

thirteenth-century authors sought to guide and instruct in the requirements of post-Lateran IV Catholicism and thereby promote access to salvation. That meant (among other things) confronting the transitional point of death and its potential barriers and hindrances, and providing reassurance that salvation was always possible even for those considered outcasts (chapter 4 is neatly and tellingly titled, “Getting the Riffraff into Heaven: Jongleurs, Whores, Peasants, and Popular Eschatology”).

Like much medieval pastoral literature, many of these texts seem timeless in their message. That matters. Waters writes of the early stages of the pastoral revolution and its potentially momentous attempts to textualize doctrine and theology in the vernacular. Her texts are foundational for the tradition and its techniques. Unsurprisingly, much of her analysis resonates with and illuminates subsequent developments, as the *clergie* was further translated into Middle English. The outcome is a stimulating and thought-provoking volume, valuable not just for scholars of thirteenth-century religion, but for anyone working on the *pastoralia* of the pre-Reformation church.

R. N. Swanson, University of Birmingham

GILLIAN WILLIAMSON. *British Masculinity in the “Gentleman’s Magazine,” 1731 to 1815*. Genders and Sexualities in History. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. Pp. 283. \$100.00 (cloth).
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The *Gentleman’s Magazine* was one of the more enduring and characteristic literary institutions founded in the eighteenth century. It embodies much about the dominant interpretation of English society at that time, by depicting a genteel, self-consciously polished and learned, but eclectic and sometimes eccentric compendium of news, literary productions and reviews, natural observations, and queries. Its greatest strength and selling point was its correspondence pages, which provided a valuable site of public discourse for its readership, and (in modern parlance) interactivity with its editorial content. Soon, the journal became a literary phenomenon in its own right—it functioned as both a valued friend to many rural and colonial gentlemen (and aspirant gentlemen), and a symbol of stolid, dusty social, literary, and intellectual convention. Consequently, the *Gentleman’s Magazine* was a literary vehicle that captured and acted as a genuine representative of a swathe of genteel and middling public opinion through the period. The magazine may have reached fifty thousand readers directly each month, perhaps 5 percent of the total middling population in the mid-eighteenth century (or as many as 1:5 of its adult male population). No other periodical reached such a wide audience, or had its longevity.

Gillian Williamson’s excellent study demonstrates that the representation of this audience (and perhaps its self-identity) shifted through the period, from the reification of gentlemanly polish, politeness, and self-construction to more overt critiques of the elite corruption and subversion of these ideals and an emphasis on patriotic service, household authority and self-restraint against the existential threats from Revolutionary France. After valuable preliminary chapters on the magazine’s changing editorial regimes and an investigation of the depth of its readership, Williamson then continues chronologically, with chapters on the magazine’s three eras. These correspond to the editorships of its founder, Edward Cave (to 1754); his nephew Richard Cave and his partner, Edward Cave’s apprentice, David Henry (to 1792); and the gradual transition to the proprietorship of the magazine’s printer John Nichols (to 1826).

Williamson employs an innovative analytical technique by exploring both the explicitly masculine subject matter and values expressed in the authorial content of the magazine and the much broader cross-section of gendered values implied within the many notices (births, marriages, deaths) and other insertions by the wider readership. This approach allows her to argue, persuasively, that the magazine can be used as the representative of elite and middling male public opinion through the period. In turn, this point lends weight to her arguments about the reach and representativeness of the magazine through the long eighteenth century.

This abundance of material ensures that Williamson's central interpretation of apparent shifts in the leading behavioral archetypes associated with what R. W. Connell calls the "most honoured form" of elite masculinity has a firm evidential basis (R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity," *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 [December 2005]: 829–59, at 832). This is particularly apparent in Williamson's detailed analysis of the changes in the kinds of traits praised by obituaries and of the alterations in readers' concerns between the 1740s and the 1770s, or between the mid-1780s and the period after 1795. As she observes, these shifts seem to lag slightly behind those detected in studies that focus exclusively on the editorial content of political pamphlets, newspapers, or periodicals. This lag may reflect the time that was required before the magazine's readership began to reflect these opinions within their own contributions.

Clearly, as its critics observed in the early nineteenth century, over time the *Gentleman's Magazine* came to invent and perpetuate a house style, in terms of the content, parameters, and modes of expression found in contributions. Increasingly contributors conformed to these perceptions and assumptions. This creates a methodological chicken-and-egg situation, in which the magazine was created by reference to an imagined construct shared between the editors and the readership. This is a very complex idea, because it implies that editors directed the content toward what they thought the readership would like, and readers tailored their contributions to an ideal of how they imagined the magazine should be. In terms of Williamson's interpretation, this may raise the question of whether the magazine was merely a passive reflection of the opinions of its readership or became a more active space in which both editors and readers tailored their opinions towards a normative consensus. The problem lies in trying to determine whether this consensus represented a wider middling public opinion, as Williamson argues.

Williamson presents a clear, coherent, and very logical account of the evolution of the magazine, its editorial preoccupations, and its developing relationship with its devoted readers. Her book is based on a very significant body of original research, which includes the methodological innovation of examining the notices and comparing these to the authorial content; it spans a long period of time; and her arguments about the representative nature of the magazine appear well founded. In this respect, it supersedes William Stafford's two articles about post-1785 masculinity in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (William Stafford, "Representations of the Social Order," *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 33, no. 2 [Spring 2009]: 64–91; idem, "Gentlemanly Masculinities as Represented by the Late Georgian *Gentleman's Magazine*," *History*, 93, no. 309 [January 2008]: 47–68). With this book, Williamson makes important contributions to the fields of the history of print culture and the history of the Anglophone elite and middling classes, and she offers a significant addition to gender history and history of masculine identities in the long eighteenth century. Her book will feature on a substantial number of courses in early modern social, cultural, and gender history, and it should serve as an essential guide, and perhaps an inspiration, to undergraduates and postgraduates doing dissertations on the *Gentleman's Magazine* or other printed sources of this period.

Henry French, University of Exeter