Introduction

Time for Reading

DEIDRE SHAUNA LYNCH AND EVELYNE ENDER

THE FIRST HALF OF ALI SMITH'S DEBUT NOVEL, *LIKE* (1997), FOLlows a winding journey, from the seaside in Scotland, south to Cambridge, on to Pompeii, and back again, that is taken by Kate Shone and her mother, Amy. Smith introduces these characters at a time when eight-year-old Kate is beginning to discover books, "eating and sleeping with them, living by the book, you might say" (151). Late in the novel, we will learn that Amy was formerly that sort of bookish child herself: the passage just quoted gives us Amy remembering an earlier life. Amy is presented initially, however, as having lost her capacity to comprehend written words—a consequence of a trauma that, we infer, may have involved her daughter's birth. Kate has thus come to serve in this household as the translator who deciphers the words on the fronts of shops or buses. Amy, as Kate puts it to herself, "peers hard at the shapes of them and shakes her head and has to ask Kate" (27).

Earlier we have seen the eight-year-old Kate poring over *One Hundred and One Great Wonders of the World*, which she has been concealing from her mother (who now is likely as not to use books, which she cannot read, to prop up an unsteady table or light a fire). Reading over Kate's shoulder, we too stumble over the name "Rud Yard Kip ling":

> Or it could maybe be said Rude yard. It is funny the sounds that some words make, sometimes they're so different from what they look like. It's funny how the letters that make up words can look like people. They can look like different people depending on what book they're in or what sign they're on, depending on how they're written or painted. In this book the small a's look sort of like small nice people with fat stomachs. . . . Some e's can look smiley but usually they look like they do here, mean, like they're laughing at something horrible. (26–27)

DEIDRE SHAUNA LYNCH is Ernest Bernbaum Professor of English Literature at Harvard University. Her most recent book is *Loving Literature: A Cultural History* (U of Chicago P, 2015). She is working on a book to be titled "Paper Slips: Disassembling the Book" and, with Alexandra Gillespie, is editing the volume on books for Oxford University Press's series Twenty-First Century Approaches to Literature.

EVELYNE ENDER is visiting professor in the Department of Comparative Thought and Literature at Johns Hopkins University. She is finishing a book provisionally titled "Handwriting: An Inner History" and preparing a volume of essays on the value of literature in the medical humanities. Her essay "Jean Starobinski's Resistance to Theory—*Le Regard de l'Absent*" will appear in *The Structuralist Controversy: De Baltimore 1966 à Aujourd'hui*, a special issue of *MLN* forthcoming in 2019.

© 2018 DEIDRE SHAUNA LYNCH AND EVELYNE ENDER

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Many (too many) things—the text messages on your phone, the cereal box on the breakfast table, bureaucratic paperwork, this issue of *PMLA*—claim your attention as a reader. One reason, though, to devote some of your limited reading time to a novel is the opportunity literature provides us to reflect on the phenomenology of our textual experiences at the same time we are having them.

Watching someone else get lost in a book and become riveted by its words or story is a baffling and estranging experience, one of "an almost primal exclusion" (Stewart 141). Barred from an unmediated knowledge of the content of that response, we are limited to inferring that reading is happening. We observe manual operations—the turning of pages, for example—but the mental operations they accompany remain inaccessible. To engage with a novel, however, can remedy that opacity: a novel can put its reader inside the consciousness of a character who is reading in his or her turn. Mysteriously, almost miraculously, this genre can enable us to read as though we were someone else—to apprehend, even as we ourselves read, how words on a page or screen put that other mind in motion too.[1]

Smith is one of several contemporary fiction writers who take an interest in the conditions in which (their) readers read now. Her novels report on a media landscape transfigured by electronic textuality, one where opportunities for absorbed, attentive reading look to be menaced by incessant Internet chatter. Even literary scholars, whose sense of vocation is often founded on the sustained, close-focus modes of engagement we associate with the densely written lyric poem or the long novel, nowadays find themselves "reading against noise." That phrase is the title we selected for the panel we moderated at the 2017 MLA convention, where Amy Hollywood, James Curley-Egan, Jonathan Sachs, and Andrew Piper discussed how humanists today might balance the close reading to which they have been long committed with the searching and scanning enabled by new digital tools. (Revised versions of the papers they delivered conclude this issue.) It may be that the audience of Smith's *How to Be Both* (2014) feels free to oscillate between this novel's pages and the search engines they use on their computers and phones to look up the Renaissance painters and French pop stars the pages refer to because the characters inside the novel do their reading in similarly various ways. They too careen distractedly from page to screen and screen to screen. They engage multiple information streams at once.

