DAVID GARRICK AND THE
MEDIATION OF CELEBRITY

What happens when an actor owns shares in the stage on which he
performs and the newspapers that review his performances? Celebrity
that lasts over 240 years. From 1741, David Garrick dominated the
London theatre world as the progenitor of a new ‘natural’ style of
acting. From 1747 to 1776, he was a part-owner and manager of
Drury Lane, controlling most aspects of the theatre’s life. In a
spectacular foreshadowing of today’s media convergences, he also
owned shares in newspapers including the St. James’s Chronicle and
the Public Advertiser, which advertised and reviewed Drury Lane’s
theatrical productions. This book explores the nearly inconceivable
level of cultural power generated by Garrick’s entrepreneurial manu-
facture and mediation of his own celebrity. Using new technologies
and extensive archival research, this book uncovers fresh material
concerning Garrick’s ownership and manipulation of the media,
offering timely reflections for theatre history and media studies.

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