

## Abstracts

- 1083 **Yi-Ping Ong**, *Anna Karenina Reads on the Train: Readerly Subjectivity and the Poetics of the Novel*  
 What does it mean to be a reader of a novel? The famous scene of Anna Karenina reading on the train takes up this question. Whereas Tolstoy's scene is traditionally viewed as yet another example of the pleasures and dangers of novel reading, from empathic identification to romantic self-aestheticization, I argue that the scene investigates the phenomenology of novel reading, the nature of readerly subjectivity, and the poetics of the classic realist novel—all in ways that depart from other canonical literary depictions of novel reading. Bringing together the poetics of the realist novel with complex issues of self-knowledge and deliberation, the scene reveals a new form of readerly subjectivity that entails the imagined nonexistence of the empirical reader. Drawing on Bakhtin, Kierkegaard, Sartre, and others, I show the implications of this form of readerly subjectivity for not only an original interpretation of Tolstoy's much-read scene but also our understanding of novel reading. (Y-PO)
- 1099 **Beth Blum**, *The Self-Help Hermeneutic: Its Global History and Literary Future*  
 The self-improvement industry has been analyzed from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including those of sociology, history, and religion, but its relation to literature has not received the attention it demands. Self-help is inextricable from the history and future of reading around the globe. Using Samuel Smiles's *Self-Help* (1859) as a case study, I unearth the overlooked role of the self-help hermeneutic, a practical reading method that collapses period, nation, and genre in the global dissemination of literary culture. I then demonstrate that the pastiche didacticism of Smiles's early readers has become a mainstream conceit of twenty-first-century novels, including Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*, Tash Aw's *Five Star Billionaire*, and Sheila Heti's *How Should a Person Be?*. By putting on hold the standard critique of the genre's homogeneous neoliberal influence, I recalibrate the scales by which we measure self-help's literary and political relevance. (BB)
- 1118 **Kathryne Bevilacqua**, "What a Farmer Reads Shows in His Farm": Performing Literacy with Adult Reading Primers  
 Cora Wilson Stewart's *Country Life Readers* (1915–17), beginning reading primers designed for white Appalachian adults, contain lessons in the social meaning of reading. The formal interplay of the readers' illustrations, text, and handwriting exercises show how Stewart's primers teach not how to read but rather how to *act* like a reader. By instructing students in the habits, attitudes, and behaviors that will make them seem "literate" to the wider world, the primers argue that these performances (some textual, many not) are not supplements to literacy but literacy itself. Setting Stewart's primers against other adult primers from the period further shows how these literate performances

were circumscribed by race and region. Rather than dismiss this version of literacy as irredeemably “mythic,” I suggest that sources like Stewart’s are evocative reminders to attend to the ways in which nonreading is always implicated in reading’s meaning. (KB)

1135 **Whitney Trettien, Media, Materiality, and Time in the History of Reading: The Case of the Little Gidding Harmonies**

How might scholars extrapolate from the material evidence of “used books” to build larger narratives that help us make sense of the past, without reducing it again to grand, progressivist theories? The history of reading, and book history more generally, would benefit from an exploration of frameworks that extend beyond those of linear time and discrete periodization, and media and technology studies might help lead the way. This essay juxtaposes two annotations left in a set of cut-and-paste biblical harmonies made at the religious household of Little Gidding in the 1630s and 1640s. The first is a seventeenth-century note left by King Charles I; the second is a cut-up booklet made by an anonymous reader in the nineteenth century. Comparing these two moments of reading reveals the urgency of expanding the historical horizons of literary studies and deepening its engagement with theories of time, media, and materiality. (WT)

1152 **Mike Chasar, Ghosts of American Literature: Receiving, Reading, and Interleaving Edna St. Vincent Millay’s *The Murder of Lidice***