For many of its pages Smith's first novel pursues a related project. *Like* simulates for those who can read fluently the felt experience of those who cannot quite read—either not yet or not anymore. Thus, in the passage cited earlier Kate has not yet attained the competency that enables the black marks on the page to recede from awareness as a matter of course. Kate is still looking at, not through, the letters. Soon after Kate's encounter with Rud Yard Kip ling, her mother, Amy, will haltingly regain her own literacy. In later passages focalized through Amy, as she sits on the train that takes her and Kate south, surrounded by the newspapers other passengers have discarded, words begin detaching themselves from "the blocks of swimming black print" and "flash into her head": "it's painful, like too much light entering at the eye" (44). Smith makes apprehensible the feel of reading—experiences of legibility and illegibility that generally elude reflection.

Such elusiveness gets mentioned frequently in histories of the book. Statements about what a tricky undertaking the study of reading can be pepper the methodological reflections of this discipline. On a regular basis, its historians simultaneously deplore and relish the slipperiness of their object. Roger Chartier, for instance, underscores the perversity of his enterprise by declaring, famously, that "any history of reading . . . must postulate the liberty of a practice that it can

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

only grasp, massively, in its determinations." As he warns, reading "cannot be deduced from the texts it makes use of" (23): archivally minded historians who believe they are discovering what people read are, strictly speaking, discovering only what was published and printed and what the readers purchased or borrowed.[2] There are alternative accounts of the methodological conundrums that dog the study of reading. That scholars, precisely as scholars, may be ill equipped to comment on what reading entails beyond the academy may be another challenge. What the literary scholar pursuing reception history "is trained to produce and teach—the 'close reading,' the 'reading' per se—can never become a tool for arriving at a sense of how readers of the past read," states Nicholas Dames (11); the obstacle lies in part with the counterintuitive arrangement that sees scholars taking as objects of study and labor the very works that lay readers have treated as scenes of pleasure and leisure. Alternatively, the reading act is sometimes described not as alien but as excessively familiar—"too close . . . for comfort," Leah Price says—to the professional readers who aim to analyze it ("Reading" 303–04). Price thus inverts Dames's diagnosis when she states that the real challenge is to establish "critical distance from a field whose message is also its medium" (318). Yet judging from the robust response to the editorial board's call for submissions—so robust that, in an arrangement unprecedented in *PMLA*'s long history, an examination of this topic will extend across two successive issues of the journal—many members of our discipline are eager to confront this challenge, and others.

That eagerness registers multiple concerns of our moment. Responding to our request for essays that, as we wrote, would unpack the "diverse practices and norms" that get covered over by the deceptive simplicity "of the gerund *reading*," some colleagues were motivated by their interest in how technological change has altered the material conditions of everyday reading. Many were interested in how, for digital natives at least, such reading involves screens and social media sites as much as it does the print books some of us used to (and perhaps still do) curl up with in solitude. Indeed, in her essay for this issue, N. Katherine Hayles points out that the use of e-readers has redefined reading to a greater extent than we have recognized, since the processing of text in such cases involves an interlacing of machine perceptions and human senses. Reading now, she insists, takes place not so much in "cultures" (to quote this special issue's title) as in "mixed cognitive ecologies linking humans and nonhumans."

That migration of text—from books stored on library shelves to computer screens networked into searchable electronic databases—has had, of course, implications for literary scholarship as well: another reason our call for submissions appears to have struck a chord with the MLA membership. The discipline's long-standing methodological preference for the close scrutiny of "text-sized" units has been challenged over the last decade and a half by research projects that work on a vastly enlarged scale—projects based in, for instance, the whole of the *HathiTrust Digital Library* (which amasses 2.2 million digital surrogates of public-domain print volumes). "[G]igahistoricisms," James English and Ted Underwood call such projects (280). This scale suits the speed of the "reading" (that is, the data gathering and correlating) that computers can do, but not that of the reading that slower human beings are able to undertake within their restricted life spans. In his article for *Cultures of Reading*, Benjamin Mangrum reconstructs the epistemological history of the quantitative methods—in particular the practices of statistical aggregation and averaging—that underpin many of the new big data projects. Mangrum cautions us against transferring to investigations of the literary

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

field methods that were devised in the mid-twentieth-century United States to poll and survey a mass public. He reminds us, too, that the methods that made social facts countable and commensurable were formulated precisely as social science scholars sought to disavow the qualitative, interpretive methods that had once been integral to their practice.

