Daniel Cook and Nicholas Seager, eds., *The Afterlives of Eighteenth-Century Fiction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. Pp. 304. £65. ISBN 9781107054684.

The collection of essays that comprise *The Afterlives of Eighteenth-Century Fiction* examines how both canonical and non-canonical novels of the long eighteenth century have been – and continue to be – adapted and appropriated for new audiences in innovative ways. Such re-creations, this volume attests, are not confined to any one particular medium but instead find expression in, among other forms, newspaper serialisations, musical theatre, poetry, print caricature, film and puppet theatre. Each contributor offers an insightful reading of how fiction of the period instigated a wealth of 'imaginative re-creation[s]' that, far from destroying the significance of the original, gave such texts a new lease of life in other striking, and sometimes surprising, forms (11).

It is the transformations of eighteenth-century novels that form the focus of the essays in this collection. Given the novel's as-yet-undefined status in the eighteenth century, it was, as Daniel Cook and Nicholas Seager claim in their valuable introduction, particularly susceptible to 'remediation' (5). Though these re-imaginings ensured eighteenth-century novels were consumed on a mass scale – albeit in different formats – the authors of such works were powerless to curtail such 'secondary authorship' (37). As Cook observes in a compelling first chapter, authorship did not necessarily denote ownership in this period. As a result, fiction was often at the mercy of '[m]imics, counterfeiters, continuers, and adapters' (23).

Far from being a victim of such appropriations, however, the novel, as the following two essays by Michael McKeon and Leah Orr argue, engaged in these very techniques. Such a claim further supports the critical consensus – put forth by J. Paul Hunter among others – that the early novel is a mixture of existing forms. McKeon traces the novel's debts to family romance and focuses particularly on the trope of discovered parentage. He offers compelling readings of the fiction of Henry Fielding, Frances Burney and Jane Austen but it is his reading of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* which is the most striking. Orr, meanwhile, suggests that 'character-oriented' chapbooks of the early century supply the 'missing link' between seventeenth-century picaresque fiction and early eighteenth-century criminal narratives (81, 86). Such a claim is both perceptive and persuasive and offers an intriguing addition to scholarship on the novel pre-Richardson.

Chapters 4 to 7 examine how the works of the most canonical novelists of the period found expression in outlets other than the novel. Essays by M-C. Newbould and Dahlia Porter chart how novels, and poetic excerpts from novels, were repackaged in collections and anthologies aimed to both 'delight' and 'instruct' their readers (135). Newbould's account of how the 'bawdy' works of Fielding and Laurence Sterne were re-appropriated for late-century sentimental readers, in particular, is a compelling read (3). Nicholas Seager's chapter investigates the serialisation of novels in early eighteenth-century newspapers. He argues that fiction of the early century was often read 'not in a volume, but in short injections', an observation that provides a fascinating insight into early eighteenth-century reading practices (113). The contribution by Sarah Raff, meanwhile, which charts the afterlife of the Richardsonian trope of 'guardianship' in Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*, reminds us that the afterlives of fiction of this period were not confined to the eighteenth century.

The visual afterlives of eighteenth-century fiction are the focus of the following four chapters. Essays by David A. Brewer, Michael Burden, David Francis Taylor and Robert Mayer explore how fiction ranging from Fielding and Richardson to Walter Scott and Mary Shelley found expression on the stage, the screen and in print caricature. Though these chapters largely consider canonical works of the period, the re-imaginings of such works remain relatively obscure: Mayer's analysis of Daniel Defoe's influence on the films of Patrick Keiller

is, perhaps, the most notable instance of this. Brewer's discussion of the novel's afterlife in puppet theatre likewise makes for a captivating read. His detailed analysis of the staging of Fielding's *The Author's Farce* – a staging where distinctions between the human and non-human were perilously blurred – is particularly worthy of note and gives the under-represented art form of puppet theatre a fascinating introduction in critical debate.

The final two essays on Jane Austen, written by Jillian Heydt-Stevenson and Peter Sabor, signal a dynamic conclusion to an already engaging volume. Where Heydt-Stevenson examines the evolution of what constitutes happiness from Austen's day to our own, Sabor places Austen's 'The History of England' at the forefront of a lively tradition of mock-history. Both essays further reassert one of the volume's central premises concerning the potential of eighteenth-century re-imaginings.

All thirteen essays in this collection contribute to making *The Afterlives of Eighteenth-Century Fiction* a stimulating read. The detailed examinations of how eighteenth-century novels have been re-imagined and re-presented award these adaptations with critical significance. Yet, despite proclamations to the contrary, non-canonical novels are somewhat overlooked in this volume. Issue may be taken, for instance, with having two chapters allocated to the afterlives of Austen's fiction, particularly when taking into account the recent publication of *Uses of Austen: Jane's Afterlives*, edited by Gillian Dow and Claire Hanson (2012). Such a minor quibble, however, does not detract from the overall merits of this work. Rather, it testifies to the central premise of this collection: that the re-imaginings of the period's fiction are as legitimate and dynamic objects of critical debate as the originals by which they were influenced.

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