General Introduction
Making Fields: Women in Publishing

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Names on the Door: Feminist Methods in Book and Publishing Studies

In the 1961 volume *Publishers on Publishing*, edited by American publishing executive Gerald Gross, all thirty-six contributors are men.[1] Women circle the book's edges. The volume is dedicated to Gross's wife, Arlene – a writer and business executive – and is prefaced by editor Frank Swinnerton, who frames his contribution with a sexist anecdote explaining how publishing works and suggesting that the complexities of the industry would stagger the comprehension of the average 'intelligent woman with no knowledge at all of the book world'.[2] Such an obviously biased collection would not likely see the light of day now, but it points to a pervasive culture that dominated not so long ago in an industry remarkable for its gendered occlusions.

Widely known as 'the gentleman's industry' in the late nineteenth century, publishing has long had the reputation of being a conservative, class- and race-bound, patriarchal business. Even women who owned shares and worked as co-founders of early twentieth-century presses could be left off the company name. American publisher Blanche Knopf, co-founder with her husband of literary imprint Alfred A. Knopf, was called 'the soul of the firm' by author Thomas Mann but told by Alfred 'that because his father planned to join them at the firm, her name could not be accommodated: three names on the door would be excessive'.[3] Fathers, even nameless and mythic ones, had been supplanting women's industry roles for a long time. Frank Mumby, in his landmark 1930 longitudinal history of the book trade, opens his first chapter claiming that '[t]he secret of the philosopher's stone is not more difficult to discover than the name of the Father of the Book Trade.'[4] Paterfamilias and heteronormative marital metaphors abound in mid-twentieth-century publishers' memoirs. Sir Stanley Unwin, for instance, founder of Allen & Unwin, describes publishing in his 1960 autobiography, *The Truth about a Publisher*, as 'exacting' work and 'a most jealous taskmistress' that 'involves working non-stop and almost taking it to bed'.[5] Class and gender privilege also eased professional access and defended the 'genteel culture' of publishing against the feminising depredations of consumerism or the working class.[6] As Margaret Cole described the options open to differentially educated schoolboys in 1930s Britain: 'the public schoolboy, in fact, who has access to a little money and wants an occupation which will amuse him, takes to publishing as the county schoolboy, with the assistance of his wife, acquires a small shop or pub'.[7] The various cultural perceptions of

the industry and narrow educational pathways behind these depictions of publisher 'types' also reveal the complex interplay of amateur and professional dynamics which have long shaped the field – combining initial 'amusement' and engagement with the development of professional skills and commercial enterprise.

Stats and Stets: Women's Labour from the Nineteenth Century to Now

As the *Edinburgh Companion to Women in Publishing* shows, however, despite the notion of the publisher-as-gentleman, there were more women working in publishing – both behind the scenes and up front – than observers like Cole might have been aware, and their stories, perhaps like those of Unwin's personal secretary with her thirty-five years of 'unparalleled devotion', appear lost to time.[8] 'All publishing was run by many badly-paid women and a few much better-paid men,' editor Diana Athill writes in her memoir *Stet*, reflecting on working for André Deutsch in the 1950s.[9] Published in 2000, *Stet* takes as its title a word from the copyeditor's lexicon, meaning to reinsert a previous deletion: an apt metaphor for feminist book historical efforts to excavate the lives of unheralded women in publishing and to reinstate them into more capacious historical narratives of the book industries. The 'many' and 'the few' characterisation Athill invokes pertained throughout an industry which, as Sarah Lubelski recounts, actually began to be 'feminised' – 'a term used to identify professional fields that are numerically dominated by women or gendered as feminine'– in the nineteenth century, particularly when it came to behind-the-scenes labour.[10] Victorian studies scholarship has recently added to the broader efforts of feminist book historians – notably ignited by the work of Kate Ozment and Cait Coker, Leslie Howsam, Sarah Werner, Michelle Levy, Simone Murray and others, including many of our contributors – to uncover the many women working in the book trades from the mid-to-late nineteenth century, as well as a much longer time frame.[11] This is the foundational field-making work this volume builds on.