Other factors likely informed the strong response to our call for submissions: doubts in some quarters that literary scholarship has always been well served by its practitioners' commitment to interpretation, and a growing enthusiasm for countermodels (including social scientific ones) that sidestep the traditions of critical hermeneutics. In an era of "method wars," interpretation now has "rivals" (Felski, Introduction v). Various commentators emphasize the limitations, or decry the routinization, of the procedures literary critics have used to make texts speak their hidden truths and deep meanings (e.g., Sedgwick; Felski, *Limits*). Some question the value of those very concepts of hiddenness and depth. They model (and sometimes retrieve from the discipline's past) descriptive methods whose analytic end point is the textual surface—what is "evident, perceptible, apprehensible in texts" (Best and Marcus 9). Not so long ago *close* reading was regularly identified as the single methodology literary scholars shared (Gallop). Now, even a cursory survey of how twenty-first-century literary critics describe their methods reveals the gerund *reading* combining with all manner of adjectives: not only *close*, not only *critical* (near neighbor to *close* in many accounts of literary pedagogy), but also *distant*, *flat*, *too close*, *surface*, *mid-level*, *just*, *reparative*, and so on. A few contributors to this collection have proposals for extending this list.

Rachel Sagner Buurma and Matthew K. Gold have recently wondered whether one reason combatants in the discipline's method wars tend to eschew references to *interpretation* and emphasize *reading practices* instead is that *reading* facilitates a "bid for a broader kind of reach or relevance for literary study." "[I]f 'interpretation' emphasizes expertise and affiliates literary study with a twentieth-century professional ethos," they maintain, "'reading' expresses commonality with the ranks of the literate" (140). This account of why, overshadowing *interpretation*, *reading* preoccupies literary studies evokes some of the institutional pressures shaping this issue of *PMLA*: at a moment when many of us in the academy regret our lack of connection with a broader public, the methods that have marked the specialist's distance from ordinary readers may seem more a liability than an asset. It also suggests why it is a good thing that our call for submissions elicited so many responses from scholars whose study of reading's past has revealed the historical variability of reading's ethical projects, of its norms of action and interaction, and of the webs of social relations that surround it. Combatants in the method wars have generally neglected this vein of historical study. This is unfortunate, since the discontinuities separating past practices of reading and beliefs about reading from the practices and beliefs that inform our current writing and teaching are good to think with. The disciplinary transformations that the debaters about methods envision might, for instance, be imagined more expansively if their accounts of the current critical situation—narratives that sometimes present the discipline as developing sequentially from past to present to a "postcritical" future—did more to acknowledge the multiple, diverging histories by which the contemporary has been formed.[3]

Historical study can, in other words, renew our methods and sharpen our sense of "how we read now." In her article for this special issue, for example, Beth Blum honors motives for reading—desires for self-betterment—that garner little respect in the contemporary academy, where they are generally dismissed for their unliterary utilitarianism. She tracks the global circulation

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of an ethic of self-culture that was launched by Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* in 1859, outlining how readers in a wide range of locations adapted to local conditions the Western intellectual tradition Smiles had sampled. Blum concludes by surveying how the self-help hermeneutic is destigmatized—and even reclaimed as a compositional method—in contemporary fiction by Sheila Heti, Mohsin Hamid, and others. The stories of readers' hunger for life advice that Blum gathers remind us of what it means, as Smith's Amy Shone puts it to herself, to "liv[e] by the book." Those stories also refute the notion, which may occasionally be glimpsed when our colleagues defend close reading's continuing vitality, that if you are not reading closely, complying with the protocols for textual processing imparted in the classroom, then you must be reading casually or carelessly.

Supplementing Buurma and Gold, we would proffer one more explanation of why the meanings of *reading* have recently become less self-evident and more heterogeneous. Perhaps it is because the divisions between amateurs and professionals, common readers and academics, that Buurma and Gold refer to no longer seem as firm as they once did. (The boundaries between them are possibly not even as firm as some formulas that we ourselves used earlier in this introduction might intimate.) Another context for this issue of *PMLA*, in other words, may be that practitioners of literary studies have begun owning up to and taking an interest in our own off-duty, after-hours lives as readers.[4]

Our descriptions of our scholarly methods shift once we no longer assume that the scene of professional reading is self-enclosed and acknowledge how it opens out onto other scenes and modes of textual engagement, including those defined by affective attachments. The notes of autobiography—or of auto*bibliography*, of memoir mixed with reading list—discernible in some of the articles that follow may bear this out.

