protection of their assets that the book trade in the third quarter of the century became increasingly litigious, as booksellers turned to the courts and the common law to protect their assets and livelihood. Booksellers were heavily invested in promoting their imprints and their shops, and so when their claim to the exclusive rights to a title were challenged with the on-going copyright and literary property debates in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, it threatened their newly acquired position as commercial Britons.

Booksellers recognized the instability and potential problems with their notion of copyright, but used it to their advantage circumventing the specifics of the *Copyright Act* to further their own businesses. When the Scottish booksellers began challenging these distinctions, the English booksellers employed their position to gain further influence in Hanoverian society, lobbying Parliament to grant further concessions to booksellers. For

the on-going legal questions concerning copyright, which characterized the mid-to-late century trade, were deeply rooted in their booksellers' own attitudes to their trade and their shared assumptions about how they could operate their business.

In 1751, with the support of many of his contemporaries in the London book trade, Andrew Millar filed a claim against several prominent Scottish booksellers for the illegal reprinting of his exclusively held copyright. He alleged that a number of Scotland-based booksellers had taken:

> upon them, in Violation of the property thus purchased by the Appellants, and in Contempt of the said Laws enacted for the better Security thereof, sell several pirated editions of the said works, which had been either printed by themselves in Scotland or by others aboard.[1]

Claims of this nature became commonplace in the second half of the eighteenth century, as booksellers became acutely aware of their copyright assets and were antagonistic to all attempts to threaten their exclusive entitlement to sell and distribute works, which they considered were their property. Millar was particularly engaged in fighting copyright infringement, and this became a growing concern affecting most English booksellers and their literary property.[2]

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[1] Andrew Millar, *The Case of the Appellants. Andrew Millar, Daniel Midwinter, John Knapton, and Others, Booksellers of London; and John Paterson, Surviving Executor of the Last Will and Testament of John Pemberton...William Elliot, Their Factor of Attorney; Appellants. Alexander Kincaid, Gavin Hamilton, and Others, Booksellers of Edinburgh and Glasgow; and Alexander Symers, and Andrew Symers...Were Booksellers of Edinburgh; - - - - - Respondents.* , (London: 1751), 1.

[2] The designation "English bookseller" includes all London-based booksellers, regardless of their heritage, while "Scottish bookseller" refers to all booksellers established in Scotland. Additional details on Andrew Millar are provided in chapter one "Booksellers and the Literary Marketplace in the mid-eighteenth century Britain" For more details on Andrew Millar, see: Hugh Amory, "Millar, Andrew (1705–1768)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Carol Hall, "Andrew Millar " in *The British Literary Book Trade, 1700-1820; Dictionary of Literary Biography ; V. 154.*, ed. James K. Bracken and Joel Silver (Detroit: Gale Research,

Booksellers' own attitudes shifted the principles of trade, intensifying the importance of business in the literary marketplace, as books were regarded not only for their literary merits, but also for their profitability. In this perspective, copyright, as the exclusive right to publish and sell a title, was fundamental to mid-eighteenth century booksellers' concept of property. Although copyright was a central concept of the book trade throughout the early modern period, it was in the eighteenth century that booksellers, along with their lawyers, attempted to definitively define this central concept. The *Copyright Act* of 1710 provided statuary protection but still failed to articulate the niceties of copyright, presenting further uncertainties to English booksellers' property. When some Scottish booksellers contested both the authority and the commonly held interpretation of the copyright legislation, booksellers quickly recognized the severity of the situation.

At the root of the controversy was the Act's stipulation that copyrights expired after a maximum of twenty-eight years. This expiration was often misinterpreted and widely overlooked, as the majority of booksellers considered copyright in league with other traditional forms of property, arguing it was interminable. As a result, booksellers continued to purchase copyrights for new and old titles, counting on the statutory protection of their property. While English booksellers continued to purchase and hold copyrights, Scottish booksellers wanted to further profit from the enormously popular

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1995), 184-190; Charles Knight, *Shadows of the Old Booksellers*, (London: G. Routledge, 1908), 187-203; E. Marston, *Sketches of Some Booksellers of the Time of Dr. Samuel Johnson*, (Clifton A.M. Kelley, 1972), 15-27; Henry Robert Plomer et al., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1726 to 1775*, (London,: Bibliographical Society, 1968), 171-173; Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 274-294.

literary marketplace and appetite for books; however, the *Copyright Act* applied to Scotland, and so it was illegal to print any titles held in copyright in England.

The fiercely competitive book trade of mid-eighteenth century fueled the literary property debates, as the English booksellers sought to protect their property, while Scottish booksellers argued against traditionally held interpretations of copyright and the application of the *Copyright Act.* These concerns collided in the courts; the English booksellers demanded further protection of their property rights, while Scottish booksellers challenged the English concept of perpetual copyright. The debate of the mid-eighteenth century challenged and ultimately altered attitudes to copyright and to property. For many English booksellers, who had invested considerable sums of money, it was a fundamental issue, both for the trade and for their financial status, one that took over a quarter of a century to effectively answer.

Yet, it is important to understand that the legal interpretations of the copyright principle were secondary to the booksellers' sense of property. Rather, the significance of the copyright litigation, which featured prominently in the second half of the eighteenth century, was its implications to concepts of property and the ways in which booksellers exploited these legislative ambiguities to their advantage. The effects of copyright were felt throughout the eighteenth century trade, as booksellers, both in England and in Scotland, attempted to understand its legal meaning and financial consequences.[3]

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[3] For more information on the *Copyright Act* and copyright in the eighteenth century, see: Cyprian Blagden, *The Stationers' Company, a History, 1403-1959*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1960), 229-252; John Feather, "The Commerce of Letters: The Study of the Eighteenth Century Book Trade," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 17, no. 4 (1984), 405-424; John Feather, "The English Book Trade and the Law: 1695-1799," *Publishing History*, no. 12 (1982), 51-75; John Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, (London: Routledge, 1991), 84-92; John Feather, "Publishers and Politicians: The Remaking of the Law of