The twentieth-century world of books inherited then from an environment in which norms of employing women in particular lower-status but functionally crucial roles had already begun to take shape. Even today, publishing is a profession with a strikingly high number of women, some of whom have successfully climbed into the upper echelons, but whose numerical clout, as Margaretta Jolly writes in a recent special issue of *Women: A Cultural Review*, belie other inequities: 'Estimates suggest the publishing workforce is around three-quarters women, and it is to be celebrated that women now hold (just) over half of senior management or executive leadership positions. But the gender pay gap in the major publishing houses favours men by as much as 29.69 per cent, reflecting that women still disproportionately work in marketing, rights and lower level editorial rather than executive, technology and finance.'[12] Lubeski argues that today '84 percent of positions below the executive level are filled by women', or, as *New York Times* reporters Alexandra Alter and Elizabeth A. Harris pointedly note, '[w]hile the ranks for the publishing industry skews heavily female, and women tend to buy more books, men have often held the top jobs.'[13] As Sharmaine Lovegrove (now publisher at Dialogue Books) points out in her interview for this volume, senior management does not necessarily equate to power in terms of the cultural agenda: 'There's

Picture Post, March 25, 1944

The Meeting that Settles the Affairs of the Publishers' Association

The Association meets at its headquarters in Little Russell Street, London. The President, R. J. L. Kingsford (Cambridge University Press) sits at the far end. On his left is B. W. Fagan (Edward Arnold), and then round the table: W. G. Taylor (J. M. Dent), W. B. Gannon (Oxford University Press), R. F. West (Baillière, Tindall & Cox), H. Aubrey Gentry (Cassell), C. W. Chamberlain (Methuen), R. H. Code Holland (Pitman), Daniel Macmillan (Macmillan), F. J. Warburg (Secker and Warburg), W. A. R. Collins (Wm. Collins), R. F. Bennett (George Phillip).

during the last year, estimates that there must be somewhere between one and two million factory workers who are reading such books, or possess the very high intellectual calibre necessary for reading them. Moreover, in my friend's experience, hardly any of them read anything else, any other *serious* books, that is. What a field those million and a half highly intelligent men and women would offer to our publishers and our writers, if only they could be made as interested in serious imaginative writing as they are in serious technical books!

Other classes of books that sell well are those concerned with religion, with post-war reconstruction, with the battlefronts. Books by war correspondents, and by neutral journalists who have seen enemy countries from the inside, are still surprisingly popular. Surprisingly, because there is a quite erroneous idea going about that to-day we are all wanting to read escapist books—something to make us forget the bombs and the casualty lists. The facts do not bear this out at all. In this fifth year of the war we are apparently not in the least tired of reading about it. Four novels out of five have a war background: the real drama of resistance in the Occupied Countries appeals to us more than the melodrama of detective fiction, for instance. Four of the war's most popular imaginative books are Richard Hillary's "The Last Enemy," C. S. Forester's "The Ship," Nigel Balchin's "The Small Back Room" and Arthur Koestler's "Arrival And Departure": each of them is on a war theme, and develops it in a grimly realistic way. The popularity of this kind of realism, which is all of a piece with the popular demand for serious informative books, is surely a good sign. I don't mean that the greatest literature is realistic: it isn't. Homer isn't. Shakespeare isn't, Dostoyevski isn't. But it *is* a good sign that people to-day are rejecting sentimentality and sugary

The Meeting About a New Edition

Victor Gollancz entertains one of his best-sellers.—"Cassius," author of "The Trial of Mussolini."

fantasies, and are asking that books should tell them the truth. Once you have started to demand truth from a novel, you are not going to be satisfied ever again with trash; you are already half-way, in fact, towards—not just better books—but the best books.