Consider how in Margaret Russett's article the treatment of translation theory and Romantic reading comes to be interwoven with an account of romantic love. Russett combines study of the defamiliarization promoted in Romantic-period aesthetic theory with a memoir of the classes in English Romanticism that she taught at Boğaziçi University not long after 11 September 2001. After Russett relocated to Turkey, the Romantic poets' experiments in "foreignizing"—in estranging their readership from its native English—became newly important for her; they felt closer to home. And while she experienced the imperfect fluency that is the lot of those who read in a second language, she also, she recounts, learned a lesson in the erotic dimension of that estrangement.

As we worked on this issue, an earlier special issue of *PMLA* was often in our minds: *The History of the Book and the Idea of Literature*, edited by Leah Price and Seth Lerer in 2006. For scholars of our disciplinary history it is in retrospect striking how few signs there are in that number of *PMLA* that its contributors were inclined to call for a moratorium on interpretation. One perhaps hears a hint of impatience with the hermeneutic project when Price, in her introduction to that issue, proposes that book history might be most valuable to literary studies for its rehabilitation of the obvious, for the way it redirects attention to features of the book that lie in plain sight—the physical medium rather than the message it transmits, the manifest rather than the latent ("Reading Matter" 13). But Price in the main places her emphasis elsewhere, stressing that the book history she and Lerer are spotlighting is part of a wider material turn engaging the humanities. She identifies their issue as "a bid to situate the study of material culture as a player in theoretical debates" (15).

Thinking about the relation between these two special issues has for us been a

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

stimulating exercise in taking the measure both of the overlap between book studies and reading studies and of the fields' divergence. Only some of the contributors to *Cultures of Reading* would ally themselves with the kind of historical work that Price and Lerer showcased. That said, in some measure materiality is something all our contributors must engage: the one thing reading almost always entails, after all, is an encounter between a consciousness and a material object, an object at hand.[5] The tools reading involves are manifold, and the conditions these tools impose on human beings' readerly activities vary, but they all do that imposing. "Things ask us to do certain things with them," Piper writes in *Book Was There: Reading in Electronic Times*. "[T]he soft graininess of the page or the resistant slickness of the screen . . . these features . . . contribute to a different relationship to reading, and thus thinking. Things . . . contribute to the shape of our thoughts" (x).

Not all the contributors to *Cultures of Reading* would go as far as Piper does in stressing the impact the material platform has on readers' experience of reading the text it houses. Another difficulty we confront when we try to specify the role of materiality in the reading process is the fact that while some historical moments downplay reading's material dimensions, others deliberately embrace them, in ways that make reading itself an activity that produces physical traces. In Renaissance England, for instance, as the book historian William Sherman observes in his study of its marginalia, reading was "no less a manual art than writing or printing" (48)—because it was taught in the schoolroom as an activity that ought to be done with pen in hand.

But even the contributors to this issue who are readiest to affiliate themselves with book history's archival methods and most committed to following the paper trail of the past remain mindful of the less easily graspable dimensions of reading and of the evidentiary conundrums that human interiority creates for the investigator. We can see some of that mindfulness in the methodological reflections that are woven into Barbara Hochman's article, a "reading" of Nella Larsen's 1922 application to the New York Public Library's library school. Attending closely to the sort of mundane paperwork we ordinarily categorize as being used, or processed, not read, Hochman is able to speculate about the emotional investments in books that the novelist performed as part of her application and to suggest their bearing on Larsen's fiction. Yet Hochman acknowledges the limits of the inferences her archive permits: "there is always a gap between a lived experience of reading and claims about reading. That gap is all the greater when a booklist is prepared by a black reader for white figures of authority." In histories of reading, some blanks will remain unfilled and unfillable.