Copyrights often resulted in high asset valuations, but they did not immediately provide the necessary capital to successfully develop a business.[4] A petitioner to the House of Commons in 1774 claimed, "Booksellers buy with a view to immediate profit; and do not attend to such remote and uncertain contingencies."[5] While its prolonged ownership, in perpetuity, offered tremendous potential, copyright ownership did not always result in immediate success. Depending on the market and the popularity of the title, the value of the copyright could increase, tremendously. For instance, Robert Dodsley left his brother James £500 in his will, but included many copyrights that continued to accrue over the second-half of the century. Indeed, James possessed a fortune of £60,000 at his death.[6]

Copyright in Britain 1775-1842. Part I: Legal Deposit and the Battle of the Library Tax," *Publishing History*, no. 24 (1988), 49-76; John Feather, "Publishers and Politicians: The Remaking of the Law of Copyright in Britain 1775-1842. Part Ii: The Rights of Authors," *Publishing History* 25 (1989), 45-72; John Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates: British Copyright Law in Theory and Practice, 1710-1775," *Publishing History*, no. 22 (1987), 5-32; John Feather, *Publishing, Piracy and Politics: An Historical Study of Copyright in Britain*, (New York: Mansell, 1994); Mark Rose, "The Author as Proprietor: "Donaldson V Becket" And the Genealogy of Modern Authorship," *Representations*, no. 23 (1988), 51-85; Trevor Ross, "Copyright and the Invention of Tradition," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 26, no. 1 (1992), 1-27; Gwyn Walters, "The Booksellers in 1759 and 1774: The Battle for Literary Property," *Library* 29, no. 3 (1974), 287-311. Also, for a discussion of pirated editions in continental Europe, see: Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie, 1775-1800*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 131-176.

[4] Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 59.

[5] The author made the statements concerning the booksellers' claim that the current copyright arrangement helps authors. "Observations on the evidence given before the committee for proving the Allegations in the Booksellers Petition: Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*, 17.

[6] Appendix A, Will of Robert Dodsley, Robert Dodsley, *The Correspondence of Robert Dodsley, 1733-1764*, ed. James E. Tierney, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 503-505. According to Richard Sher, Andrew Millar's will "left £200 to his brother Henry, £50 a year during the life of his widow to Henry's son Alex, £200 each to his sisters Anna and Elizabeth, and an additional £300 to Elizabeth's husband James

Discussions of the eighteenth century literary property debates have been disproportionately directed to studies of authorial rights, as many have argued the principle of perpetual copyright was dismantled, in the 1774 legal decision in favour of authors, which stimulated the print culture during the Romantic age.[7] However, in focusing on authors, scholars have overlooked the extensive process of the changing attitudes to property over the course of the eighteenth century, as it applied to booksellers. In Hanoverian Britain, property was fundamental to political participation; the ubiquity of wealth, particularly in the commercial world and its significance in the daily lives of Britons, was central to political and social structures.[8] As a result, political and legal institutions were routinely enlisted to resolve commercial disputes that arose.

Hamilton, as well as other legacies to some Scottish cousins." Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 277.

[7] However, Richard Sher points out: "after the abolition of perpetual copyright in 1774, publishers paid authors as much or more for the rights to publish their new titles, perhaps because, among other factors, the certainty of copyright regulations mattered more than the duration of the copyright period." Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 26. For further information on authors in the mid-to-late eighteenth century literary property debates, see: Arthur Simons Collins, *Authorship in the Days of Johnson; Being a Study of the Relation between Author, Patron, Publisher, and Public, 1726-1780*, (Clifton, : A. M. Kelley, 1973); Feather, "The Commerce of Letters."; Feather, "The English Book Trade and the Law."; Feather, "Publishers and Politicians: The Remaking of the Law of Copyright in Britain 1775-1842. Part I."; Feather, "Publishers and Politicians: The Remaking of the Law of Copyright in Britain 1775-1842. Part II."; Jody Greene, *The Trouble with Ownership: Literary Property and Authorial Liability in England, 1660-1730*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Rose, "The Author as Proprietor: "Donaldson V Becket" And the Genealogy of Modern Authorship."; Ross, "Copyright and the Invention of Tradition."; William St. Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 43-65; Walters, "The Booksellers in 1759 and 1774: The Battle for Literary Property."; Martha Woodmansee, "The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions of the Emergence of the 'Author.," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 17, no. 4 (1984), 425-448.

[8] See Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 565-676; Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 207-280; Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 185-250.

The ensuing debates broadened definitions of property, and booksellers eventually invoked the English common law to protect their assets. The result was not favourable to the traditional book trade, which had expanded substantially throughout the eighteenth century. The 1774 *Donaldson v Becket* decision, which decided against perpetual copyright, forced booksellers to re-evaluate both their concepts of property and their attitudes towards the trade.[9]

The struggle to define copyright and place it within the rubric of conventional property echoed the broader issue facing the eighteenth century businessman, which was the changing notions of wealth and property. Property, as Paul Langford demonstrated in his book *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman*, was an increasingly fluid concept throughout the century. It enfranchised an unprecedented number of men to political life,

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[9] However, the 1774 decision did not immediately, or radically, alter the trade, as the traditions of the trade continued. As Richard Sher explained, "In practice, laws were not always decisive, not only because they were sometimes evaded by means of unauthorized publishing or piracy but also, and perhaps more importantly, because the mean at the top of the London book trade, like their brethren elsewhere, routinely bypassed the legal regime by establishing and enforcing regulations within the trade itself." Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 26. The complete list of respondents in the case were Thomas Becket, Peter Abraham de Hondt, John Rivington, William Johnson, William Strahan, Thomas Longman, William Richardson, John Richardson, Thomas Lowndes, Thomas Caston, George Kearsley, Henry Baldwin, William Owen, Thomas Davies, and Thomas Cadell. For the details on the case, see "The Cases of the Appellants and Respondents in the Cause of the Literary Property Before the House of Lords: Wherein the Decree of Lord Chancellor Apsley was reversed, 26 February 1774 with the genuine Arguments of the Council, the Opinions of the Judges, and the Speeches of the Lords, who distinguished themselves on that Occasion" in *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1764-1774*, (New York Garland Publishing 1975). Also, see: "The Leadings of the Counsel Before the House of Lords in the Great Cause concerning Literary Property; together with the opinions of the Learned Judges on the Common Law Copy Right of Authors and Booksellers to which are added, the Speeches of the Noble Lords, who spoke for and against reversing the Decree of the Court of Chancery." *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1764-1774.*

but few Britons were able to effectively define it.[10] Property continued to be fundamentally important to the political process, but the increase in market-related wealth changed concepts of property, as many non-traditional financial assets, such as copyright, were challenging the interpretation of property.