There has been a decline, though, in the reading of contemporary novels since the war began. And there has certainly been a decline in the general standard of novel-writing. Why is this? For one thing, many of our best novelists have been silent since the war—E. M. Forster, Aldous Huxley, Rosamund Lehmann, R. C. Hutchinson, for example. And war has, no doubt, tapped much young talent in the bud. There is also the—to me—baneful influence of the films: a great deal of talent has been seduced by the cash appeal of Hollywood;

Continued overleaf

The Meeting That Decides How to Use the Paper Ration: The Board of Directors of Faber and Faber

Faber's directors meet round a table filled with readers' reports and bottles of beer. They are deciding what to publish and what not to publish. *Left to right* round the table are T. S. Eliot, Morley Kennerley, Geoffrey Faber, W. I. Crawley, Richard de la Mare, C. W. Stewart and Miss C. B. Sheldon.

Figure 0.1 'The Board of Directors of Faber and Faber', from C. Day-Lewis, 'Do We Read Better Books in Wartime?' *Picture Post*, 22.13, 25 March 1944, p. 22. Courtesy of the *Picture Post* Historical Archive, 1938–1957.

a naiveté about how these gender roles [at the managing director or executive level] are perceived within the industry, because I have a lot of power being a publisher.' But women have not historically sat at the decision-making tables in publishing, and when they have, their 'only woman' status can sometimes appear synecdochal, as in this photograph of the offices of Faber and Faber in the 1940s: a table full of men, with one women – her back to the camera – present, but barely visible. (She was Miss C. B. Sheldon.)[14]

Within academic discourses surrounding book history and book publishing, moreover, feminist book historians have sometimes found themselves similarly seated – at the table, but academically marginalised. It has only been in the past twenty-five years – since Leslie Howsam's short but provocative editorial in *SHARP news*, 'In My View: Women and Book History' – that critics have come to extensively manifest in their readings and methodological practices the 'feminist twist' Howsam argues must be

brought both to the objects and aims of descriptive bibliography and to a revision of Darnton's famous 'communications circuit', where, contrary to received wisdom, 'women can be identified at every node of the cycle and at all periods in history'.[15] For instance, Simone Murray and, more recently, Kate Ozment have broadly interrogated the masculinist biases within both the foundational models undergirding the discipline and its own academic founding 'fathers', while also acknowledging its generativity for feminist critique. Murray calls this 'the enormous cross-pollination between book history and feminist research' which could lead to a 'radical reconceptualisation of the nature and parameters of both disciplines'; Ozment argues for the consonances (rather than perceived dissonances) of embracing 'the messiness of what critical theory introduced to the academy: diversity of subject matter'.[16]

This restructuring and reorienting of the field is as much methodological as it is historiographical: we need to draw new diagrams, approach archives differently and enumerate different roles if we are to fully capture women's participation in publishing during a century in which massive change occurred more broadly in women's professional identities. We need 'an alternative communications circuit – a woman-centered network', as Trysh Travis argues.[17] All the contributors to this volume engage in these debates in manifold ways and using various methodological approaches, whether re-examining the material, social, economic and cultural conditions for women's participation in and contributions to the publishing industry, excavating archival traces of women's industry work, or rethinking the cultural significations of the look and feel of books made by feminist presses. Re-engagement with the status and function of the archive – 'tracing the fluid boundaries between intimate and institutional modes of preservation', in the words of Melanie Micir – has been a guiding principle for many of our contributors.[18] Feminist recuperative work must give sustained attention to gaps and silences in the continued and continuing development of intersectional feminist approaches to book and publishing history. In line with Kate Eichorn's claims for a deliberative, self-conscious archival practice that looks to the gains of the future as much as the occlusions of the past, the interviews we share here of women working in contemporary publishing also capture for posterity the stories and voices of today's industry leaders.[19]