In a surprising way, Hochman's argument intersects at this point with that of a very different article in this collection, one working in a phenomenological rather than historicist mode. Yi-Ping Ong begins her discussion here of *Anna Karenina* by likewise foregrounding absence. She starts with a book that is *not* there—missing from the otherwise detailed diagram that Vladimir Nabokov prepared for his Russian literature undergraduates when the class arrived at the scene of Anna's novel reading on the train. This scene in Leo Tolstoy's novel might be claimed as a forerunner of the scene in Smith's *Like* discussed earlier, except that the contents of the novel Anna takes out of her bag never quite come into focus for Anna, or us. This reading session fails because the lives of the fictional others inside her book distract Anna with reminders of the life she wishes to live herself outside it. Probing the terms through which Anna's novel might be said to exist apart from its reading, and raising wider questions about the ontology and boundaries of literary art, Ong traces the conflicts Tolstoy posits between reading experience and the lived experiences it suspends.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

If, then, at some moments in our work we had thought of *Cultures of Reading* as the sequel to the 2006 *PMLA* issue on book history, this view became harder to sustain as we realized that for many of our contributors material culture was often only half the story. The research questions they pursued often sent them beyond the book. Robert Darnton's famous diagram of the communications circuit in the age of print—which lays out in a synoptic view the interactions through which the book is progressively produced and disseminated and consumed—presents reading as the culmination of, or sequel to, a story that was launched at the author's writing desk: "[t]he reader completes the circuit" (111). But the history of the book and the history of reading do not necessarily dovetail as neatly as that diagram is sometimes taken to imply—in part because readers do much more (and less) than actualize writers' intended meanings, or enable written texts to come to life in the theaters of their minds, or succumb to being informed by their reading matter. (Nor can reading be understood solely as the demand that answers to the book trade's supply.) And the term *reception*, which is supposed to suture the history of books to the history of reading, misleads inasmuch as it implies a punctual, self-contained act and not the complex, layered, and extended temporalities this domain of practice involves.

In the current issue, Kathryne Bevilacqua considers one manifestation of those temporalities. She shows how the *Country Life Readers* (1915–17) aimed to provide their intended audience of not-yet-literate adults with a crash course not only in literacy but in being a reader—in taking up a new identity. The definition of literacy at issue for the Appalachian farmers addressed by these primers goes beyond any limited textual practice focused on these books. Instead, it entails the farmers' long-term commitment to a life "lived according to text."

Recent scholarship that treats *book use* rather than the narrower category of reading poses its own challenge to schemes that presuppose that texts might choreograph their own processing and thus be treated as evidence in themselves of readers' attitudes (e.g., Sherman; Price, *How*; and Cormack and Mazzio). Smith's *Like* represents an extreme case of such book use when it has Amy Shone employ the pages she cannot read for nonlinguistic, materialist ends that convert them into wadding and kindling. Even so, Amy's repurposing—which wrests printed matter out of Darnton's communications circuit altogether—may be linked to practices of remaking that *are* centered on exercises of literacy (practices that have, however, similarly disruptive effects on Darnton's flowchart). William Sherman's "marking readers," who leave a trail of marginalia behind them, exemplify such practices, but such active users of books, who augment or outright remake the objects that pass into their hands, appear in *Cultures of Reading* too. In Michael Chasar's article, readers in the 1940s (including Chasar's grandmother) take pains to "interleave" their copies of Edna St. Vincent Millay's *The Murder of Lidice* with newspaper clippings related to the Nazis' destruction of the village that Millay memorializes in her poem, as though the text were incomplete without this supplement from its future. In Whitney Trettien's essay, the seventeenth-century creators of the Little Gidding harmonies refashion the Gospels, cutting them up and rearranging their parts.

Discussions of book use have brought in their wake a rethinking of what and when time for reading might be.[6] Contending with the New Criticism's assumption that the text represents a stable, discrete, finished entity, these discussions often emphasize radical incompletion and mutability; in the place of the New Critics' text object, they envision a book event unfolding over multiple times and places.[7] Such considerations inform the methodological intervention Trettien makes in her article. The Little Gidding community's

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

cut-up texts and collages were offered as a remedy to the religious schisms of 1640s England, but, Trettien insists, the members of that community also created objects that were not solely of that time and place. One notes how their scissoring of the pages anticipates Susan Howe's contemporary poem collages, which Hollywood discusses in her MLA convention paper published in this issue. Aiming to model a methodology that would acknowledge books' capacities to "pleat together past, present, and future," Trettien presents the Little Gidding creations as textual systems in which individual acts of reading were coordinated and in which agency was distributed. They thus stand in her article as the nondigital equivalents of the cognitive assemblages that Hayles identifies with our own era of machine reading. When Chasar enumerates the many "new media" involved in transmitting Millay's poem to its mid-twentieth-century audience in the United States, he, like Trettien, proposes a transtemporal comparison and evokes a dress rehearsal for the present digital moment. The reception of *Murder* and the audience participation the poem elicited—participation that took Millay's readers well beyond the book—seem a world away from the quiet, privatized scene of reading that poetry is generally thought to involve.