Concepts of property were fundamental to the on-going copyright debate that took place over the century. For most commercial Britons, property was recognized as a source of social and political power.[11] Meanwhile, the emerging commercial society fashioned new definitions of property, resulting in a century of shifting principles, as Britons tried to keep the traditional view of property, while also incorporating recently acquired commercial assets.[12] Property was an acknowledged necessity for the governing political structure; however, the way in which Britons defined and understood the concept changed over the eighteenth century. In the case of the booksellers, they used the imprecision of copyright and property to further their business interests, while also appealing to this property to gain esteem in political circles.

Although they shaped the late-eighteenth century book trade, the details of the legal determinations of copyright were not immediate concerns for the mid-century booksellers, since the Act's conditions were routinely avoided and ignored in the competitive world of the book trade. Though the eventual determination hardly

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[10] Langford, *Public Life, 1-70.*

[11] *Ibid*, 28-29. Langford succinctly stated, "If eighteenth-century politics was ultimately about the interests of property, it had as much to do with change and competition within the propertied society itself as with the assertion of proprietorial power over largely unpropertied inferiors." *Ibid,* 1.

[12] According to Paul Langford, the most general definition of property accepted during the period was the concept of property attributed to wealth, and few Britons attempted to further understand the concept, and so it remained ambiguous, much like the concept of copyright. Langford, *Public Life*, 1-14.

influenced established and tradition-ridden booksellers, who, by that time, had established successful businesses based on the perpetuity principle, it remained a touchstone of debate within the trade throughout the mid-century period. Historian Richard Sher points out that the weight ascribed to the 1774 decision has been generally overstated, as the fascination with books and the expansion of print culture surfaced well before the copyright determinations.[13] Many have mistakenly dated the emergence of the large-scale book trade with the dismantling of the traditionally held concepts of copyright, but the process was established by the mid-eighteenth century—well before the legal determinations occurred.

For the mid-century trade, the significance of copyright was rooted precisely in the misunderstandings and erroneous assumptions of the principal booksellers. Most importantly, booksellers generally disregarded the time-limit clause of the copyright legislation; instead, they chose to interpret the copyright as interminable. In the case of the copyright debate, booksellers, authors, publishers, and politicians debated not only the future of the trade but also addressed the fundamental concept of property.[14] While English common law was inherently obliged to acknowledge and incorporate new concepts of property, the Scottish civil law tradition was unwilling to account for intangible assets.[15] As a result, the Scottish legal system was rather hostile to any

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[13] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 25-29. Sher pointed to the following book as an example of the overstated influence of the dismantling of perpetual copyright. St. Clair, *The Reading Nation*, 43-65.

[14] Langford, *Public Life*, 25-28. Paul Langford pointed out that the judges and legislators, making determinations in the copyright cases, were "unusually ready to discuss the fundamentals of property theory." *Ibid*, 26.

[15] Feather explained, "the problem was that the Roman basis of Scots law did not admit of the concept of 'incorporeal' property: to be a legal entity, a property had to have real, or physical, existence." Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 81.

determinations concerning literary property. The ensuing debate, which crested in 1774, brought forth questions and concerns located at the heart of the eighteenth century commercial identity.[16]

Property was intrinsic to politics; property qualifications reinforced its importance to the eighteenth century Briton, as it enfranchised men to political life.[17] For booksellers, their property was often tied to their business; only at retirement did most acquire real estate.[18] Nevertheless, booksellers were involved in the public life that historians, such as Paul Langford and James Raven, have examined in considerable detail.[19] Booksellers' investments in non-traditional forms of property (movable goods or commodities), did not afford them direct participation; instead, they began participating, through the print culture, in what John Brewer termed as the "alternative structure of politics."[20] When

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[16] For further reading on the eighteenth century commercial society, see: John Brewer, "Commercialization and Politics," in *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Neil McKendrick, Brewer John, and Plumb J. H. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 197-262; John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1997); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837*, (Yale University Press, 2005); Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650-1850*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*; Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798*; Porter, *English Society*; James Raven, *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750-1800*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

[17] Langford, *Public Life*, 206-287.

[18] For instance, following his retirement, Andrew Millar moved into "a splendid home in Pall Mall that Robert Adam designed for him." Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 294.

[19] See: Brewer, *Party Ideology*; John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*; Langford, *Public Life*; Porter, *English Society*; Raven, *Judging New Wealth.*

[20] Brewer, *Party Ideology*, 139-160.

booksellers found their assets threatened, it was typical that they turned to Parliament and to the common law courts to resolve their disputes and protect their property.

Awareness of copyright and literary property in England emerged in the seventeenth century.[21] Although the notion of purchased copies existed throughout the early modern period, the growth of the book trade during the English Civil War, with the relaxation of government intervention, resulted in an increase in booksellers entering the trade.[22] During the Civil War period, many purchased copyrights, but the return to the previous monopolistic system with the Restoration resulted in many booksellers losing the ability to print, which invalidated their purchased copies.[23] Further complicating matters, in 1695, the *Licensing Act*, which imposed pre-publication censorship and upheld the monopoly of select publishers, was allowed to lapse. Despite numerous attempts to reintroduce the legislation, it failed to pass. Following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the concept of liberty, as ambiguous as it may be, motivated most politicians, Whig and Tory, to repudiate state intervention. As well, with the toleration of Protestantism in 1689, it was increasingly difficult for the state to maintain the censorship of previous eras.