Intersectional Erasures: Structural Biases and Uneven Playing Fields

As many of the essays in this volume make plain, publishing has long had a structural problem with whiteness, as well as class; saturated as it is as an industry based on personal networks and connections that can struggle, in Marcela Valdez's words, 'to overcome the clubby, white elitism it was born in'.[20] Diana Athill addresses this exclusion obliquely when she acknowledges at the end of her memoir that '[o]f that caste I am a member: one of the mostly London-dwelling, university-educated, upper-middle-class English people who took over publishing towards the end of the nineteenth century from the booksellers who used to run it.'[21] For 'a working-class South Asian girl' without connections, as Farhana Shaikh points out in her interview in this volume, publishing (and writing) aren't often seen or encouraged as tangible career paths. As Helen Huthwaite and Rebecca Smart reflect in their interviews, publishing

has traditionally been characterised by precarious labour, low starting salaries and regional imbalances that create barriers to access; discussing their work on in-house initiatives 'Changing the Story' and social enterprise 'Creative Access' here respectively, Sharmaine Lovegrove and Natalie Jerome also powerfully address issues of social class. Long-term demographic trends (in the UK workforce at least) suggest it is as difficult now as it ever has been for people from working-class backgrounds to access cultural jobs like publishing.[22]

For women of colour, structural inequalities within the publishing industry both now and in the past are compounded.[23] Laura McGrath and others have recently shown that 84 per cent of today's publishing industry in the US is white.[24] Women like Toni Morrison, who worked as an editor in American trade publishing between 1965 and 1983, were exceptions, even in the era of second-wave feminism, civil and gay rights, whose long-term industry impacts were not foreordained; Morrison's critical role in expanding Black voices in the late 1960s and 1970s collapsed precipitously when she left Random House, as Richard So has recently argued.[25] In-house representation strongly tracks output; as So and Gus Wezerek have demonstrated, the proportion of people of colour within contemporary publishing almost exactly correlates with the proportion of authors of colour published.[26] But even these dispiriting numbers speak to historical efforts to open a pipeline for people of colour in the industry while expanding the parameters of how houses hired, operated and functioned. In the UK in the 1980s, for instance, Margaret Busby, co-founder of Allison & Busby in 1967 and the first Black woman publishing director in the UK, formed with Rose de Lanerolle (then managing director of The Women's Press), Jessica Huntley, Lennie Goodings and others, the GAP (Greater Access to Publishing) initiative. Greater Access to Publishing would be followed by Independent Black Publishers, a trade association started by Verna Wilkins; and later, the Diversity in Publishing Network (DIPNet), set up by Elise Dillsworth and Alison Morrison in 2004. In the landscape of small presses, alternative interventions took place as part of the second-wave feminist movement, including the example of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, discussed in this volume.

But, as our interviewees in this book make plain – amplified by the oral testimony of industry veterans in Emma Shercliff's chapter – not enough has changed to interrogate the assumed identity politics of the industry. 'We really need to do something about publishing,' Audre Lorde corralled Barbara Smith in October 1980, stressing its continued homogeneity and privilege even towards the end of the twentieth century.[27] In the twenty-first century, it is unconscionable that more hasn't changed. As Natalie Jerome points out in her interview: 'I was one of a handful of black, female commissioning editors for a very long time and today I believe I'm one of three or four black literary agents in the country [UK] (and the only one thought to be operating in Wales). This scares and shocks me immeasurably.' For contemporary women writers of colour, anti-racist labour work can be exhausting: 'Too often, when I'm supposed to be interviewed about my books, I'm asked how to solve the problem of lack of diversity in publishing,' Booker Prize-winning novelist Bernardine Evaristo writes in her recent memoir, *Manifesto*. 'These days, I recommend that they ask the gatekeepers for advice. They own the door and have the keys. I think they can work it out without my help.'[28] Bibi Bakare-Yusuf states in her interview with Shercliff for this volume that 'if we talk about Black Lives Matter, Black lives are only going to matter if we're in control of the means of production.'