The history of Edna St. Vincent Millay’s long World War II propaganda poem *The Murder of Lidice* reveals the transmedial logics that affected its publication and the media conditions that shaped its reception. After commissioning the poem in 1942, the Writers’ War Board coordinated a high-profile, strategically sequenced release, in which eight versions of the poem went public during a single week—periodical versions in *The Saturday Review of Literature* and *Life* magazine, a live performance featuring Hollywood actors, an NBC radio broadcast of that live performance, globally broadcast radio versions in three languages, and a book issued by Harper and Brothers. Comparing a set of fan letters (written in response to the NBC and *Life* versions) with a collection of interleaved book versions of the poem (books with newspaper articles stored between their pages) suggests how audiences might have been moved by the media of *Murder*’s distribution as much as by the content of the poem itself. (MC)

1172 **Barbara Hochman, Filling in Blanks: Nella Larsen’s Application to Library School**

In 1922 Nella Larsen Imes was the first African American applicant accepted to the library school of the New York Public Library; soon she would be a promising novelist of the Harlem Renaissance. Larsen’s library school application is a rich text that discloses the encounter of a conflicted subject with the norms and values of an institution. Bureaucratic forms do not have readers—at least as literature professors generally use that word—but filling out an application requires cultural competence, and evaluating one requires interpretive activity. Responding to a standard question on the application, Larsen compiled a book list that reflects her pragmatic, aesthetic, and emotional investment in reading. Stylistically and thematically, this ephemeral document anticipates Larsen’s best work; it intimates conflicting perspectives on race, gender, and national belonging while exposing the limits of “imagined community” in one culturally typical American institution. (BH)

1191 **Margaret E. Russett, Language Strange: The Romantic Scene of Instruction in Twenty-First-Century Turkey**

Reflecting on my experience of teaching British Romantic literature at a Turkish university, this essay addresses the current conversation about global

English by exploring the intersections among second-language literary study, translation theory, and Romantic aesthetics. It begins with a reconsideration of orientalism that traces a foreignizing impulse in canonical Romanticism, links this with Victor Shklovsky's concept of *ostranenie* ("estrangement"), and goes on to propose foreign language study as the exemplary instance of Romantic or Shklovskian aesthetic experience. Turning next to recent accounts, by Emily Apter and others, of Istanbul as the birthplace of "translational transnationalism," I juxtapose the utopianism of contemporary translation theory with Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poetic ideal of "untranslatableness." I conclude with a reading of Orhan Pamuk's novel *Snow*, particularly its homage to Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," as a meditation on translatability, before briefly revisiting the Turkish Romantic classroom and its global English futurity. (MER)

1207 **Benjamin Mangrum, Aggregation, Public Criticism, and the History of Reading Big Data**

This essay traces the history of ideas behind the critical methods of distant reading and macroanalysis, modes of criticism enabled by the rise of the science, media, and technology of aggregation. I situate these methods in the intellectual shifts marked by the advent of modern polling practices, computational census technologies, post-1945 marketing strategies, and other methods of analyzing an aggregated public. Drawing on work by Sarah E. Igo, Mary Poovey, Bill Kovarik, and others, I demonstrate that the ideas legitimated through these shifts in technology and public sentiment are fundamental to the types of claims made in the "big data" digital humanities. This attention to intellectual history raises important problems and qualifications for big data methods like distant reading, particularly regarding their underlying assumptions about the publics of literary history. (BM)

1225 **N. Katherine Hayles, Human and Machine Cultures of Reading: A Cognitive-Assemblage Approach**

The concept "cultures of reading" should be expanded to include machines that read. Machine reading is exemplified by the computer system called Never-Ending Language Learning (NELL). Because NELL lacks real-world experience, its semantic comprehension is limited to forming categories of words. This process illustrates a major difference between human and machine reading: whereas human reading involves causal reasoning, machine reading relies more on correlations. Human-machine hybrid reading, for example the kind done with an e-book, can be understood as a cognitive assemblage through which information, interpretations, and meanings circulate. The introduction of mechanical cognition into printing can be seen in the Paige Compositor, from 1878. The transition from electromechanical cognition to more flexible digital and electronic computational media marks the movement from print, understood as a technology involving the arrangement of type pieces to impress ink on paper, to postprint, in which inked products originate as computer files. This change, which signals an ontological rupture in writing and reading practices, is addressed through a cognitive-assemblage approach emphasizing the distribution of cognition among technical and human actors. (NKH)