The instability of these seemingly intangible notions was a grave concern for booksellers. First, many booksellers recalled the devastating effects of the Restoration, when many copyright-holders lost their right to publish with the return to the licensing system. Secondly, booksellers who were authorized to publish, under the conditions of

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[21] According to John Feather, the *Copyright Act* was the first official recognition that copies could be owned. Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 5.

[22] For more information on the growth of printed material in 1641, see: Peter Marshall, *Mother Leakey and the Bishop: A Ghost Story*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 108-109.

[23] During the period, copyrights were commonly referred to as copies.

the *Licensing Act*, also found their property suddenly without its foundation. As a result, the failure to renew the *Licensing Act* presented all booksellers with a stifling uncertainty, for no one could precisely value their assets, and any new legislation could render their property valueless.[24] These grave uncertainties prompted booksellers to petition Parliament for further protection of their assets, resulting in the legislation of the *Copyright Act* in 1710.[25]

The Act stipulated that copyrights expired after a maximum of twenty-eight years, but booksellers generally maintained the ownership until it was relinquished. As well, the wording of the Act was often understood to indicate the applications for "the penalties for breach of copyright" expired rather than the actual copyright.[26] According to most accounts, the expiration date on copyright was included primarily to augment the position of authors in the literary market, because it kept booksellers from holding the work indefinitely and as such, it offered authors more control over their own intellectual property.[27] Regardless of the time-limit clause, booksellers held copyright throughout the century, without acknowledging expiration. Since booksellers purchased the copyright and it was considered property, it was widely held that copyright remained privately owned until booksellers surrendered it. Often, booksellers would share copyrights or make agreements for the legal printing of privately held copies, but it was commonly

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[24] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 67-74.
[25] It should be noted the *Copyright Act* only applied to books. Great Britain, *An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies, During the Times Therein Mentioned*, (London: printed by the assigns of Thomas Newcomb, and Henry Hills, deceas'd; printers to the Queens most excellent Majesty, 1710), 2. In 1734, William Hogarth petitioned to have a similar protection afforded to engravers, resulting in the *Engraver's Act.* Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates: British Copyright Law in Theory and Practice, 1710-1775," 8.
[26] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 78.
[27] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 16.

regarded as a personal possession. Since most regarded copyright as a legally protected asset, many booksellers used copyright to test the limits of their authority in eighteenth century commercial Britain.[28] Therefore, although the eighteenth century book trade enjoyed statutory protection, the *Copyright Act* remained largely un-enforced and misunderstood until the legal decision of 1774, which dismantled the commonly held perpetual copyright principle.[29]

The existence of statute law recognizing copyright had limited implications outside of the trade. John Feather concluded the Act resulted from booksellers and publishers applying pressure, and it "was essentially an Act designed by a group of leading members of the trade for their own benefit and protection."[30] Because of the specific nature and the degree to which Hanoverians interpreted it as ambiguous, the application of the Act was left to the tradesmen with the most to lose or gain from its implementation in the book market. As a result, the book trade continued to rely on

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[28] For information on the debate concerning literary property in Britain, consult the following collections of pamphlets and petitions from the eighteenth century: *Considerations on the Nature and Origin of Literary Property: Wherein That Species of Property Is Clearly Proved to Subsist No Longer Than for the Terms Fixed by the Satute [Sic] 8vo Ann* to Which Is Added, a Letter to Robert Taylor, Bookseller, in Berwick*, (Edinburgh: Printed by Alexander Donaldson, 1767); *Literary Property Debate*, (1975); *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*, (New York Garland Publishing, 1974); *The Literary Property Debate: Seven Tracts, 1747-1773*, (New York Garland Publishing, 1974); *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1764-1774*; Thomas Hayter, *Freedom of the Press and the Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1755-1770*, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974); Horace Walpole and William Warburton, *Horace Walpole's Political Tracts, 1747-1748*, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974). It is important to note that *The Literary Property Debate* series did not assign page numbers to the collection, and so the page numbers cited come from the original publication rather than the book.

[29] Feather, "The English Book Trade and the Law," 63-66.

[30] *Ibid*, 64.

traditional practices, in dealing with ownership of titles and despite the legislation, they opted not to adopt new trade customs.[31]

The *Copyright Act*'s problems were rooted in "the traditional practices of the trade and the vagueness of the 1710 Act."[32] The imprecision of the Act made it difficult for the judiciary to effectively understand and make determinations on exactly who possessed copyright of a given work. At the same time, the existence of statute law multiplied the claims of copyright infringement and piracy in the courts. The recourse to litigation grew over the eighteenth century in lock-step with the proliferation of printed material.[33]

While only a few booksellers understood the founding principles of the 1710 *Copyright Act,* it did not deter the majority from making declarations of legal entitlement.[34] For most, copyright was a legal guarantee of their sole ownership of the title—a definition further complicated by publishers and booksellers in Scotland and Ireland, who were hostile to the Act's copyright restrictions.

Although the 1707 *Act of the Union* had forged the British nation, it inadequately reconciled British concerns, failing to induce the cohesion of English and Scottish interests.[35] The chasm between English and Scottish viewpoints heavily influenced

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[31] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 94. According to Roy Porter, innovation was rare during the period. Porter, *English Society*, 195.
[32] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 5.
[33] *Ibid*, 6.
[34] See: Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates."
[35] Stephen Brown, "William Smellie and the Printer's Role in the Eighteenth-Century Edinburgh Booktrade," in *The Human Face of the Book Trade: Print Culture and Its Creators*, ed. Peter Isaac and Barry McKay (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1999), 29-43; Colley, *Britons*, 55-145; Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 67-127; Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 265-326.

debates of copyright and literary property.[36] For instance, English booksellers were tentatively awarded protection in England, but they were still at the mercy of Scottish booksellers, who boldly infringed on their copyrighted material, trusting that the "English" exclusive rights did not apply in Scotland.