Ideally, a more nimble, collaborative and intersectional feminist bibliographical praxis within (and without) the academy will build upon this industry work, circularising knowledge production about historical and contemporary publishing practices to expand cultural recognition of its significance. In the words of feminist bibliographer Sarah Werner: 'So why do we need a feminist praxis of printing history? We need it so we can thrive. The questions that a feminist analysis asks of books are aligned with the systemic critiques that book history should be making: what are the social, political, and economic conditions of their production and consumption? [. . .] [J]ust as social justice movements strive to bring more people into the fold, so a true feminist printing history needs to bring more people into our fold.'[29] As with printing history, so with publishing history, and here in this volume, Marxist book history methods of bringing labour to the fore are brought productively into conversation with intersectional feminist historical and archival methods.

Great Mens' Stories: Rewriting the Publishing Studies Narrative

The actual exclusion and inequitable treatment of women, and particularly women of colour, in publishing along with the narrative emphasis on 'great mens' stories', perhaps, is what Simone Murray factors into the marginalisation of the field of publishing studies as a whole and the broader 'marginalisation of feminist publishing within academic discourse'.[30] Despite many and rapid changes in the publishing sector over the course of the twentieth century, trade histories and scholarly writing on publishing have for a long time followed the lead of the firms themselves. Autobiographies of male publishers, with women playing bit parts, still dominate on the book stands, while women's work features only slightly in academic studies of the major presses, a compounded marginalisation our volume begins to redress. What Murray describes as 'the intrinsically self-congratulatory nature of the publishing house history' has tended to crowd out feminist book historical analysis of the trade, especially in areas of technology (who runs which machines), economy (who is paid more or less), and list selection (which titles are rejected and which accepted), where structural biases have long pertained.[31] Even Alistair McCleery's influential 2002 essay 'The Return of the Publisher to Book History' strikes a slightly paradoxical note from a feminist disciplinary perspective in its recentring of Penguin publisher Allen Lane to counter a perceived 'loss of legitimacy within book history for the kind of exercise that critically examines the role of a publisher as an autonomous individual, rather than as an agent subordinating personal will to impersonal forces emerging from the nexus of cultural change, the marketplace, and legal liability'.[32] Lane was, of course, a tremendously influential interwar British publisher, but he has also had perhaps more than his historical due in the form of full-length biography and in countless passing references to Penguin's innovations attributed to him.[33]

While what Murray calls the 'gender-oblivious' state of standard synoptic histories of twentieth-century book publishing may be generically pervasive, it can still be jarring in the twenty-first century to come across accounts of even well-known women publishers like Virginia Woolf that slight her editorial or business acumen in favour of miniaturising family portraits.[34] There have been sustained feminist critiques within some spheres of modernist literary scholarship over the past decade to counter this

view of the already canonical Woolf, but there has been less attention to the stories of more obscure authors and industry actors, from typesetters to readers, book designers to font makers, secretaries to office managers, booksellers to travellers, illustrators to editors.[35] This volume, then, is part of a broader energetic movement in feminist book history and bibliography at present that seeks not only to reanimate historical narratives with more developed women characters, but also to bring the field in line with other areas of book history in offering more critical and analytical perspectives on the business of books. Our intent, of course, is not to throw publishers' biographies and autobiographies out the window – these are still popular and informative, as testified by recent books like Athill's or Lennie Goodings' *A Bite of the Apple* (2021), about her time at Virago Press – but rather to suggest that they need to be read critically *as* autobiographies and supplemented with richer, more inclusive histories that examine a broader set of professional roles (and pay scales) within the industry, and offer critical perspectives also on its diversity (and lack thereof).