Reading takes time. (Designers of the newest models of e-readers seem to assume that users will wish to be reminded of this fact at every turn, by announcements like "20 hours to go" or "Typical time to read / 6 hours and 33 minutes." Is the point of these reminders the virtue signaling they facilitate, how they permit us to identify ourselves as readers who, in stalwart defiance of all the predictions about the shortened attention spans of the digital age, have kept on reading?) Reading also makes time. (Sachs and Piper begin the convention paper published here by underscoring the tight link the Romantic era forged between a sense of time's duration and book-based, literary reading. In his convention paper, Curley-Egan explores the haunting "closeness" of "close reading" by reminding us how solitary reading has helped define the aesthetic experience of nighttime.) Reading—or more precisely the reencounter with a book from one's past—has also served to mark time and to connect up moments in time. Embarked on that contrapuntal process, in which one sometimes reads and sometimes remembers oneself reading, rereaders use the book to which they return to parse the discontinuities between then and now. Since Romanticism those revisitations have been crucial to Western literature's ways of projecting its existence across time. Think of John Keats's sonnet "On Sitting Down to Read King Lear Once Again," or of how Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* arcs between its narrator's two encounters, in youth and age, with George Sand's *François le champi,* the first "real novel" that crossed Marcel's path (31).

And another way in which reading may be seen to pull away from the book involves how those repeat encounters, trips down memory lane, confront us with memory's imperfections (so we remember, if only to forget again, all the subplots and characters we earlier consigned to oblivion). Even as it comes to dwell in our memories, internalized until it has become a piece of who we are, the real book also slips away, disappearing behind what Pierre Bayard, with a glance at Freud's concept of the screen memory, calls a "screen book" (44).

This screen book does not keep still and does not remain intact either: "our memory of books, most particularly those that matter to the point where they become part of us, is endlessly reorganized by the unconscious stakes of our present circumstances" (45). The books that have exited the world of perishable objects and been shelved in the library of the mind are also subject to time. You can't go home again.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

When we chose "Time for Reading" as this introduction's title we anticipated that it might trigger our readers' nostalgia—for a time when it felt as if there was more time and when reading (book reading in particular) seemed more focused and fullhearted. Perhaps the interest our call for submissions elicited is also ascribable to that nostalgia and its converse, fears that the time for reading is becoming scarce in the contemporary, 24-7 media landscape. It is notable, though, that since the eighteenth century at least, as Christina Lupton has recently shown, people have been attempting, and failing, to carve out more time for reading. And in another sense of *reading*, reading never stops. Once mastered, the capacity for textual processing cannot be lost. Indeed, when we resume our task of introducing *Cultures of Reading* in the January 2019 issue, one item on our agenda will be the neurological evidence that suggests the virtual impossibility of not using the codes that were impressed on our brains in the years when, like Kate Shone, we were learning to look through and not at the letters.

This observation serves, too, as your advance notice: reading lies before as well as behind you. In January 2019 it will again be time for reading.

Notes

1. "The special life-likeness of narrative fiction . . . depends on what writers and readers know least in life: how another mind thinks" (Cohn 5–6).

2. In book historians' databases unread and read books generally look the same, though some—e.g., the *Early Novels Database*, established and maintained by the University of Pennsylvania and Swarthmore College—do record marginalia.

3. See Eisner for a helpful elaboration of this point.

4. Lynch discusses how porous these boundaries become for practitioners of literary studies, thanks to the expectation that professionals who work on literature will love it too.

5. Such is the variability of reading's meanings that even this general statement demands some qualification: in some settings (classical Rome, medieval Europe) reading for most may have been an experience of audition—one in which one was read to and was distanced accordingly from the visual and tactile dimensions of the text being read.

6. As a distinctive category of print publication, books invite consideration of temporal distension and time lag in ways newspapers and periodicals do not: "[t]he time of their publication and their reading diverges much more naturally than in most other forms of print" (Lupton 130).