Although Scottish booksellers were technically restricted from printing material held in copyright in England, even for their domestic market, the Act failed to restrain the proliferation of pirated books.[37] The 1739 *Import of Books Act* restricted the importation of English-language books, most-often brought in from Ireland, but similar to the *Copyright Act*, it was not easily enforced.[38] At the same time, older works under the Act, such as those by Milton and Shakespeare, were due to expire.[39] Although English booksellers continued to assert their exclusive ownership, by appealing to conventions existing in the common law confirming perpetual copyright, Scottish printers quickly began printing and profiting from newly public copyrights.

By the 1730s, the legal and parliamentary principle of copyright was well-established, though hotly contested. When Andrew Millar, Robert Dodsley, and Thomas Osborne entered the trade in the 1730s, they inherited the obligations and expectations of the exclusive right-to-copy convention. The passing of the *Copyright Act* resulted from the politicking of the earlier post-1695 cohort of booksellers. Nonetheless, its ambiguities continued throughout the century, particularly affecting the new breed of booksellers of

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[36] For a comprehensive examination of the relationship between Edinburgh and London publishers, see: Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 263-326.
[37] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 15-17.
[38] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 79.
[39] Despite the expiration, which took effect in 1731-1732, Milton and Shakespeare continued to be traded as copyright shares for considerable sums of money. Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 6.

the mid-century.[40] Throughout the 1730-1770 period, the notion of perpetual copyright was considered an intrinsic facet of the trade. By 1774 when copyright was legally redefined, most of the booksellers involved in the changing trade of the mid-century had died or retired.[41] In fact, the 1774 decision originated in the litigation Andrew Millar had brought forth against Robert Taylor several years earlier; however, by the time the courts provided a final decision, in the *Donaldson v. Becket* decision, Millar had been dead for six years.[42] From his desire to cement the concept of copyright and through his legal challenges to Scottish printers and booksellers, Millar instigated the legal battles that culminated in the dismantling of perpetual copyright.[43]

Booksellers were involved in contracts with authors and heavily invested in purchased copyrights. When pressed with these financial obligations, many took action to ensure the protection of their property. Andrew Millar purchased scores of copyrights and paid authors handsomely.[44] In doing so, he was quite successful, but Millar's financial status was founded upon his ownership of exclusive rights for several major works. In fact, on several occasions, Millar would outbid his competitors to secure sought-after

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[40] "Petition of booksellers residing in Edinburgh: Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*, 7.

[41] The Donaldson vs. Beckett decision of 1774 originated in the Millar's claim about the illegal reprinting of Thomson's *The Seasons*. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 288-289.

[42] "The Cases of the Appellants and Respondents in the cause of Literary Property Before the House of Lords" in *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1764-1774*, 1-2. The *Millar v. Taylor* case was decided in 1769. Feather, *Publishing, Piracy and Politics*, 85-93.

[43] For a further discussion of Andrew Millar's relationship with the Scottish book trade, see: Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 275-294.

[44] Horace Walpole, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence: Volume Nine*, ed. W. S. Lewis, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 84. Also in Horace Walpole, *Selected Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. William Hadley, (London: J. M. Dent & sons, 1926), 197.

titles, making his copyright investments all the more important.[45] As well, Millar was heavily engaged in reprinting his titles, commonly offering features "never before published" with each edition.[46] His major works were rarely out-of-print, and his shop was frequently providing newly revised editions, promoting the novelty of the publications. As Millar was regularly updating his titles, he evidently considered them as long-term assets.

When the Scottish booksellers began infringing on Millar's copyright, in other words his property rights, it was a genuine concern. Millar's financial obligations compelled him to take action and protect his assets.[47] Interestingly, Millar worked more closely with Scotland-based booksellers than most of his contemporaries; meanwhile, he was the most zealous opponent to Scottish book piracy.[48] His contesting of copyright infringement was doubtlessly related to his keen sense of the market and the goods he sold. As a trade-based publisher, offering titles for the general public's consumption, Millar was far more vulnerable than many of his contemporaries. First, he had purchased many copyrights, often for considerable sums of money. Second, the books, he offered,

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[45] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 283.
[46] For an example of Millar's claims of material never before published, see: "Books Printed for and Sold by A. Millar in the Strand, London" in William Robertson, *The History of Scotland During the Reigns of Queen Mary, and of King James Vi. Till His Accession to the Crown of England. With a Review of the Scottish History Previous to That Period; and an Appendix. Volume One*, (London: printed for A. Millar, 1762), 455.
[47] For information on the court case, see: "Speeches or Arguments of the Judges of the Court of King's Bench in the cause of Millar against Taylor" in *The Literary Property Debate: Seven Tracts, 1747-1773*, 1-128. "The Question concerning Literary Property determined by The Court of the King's Bench on 20 April, 1769" in *The Literary Property Debate: Seven Tracts, 1747-1773*, 1-127.
[48] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 289-294.

being largely popular titles, appealed more broadly to the general reading public.[49] While his imprint's expansive appeal facilitated its success, it also made it more vulnerable to plagiarism and theft, as the other Scottish publishers were offering his titles for lower prices and undercutting his market.

When Millar discovered Scottish editions of Thomson's *The Seasons*, for which he held exclusive copyright, he filed a claim against Robert Taylor, the publisher.[50] However, Taylor argued the copyright had expired; therefore, he could not be fined. Millar countered that the protection of copyright was founded in the common law, and the judge agreed, determining that perpetual copyright exists in the common law, as convention to property in purchased copies in perpetuity pre-dated the 1710 Act.[51] Millar continued to seek injunctions against Scottish infringement, resulting in the *Donaldson v. Becket* case.[52] Donaldson further challenged the Millar decision in his litigation with Beckett, as Donaldson published Thomson's *The Seasons*, the publication at the centre of the Millar v. Taylor and its copy-owner, now Beckett, felt obliged to sue.[53] Initially, the courts agreed with the English booksellers, based on the precedent of *Millar v. Taylor,* that copyright existing in perpetuity was founded in the common law, but in Donaldson's further litigation against Becket, it was decided the legislation invalidated previous

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[49] The Tonson family's imprint was involved in the copyright issues for the same reasons; having purchased so many copyrights and built a business on the exclusive ownership of certain titles, it helped motivate them into protecting copyright. Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates" 7.