#ThanksForTyping: Rhetorics of Invisibility and Self-Erasure

The recent popularity of the Twitter hashtag #ThanksForTyping,[36] based on an ironic recuperation of a well-known but dismissive phrase commonly found in book acknowledgements, points, as well, to broader recognition beyond scholarly quarters not only for the fact but also the specific nature and character of previously undervalued creative and intellectual labour performed by women in creative industries.[37] Despite the massive proliferation of paper documents, of books, letters, business documents and ephemera that attends the historical moment of the twentieth century, still there are women's stories that don't seem to be regularly told. Different types of absences shape the specific field of publishing studies in the twentieth century: of women who undertook uncredited professional roles; who led shifts and changes in publishers' decision-making; who started their own presses, offering new systems and structures as alternatives to the old ones; and yes, who typed and often edited, altered and shaped written work as they did so. For every 'high-profile publishing woman' that has attracted some critical attention, such as Blanche Knopf or Carmen Callil, others have been occluded.[38] And yet, as the chapters in this volume show, women were often the beating heart of the publishing industry in this period, as they had been in the broader book trades for centuries, whether collecting domestic rags or recycling household paper for papermaking, bookbinding, typesetting or, of course, authoring books.[39]

One of the contributors to women's silencing, beyond the dominance of the (auto) biographical male narrative in publishing studies, is the rhetoric of self-effacement inherent to the nature of some of the work undertaken in the publishing process itself. While Robert Darnton's book history circuit aimed in part to restore some of the often unacknowledged facets of labour that go into the making of books, the industry continues today in practices that give centre stage to the author (and their 'brand'), often without acknowledgement of the many bookish roles involved in production.[40] Invisibility is therefore inherently built into the process of publishing: editorial work, marketing and book design are all akin to what Beatrice Warde described as the 'crystal goblet' in modern typography. 'Type well used', Warde suggests, 'is invisible as type, just as the perfect talking voice is the unnoticed vehicle for the transmission of

words, ideas.'[41] Several of the women highlighted in this collection echo this sentiment, particularly those working in large commercial presses or with mid-century periodical publications. The idea that not only the typographers and book designers, but also the editors, marketers, book travellers, press staff, managers, typists, bookkeepers and printers should be aiming for their work to vanish in the service of the book itself is common across the publishing industry. True professionalism often equates directly to invisibility: as Ellah Wakatama points out in her interview with Shercliff, one shouldn't see the editor's work lest it distract from the illusion of unmediated communication between author and reader – 'no mention of me means that I've done a really good job'. This discourse of, and indeed ideal of, invisibility creates a particularly complex set of considerations for historians engaged in recovery work, especially when this rhetoric is socially and historically tied up with particular understandings of gender, class and race. Rhetorical self-effacement is common in many of the essays in this collection, with women editors, publishers and translators often diminishing their own contributions to the book worlds in which they participated. Added to other common structural issues facing women's work in our historical time period – including a tendency to move between firms (what Laura Di Nicola describes as 'publishing nomadism') and to work in specialist areas often designated 'feminine' – they can further frustrate our efforts to make the archives sing.[42]

Origin Stories: Community-Building and Academic Housework

The essays in this volume stem from two international conferences on the theme of Women in Publishing that were organised by the editorial team pre-Covid, in 2019. One became the inaugural conference of the interdisciplinary Centre for Book Cultures and Publishing (CBCP) at the University of Reading, UK (see Plate 1). This was held in Special Collections, where archivists crafted a pop-up exhibition and we learned from the words of Jane Cholmeley (co-founder of Silver Moon Women's Bookshop in 1984) and Penny Mountain – both of whom were early members of the UK networking organisation Women in Publishing, founded in 1979.[43] The other conference, that same summer, took place in Stanford University's Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis (CESTA) as part of a Modernist Archives Publishing Project (MAPP) international team workshop (Plate 2).[44] These were lively, energetic and oversubscribed occasions, already part of the groundswell of enthusiasm in an urgent, rediscovered feminist field. The two conferences became part of a publishable (and fundable) narrative on Women in Publishing, with academic interest from scholarly presses aligning with several major international projects and collaborative feminist databases, to which our book's contributors have played some leading roles.[45] This academic enthusiasm represented part of a groundswell of energy in reclaiming feminist labour and histories, also seen in the trade press.

