THE APPEARANCE OF PRINT IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FICTION

Eighteenth-century fiction holds an unusual place in the history of modern print culture. The novel gained prominence largely because of advances in publishing, but, as a popular genre, it also helped shape those very developments. Authors in the period manipulated the appearance of the page and print technology more deliberately than has been supposed, prompting new forms of reception among readers. Christopher Flint’s book explores works both by obscure “scribblers” and by canonical figures, such as Swift, Haywood, Defoe, Richardson, Sterne, and Austen, that interrogated the complex interactions between the book’s material aspects and its producers and consumers. Flint links historical shifts in how authors addressed their profession to how books were manufactured and how readers consumed texts. He argues that writers exploited typographic media to augment other crucial developments in prose fiction, from formal realism and free indirect discourse to accounts of how “the novel” defined itself as a genre.

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Thomas Rowlandson, *Doctor Syntax and the Bookseller* (1877).
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FICTION

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"Tis an unpardonable Presumption in any Man, either to answer, or censure, what He has thought fit to publish.

(Anon., "An Essay on the Pride of Authors," 1718)
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22 John Kidgell, *The Card* (1755), I, frontispiece and title page. Courtesy of Special Collections, Kelvin Smith Library, Case Western Reserve University.


My thanks go to colleagues of two sorts: those fit though few who, by their insight, helped refine my thinking (they know who they are and can find themselves in the index), and those who, by misunderstanding me, have helped to make this book clearer (some of whom can find themselves in the index). I am indebted to the William Ready Division of Archives & Research Collections at McMaster University for the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) Fellowship summer grant they provided (and Rick and Colleen, who put me up and then put up with me), the Newberry Library for granting me a wonderful year-long National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Fellowship in Chicago, the English Department at Case Western Reserve University for a sane academic harbor, the anonymous readers and the editors at *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* and *PMLA* who approved publication of articles upon which portions of this book are based, Paula Backscheider and Catherine Ingrassia for taking an interest in an earlier version of Chapter 1 that appears in their *Blackwell Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture*, my editor at Cambridge University Press, Linda Bree, who thought my manuscript interesting enough to bring before the Syndicate and reminded me that this book, like most, was not exempt from sober pragmatic publishing considerations, and the two anonymous readers for Cambridge who recommended publication of the manuscript. I am indebted to Audrey Cotterell for her eagle-eyed copy-editing and to Jodie Barnes and Maartje Scheltens for handling the various production difficulties that necessarily arise in seeing a book to print. I am grateful to Blackwell Publishers, *ECF*, and *PMLA* for permission to include revised portions of the following: “The Novel and Print Culture: A Proposed Modesty,” *The Blackwell Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture*, ed. Paula Backscheider and Catherine Ingrassia, Blackwell, 2005, 343–64 (for Chapter 1); “In Other Words: Eighteenth-Century Authorship and the Ornaments of Print,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*. 
Acknowledgments

Fiction 14, 3–4 (April–July 2002): 627–72 (for Chapter 3); and “Speaking Objects: The Circulation of Stories in Eighteenth-Century Prose Fiction,” PMLA 113 (March 1998): 212–26 (for Chapter 4). My family has always been supportive and patient during the years I have spent on this project. They will be happy not to hear about print technology for a while, and my son, Gray, can now stop pestering me about when the book will appear in print. As ever, the bulk of my thanks goes to Athena Vrettos, who has steadfastly advised me to be less prolix. I hope I have disappointed her less and less over the years.