[50] Millar printed twenty-five editions of Thomson's *Seasons*. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 281. According to Donaldson's 1774 appeal, Millar purchased the copyright for the poem from John Millan for £105. "Cases of the Appellants and the Respondents" in *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1764-1774*, 1.

[51] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 19.

[52] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 82.

[53] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 20.

common law conventions.[54] Thus, expiration dates assigned to copyrights replaced all earlier conventions, including the booksellers' traditional view of interminable copyrights.

The on-going litigation confirmed booksellers' uncertainties of their traditional copyright practices. While the book trade turned to the court for copyright determinations, English booksellers retreated, supplementing their legal manifestations with further insular policies.[55] In 1759, a letter was circulated to all booksellers in England, stating:

> ...the booksellers of London, in their own defence, have been forced to take proper measures to stop this growing evil; and, upon mature consideration, with the advice of persons *eminent in the law*, have come to a general agreement to prosecute, by due course of law, all such persons as shall be detected in either printing or vending piratical editions of the book which are their property.... If you have any Scotch, or other piratical editions of English books, they will take them off your hands, at the real price they cost you, and give you in return to the same value in the genuine editions of the said books, at the lowest market-price; *upon condition*, that you will engage not to purchase or vend any such pirated editions for the future.[56]

An association of prominent booksellers including Andrew Millar, James Dodsley, the Rivingtons, the Longmans, Samuel Richardson, Thomas Osborne, John Newbery, and

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[54] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 22-23. Although Feather's article provides the clearest discussion of the copyright decisions, for more details on specifics of the case, see the transcribed notes from the cases: "Speeches or Arguments of the Judges of the Court of King's Bench in the cause of Millar against Taylor" in *The Literary Property Debate: Seven Tracts, 1747-1773*, 1-128. "The Question concerning Literary Property determined by The Court of the King's Bench on 20 April, 1769" in *The Literary Property Debate: Seven Tracts, 1747-1773*, 1-127. "The Cases of the Appellants and Respondents in the Cause of Literary Property Before the Lords" and "The Pleadings of the Counsel Before the House of Lords" in *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1764-1774*.

[55] The significance of the 1759 arrangement is further explored in Walters, "The Booksellers in 1759 and 1774: The Battle for Literary Property."

[56] John Wilkie to all the Booksellers in England, November 2, 1759 in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*, 24.

Jacob Tonson, generated £3,150 though subscription fees and vowed to fight any Scottish or Irish infringement in the English book market.[57] The association sought to curb the spread of pirated editions in the provinces, as many Scottish and Irish editions were being marketed and sold beyond the metropolis in the outlying areas.[58] After the grace period, the booksellers vowed to blacklist and prosecute all booksellers found in possession of pirated editions. In short, booksellers sought to isolate the Scottish booksellers from English customers. Although the English booksellers were protecting their business and financial interests, the manner in which they went about it was ill-received.[59]

While the London booksellers continued their offensive, Alexander Donaldson, persisted in printing and selling pirated titles. Owing to his cheap prices and few copyright obligations, he quickly acquired considerable wealth.[60] While Alexander Kincaid, Donaldson's former business partner, reorganized his shop to feature original Scottish Enlightenment publications, Donaldson devoted his business to reprinting

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[57] In this case, the threat of Scottish pirated editions was considerably more justified than the Irish threat. John Whiston to John Merrill, April 26, 1759 in *Ibid*, 22. The complete list of subscribers and the amount of subscription fees was as follows: "Mr Tonson subscribed 500 pounds, Millar 300 pounds, Hitch 150. All the wholesale dealers, Dodd, Baldwin, both Rivingtons, Ward, Beecroft, Longman, Crowder, and Comp. Ware, Richardson, Dodsley, Davey, and Comp. Johnston, Newbery, 100 pounds each, T. Osborne 50, Brown, Whiston, L. Davis, Sanby, Shuckburgh, Bathurst, Hawkins, Wren, Pottinger, Buckland, Field, Stuart, Castlon, & c. & c. 25 pounds each; in all amounting to 3150 pounds." *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*, 22.

[58] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 18-19.

[59] See: "Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*. "Petition of Alexander Donaldson, Bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, London: Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775, 9-12.*

[60] For Donaldson's biography, see: Plomer et al., *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers*, 299-300; Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 312-316.

English titles.[61] Donaldson was doubtlessly aware of the exclusive rights afforded English booksellers through copyright ownership, as "no less than eleven suits in Chancery were carried on against him."[62] As a prominent book pirate, Donaldson quickly saw success in the trade, but noticed a considerable slump in his profits in the 1760s, as a result of the closure of the English market.[63] Finding his markets shrinking and spurred by recent Scottish court decisions against perpetual copyright, Donaldson launched an offensive against the London booksellers.[64]

Donaldson's campaign was chiefly commercial.[65] Over the following years, he intentionally published copyrighted material, baiting the London booksellers to take the issue to the courts. As an additional challenge to the English-booksellers' hegemony, he established a bookshop in London, offering his Scottish reprints at a fraction of the price of the official publications.[66] After several suits, Donaldson returned to the courts in 1774, appealing a previous decision. In the case, he admitted to publishing the title, but denied the London booksellers "could then have the sole privilege of printing and uttering *The Seasons* and *The Hymn*", as the twenty-eight year period had passed.[67]

In the wake of the 1774 decision, booksellers approached Parliament to further protect their assets. Their actions resulted in the 1774 Booksellers' Bill. In response to the House of Lords' *Donaldson v. Becket* decision, the bill sought to preserve the

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[61] Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 313-314.
[62] "Petition of Alexander Donaldson, Bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, London: Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*, 10.
[63] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 80-81.
[64] For further details on the Scottish cases, see: Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates."
[65] Feather, *A History of British Publishing*, 80.
[66] *Ibid*, 82-83.
[67] "Case of the Appellants: Cases of Appellants and Respondents" in *The Literary Property Debate: Six Tracts, 1764-1774*, 2.

booksellers' interest in the sale and ownership of copies, a condition the decision had rendered useless. Pointing to the sizeable investments they made, booksellers petitioned Parliament to introduce legislation overruling the decision, thereby, preserving their property.[68] As one observer noted in 1774, "Near £200,000 worth of what was honestly purchased at public sale, and what was yesterday thought property is now reduced to nothing."[69]

The 1774 petitions were not unusual, as Parliament was being inundated by requests for legislative intervention from small, private interests.[70] Oftentimes, Parliament could not effectively resolve these disputes. Paul Langford described the main goal in the arbitration of these interests was ensuring, "those disappointed did not take their disappointment out on the political structure which had failed them."[71] Langford further explained these conflicts, such as the one involving the booksellers in 1774, were "the politics of interest, rather than the politics of class, or the politics of faith," as commercial Britons used the political institutions to further elucidate concepts of property and interest in the marketplace society.