But the genesis of the book comes from a less positive experience a few years earlier, when two of us organised a one-day conference on Modernist Publishing in 2015. We were surprised to find ourselves in the pub at day's end, chewing over reluctant and slightly embarrassed feelings of unease and discontent, wondering how and why exactly the day had slipped from our hands as several senior colleagues broke into mini-lectures about what they knew of the great men of publishing and the significance of certain male-led presses publishing significant male authors, while we 'hosted', serving them tea and cake. It was an odd feeling of deflation, like feminist killjoys 'unseated by the table

of happiness' after a discussion we had organised and looked forward to.[46] We were struck by the disparities between the different academic fields in which we worked (as far as we were aware, our conference was one of the first events ever to have tried reaching both 'literary' modernists and book history specialists). We experienced that day as a failure, both personal and professional, in some ways – but we learnt from it and took heed from words in the adjacent fields we were moving in (including feminist digital humanities and literary studies) about flying our colours closer to the mast, rooting the feminist content and potential of our work clearly, as Jacqueline Wernimont encouraged, in 'a set of practices and tools fundamentally linked to the work of women and feminist scholars'.[47] We found ourselves specifically questioning why, when publishing came into the equation of literary studies and book history, the field became so conservative and patriarchal? More importantly, what could we – along with others – do to change it?

We are aware of the self-selecting nature of conferences and have been keen to address some key gaps in editing this book, reaching out beyond our own networks to include a wider pool of contributors from different career stages, and to include scholars working in different geographical regions. We have endeavoured to work hard with our publisher to keep some precarious, early career scholars on board. The long-running debates, erasures and fractures within feminism and the intersectional figure of 'woman' (as necessarily including non-dominant gender identities beyond those of ciswomen) are not elided, though they inevitably show themselves in our own collection. Of course, there is still room for expansion and further inclusion beyond the expected canons of twentieth-century publishing. But this volume should be seen as a start: an intervention in the much wider global histories and beginnings of field-making on Women in Publishing.

The geographical scope of the book goes beyond national borders, mirroring the development of the publishing industries in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with a particular focus on transatlantic and European/continental publishing. Our focus is predominantly anglophone but not exclusively, with several chapters on Italian publishing and on Spain, Latin America and the Spanish-speaking world, as well as a chapter on colonial Mozambique, formerly part of the Portuguese empire. The UK, US and European publishing zones loom large, but our contributors and interviewees include women working in Ibero-American publishing houses, the Caribbean, New Zealand, Ireland and India. We do not pretend, of course, to be presenting a fully global picture here, but representing a more varied linguistic and geographical perspective than is common is one of our ambitions. We hope that our efforts to examine a broader array of geographical contexts and the communications traffic amongst them (historically and in the present day) will encourage more scholars to pursue future research, including particularly more work on the global South, bringing more voices and different critical perspectives to re-energising methodological and historical approaches to book and publishing studies.

Eclectic Roles and Uncategorisable Values: Organising the Volume

One of the book's key aims is to reclaim the eclecticism of women's roles and work within publishing, taking us beyond a roster of familiar names and also beyond overtly

feminist operations and presses to examine women's roles across a wider range of publishers. The volume is organised around women's manifold jobs in publishing, broadly understood (with recognition, as many of our contributors and interviewees make clear, that the lines between roles are rarely straightforward), and incorporates analysis of well-known women publishers and editors (and writers) alongside lesser-known women working as agents and scouts, or in marketing, sales, production and distribution.

