

THE EPHEMERAL EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Often regarded as trivial and disposable, printed ephemera, such as tickets, playbills, and handbills, was essential in the development of eighteenth-century culture. In this original study, richly illustrated with examples from across the period, Gillian Russell examines the emergence of the cultural category of printed ephemera, its relationship with forms of sociability, the history of the book, and ideas of what constituted the boundaries of literature and literary value. Russell explores the role of contemporary collectors such as Sarah Sophia Banks in preserving such material, arguing for ‘ephemerology’ as a distinctive strand of popular antiquarianism. Multi-disciplinary in scope, *The Ephemeral Eighteenth Century* reveals new perspectives on the history of theatre, the fiction of Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen, and on the history of bibliography, as well as highlighting the continuing relevance of the concept of ephemerality to how we connect through social media today.

GILLIAN RUSSELL is Professor of English at the University of York. A Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, she is internationally renowned for her innovative interdisciplinary research which began with *The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics and Society, 1793–1815* (1995). She has pioneered field-changing new directions in scholarship – on war and theatre and on the study of sociability. Her books include *Romantic Sociability: Social Networks and Literary Culture 1770–1840* (Cambridge, 2002), co-edited with Clara Tuite; *Women, Sociability and Theatre in Georgian London* (Cambridge, 2007); and *Tracing War in British Enlightenment and Romantic Culture*, co-edited with Neil Ramsey (2015).

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Print, Sociability, and the Cultures of Collecting

GILLIAN RUSSELL

University of York



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Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48758-0 — The Ephemeral Eighteenth Century
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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108487580
DOI: 10.1017/9781108767347

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First published 2020

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-48758-0 Hardback

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Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48758-0 — The Ephemeral Eighteenth Century
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Frontmatter
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To Harry Morrow and Jennifer FitzGerald

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Acknowledgements

The Ephemeral Eighteenth Century has been a long time in the making. I was privileged to receive a professorial research fellowship from the Australian Research Council in 2010 which gave my ideas valuable time to grow and develop. This project had its genesis in the return from Canada in 2007 to the National Library of Australia, Canberra, of the playbill for a production of the tragedy *Jane Shore* in Sydney in 1796, the earliest printed document in Australian history to be so far discovered. I am grateful to the former Director General of the National Library of Australia, Jan Fullerton, for inviting me to participate in events associated with the playbill's return. The project also grew out of a period of shared teaching and research in Australia with Sarah Lloyd, whose pioneering work on the ticket has been invaluable. I have benefited immensely from the work of two outstanding research assistants, David Free and latterly Kate Horgan, whose expertise, as well as kindness and patience, has sustained me throughout. I would particularly like to thank Kate for her invaluable help in compiling the index.

In the course of writing *The Ephemeral Eighteenth Century* I moved institutions twice – to the University of Melbourne from the Australian National University (ANU), and most recently to the University of York. Particular colleagues and friends have been with me through thick and thin: Deirdre Coleman, Jon Mee, Neil Ramsey, Russell Smith, Daniel O'Quinn, and Clara Tuite. Monique Rooney's intellectual example, as well as wisdom, has influenced my work in profound ways and produced a better book. I am grateful for a visiting research fellowship at the University of Warwick in 2012, for which I particularly thank Karen O'Brien, and I also thank Theresa Kelley for inviting me to participate in the extremely useful workshop on archives and agentive life at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2013. Kevin Gilmartin has been supportive in very many ways, including an invitation to the conference 'Sociable Spaces' at the Huntington Library in 2012 and to an MLA panel in

2013 in honour of the late Jane Moody. An invitation to give a keynote in Wellington, New Zealand, in 2017 helped me develop ideas about the handbill, for which I thank Nikki Hessel and Ingrid Horrocks. Chawton House Library was a congenial environment in which to write the conclusion of the book in 2017: I was honoured to be the recipient of the Marilyn Butler fellowship there and thank the Library's director, Gillian Dow, and also my companions in the Stables for showing interest in ephemera on a memorable afternoon bus trip to Winchester. I thank Sarah Comyn and Porscha Fermanis for the opportunity to talk about ephemera at University College Dublin in 2017.

Other colleagues and friends whose support I would like to acknowledge include, at the ANU, Julieanne Lamond, Lucy Neave, Roald Maliangkay, Caroline Stevenson, Rex Stevenson, and Wei Shuge; in Melbourne, Trevor Burnard, Sarah Balkin, Susan Conley, Tom Ford, Eoin Hahessy, Joe Hughes, and Jimmy Yang; and at the University of York Centre for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Catriona Kennedy, Mary Fairclough, Alison O'Byrne, Jane Rendall, Jim Watt, Joanna Wharton, and Chloe Wigston-Smith. John Barrell and Harriet Guest were generous and welcoming on numerous occasions of visits to York.

I am grateful to staff in many libraries and research institutions, particularly the National Library of Australia, Canberra. Michela Bonardi at the British Museum and Deborah Horner at the British Library were particularly helpful in acquiring images. At Cambridge University Press I would like to thank Linda Bree for her support and encouragement over many years, and her successor Bethany Thomas (as well as Tim Mason) for skilfully shepherding the book through the Press in its final stages. The advice of the anonymous readers was extremely helpful in honing the argument and also in drawing attention to how I was beguiled by the collecting practices of Sarah Sophia Banks. I would also like to acknowledge the editorial support of Victorian Parrin at the Press and Elizabeth Stone. I thank James Chandler, not only for his role as general editor in this instance but also for the support he gave me while I was at the University of Melbourne. Iain McCalman was similarly ready to give advice and support which I greatly appreciated at the time.

Finally, as always, my greatest debt is to Benjamin Penny and our son, Tom Russell-Penny, for their faith and encouragement. This book is dedicated to two important teachers: Harry Morrow, who set me on the path to academia in Northern Ireland in the 1970s, and Jennifer FitzGerald for showing how to be a scholar, a feminist, and a good friend.