Over the course of the eighteenth century, the changing nature of property was widely discussed, as the growing prosperity resulted in a wide-ranging and ever-expanding classification of wealth. In this on-going debate, literary property factored heavily, as many tried to place the intangible concept within the rubric of property.

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[68] Feather, "The Publishers and the Pirates," 24-25. Also, see the collection: "Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775.*

[69] *London Magazine* (1774) as cited in Langford, *Public Life*, 25.

[70] Peter David Garner Thomas, *The House of Commons in the Eighteenth Century*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 14-44.

[71] Langford, *Public Life,* 186-187.

William Kenrick in his "Address to the Artists and Manufactures of Great Britain" explained the recent attempts to understand property:

> In the late contests about Literary Property much hath been said and written on the nature and origin of property in general. The common lawyers, wedded to words and forms, have bandied about the technical terms of corporal and incorporeal till they have almost forgot their simple use. It hath been proved, however, against them, that there are incorporeal rights as easily ascertainable by law, and as justly entitled to the protection of it, as others which are corporeal.[72]

However, the protection, to which Kenrick referred, was that of the author, as he claimed authors had an inalienable right to the fruits of their labour. Some Britons, like Kenrick, argued booksellers infringed on the authors' property, and copyright should be vested solely with authors, creators of the literary goods.[73] Despite the authorial rights being championed, booksellers, in investing considerable sums of money into the right to copy, were intimately linked to the concept of the publication as property.

Booksellers acknowledged the changing nature of property and used it to their advantage, expected Parliament and the courts to agree with their interpretation. As Alexander Donaldson pointed out in 1774 in response to the proposed Booksellers' Bill in Parliament, "that it will appear from the practice of the London booksellers, that they did not, for a series of years, entertain an idea of a common law right, though the contrary is now pretended."[74] Critics of the London booksellers echoed these statements of the appeal of common law rights, and used the novelty of the argument to discredit its

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[72] "An Address to the Artists and Manufactures of Great Britain by W. Kenrick" in *The Literary Property Debate: Eight Tracts, 1774-1775*, 4.

[73] See: Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *Ibid.*

[74] "Petition of Alexander Donaldson, Bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, London: Papers relating to the booksellers bill, before the Honourable House of Commons, 1774" in *Ibid*, 11.

proponents. However, the notion of common law property rights were, to a large degree, popularized in the mid-to-late century, making the booksellers assertions much more common than some critics believed.[75] When booksellers confronted piracy in the courts, asserting their common law rights to the property, it pointed to a broader movement of the role of the courts in determining property, as well as the common law protection of non-traditional forms of wealth.

When the booksellers turned to Parliament in 1774 to protect purchased copyright assets, they were not only seeking confirmation of their non-traditional property, but also seeking legislative protection of their economic development. Shortly after their application, critics came out in force, arguing the London-based booksellers were trying to institute a monopoly. The pejorative use of monopoly factored heavily in critics' rhetoric, claiming booksellers were effectively using the guise of copyright protection to keep prices high, which in turn affected the customer.[76] At the time, monopolies were received disapprovingly, and so the accusation of a monopoly in the book trade was not taken lightly.[77] The exclusively-held, interminable property, in the form of copyright, was allegedly central to the monopoly of the literary marketplace, as it vested control of the literary goods with a select group of booksellers.

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[75] For further details on the changing concepts of property in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, see Langford, *Public Life*, 28-70.

[76] Accusations of price-fixing appeared throughout the century. Historians have pointed out the prices, rather than literacy, primarily affected book sales. Porter, *English Society*, 235-237; Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, 57. However, the arguments of price fixing through monopolies have not been effectively demonstrated. Certainly, prices were inching upwards throughout the century, but the overt actions of the booksellers, except for choosing materials, has yet to be demonstrated. Brewer, *Pleasures*, 152-153.

[77] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 152.

As a result of the disputes, by 1774, the book trade was again in a state of flux. Its critics argued the exclusive, insular customs, which characterized the trade of Millar and Dodsley, were no longer feasible.[78] The literary property debates demonstrated the principal concern of many eighteenth century commercial Britons, which was the instability of property. Traditionally, property was affiliated with ownership. Initially, booksellers subscribed to the traditional view of ownership, as an indicator of wealth. However, copyright, despite the legislation, remained imprecise for more than half the eighteenth century. Booksellers, keeping with the traditionally held view of ownership, felt the copyrights were interminable. Acquired through purchase, the condition of an expiry was given little attention, and most booksellers considered it in the same vein as other acquired possession, such as an estate, that could be retailed. Therefore, when the debate concerning literary property renewed in the mid-century, it threatened booksellers' assets, as well as challenged their concepts of property.

When Andrew Millar took the issue of piracy to court, he was asserting his inalienable right to property.[79] Based upon the traditional notion of ownership, Millar believed the Scottish pirates were infringing on his acquired wealth. As the matter continued over the second half of the century, the English booksellers realized the issue was far more complex. The debates over copyright initiated an examination into the nature of property, bringing forth one central question, that was; could copyright and

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[78] Interestingly, by the 1770s, the mid-century trade was considered as the traditional way.