The book is organised thematically, each section opening with a chorus of interviews with women working in publishing today (a suggestion from our own editor, Jackie Jones). These interviews put the book's historical contents into focus and shine a light on inspiring women making a difference in their respective areas: Helen Huthwaite (publisher, Avon, UK), Natalie Jerome (literary agent, Curtis Brown, UK), Sharmaine Lovegrove (publisher, Dialogue Books, UK), Jennifer Mack-Watkins (printmaker and illustrator, US), Dr Rathna Ramanathan (graphic designer and researcher, UK/India), Hannah Schofield (literary agent, LBA Books, UK), Rebecca Smart (co-CEO, DK Publishers, UK) and Farhana Shaikh (founder of Dahlia Books, UK). Our interviews are complemented by Emma Shercliff's chapter – beginning the collection – which includes new interviews with Margaret Busby, Verna Wilkins, Rosemarie Hudson, Nana Ayebia Clarke, Elise Dillsworth, Ellah Wakatama, and Bibi Bakare-Yusuf. Parts I and II of the book focus on women publishers and editors working in publishing houses and in periodicals, while Parts III and IV look at the wider range of publishing professionals: translators, secretaries, booksellers, literary agents, publishers' readers/scouts, patrons, distributors, illustrators and makers.

We hope through the scope and scale of this book to suggest many avenues for future research. For every woman in publishing cited, there will be tenscore more to be found. As feminist scholars, we recognise the importance of challenging ideas of comprehensiveness. 'Citations can be feminist bricks,' Sara Ahmed reminds us: 'they are the materials through which, from which, we create our dwellings.' But they can also be 'feminist straw: lighter materials that, when put together, still create a shelter but a shelter that leaves you more vulnerable'.[48] Challenging the 'swashbuckling' narrative of the lone male (or female) publisher that the field has inherited, the structure of the book reflects our sense that a more prismatic or, in Claire Battershill's description, 'constellational' approach to women's print history is needed, one that brings together lots of different voices, perspectives, approaches and experiences.[49] This carries through too into questions and practices of methodology, with contributors drawing on various sources including interviews, anecdotes, essays, textual analysis and historical methodologies. The question of archives, whether brick and mortar or digital – and the absence, or not, of these women workers within them – is rarely far from our minds.

Challenging traditional hierarchies within publishing, the book includes chapters that look at sectors often designated within the industry (as well as outside of it) as 'inferior' and 'female', such as children's books, where in fact, as several of our contributors make plain, women could sometimes fashion powerful, transatlantic, networked careers. We include essays on women printers, type designers and typographers – a historically difficult, patriarchal field for women to work in because of trade union laws dating back to the nineteenth century – but again, one which has its own submerged feminist history.[50] Some fields within our book's remit have attracted more

scholarship than others: the topic of women working in periodicals, for instance, has a more established scholarly literature than that of women working as distributors, mirroring the broader patterns of book and publishing studies. Citation, like visual culture, is important for a politics of visibility and representation, and we have tried to strike a balance with the visual materials collected here. Sourcing images (never mind good-quality ones) of some of the lesser-known women discussed in the book has not always been possible, while images of some of the more famous of our subjects have unfortunately been too expensive to reproduce here. We are grateful to all of the contributors who have worked with archivists and librarians and, more commonly, chased other leads outside of the official archives of institutional memory, to offer a new visual take on the field.

The chapters in this volume attest to some of the tremendous work women in publishing have achieved over the last century, and gesture towards what might still be done. As Rathna Ramanathan says in her interview, 'Publishing for me is about relationships.' As an industry, publishing is notorious for relying on known connections, a structural barrier that many of the women discussed here have challenged and remade, forging their own networks and mentorships along the way. As Jennifer Mack-Watkins points out, 'I just reach out to people who I think could be good partners. [. . .] Where can the voices that are diverse be more included? And that's where I jump in.' As editors academically situated in the UK, USA and Canada, we have valued the relationships created in making this volume and are grateful to our contributors for creating a new web of citations and connections crucial to better understanding women's long-running interventions in publishing, printing, distribution and literary production. 'The rug needs to be beaten,' Sharmaine Lovegrove says of today's mainstream publishing industry, bringing in people 'who had different experiences, because ultimately that's what we want from our writers, and that's what we're asking our writers to do.' It's an apt metaphor for intersectional feminist change. We invite you to take part in telling new stories about this industry, to join the chorus.

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