7. On the New Criticism's text object, see Mao; on the book as event, see Fleming.

Works Cited

Bayard, Pierre. *How to Talk about Books You Haven't Read*. Translated by Jeffrey Mehlman, Raincoast Books, 2007.

Best, Stephen, and Sharon Marcus. "Surface Reading: An Introduction." *Representations*, vol. 108, no. 1, Fall 2009, pp. 1–21. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/rep.2009.108.1.1?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

Buurma, Rachel Sagner, and Matthew K. Gold. "Contemporary Proposals about Reading in the Digital Age." *A Companion to Literary Theory*, edited by David H. Richter, Wiley, 2018, pp. 139–50.

Chartier, Roger. *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Translated by Lydia Cochrane, Stanford UP, 1994.

Cohn, Dorrit. *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*. Princeton UP, 1983.

Cormack, Bradin, and Carla Mazzio. *Book Use, Book Theory, 1500–1700*. U of Chicago Library, 2005.

Dames, Nicholas. "On Not Close Reading: The Prolonged Excerpt as Victorian Critical Protocol." *The Feeling of Reading: Affective Experience and Victorian Literature*, edited by Rachel Ablow, U of Michigan P, 2008, pp. 11–26.

Darnton, Robert. *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History*. W. W. Norton, 1991.

Eisner, Eric. "Reading for the Moment." *We, Reading, Now*, edited by Dalglish Chew and Julie Orlemanski, *Arcade: Literature, the Humanities, and the World*, 2016, arcade.stanford.edu/content/reading-moment. Accessed 23 Aug. 2018.

English, James F., and Ted Underwood. "Shifting Scales: Between Literature and Social Science." *Modern Language Quarterly*, vol. 77, no. 3, Sept. 2016, pp. 277–95.

Felski, Rita. Introduction. *New Literary History*, vol. 45, no. 2, Spring 2014, pp. v–xi. *Project Muse*, muse.jhu.edu/article/551383/pdf.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press

———. *The Limits of Critique*. U of Chicago P, 2015.

Fleming, Juliet. Afterword. *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 73, no. 3, 2010, pp. 543–52.

Gallop, Jane. "Close Reading in 2009." *ADE Bulletin*, vol. 149, 2010, pp. 15–19. *Modern Language Association of America*, www.ade.mla.org/bulletin/article/ade.149.15.

Keats, John. "Sonnet: On Sitting Down to Read *King Lear* Once Again." *Keats's Poetry and Prose: A Norton Critical Edition*, edited by Jeffrey N. Cox, W. W. Norton, 2009, p. 114.

Lupton, Christina. *Reading and the Making of Time in the Eighteenth Century*. Johns Hopkins UP, 2018.

Lynch, Deidre Shauna. *Loving Literature: A Cultural History*. U of Chicago P, 2015.

Mao, Douglas. "The New Critics and the Text-Object." *ELH*, vol. 61, no. 1, Spring 1996, pp. 227–54. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/30030280?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

Piper, Andrew. *Book Was There: Reading in Electronic Times*. U of Chicago P, 2012.

Price, Leah. *How to Do Things with Books in Victorian Britain*. Princeton UP, 2012.

———. "Reading Matter." Introduction. *The History of the Book and the Idea of Literature*. Special issue of *PMLA*, edited by Price and Seth Lerer, vol. 121, no. 1, Jan. 2006, pp. 9–16. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/25486286?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

———. "Reading: The State of the Discipline." *Book History*, vol. 7, 2004, pp. 303–20. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/30227365?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

Price, Leah, and Seth Lerer, editors. *The History of the Book and the Idea of Literature*. Special issue of *PMLA*, vol. 121, no. 1, Jan. 2006.

Proust, Marcel. *Swann's Way*. Translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff, Random House, 1934. Vol. 1 of *Remembrance of Things Past*. 7 vols.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading; or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction Is about You." *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in Fiction*, edited by Sedgwick, Duke UP, 1997, pp. 1–37.

Sherman, William H. *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England*. U of Pennsylvania P, 2008.

Smith, Ali. *How to Be Both*. Pantheon Books, 2014.

———. *Like*. Harcourt Brace, 1997.

Stewart, Garrett. "Painted Readers, Narrative Regress." *Narrative*, vol. 11, no. 2, May 2003, pp. 125–76. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/20107308?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2018.133.5.1073 Published online by Cambridge University Press