[79] John Feather noted Becket's counsel had "rehearsed the natural law theory of property" for the case, and "he contended himself with the argument that Parliament has recognized such rights, that they were also embodied in the crown patens and the English Stock, and that the 1710 Act merely provided some support for the booksellers by imposing penalties on the perpetrators of unauthorized reprints under certain conditions." Feather, *Publishing, Piracy and Politics*, 90.

literary property truly be categorized with other traditional assets? The answer, much to the dismay of the booksellers heavily invested in copyrights, was no. Although booksellers could hold exclusive rights over a publication intended for public consumption, the right was finite.

Booksellers of the mid-century, such as Andrew Millar, were actively involved in the determination of copyright and restricting piracy. The ubiquity of books throughout Britain in the eighteenth century reinforced the significance of copyright and property in the trade. The unprecedented increases in publications available for sale and in literacy rates intensified the debate, as booksellers sought to protect their investments within the progressively competitive marketplace.[80] Following 1774, piracy continued, particularly in Ireland, but the allegations of infringement were deflated, as claims of exclusivity to a publication diminished.[81] The result was a further expansion of the book trade in the final two decades of the century, as the changes in literary property provided additional incentives for new booksellers and authors.

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[80] See chapter two for a further discussion of the proliferation of printed material. Also, see: Brewer, *Pleasures*, 167-197.

[81] According to Richard Sher, four London booksellers testified before Parliament on March 15, 1785, complaining Ireland enjoyed an unfair advantage in the book market, because: copyright laws did not apply; lower duties on paper in Ireland made it cheaper to print; lower duties on leather made it cheaper to bind books; and wages were generally lower. These factors, they argued, made it impractical to compete with Irish competitors. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book*, 445.

CONCLUSION

BOOKSELLERS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE LITERARY MARKETPLACE

When Lord Chesterfield advised his son to productively employ his spare time by reading, he cautioned:

> ...never burden your mind with more than one thing at a time: and in reading this book, do not run over it superficially, but read every passage twice over, at least; do not pass on to a second, till you thoroughly understand the first, nor quit the book till you are master of the subject; for unless you do this, you may read it through, and not remember the contents of it for a week.[1]

For Chesterfield, reading was not only a past time, but also an independent study, as he employed books to enrich his knowledge. There virtues he implored upon his son were prerequisites of a gentleman and an active member of English political circles in the mid-eighteenth century. With a myriad of titles conveniently available for consumption, Chesterfield understood that Englishmen and women could read and study a bewildering and growing array of subjects. As a result, attitudes to reading changed to reflect the multifarious ideas and ideologies available in books, as the accessibility of printed texts

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[1] Philip Dormer Stanhope Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Advice to His Son on Men and Manners: In Which the Principles of Politeness, and the Art of Acquiring a Knowledge of the World, Are Laid Down ... To Which Are Added, Extracts from Various Books, ... Lord Burghley's Ten Precepts to His Son, and Dr. Franklin's Way to Wealth,* (London: printed for W. Richardson, 1788), 113.

on wide-ranging subjects transformed the fundamental importance of reading and owning books.

The quantitative growth of the print culture presented a seemingly endless stock of titles for Britons to now enjoy. Much to the delight of Thomas Turner, and his contemporaries, books were as easily obtained as meat and drink. Libraries, shops, book reviews, and advertisements surrounded Britons with a plethora of printed material. Accordingly, during the mid-century period, Britons consumed more literature than ever before, as they indeed enjoyed and participated in the literary marketplace. Although increases in literacy and in leisure assisted the popularity of books, the expansion of the literature chiefly resulted from the activities of booksellers in the marketplace.

The transformation of the literary marketplace was gradual, occurring over a series of generations. Although these processes originated in the seventeenth century and continued well into the nineteenth, the eighteenth century experienced an exceptional rise in the consumption of literary goods. This owed much to the new breed of booksellers who populated the mid-century trade. The importance of eighteenth century booksellers was their willingness to embrace new commercial strategies for the trade, exploiting them to their advantage.

This thesis began with the question: what role did booksellers' motivations play in the dramatic increases in the book trade? The answer to such a compelling question lies, in part, in the behaviour and business practices of mid-century booksellers since their attitudes were vital to the growth of the trade and factored heavily in the literary marketplace. Booksellers commonly considered themselves businessmen before supporters of literature. Individuals like Andrew Millar and Thomas Osborne were

recognized by the social and political elites as uncouth, impolite, and ignorant of literature, but these faults were immaterial to their business, or their ability to secure authors. The professional demonstration and detachment of booksellers from authorship and the art of writing is fundamentally important to historians, as it demonstrates the ascendancy of commerce as the rudimentary principle of the trade and the transformation of the literary marketplace.

The emergence of the commercial book trade had broad implications. Although copyright had existed in principle during the early modern period, the rise in printed material, as well as the commercial marketplace, reinforced the economic value of purchased copyrights, and mid-century booksellers appealed to both the Parliament and Courts of Law to protect their non-traditional property and literary assets. Moreover, booksellers were able to accumulate considerable wealth in the commercial society, selling literature as fashionable goods, appealing to the developing polite and commercial middling ranks. The book trade's business principles shifted from the merits of the literary work to the economic potential of the book. As such, booksellers approached books from a business perspective, and judged works based on the profitability of the title.

Therefore, this thesis sheds light on a key concept in understanding the changing nature of British society, demonstrating the significance of booksellers in historical understanding of the Hanoverian literary marketplace. However, further research is required, particularly concerning the participation of booksellers in the political culture. John Brewer and Hannah Barker have demonstrated the significance of newspapers in fostering political identities, yet the role of booksellers, in deciding what to print and, in

turn, what was the print culture, remains underdeveloped.[2] An exception to this trend is the study of John Almon in such processes between 1740 and 1760.[3] As booksellers are reintegrated into the historical narrative, historians can further examine the role of these businessmen in society. Such research will go some way to revealing that for the mid-eighteenth century British bookseller, the profitability of books was paramount. Their attitudes to books, business, and property ultimately transformed the literary marketplace over the course of the mid-to-late eighteenth century.

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[2] Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 43-72; John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 139-160.

[3] Brewer, *Party Ideology*, 163-200; Peter D. G. Thomas, "John Wilkes and the Freedom of the Press (1771)," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 33 (1960), 86-98.

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